

Single Sky – Single Interest?

National interest organizations and their ability to establish and make use of a common EU-level platform

Mathias Johannessen

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Printed at ARENA
Centre for European Studies
University of Oslo
P.O. Box 1143, Blindern
N-0318 Oslo, Norway
Tel: + 47 22 85 87 00
Fax: + 47 22 85 87 10
E-mail: arena@arena.uio.no
<http://www.arena.uio.no>

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Abstract

With this master thesis, I aim to explain how national interest organizations adapt to changing forms of governance at the European level. This is done through a case study with emphasis on the Norwegian Air Traffic Controllers Association, NATCA, and the EU-level associations in which NATCA participates. On the one hand, I try to explain the preferred choice of channel for NATCA when dealing with EU-level issues: Why do they choose the European (or national) path? On the other hand, and more importantly, I raise a more fundamental question: How are the prospects for a common EU-level platform to develop amongst European air traffic controllers associations? The main data source has been interviews with key informants from the associations.

The choice of channel is analyzed through a Multi-Level Governance and a Liberal Intergovernmentalist perspective. A mixed strategy towards the EU, working at both the national and European level, appears to be preferred by NATCA. However, NATCA rarely approach the EU directly. To channel the issue through the EU-level associations seems to be the preferred choice. When the EU is approached, supranational institutions such as the Commission, EASA and the Parliament appear to be preferred over the Council.

In the latter part of the thesis, I apply organizational theory and show that the European associations investigated in this thesis, IFATCA and ATCEUC, appear to have vaguely defined organizational characteristics. The interviewees express that they experience to get heard within EU. This appears to owe more to fortunate circumstances and highly committed individuals than to the organizational features in the associations. I conclude that the prospects for a viable European platform in a long term perspective is somewhat limited seen from an organizational point of view.

Keywords

Organizational theory – interest organizations – Europeanization – air traffic controllers – aviation regulation – multi-level governance – lobbying

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As will be seen in this thesis, I rely a lot on interviews. My sincere gratitude goes to all of my excellent informants who willingly shared time, interest and insights with me in Oslo, Brussels and Düsseldorf. Without your contribution, this thesis would for sure not have come into being.

Lastly, Haakon Gunnerud and Mads Skogen have both provided me with excellent and useful comments on this thesis. I am truly grateful that they found time to do so. In addition, an anonymous contributor did some 'volunteer' assistance, in terms of correcting my far from perfect English. Thank you all!

Needless to say, all remaining errors and shortcomings are solely my own responsibility.

Mathias Johannessen

Oslo, 18 June 2010

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List of Abbreviations

ATCEUC – Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination

ATM – Air Traffic Management

EASA – European Aviation Safety Agency

EP – European Parliament

ETF – European Transport Workers Federation

EUROCONTROL - European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation

FAB – Functional Airspace Block

ICAO – International Civil Aviation Organization

ICB – Industry Consultation Body

IFATCA – International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations

LI – Liberal Intergovernmentalism

MEP – Member of European Parliament

MLG – Multi-level Governance

NATCA – Norwegian Air Traffic Controllers Association

QMV – Qualified Majority Voting

SES – Single European Sky

SESAR - Single European Sky ATM Research

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

In this thesis, I intend to explore the adaptation of national interest organizations to changed forms of governance at the EU level. Through a case study, I aim to explain the strategy national interest organizations choose in order to adapt to the increasingly significant EU level. In addition, I want to shed light on the understudied question of to what extent an European association of national interest organizations offers a platform that the national interest organizations can use to coordinate their actions, and thus increase the potential of getting their voice heard.

Throughout the past decades, EU has strengthened its position as a relevant decision making level. The European Commission and the European Parliament have been delegated responsibility within a wide range of policy areas. Within the institutional framework of the EU, the Commission and the Parliament may be identified as the two

most supranational institutions taking actively part in the decision making process. Given that the power of the supranational component of the EU has been strengthened through over the years, this will possibly have profound impact on the decision making processes in European national states, with possible implications for interest organizations.

In this thesis, I operate with the underlying assumption that national interest organizations will have to adapt to the changing forms of governance at the EU-level. If interest organizations hesitate to do so, I argue that they will experience a decrease in their abilities to influence the policy making within their policy-area.

I will in this first chapter introduce the reader to my case. Thereafter, I will formulate the precise research questions and give the reader an overview of some of the most important literature in the study of interest organizations within the EU. The latter part of the chapter will give an outline for the rest of the thesis.

The Case

In order to explore the overlying focus of the thesis, I have chosen to approach the topic through a case-study. The decision to choose my specific case has followed the intention of choosing a case¹ which enables me to shed light on the overlying research focus. First, I have chosen a policy-field largely governed through the co-decision procedure, with significant competences in the Commission: The Single European Sky (SES). Through choosing this policy area, it is very likely that I find national interest organizations are organized in so called *euro-groups*. Euro-groups are European associations of national interest organizations. As SES represents a policy regarding air traffic management, it is a policy issue with implications for a policy-area which by nature is highly internationalized. Hence, air traffic management is possibly already quite harmonized across borders. It is therefore, on the one hand, imaginable that SES involves a wide range of actors with concurrent interests. This could result in a constructive cooperation at the European level. On the other hand, some competing, country-specific interests, or even differences within

¹ See more on case-studies in chapter 2.

one country, may exist and make constructive cooperation hard to achieve.

The national interest organization I have chosen as my case is Norwegian Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) and the Euro-groups at the European level in which NATCA participates. Some pragmatic considerations have been important for this choice, such as easier access to interviewees. I will in addition argue that to look at an interest organization in a country which *de facto* implements relevant EU-legislation but remains outside of the EU will make the Norwegian interest organization very likely to be proactive at the European level. However, there are many other possible implications following participation in a European association as an interest-organization, representing an interest located outside the EU. These will be elaborated later in this thesis.

Single European Sky (SES)

In the past and present, the European airspace has been organized with national borders as the basis for the division of airspace between European nation states. Through the past decades, an intention has been expressed for the coordination of the regulation of air traffic control across national borders and to implement a common regulation throughout EU². The present situation is, according to the Commission, inefficient, expensive and not suited to overcome the environmental challenges facing the aviation industry the years to come. At the same time, this way of organizing the airspace is poorly equipped to face the challenge following the expected increase of air traffic the next decades (European Commission 2008a: 3-6).

By nature, the European air traffic can be said to be border-crossing. The large amount of international flights puts forward strong functional needs for a good coordination of air traffic across borders. Having in mind that Europe already is one of the densest airspaces in the world in regard to air traffic makes such coordination crucial to handle the expected increase in the coming years.

² Switzerland and Norway, in addition to some Mediterranean countries, are also integrated in the work with the SES.

The primary aim of SES is in short the establishment of so-called *Functional Airspace Blocks* (FABs) which are to be organized in accordance with the principles of *functionality* and *efficiency*. This contrasts the current situation where national borders serve as the borders between air navigation service providers (European Commission 1999). In order to specify the initial aim of the SES I, the Commission has created a document which aims at taking the work one step further, SES II (European Commission 2008a). The Commission expects that, if put into force, SES II and SESAR (the research part of the project) will contribute to 10 % less usage of fossil fuel in addition to improvements of the safety levels and efficiency of air transport (European Commission 2008b: 4).

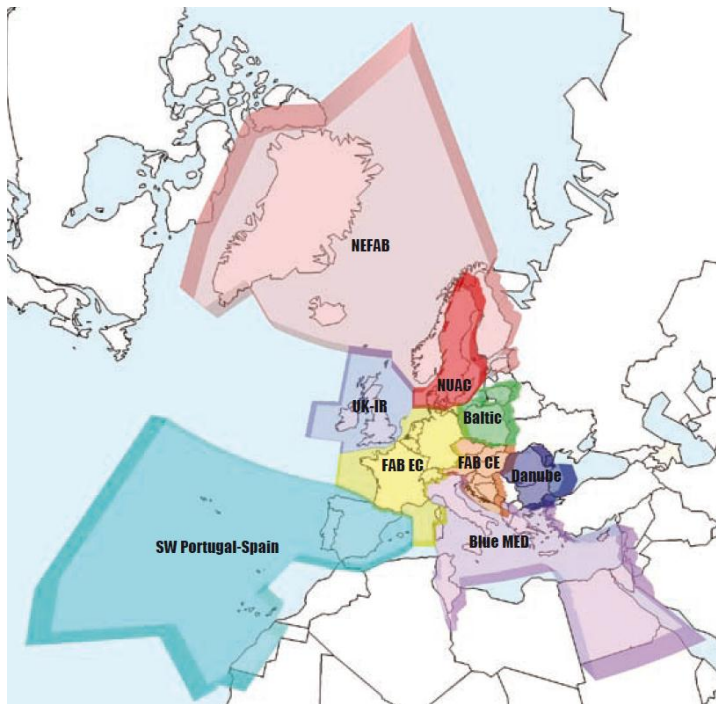


Fig. 1 The organization of the EU airspace in FABs (EUROCONTROL 2008)

An implication from the proposed organization of the European airspace into FABs is that the *blocks* inevitably will have a border-crossing character. At a first glimpse, SES seems to be a purely

technical matter. In practice, however, SES has possible political implications. The development will eventually affect national sovereignty regarding air traffic control, and lead to a loss of actual competence to control the national airspace. An imaginable situation might be a French fighter, operating in French airspace while controlled by German air traffic controllers. This scenario would make the German air traffic authorities responsible for air movements in French airspace. This could in turn make the coordination of European airspaces a controversial policy-area, even though the Commission stresses that the SES does not implicate a transfer of airspace violating the national sovereignty (European Commission 2008b).

As mentioned earlier, the core focus of this thesis is to investigate how interest organizations adapt to the changed forms of governance at the European level, and how well Euro-groups serve the national organizations interests. Air traffic controllers are likely to be largely affected by SES and their associations therefore makes an appropriate case for this thesis.

National interest organization and European associations

At the national level NATCA (Norwegian Air Traffic Controllers Association) will be my case. Norway, and therefore Norwegian associations, is in a unique position in this regard. Norway remains outside of EU but a large part of the civil society, and thereby the interest organizations, are affected by decision making at the European level. The way NATCA works towards EU is one main focus in this thesis.

At the European level, ATCEUC and the European branch of IFATCA will represent my cases. NATCA is taking part in both associations (ATCEUC 2009; Interview 2009; 2010). At the European level, I therefore argue that these associations represent the European choice for NATCA. ATCEUC consists of 27 different national level trade unions from European Countries. IFATCA is a global association where professional associations from most countries and continents are represented. ATCEUC has ambitions to be in active dialogue with the Commission regarding the issues surrounding SES, and with questions relating to air traffic control in general. ATCEUC

has recently been granted status as a *social partner* within the social dialogue framework for civil aviation after landing a cooperation agreement with ETF (European Commission 2009), and was granted this status late 2009 (Interview 2010). IFATCAs European branch is also involved in the questions regarding SES, first and foremost the technical and safety-related issues, for instance through participation in the Industry Consultation Body (ICB).

Interest organizations are often assumed to have more profound possibilities to get their voice heard at the European level if they act through a European association instead of lobbying alone in Brussels (Eising 2007: 334; Bennett 1997: 68-69). Within the institutional framework of EU, and especially within the Commission, it is recognized as advantageous for national interest organizations to operate through an association at the EU-level. According to Hooghe (2001: 64), staff in the Commission discusses EU-policy with representatives for interest organizations as often as with representatives from the European Parliament or the European Council. Input and information from various interest organizations is crucial for the EU. The Commission has a tight budgetary situation, and paying attention to expert advises and input from various interest organizations and trade unions is a way of cutting the expenses and get more out of the resources.

Research question

As earlier indicated, the overlying aim of this thesis is to say something general about national interest organizations adaptations to changed forms of governance at the European level within the frames of a Case Study.

In order to concretize my research question, and adapt it to my chosen case, I will develop two specific research questions in order to shed light on the overlying focus of the thesis. The first part of this thesis aims to illuminate to what extent NATCA choose the European associations as their preferred channel to get their voice heard at the European level. If I find that they do so, using the European channel instead of the national one, this might serve as an indication that NATCA chooses the European way in order to get their voice heard. NATCA has in that case undergone an adaptation to the changed

forms of governance at the European level. My first research question is therefore:

- 1) *What channel (national or European) is chosen by NATCA when they aim at getting their voice heard regarding SES? How and why do they use the different channels?*

If NATCA appears to rely on the European associations in their strategy towards EU, the second part of my thesis will increase in relevance. In the second part of the analysis, I will lift my scope to the European level. I will here investigate how national trade unions are able to cooperate within European associations. In order to get the voice of an interest organizations heard at the EU level, it might be fruitful to work within the frames of an European association of national ones. If the European associations are the preferred choice, it is a presumption that the national interest organizations is able to cooperate and coordinate their positions within the European association. The fundamental question in this regard is thus:

- 2) *How and why are the European air traffic controllers' associations able (or unable) to use their European platform in a manner which enables them to negotiate common positions on issues regarding SES?*

Previous research

For the first part of my research question, it seems as if the extent of Europeanization of the sector in question is crucial in order to explain the choice of channel made by interest organizations (Eising 2003: 198). In addition, most interest organizations choose to work with the emphasis on the national level or through a European association when their resources are limited (Beyers and Kerremans 2007; Coen and Broscheid 2007). Having a Brussels office, or a liaison officer in Brussels, is costly and by no means a luxury all organizations can pursue single handedly (Bernhagen and Mitchell 2010). However, some exceptions are active on their own at the European level. This is mainly regards organizations like business interests with sufficient resources or the category that may be labeled *ideal organizations* (della Porta and Caiani 2007; Tomsic and Rek 2008). The main picture is in any case that if a sector is highly Europeanized, and the interest organizations possess limited resources and 'access goods' on their

own, they will choose to work within the frames of a European association.

As far as I understand, the second part of my research question is highly understudied. I have barely been able to find any research on the question at all. Where Euro-groups are analyzed, most researchers have questioned to what extent and why they possess more influence on and/or access to the European institutions, or towards which European institutions they operate (see for instance Eising 2007; Bouvwen 2002; Suvarierol 2008). The fundamental question – are Euro-groups able to coordinate various interests in a way and which makes them their members preferred access point – remains largely understudied.

I will come back to the previous studies in greater detail in my concluding chapter in order to attempt to show how my thesis contributes to the studies of interest organizations at the European level in general.

Outline of the chapters

In chapter two I will present the theoretical framework of this thesis. In order to explain the choice of channel taken by NATCA, I will apply Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Multi-level Governance. For the second part of my thesis, where I aim to explain to what extent the European associations represent a common platform for the national associations, I will apply an organizational perspective. The theoretical framework of this thesis is followed by an overview of the methodological choices and considerations.

Chapter three gives a presentation of my case, and introduces the reader to the *raw* empirical findings from the interviews. Chapter three represents the empirical basis for the fourth and the fifth chapter and is solely built on the findings from this thesis' main source of data; the interviews.

Chapter four is an analysis of the channel chosen by NATCA when they work towards the European level. The findings in the third chapter are here interpreted in the light of Multi-level Governance and Liberal Intergovernmentalism. The main intention is to show that

the European channel is used by NATCA. If so, this increases the importance of the most central question asked in the fifth chapter.

Chapter five seeks to establish an understanding of the European associations and to what extent they can be understood as the preferred common channel. This is done by applying organizational theory and investigating ATCEUC and IFATCAs in the light of some organizational variables. The intention is to show the *possibilities* for a viable common European platform in the light of organizational theory.

Chapter six draws up the main conclusions from the analysis in brief. In addition, this chapter shows how this thesis may contribute to the general literature on the Europeanization of interest organizations.

Chapter 2

Theory and Method

Theoretical framework

In order to answer the first part of my research question, regarding the choice of channel taken by NATCA, I will construct two different models of explanation for the adaption to European integration. I will construct the models on the basis of two different theories on European integration. These are *Liberal Intergovernmentalism* (LI) and *Multi-Level Governance* (MLG). The theories will represent two competing and possible paths choices of channel by NATCA. For the latter part of my research question, I will use organizational theory as the chosen framework in order to explain how Euro-groups work.

Liberal Intergovernmentalism

Liberal Intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik 1998) is one of the main theories on European integration. In order to explain the integration, a core point in this theoretical framework is that the integration in

Europe is considered to be a result of a series of rational choices taken by the national leaders (Moravcsik 1998: 18).

The choices to be made within in the intergovernmental decision making process can be summarized as 1) national preference building. This step takes place at the national level and clarifies the position of the respective national leaders when the member states of EU assemble in a summit to 2) negotiate the policy decisions to be made. When the national leaders have made a decision, they 3) make their institutional choice (Moravcsik 1998). The most interesting aspect of this theory may be that when the member states choose to delegate responsibility to the European level, they do so because the member states are all in the opinion that it will serve their interests better if the policy in question is treated within the European framework than at the national level.

As LI presupposes that EU is an intergovernmental cooperation, it is therefore likely that the Council, and thus the national government in which the national interest organization operates, will be the most important institution for interest organizations. The dotted line in the model below intends to illustrate *exchange of opinions* whilst the black lines represent actual attempts to seek *influence* on policy processes at the EU-level.

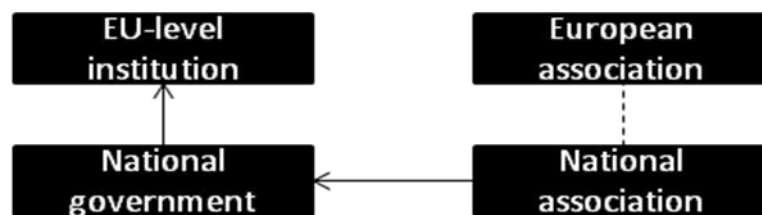


Fig. 2: Expected working pattern of trade unions according to LI

NATCA is therefore expected to serve as a preference builder within the first step in the bargaining process; preference building at the national level. The main assumption stemming from LI is therefore that NATCA will put their focus on step 1. For NATCAs special case, they will operate within step 1 in a national state not taking *formal* part in the negotiations at step 2 and 3 in the decision making process. The European associations (ATCEUC/IFATCA) are within this model assumed to have significance as a forum for exchange of

ideas and opinions between different European air traffic controllers associations.

Even though it is here implied that the significance of the European associations will not be large, it is important to keep in mind not to ignore the associations completely. Despite the fact that LI presupposes that national interest organizations will mainly operate at the national level, it is nothing preventing national interest organizations from coordinating actions as a result of exchange of opinions. A common strategy will maybe occur if the member organizations of the European associations recognize a matter as crucial and/or have more or less concurrent opinions on a matter. In general, however, the European associations are left a limited role within this model. I have three concrete assumptions in accordance with the theory:

- 1) NATCA will mainly seek to get heard within the national government. EU as a decision making level is recognized as secondary to the national one.
- 2) If NATCA seeks to get their voice heard abroad, they will mainly develop a strategy to cooperate with other national governments.
- 3) The cooperation at the European level is mainly regarding exchange of ideas, information and opinions. However, it may to some extent represent a platform for coordination of national actions.

Multilevel governance

MLG is a theory with the implication that decisions are made at different levels of governance. The actors will therefore have to operate within an administrative field covering both national and European decision making institutions, especially the ones that possess large decision making authority within their policy-field. EU has consolidated its position as a relevant decision making area within most policy fields. The Commission hence possesses significant legislative powers within this model (Hooghe and Marks 2001). The Commission appears, as outlined earlier, to possess such powers in regard to the development of the Single European Sky. A potential consequence for interest organizations is that they will have to recognize that important decisions within their policy-area will be

made at *both* the European and national level. According to this, the following strategy to get their voice heard may be expected:

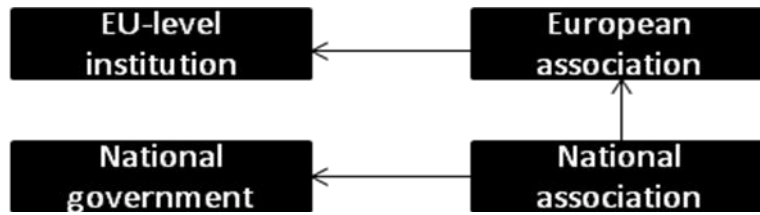


Fig. 3: Expected working pattern according to MLG

The core assumption of MLG is that the national interest organizations will use their European association when they seek access in matters where they know that the EU possesses important decision making powers. In a similar vein, they will put emphasis on lobbying and attempts to get their voice heard at the national level if they know that the national government possesses the relevant decision making powers. However, the model should not be so interpreted as if the national government possesses no important influence on EU. The model is intended to visualize how interest organizations are expected to turn to the EU when they assume that the EU is the most important arena for decisions to be made. For my case this implies that if NATCA assumes the EU to be of relevance in a policy matter, they will work towards the European level rather than the national.

It should also be noted that there are no obstacles within this model preventing national trade unions from operating independently at the European level. This opportunity will be kept *in mente* throughout the thesis. However, drawing on insights from the literature, it is more likely that NATCA will choose the European path and seek a common position with other European air traffic controllers' organizations. The two expectations from the MLG section follows:

- 1) NATCA will operate with a mixed strategy at both the national and the European level. However, for my case (the SES) I expect them to operate mainly at the European level.
- 2) The European platform is the preferred way of working at the European level.

Choice of institution

Another interesting aspect to analyze is whether MLG or LI has the most explanatory power to see what institutions the interest organizations approach at the EU-level. Eising (2007: 387) shows in his empirical study that interest organizations tend to be more active towards the Commission than the Parliament and the Council, which is in line with MLG-theory. In addition, Richardson (2006: 236) shows that the predominance of the Commission may owe a great deal to the fact that interest organizations in EU tend to seek access in the bureaucratic structure in the EU.

As LI views the EU as a mainly intergovernmental cooperation, the Council will in this perspective be the preferred institution for the interest organizations. This means that one can expect the interest organizations to operate mainly at their national level, seeking access to their national government.

In regard to the institutional preference, it is also worth mentioning that the Commission, being divided in branches according to sector rather than geography, makes it easier for interest organizations to find relevant contact points than what is the case in the Council. The Parliament also offers a structure organized according to sector, but also according to ideology (Egeberg 2006: 20-22). The two competing expectations:

- 1) In a MLG-perspective, it is worked most actively towards the Commission and/or EP.
- 2) In a LI-perspective, the interest organizations direct their attempts to gain access towards the Council and the respective national governments.

An organizational perspective

For the second part of my research question I aim to evaluate how well ATCEUC and IFATCA serve as common platforms. In order to build theoretical expectations, I will construct my theoretical framework on the basis of an organizational perspective. In a strict sense, organizational theory implies that when an organization acts, it is merely individuals who act (Egeberg 1994: 85). The degree to which an organization is able to affect the established attitudes and

loyalty of individuals is dependant on the way the organization is structured (Egeberg 2004: 200). Hence, organizational structure has effect on how the individuals in the organization act, depending on to what extent individuals internalize ideas and values of the organization. These rules and guidelines can be formalized in the sense that procedures and rules appear as written guidelines (Egeberg 1994:86; Scott 2008: 52-54). Organizational features such as structure and economic capacity are crucial to investigate these formal aspects of an organization. However, there is also a normative or informal dimension in place which might coincide with or be in conflict with the formalized structure (Scott 2008: 57-59).

According to Pasic (1996:88) it is crucial to 'unpack the institution' in order to analyze it properly. This means that in order to understand how an organization puts forward normative demands on its representatives, and also to what extent it is able to do so, is dependant on some certain key variables. The key for a thesis like this, where the aim is to analyze to what extent an European association is able to coordinate interests and thus access the decision making process at the European level, is to unpack the relevant aspects of the organizations.

Organizations may be expected to have impact on individual behavior through formal structure, demography, locus and institutionalization (Egeberg 2004: 201). I have chosen to put emphasis on three of these independent variables, namely *organizational structure*, *organizational demography* and the *locus* of the organization. The dependent variable, with which I aim to shed light on the existence of a common platform for the Air Traffic Controllers, will be *organizational identity*. Below, I will elaborate the content of these variables and how they are intended to be applied in the analysis.

Organizational structure

Organizational structure refers to the way an organization is structured. Often, the organizational structure is visualized through an organization-map where the position holders and their tasks are visualized. This map lays the foundation for how the staff in an organization should serve their roles (Egeberg 1992: 189). In my thesis, the organizations appear to be so small in size that it should be easy to get an overview of the formal structure, at least in terms of the

responsible for EU-level access seeking. For my thesis, one interesting aspect, closely related to the organizational structure, is what Simon (1965) labels *bounded rationality*. This means that a representative within an organization will be unable to attend to everything that is potentially relevant for him/her. The representatives will thus have to specialize and divide various tasks amongst themselves in order to utilize the resources in a best possible way (Egeberg 2004: 202).

Some factors of the organizational structure will be given attention. These factors have been selected in line with the anticipation that they affect the way the organization sorts out what to attend/not attend, and where it should be attempt to gain access. The factors of the structure I will investigate are size (in terms of personnel and resources), primary/secondary structure and decision making procedures in the organizations. The content of these factors will be elaborated below.

Organizational size

As the organizations within this study, ATCEUC, IFATCA and NATCA, are relatively small in size, but covering a large professional field, it is fairly unlikely that they will be able to attend everything they consider as relevant. The basic assumption is that the size of an organization matters in regard to how much information the organization is able to consider before taking decisions. Moreover, the *size* – in terms of budgetary situation and staff available – of the organizations serves as an important factor. The main intention is to use the size in order to investigate the ability of the organization to consider relevant information and find different solutions to problems and hence to make decisions and take action, which presuppose some division of tasks among the staff (Egeberg 2007:78).

To the extent the organizations possess some permanent staff located in a secretariat, the following question arises: Does the secretariat serve solely as an assistant to the board, or is it allowed to serve more of a political role? The secretariat is assumed to have its own interests and roles. These roles are shaped through interplay between the staff of the organization (the board members of IFATCA and ATCEUC) and the clientele the organization serves (the national associations) (Keohane and Nye 1974: 52). If the secretariat is allowed to contribute in regard to policy issues, it is likely that the secretariat possesses a significant impact on the organizations development.

The expectation in this section is in brief that ‘size matters’, in terms of the abilities the organization possesses to follow up on issues of relevance for it. It is assumed to be of particular importance to have permanent staff to some extent, in order to be able to exert a *continuous* pressure in issues of relevance.

Primary/secondary structure

IFATCA and ATCEUC are associations of several national air traffic controllers associations. This means that the representatives for the associations may have affiliations to their respective national association at the same time as they serve as representatives for their European association. The representatives may therefore experience to be caught between a primary structure and a secondary structure with which they are affiliated. Usually, the European level is anticipated to represent the secondary structure, whilst the national represents the primary structure. Moreover, the extent to which representatives identify with their secondary structure appears to be dependent on how much time they spend there (Egeberg 2004:203).

Typically, the primary structure is the organization the representative is expected to spend most time in whilst the secondary structure represents the affiliation which is subordinate to the primary one (Egeberg 2004:203-204). For my thesis it remains an open question whether the European or the national level is of greater importance for the representatives in question. As both associations specifically represent air traffic controllers interests and have this as a criterion for membership, respectively in a professional and a more traditional ‘trade union sense’ (Interviews 2010), the national and European interest could in many cases coincide and make the difference irrelevant. It might in any case be expected that the board members operate as dual-hatted representatives in the sense that they serve as a national representative at the European level and at the same time as a European representative in the European association (Egeberg et al. 2009: 11-12).

Decision making procedures

Another aspect of the organizational structure that I intend to put some emphasis on, regards the way the organizations reach decisions on issues that are being debated. I assume that decision making could be done either through a deliberative process with consensus as an

overlying goal, or through voting demanding majority or plurality among the members. Consensus as decision making procedure is thought to permit 'pooling of information held by the group's members and thus contributes to more informed and presumably better decisions' (Beach and Connolly 2005: 135). This could imply that consensus leads to better decisions, in qualitative terms. On the other hand, with too much emphasis on consensus one runs the risk that the group participants have 'an overemphasis on consensus and a consequent failure to critically evaluate assumptions and options when the group is highly cohesive' (Beach and Connolly 2005: 133). Hence, if an organization possesses the opportunity to arrange voting, this could allow the organization to be more effective. Moreover, if the members of an organization are aware that voting (with majority or plurality) is an option, it is possible that 'participants [may] assume that the majority has a right to have its decision be the group decision, opposition members subordinate their views [...] to the dominant view' (Beach and Connolly 2005: 133). However, arguing is likely to precede voting in most cases. Hence, working after consensus principles is not necessarily in conflict with applying majority voting.

The expectation stemming from this section is that an organization that possesses the opportunity to arrange voting will be governed more effectively, in terms of reaching decisions in contested policy issues. Consensus may improve the overall *quality* of the decisions, but could also have the side-effect that it is hard to reach decisions in many matters.

Organizational demography

Organizational demography refers to the composition of an organization in terms of the personal characteristics the members of an organization bring into it. Such characteristics which could prove relevant in this thesis may be education, professional experience and social and geographical background³ (Egeberg 2007:79). Such factors are assumed to have significance regarding the prospects for an organizational identity, as well as to how representatives act within the organization. All these aspects could have been investigated. Due

³ There are other aspects mentioned by Egeberg (2007:79) such as gender, age and ethnicity. Due to the relatively small size of the organization, I see the mentioned aspects – particularly the professional background – as the more crucial ones.

to the anticipated small size and the apparent sector specialization of the organizations in this thesis, I will focus primarily on the significance of professional background.

Professional background is in this thesis considered to be of profound importance. It is expected to be so because it is likely that virtually all representatives in the associations for air traffic controllers have the same professional background due to the sector-specific specialization. This, in turn, could give rise to a professional identity which contributes to the normative basis within the organization (Zuna 1999: 340-341). The anticipation is that if an organization scores high on the structure indicators, professional background could merely strengthen the organizational identity.

Organizational locus

The organizational locus is here referring to the location of an organizations main office. Face-to-face contact seems to be of vital importance when decisions are taken in organizations (Jablin 1987: 394). Hence, it is of fundamental importance that the organization has a main office at its disposal. A main office is regarded a presumption for an organizational normative structure and an organizational identity to evolve (March and Heath 1994: 70-73). It is therefore assumable that a strong organizational identity, and a common set of rules, will have a hard time to evolve if an organization operates without a main office.

In order to have good influence in Brussels, there is obviously important to have an office located in or near Brussels in order to be able to get access to the European institutions on a frequent basis. 85 % of EU-level interest groups have an office located less than 2 ½ hour by train outside of Brussels. (Bernhagen and Mitchell 2010: 163). Thus, the distance from the main office to Brussels might be of profound importance in order to explain and understand the frequency of contacts between an association and the European associations. As shown by Egeberg (2007: 80) the distance between government buildings affects the pattern of contact between the different parts of government. It is likely that this also goes for organizations and associations that work at the European level. In addition, as the board members in IFATCA and ATCEUC come from all over Europe, I regard it as important to have a main office in a city that is easily accessible for the members of the board.

One should be aware that the existence of e-mail, and communications technology that allows face-to-face meetings online, might offer a platform for communication that can weaken the limitations imposed by the lack of an office close to Brussels. This is also an aspect that I will pay attention to in the analysis. However, as noted, critical decision-making depends on face-to face-interaction and hence on the existence of a main office. The absence of a HQ can thus not be fully replaced by communication technologies (Therborn 2006) such as Skype, e-mail and phone conferences.

Organizational identity and the explanatory model

As indicated above, organizational identity is here understood as a product of the independent variables. Organizational identity represents the organizational features which may be identified as the most central ones; it is what makes the organization distinctive and gives continuity in the organization (Albert and Whetten 2004: 90). The crucial questions in this regard are related to the values, norms and goals of the organizations and how these came into being (Young 2001: 291). This being said, it is also important to put emphasis on to what extent the members of the organizations, in particular the board members, identify with these factors. Since the organizations in question are assumed to consist of representatives with several interrelated identities, it is interesting to see to what extent they can operate with a higher (European) identity that transcends the national ones (Young 2001: 292). However, another possibility is that the existence of multiple identities could be fortunate for an organization when dealing with conflicting environments (Stone 1996).

It should be noted that there is no intention to draw a detailed picture of the organizational identity in ATCEUC and IFATCA as such. The goal is rather to investigate the *possibilities* for an organizational identity to arise, on the basis of the independent variables. I assume that the organizational variables are related to one another as shown in fig. 4.

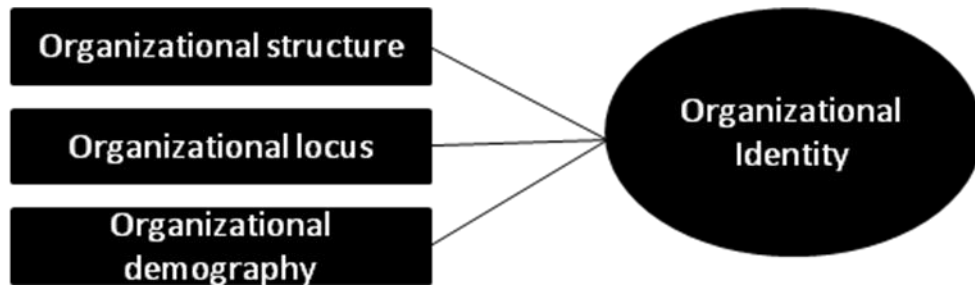


Fig. 4: The organizational explanatory model

Method and data

The central methods and data sources for this thesis have been interviews and document analysis. As the field is heavily understudied, data from the interviews has played the most important role for this thesis. In addition to the interviews and the documents, I attended a board meeting of ATCEUC at EUROCONTROL in Brussels 4 February 2010. This gave me the possibility to do some participating observation for a total of about 6 hours. I am in the opinion that the combination of interviews, (mostly) official documents and participating observation has gained this thesis a good validity, and represents methodological triangulation (Gerring 2007: 63). The validity of the gathered data is higher when combined than what would have been the case if I chose to rely solely on one source of data.

Research design

As indicated earlier, I have chosen to conduct an analysis where I seek to achieve a deeper knowledge about processes at national and European level within a specific policy field. As this is the overlying aim of my thesis, I regard a qualitative case-study as the appropriate choice of research design (Gerring 2007: 43). As indicated in chapter one, I define the part of the thesis where I investigate the choice of channel taken by NATCA as a *most-likely case* (George and Bennett 2005: 121), where the overlying aim is to apply some theoretical assumptions on my case and test if the assumptions are right. I can strengthen the applied theoretical framework if the findings coincide with the theoretical assumptions. This does not mean that my case can allow me to reject the applied theoretical framework if the findings deviate from the expectations. It is rather so that a deviation

is likely to be an indication that my case lies outside of the range of what the theoretical framework can explain (George and Bennett 2005: 116). The part of the thesis where I seek to understand to what extent the European associations serves as a common platform will be labeled an investigatory case with focus on in-depth knowledge about an understudied matter.

According to George and Bennett (2005: 17) the case study is 'an instance of a class of events'. In my thesis, NATCA represents a workers organization within the population (or class of events) that can be labeled European workers associations (a rather heterogeneous population). As indicated in the first chapter, I aim to gain findings that are partially applicable for European associations of national trade unions and professional unions as such. Thus, there is an ambition to gain findings that to some extent are generalizable. Without an ambition of generating findings that are applicable outside of the specific case, it is questionable to what extent one is actually doing research. As argued by Ruddin (2006: 798), to distance oneself from the overlying aim to generalize implies that one would merely repeat the same mental processes on every new case.

The strength of a case study is recognized to relate to internal validity (Gerring 2007: 43). Internal validity refers to what extent the researcher is able to interpret the findings as a causal connection between the dependent and the independent variables (Lund 2002: 106). The aim of my thesis is to use this strength of the case-studies to a larger extent and achieve a high internal validity, whilst giving the external validity secondary importance (Gerring 2007: 37-38).

Using qualitative data, such as interviews and documents, is suitable for my research design. It provides me with detailed and rich data with which I will have a good possibility to achieve a deep understanding of the processes in question.

'Snowball-sampling' and documents

The informants of this project have been sampled by using the principle of *snowball-sampling*. This implies that the researcher first conducts an interview with a key informant who suggests further informants (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981: 141). In my case, my first informant suggested further informants within NATCA, and also who I should contact within IFATCA and ATCEUC. The informants

he suggested within IFATCA and ATCEUC then suggested further informants for me within their respective organizations.

This method of sampling introduces several dangers to the validity of the project. First, it might be that the key representatives have chosen to recommend certain informants, whilst avoiding to recommend others that might not share the same perspectives as the key informant (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981: 142-143). However, in my selection of informants, especially at the European level, it was a crucial criterion that they actually participated in the work towards the European institutions, or were responsible for European strategies at the national level. Therefore, the number of possible informants was rather limited. I believe that this, and the selection of informants through two steps, has decreased the risk of getting a biased sample of informants.

For the document analysis, I have mainly selected to look at formal policy papers from the European institutions regarding SES. However, I have also looked closer at some documents from the Industry Consultation Board (ICB) in which IFATCA participates, and some documents from the Social Dialogue where ATCEUC⁴ are represented. I have also had a closer look at some internal documents circulated within NATCA, ATCEUC and IFATCA.

Semi-structured interviews

The main sources for this thesis are the interviews. I have conducted seven semi-structured interviews on different locations in Oslo, Düsseldorf and in Brussels. I have interviewed three representatives from NATCA, two from IFATCA and two from ATCEUC. The interview with the two IFATCA informants was due to limited time conducted as a duet interview. The interviews have lasted between 40-120 minutes, where the one lasting 120 minutes was the duet-interview. All interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews. Some informants wished to read the transcription and add comments to it, whilst most informants just wanted to read through and verify the final quotations that are used in this thesis.

⁴ IFATCA is also to a certain extent represented in the Social Dialogue. They are represented through the chairs of ATCEUC (5 seats) in the Social Dialogue when matters are discussed where IFATCA has interest in participating (Interview 2010). More on this in the empirical and analytical chapters.

There has also been some follow up via e-mail and phone calls in the aftermath. The data gathering for the project was reported to, and approved by, the 'Privacy Ombudsman for Research' December 2009, before the first interview was conducted.

In all interviews, I have used a digital recording device. A full transcription of all interviews has been conducted. This is indeed very time-consuming, but secures that no aspects of the interviews are lost and is thus logically connected to the intention of this thesis regarding the pursuit of in-depth knowledge rather than maximum generalizability. On the positive side, using a recorder improves the precision of the interviews as it allows me to transcribe virtually everything that has been said throughout the interview (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 110). This should serve both mine and the interviewees interests. On the negative side, by using a recording device the researcher runs a risk of disrupting the interview situation. For instance, an interviewee could feel nervous knowing that every word is recorded (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 111). However, as I have used a small digital recorder that was put on the table, my impression was that the recorder was forgotten after the introductory questions as it was located outside of the conversation.

In addition to the recorder, I also used a note-pad in all interviews. After the 2-3 first interviews, I discovered that taking additional notes could be a good way of pushing the informant to elaborate further on certain issues. My impression was that the informants recognized the note-taking as a sign that something was of more vital importance than others discussed in the interviews. When used right, this could be a strategic way of gaining deeper data on certain and crucial issues.

I used a semi-structured interview-guide in all interviews (Kvale 1997: 121-123). The guide covered some main topics and suggestions for broad questions in order to get the informant started. The guide also included follow-up questions to elaborate the answers further if the informant should give an unsatisfying answer on the questions asked. However, in the interviews I often experienced that the main subjects were covered without me even having to ask the general questions. The interview guide was for practical purposes therefore serving more as a reminder to steer the interview in the right direction rather than as a strict guide for the conversation as such.

Semi-structured interviews as method implies, especially when a digital recorder and transcription is used, that the researcher gathers very detailed, and rich, data material. With so much detailed data available, it is clearly a very time-demanding strategy (Hellevik 1999: 147). Within the framework of a master's thesis, there is only time available for a low number of interviews. This clearly represents a challenge for the validity of the thesis as it is difficult to know if the informants in the project are representative. Another risk is that the thesis will be *shallow*, meaning that it is easy to get hung up in the details and get superficial findings in the analysis (Repstad 2007: 83).

The main methodological challenges with semi-structured interviews are related to the reliability and validity of the thesis as such. The reliability of a project concerns the way the data has been gathered. In order to have a high reliability, it is crucial that the researcher gathers and treats data with care. If a project is reliable, this means in this regard that another researcher should be able to investigate the same research questions with the same data material and reach the same conclusions (Hellevik 1999: 184). For my project, the main challenges in this regard concern the way the interviews have been conducted and the interpretation of the findings. One should in addition always keep in mind the potential 'researcher effects' that could occur in interviews, a risk that I have hopefully kept at a minimum due to the combination of interviews and document analysis.

The validity concern is more about the data's relevance for the research question (Hellevik 1999: 102). Here it is important to find the relevant informants and sources. As the informants have been selected according to their position within NATCA, IFATCA and ATCEUC, I regard them as satisfactory in this regard. They should be in a good place to provide me with valid data on processes at the national and European level. Interviews alone could represent large challenges in this regard, and it is recommended to combine one qualitative method with another in order to increase the validity (Repstad 2007: 27-28). Again, the combined use of documents and interviews, supplemented with participating observation, represents a conscious attempt to overcome the validity challenge. The data from the document analysis is a way of pulling some data into the analysis which I as researcher have not influenced (Hellevik 1999: 102). It shall thus contribute to an increase of the validity.

The use of documents

In its broadest sense, document analysis is a method where the researcher puts emphasis on a wide range of documents and earlier research on the field in order to increase the validity of the researcher's findings. Within this perspective, the documents serve as sources to build sound background knowledge for the analysis. In a more narrow sense, document analysis is a method where one grants certain documents status as sources for the analysis in itself (Repstad 2007: 86-87). The documents will thus, in this perspective, serve the role of sources in the same way as the interviews. However, I depend to a lot larger extent on the interviews. It is therefore more appropriate to speak of my use of documents rather than a clear cut document analysis.

In my thesis, I have chosen to use written sources both in a broader and a narrower sense. First, I have mainly used documents to build background knowledge *before* I conducted the interviews. I read documents from the European Commission, the Parliament and some working groups in order to get an impression of the formal intention of SES and to get a grasp on the overall context. The focus was to read up and prepare for questions, and hence be better suited to ask spontaneous follow-up questions. In addition, I read opinions and comments from IFATCA and ATCEUC that were posted on their web pages. With this background knowledge, I felt that I was better suited to give impulsive follow-up questions in the interviews, as well as being better able to interpret the results at an early stage.

There are a lot of documents available regarding the SES and I have therefore chosen to start with the newest documents before moving on to documents of older date thereafter. As stressed by Kjelstadli (1997), this is a good way to start a document analysis as policy documents tend to have a summary of earlier development in the introduction. Thus, it is not always needed to read all documents on a matter. I have despite this had to put emphasis on some older documents in order to get the narrative of SES right.

Lastly, I have used the documents in a narrower sense in order to add greater depth to the analysis. However, the interviews are by far my main sources and the documents have served mainly in order to enhance the understanding of the issue in question and to a lesser extent in order to increase the validity. The documents are thus

mostly serving a complementary role to the interviews I conducted in the analysis.

Participating observation

As briefly mentioned, I participated at a board meeting of ATCEUC. I mainly sat at the table and observed, attempting to influence the meeting as little as possible. I attended the meeting until the closed session at the end of the day.

In the board meeting, all representatives were aware in brief of the purpose of my attendance. I participated according to the method of *open passive observation* (Hellevik 1999: 136-137). In contrast to hidden observation, this method is ethically unproblematic. As with the interviews, my presence could lead to nervous board members that would be disturbed by my presence. However, I experienced the meeting participants as open-minded towards my presence and the discussions had a lively and spontaneous character which I recognized as a sign that my presence did not disturb the meeting significantly.

Through the participation, I did some findings related to how ATCEUC works in practice and how they reach a decision. The findings are purely used to supplement the interviews. As I only participated for a few hours and did limited findings, I grant this way of gathering data the lowest overall importance for this thesis.

Chapter 3

Case: Single European Sky (SES)

Introduction

In this chapter, I intend mainly to present the findings that I have done in the interviews. The major part of the chapter will cover the associations in question, NATCA, IFATCA and ATCEUC, and give an empirical overview of their organizational features and strategies towards the European and national level. I will also put some emphasis on how they perceive SES. I have looked into the perceptions mainly to uncover any eventual differences in the perception of SES, and to what extent this difference of understanding can be ascribed the different aims of the associations. The overlying intention with this chapter is to build up a broad empirical understanding of the case in order to make the reader able to follow the discussions in chapter four and five, as well as to present the raw findings.

NATCA - organizational overview

NATCA is, as mentioned earlier, the interest organization for air traffic controllers in Norway. The association represent close to 550 air traffic controllers (Interview 2009). The informants describe the organization as *both* a professional association, with emphasis on professional matters such as regulations and technological questions, whilst at the same time being a trade union in the sense that it possesses the mandate to negotiate with policy makers, and has the formal right to go on strike (Interview 2009; Interview 2010). This matter varies throughout Europe. In France, for instance, there are several different associations that cover only the professional union side. The same situation is found on the trade union side there as well. In Sweden, they have a differentiated solution with one professional association and one trade union for air traffic controllers (Interview 2010).

The board of NATCA counts nine formal representatives; all of them air traffic controllers. In addition, the association has local representatives at the various airports and control centers in Norway (NATCA 2010c; Interview 2009). They have an office located at Flyporten, Gardermoen. However, the office is rarely used and is regarded to be of low importance for the association as such. The current leader, for instance, uses office spaces located at a control centre on a frequent basis (Interview 2009).

Avinor, the Norwegian air navigation service provider, supports one full-time position within NATCA. This is a company policy applicable for all interest organizations that represent a group of employees in the company. This ensures that the leader receives a salary for his/her work that equals to a 100 % position as an air traffic controller. All other members of the board in NATCA volunteer in their positions but receive reimbursement for expenses such as hotel and flights when they for instance participate at a conference on behalf of NATCA. For the other members of the board, Avinor has a company policy for providing their employees who are involved in interest organizations with some 'off-days' when they attend conferences or need to do work for NATCA (Interview 2010). It should here be noted that the average air traffic controller receives a significant part of his/her annual income due to overtime and/or extra payment for graveyard shifts (Interview 2009). This means that

the leader of NATCA will lose a significant part of his/her income when he/she works as the leader of the association.

In sum, NATCA is an association operating with limited personal resources. With only one full time position available, it can represent a challenge to have a representative available for everything they want to attend. It is recognized as a problem that there is so much to pay attention to, and so little time available per board member (Interview 2010), and they thus have to select what to attend to carefully. As an informant said, 'after all, the interests of our members come first' (Interview 2010). This implies that matters that seem to be most crucial to their members' interests, such as salaries and working conditions, will be prioritized.

Their economic situation is described as such: 'as we do this voluntarily [...] our economic situation is good, and we have money invested in a fund' and can 'attend anything we find important, within the boundaries of common sense' (Interview 2010). If they take interest in a matter, and regard it of importance for their members, they are according to the informant able to follow up on the matter, at least in economic terms.

Most informants strongly identify themselves with their profession. They underline that their identity within NATCA is closely related to the fact that they are all air traffic controllers representing air traffic controllers. This implies that they regard the main purpose of NATCA to safeguard the professional interests of their members, be it at the national or European level (Interview 2009; Interview 2010). Their work is thus about being present where it matters for their members. One informant, however, said that when he attended a conference, he felt like a 'representative for Norway' when abroad. He exemplified this with a reference to an incident on an IFATCA-meeting where they planned a forthcoming conference. Two options were available as meeting locations: The Dominican Republic and Tanzania. The informant was in the opinion that Africa, as a neglected continent in the ATM-sector, needed the conference more than the Dominican Republic. Therefore, he felt strongly that he had to lobby for Tanzania. As he persuaded the other Nordic delegates, they were actually able to tip the scales in favor of Tanzania (Interview 2010). The main impression remains that a sense of

professional identity is the one with which they identify themselves more strongly.

Participation at national level

NATCA, as an association, is taking formal part in the Norwegian administrative system as a consultative body. This implies that they get to give in their formal opinion on directives and draft regulations from for instance the Ministry of Transport or from Luftfartstilsynet, the Norwegian aviation authority, before the legislation gets implemented. According to one of my informants, NATCA has a reputation for being a trusted partner within this system, and they experience frequently that their opinions are taken into account when a new regulation is due to be implemented (Interview 2010). However, when it comes to regulations and directives stemming from EU, they have noted that the Norwegian government possesses limited influence on the legislation.

They recognize the impact from EU on ATM in Norway as significant, and were of the opinion that an increasing part of relevant legislation stems from the EU (Interview 2009; Interview 2010).

[The Norwegian government] has no clue about what happens at the European level. They just approve and delegate the responsibility [in the ATM sector] to EU [...] Going to the Ministry of Transport might be a nice conversation, but seen apart from that they don't have the overall picture. We have got it. That is not a claim; we see that on a daily basis (Interview 2009).

There is, however, often significant room for differing interpretations in the regulations stemming from EU. The interpretation depends on the national legislative tradition when regulations are due for implementation (Interview 2010). In order to be able to reject proposed EU-legislation as a consultative body, something must according to one of my informants be formally wrong. This could for instance be proposed legislation in conflict with international regulations from ICAO⁵. If this was the case, then it would be

⁵ 'International Civil Aviation Organization'. The organization codifies the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport.

meaningful to hand in an objection at the national level to the proposed EU-regulation (Interview 2009). An informant also noted that they are good at staying in touch with ministers and politicians that work with relevant policy-making, such as the transport minister (Interview 2010).

Regarding SES, a body with representatives from all Nordic ATM service providers was set up to monitor the development of NEFAB, the Nordic FAB within the SES framework. NATCA, together with other Nordic interest associations for air traffic controllers, proposed that the Nordic interest organizations for air traffic controllers should be given the opportunity to serve as observers in this body with one representative each in a so called 'reference group'⁶. According to my informants, Avinor was in favor of the proposed solution, but due to hesitation from the other Nordic service providers, the Nordic associations were denied access to this body (Flygelederen 2009; Interview 2009; Interview 2010). It was given clear signals that their focus rather should be to work closely with their respective national representatives in this body.

It seems as if NATCA serves as an integrated part of the Norwegian ATM policy making process. However, the national level is regarded insufficient in order to be able to get their voice heard regarding political processes at EU-level, especially as Norway remains outside the formal EU-institutions. It is therefore interesting to see to what extent and how they use their European associations, which is the topic of the next section. All my informants regarded SES as something NATCA pays a great deal of attention to, even though the opinions of what implications SES as a project may have for their members differ. I will come back to this in a later section.

Participation in ATCEUC and IFATCA

As noted earlier, NATCA participates in ATCEUC and IFATCA at respectively the European and the Global level. They have been a

⁶ The intention of the reference group was that one representative from the respective air traffic controllers' associations, and one representative for other unions/associations representing other employees in the national service provider, should be entitled a seat in this group (Flygelederen 2010).

member of IFATCA since 1961⁷ and a member of ATCEUC since 2006. They joined ATCEUC in order to make sure that NATCA was present at European level on the trade union side (Internal document 2006). According to my informants, the main motivation for the participation in ATCEUC and IFATCA seems to be exchange of information, keeping up to date on the developments at the European level and to be present at the European level. One informant stated that:

[Our participation] is mainly about exchange of information. And of course, the social side of the participation should not be underestimated. You get to know people in other countries [...] and exchange opinions and points of view on a frequent basis with them (Interview 2010).

Another informant highlighted that 'We have visited control centers to see how they organize their roster in regard to breaks and work arrangements' (Interview 2010). In short, it seems as if the main motivation therefore might be exchange of information and thus mutual best practice learning processes, at least at an operational level. All informants in NATCA pointed to this as the most important aspect of the associations (Interview 2009; Interviews 2010).

IFATCA has also given direct assistance to NATCA on least at one occasion. One informant mentioned that a press release was given by IFATCA during the turbulent years in Avinor in the mid-2000s. The Vice-President Europe of IFATCA stated that they feared that the proposed reforms of the air traffic management in Norway at that time represented a potential safety threat (Interview 2009). This implies that IFATCA had a support-function at the national level for NATCA. Representatives from IFATCA and ATCEUC confirmed that similar efforts have been made in several countries, either via media, through formal letters to national policy makers, or simply by arranging meetings with national parties involved and themselves at a national level (Interviews 2010). This is a clear indication that the European associations might serve a supportive function at the

⁷ NATCA was formally established in 1973. However, their predecessor 'Lufttrafikkledelsens forening' (LTF) was established in 1948, and took part in the founding process of IFATCA (Interview 2010).

national level, in addition to being a channel for expression of opinions and information at the European level.

Even if the informants describe exchange of information as the primary function of their European associations, it is very evident that IFATCA and ATCEUC serve as an integrated part of NATCAs European strategy. Have a look at the following quotations:

We have very limited direct contact with EU-institutions. There might be some persons that we know, but after all we have no national representation within EU. And to turn to the Swedes is a waste of energy because they tend to pursue their own interests (Interview 2010).

From time to time we get to speak with representatives from EU at IFATCA and ATCEUC conferences [...] We have not contacted the institutions directly in that way. It is IFATCA and ATCEUC that open the doors for us there. We have trusted them a lot in these matters (Interview 2009).

In formal terms, it is difficult to contact EU directly [...] If you seek influence, it is clear that IFATCA and ATCEUC [is of importance]. The question is in this regard if we have been active enough within the frames of IFATCA and ATCEUC (Interview 2010).

These quotations all indicate that if NATCA seeks to get their opinion heard at EU-level, its best chance might be to work through one of their European associations. After all, they admit that they have made virtually no direct attempts to get their voice heard by staff from the EU-institutions. One informant noted that this owed a lot to Norway's status as a non-member in the EU (Interview 2010). They also indicate that they rely on IFATCA and ATCEUC. A more active involvement for NATCA within these associations might lead to better opportunities to get their voice heard. At the moment, there are for instance no Norwegians with any role in the executive boards of their European associations. To play such a role is no impossibility for NATCA:

[One of the board members in NATCA] was proposed as a candidate to take over as Vice-President Europe in IFATCA when the current vice-president steps back (Interview 2010).

However, an eventual involvement as vice-president is assumed to be at the expense of his current primary function in NATCA (Interview 2009). The opportunities to participate more actively are there, but obviously in line with the argument that 'the interest of the members comes first' they have at the moment chosen not to flag his candidacy, and rather prioritize the work at national level. At the same time, another informant stressed that:

The goal must be to seek influence wherever possible. We can contact our national representatives within the Single Sky Committee and the ministry [of transport] and at the same time we use ATCEUC and IFATCA (Interview 2010).

In total, he points towards a differentiated European strategy where it is crucial to 'play on several strings' and to pursue a pragmatic strategy where one evaluates every situation carefully. The strategy is thus twofold; Either one turns towards the institutions where one expects the impact to be largest, for instance in comitology committees such as the Single Sky Committee where Norwegian representatives have some direct influence, or one operates through one of the European associations. Or, of course, one could combine these two.

It is consensus among the members of NATCA that the international engagement is of importance for the members. It is recognized that the developments in aviation has become highly internationalized.

Some of our members used to think of our international involvement as funny excursions for the board members. Nowadays, most members have realized that it is of profound importance for us to keep oriented on the international development (Interview 2010).

When attending meetings in IFATCA and ATCEUC, the representatives experienced the settings as quite different. In IFATCA, one representative noted that 'everything is professionally done. There are lots of prepared working papers, and if you get into

the technical committee⁸ you will have a hard time reading everything' (Interview 2009). The meetings of ATCEUC are described as 'more lively than the IFATCA conferences' (Interview 2010). The debates are more 'heated' and spontaneous. As a respondent said about an ATCEUC meeting:

The heated discussion in that meeting made us feel at home at once [...] The reason was that virtually everything being discussed was a translation of everything we discuss in a coffee-break. It was down to the bone trade union matters regarding salary and working conditions (Interview 2009).

In short, the participation in ATCEUC and IFATCA is first and foremost about exchange of information and a way of staying up to date. However, it is evident that the European strategy of NATCA is depending largely on the associations. Except from face-to-face contact with representatives from EU-institutions at IFATCA and ATCEUC sessions, there is little direct activity oriented towards EU from NATCAs side. Lastly, it is interesting to note that IFATCA has been used with the purpose to address a purely national matter in a national context.

Perception of SES

In general, my informants perceive SES as a good idea. They recognize the need to improve efficiency, safety and to get a more integrated European airspace. However, they disagree on the fundamental motivation stated by the Commission to realize this project.

The main problem of SES is that the approach they take is unrealistic. They talk about the merge of airspace above operative level. My opinion is that if you look down to the operational level, there is a reason why the "Piccadilly circuses" of air traffic control are where they are. A better approach would be to look down to the operational level and apply a bottoms-up approach, for instance merging control centers, instead of applying political and unrealistic thoughts [...] It would be a better approach to apply realism and figure

⁸ More on the committee system in IFATCA in the IFATCA section.

out what works instead of having a general statement that everything has stagnated, and we have come to solve the problems (Interview 2009).

With this, it is being questioned to what extent the fundamental motivation for action by the Commission is correct. The approach taken by the Commission is also criticized for the lack of practical and operational thinking.

Another problem, stressed by one informant, regards the development of the SES. He regards the FAB-discussion as a 'jelly discussion' which is hard to grasp the actual content of (Interview 2010). As becomes evident in this quote, he also questions to what extent the FAB is a suitable tool to overcome the challenges that faces the European. He has also recognized that the earlier indicated recent turn of SES towards technical matters in the SESAR-project (enabling a more unified technological ATM-platform in Europe) might be a more fruitful approach.

Nowadays, the most emphasis is put on the SESAR-part of the project which is mainly about improvement of technology. Apart from that, the FAB-question may be the "hottest potato" for air traffic controllers. To date, no one has been able to define the content of a FAB. There are of course definitions available in policy documents, but the problem remains that the interface between airspaces will be a challenge even if the merged airspaces get larger. My claim is that to think of the entire European airspace as a single entity would have been a better approach. It is a problem for the process that so much emphasis has been put on the FABs from the start (Interview 2010).

Again, and with a clear reference to the problematic aspects of a purely political and mainly top-down driven process, he questions to what extent EU has taken a political rather than realistic approach to the problems they intend to solve, and if this at all represents a viable approach in the long run.

Lastly, an informant points toward lack of initiatives taken by Avinor, and NATCA for that matter, in these questions. He stated that for instance Sweden, and SWEDAVIA, has their own Brussels

office and works more actively at the European level (Interview 2010).

IFATCA – an overview

IFATCA is a global federation in which air traffic controllers from countries all over the world are represented. The association was launched in 1961, and now has some 150 member associations from all over the world. The board is composed of eight members and a secretary. None of the positions, except from the secretary, are full-time positions. My informants regard it as a 'very time-consuming hobby' in which they invest a significant amount of their spare time. Thus they are in the same situation as NATCA, but they have no full time employed leader. All board members work for IFATCA on a volunteer basis. They only get actual expenses reimbursed by the organization. Some representatives even experience difficulties getting granted off-days by their national air service providers to do work for IFATCA (Interview 2010).

Membership in IFATCA is limited to national professional associations of air traffic controllers. They represent solely air traffic controllers, but in some cases, depending on how the national associations are organized, some air traffic controllers' assistants are also represented due to their membership in the national associations. IFATCA operates with a policy that only one national association is granted membership per country. This association is ideally the one representing most national air traffic controllers. One of my informants referred to a case where a second French association applied for membership. The former member was excluded by IFATCA. This decision was made because the new one could prove that it represented more air traffic controllers (Interview 2010). These criteria therefore seem to be strictly applied by IFATCA.

IFATCA is divided into four regions; Asia and Pacific, Africa and Middle East, Europe and Americas. Each of them has a vice-president represented in the board that has special responsibilities for their region. In Europe, they in addition have a liaison officer with responsibility for the dialogue and contact with European institutions such as the Commission, the Parliament, EASA and EURO-CONTROL (Interview 2010).

The association has a formal office located in Montreal. For the European part of IFATCA, this of course represents a challenge in regard to suitable locations for meetings. Other than the Montreal office, IFATCA has no formal office, but as an informant said: 'if people need to contact me, they know I live in Germany, they know they can contact me there. But it is not officially known to the outside' (Interview 2010). This means that his home serves as a location where it is possible to reach him, either via phone, e-mail or by a personal meeting. They have no permanent meeting facilities, and describe their meeting activity, both regarding conferences and board meetings, as 'a travelling circus' (Interview 2010).

The Montreal office is the location from which the secretary operates. According to my respondents, the secretary has 'purely an assistance function'. The main tasks are to contribute in preparing official documents, and to assist the executive board in preparing conferences and meetings. However, he does not take formal part in the writing of the papers. It is rather so that he is editing them in line with IFATCA standards (Interview 2010).

On questions on how they perceive their identity, both my informants meant that the professional identity was the strongest, followed by the European one. Both my informants have stopped engaging at the national level, and one informant noted that 'I have left all the national things behind. When I work for IFATCA, I don't think about the national background. It is really European and above' (Interview 2010). The other informant stated that he agreed, 'but generally it is the profession, globally, with which we identify' (Interview 2010).

Meetings

IFATCA arrange one *world meeting* and one *regional meeting* every year. These take place on different locations every year, and are planned two years ahead of the meeting. The formal aspects of a conference are 'really laid down' and '[IFATCA] has guidelines for conferences so that [the host association] knows exactly what to do' (Interview 2010). In addition, the secretary serves as the conference executive, meaning that he has the responsibility to 'supervise the developments and preparation for the conferences' (Interview 2010). This implies that he 'is the link between the organization committee at the conference [...] and the executive board' (Interview 2010). He is

thus to take care of the practicalities surrounding the arrangement of the conferences.

As indicated, it is a national member association that volunteers to chair the meetings. Sometimes, multiple candidates show interest to host a meeting. On these occasions there is voted on the location at the world conference or the European/regional conference, depending on which meetings are in question. Regional conferences take place in all IFATCA regions.

Conferences

All conferences are organized in three different committees: the A, B and C committee. A is the administrative committee where mainly budgetary questions and questions about the organizations charter are being debated. When a matter needs to be voted on, this takes place in the A committee as well. Normally, the A committee is where the heads of the national delegations sit. This is mainly due to tradition, but it is also because of the voting that takes place there. B is the technical committee, whilst C is the professional committee. The topics being discussed are in line with the names of the committees: 'The name says it all: In one we talk about professional issues, in one we talk about technical and the administration committee is basically about the federation' (Interview 2010). Normally, some '500 delegates are represented at the world meetings. This implicates that each committee is composed by 150-170 delegates'. At the European meetings, some 200 delegates normally participate (Interview 2010).

Every committee is supported by a corresponding working group that prepares working papers for the conferences. These working groups consist of handpicked representatives from the member associations of IFATCA. These are members who are expected to possess sufficient professional expertise to produce sound working papers within their respective areas. When the conferences are being planned, they work closely with the board in the preparation of these papers. All national delegates are allowed to comment these papers at conference. In addition, if they disagree with the content, they are even allowed to hand in alternate papers before the conference. From time to time, there are therefore several papers presented on the same issues at an IFATCA meeting (Interview 2010).

When an issue is to be voted on, there is always a goal to seek a consensus. Often, the issues debated are of such a character that this is fully possible. However, when an issue is heated and consensus is out of reach, a simple majority in the committee is sufficient to make a decision on a matter (Interview 2010). On questions as to which issues were the hardest ones to reach agreements on, the informants in particular stressed issues that their members could identify themselves strongly with.

Board meetings and other means of communication

Board meetings are arranged four times a year. Two of the board meetings take place on the location where the annual conferences are held, for two-three days before and after the conference. In addition, the board members meet every evening at the conferences for a so-called brush up meeting where they discuss the events of the day. There are also arranged board meetings in June and October. These meetings can take place anywhere in the world, and are arranged on invitation from a member association. Often, the member associations inviting the board have internal issues in which they want IFATCAs assistance, as briefly mentioned in the section about NATCA (Interview 2010). This way of organizing meetings is cost-efficient for IFATCA. The opportunity to get their assistance on a matter may very well serve as an incentive for members to volunteer to host the board meetings as well.

Despite the low number of board-meetings, and only two arranged conferences on an annual basis, it seems as if the members of the board are to some extent able overcome these difficulties. This is done by frequent contact with one another and representatives from member associations via electronic communication means. They are frequently in touch with one another via either e-mail, Skype-conferences or via telephone. My informants regard the flow of e-mail as so large that it is virtually impossible to follow up everything. They have for instance developed their own system for exchange of mail between the members of IFATCA. They have a system where the mail is marked either as 'INFO' or as 'ACTION'. If it is INFO, the board members may let it pass without following up. 'ACTION' means that they will have to follow up the e-mail and give their response, and that it is of higher importance (Interview 2010).

In total, there are a lot of communication between the board members and between the member associations and the board, formal as well as informal. Some noteworthy aspects are the conferences, and how they are conducted. My informants from NATCA were all in the opinion that the conferences were arranged in a very professional way, an impression that is strengthened after the interview with the informants in IFATCA. The low number of formal board meetings does not seem to represent a major challenge for the board members, as they are frequently in contact with each other anyway. As member associations are responsible for virtually all meeting activities, this seems to be a good way of cutting the costs.

SES perceptions

Like the informants in NATCA, the informants of IFATCA also noted that SES is based on too much of a political approach and too little of a pragmatic approach. I will in the coming section address some of the specific points that the IFATCA-informants found problematic in regard to the SES.

The first thing that the informants stressed was that SES is based on a logic that says that the ATM in Europe is not working right. According to my informants, the Commissions focus on the problems in European ATM 'does not mean that the system is not running properly. That is the miracle in Europe. The system works perfectly' (Interview 2010). They also are in the opinion that the Commission is trying to learn too much from the U.S.

[T]he traffic in the U.S. is not comparable to Europe [...] If you make a circle around London, Copenhagen and, let's say, Berlin, Paris, and Vienna. That area is so dense with airports that it is a situation they don't know in the U.S (Interview 2010).

In the U.S. the air traffic is to a large extent cross-continental, and thus not comparable to the situation in Europe according to my informants. However, the clearest inspiration from the U.S. seems to be the fact that they have a single system in the entire country. According to my informants, the European system is far more modern and up-to-date something they mean could be a result from the many different national systems that one can find in Europe. One learns from one another, updates the systems and 'within different

systems you have similar procedures, similar legal backgrounds. That our [different systems] are sort of working together' (Interview 2010). In the U.S., incentives to modernize the systems have been more or less absent. They are now in urgent need of a modernization of their entire system whilst '[In Europe], we can always change little bits' (Interview 2010).

The political 'top-down' approach is also criticized by my informants. They are in the opinion that this focus prevents the policy makers from realizing that the different systems in Europe are working quite well together. If EU were able to realize this, they could in addition have applied a 'bottom-up' logic and build on the things that actually work in the European countries. However, according to my informants there has to 'be a certain degree of top-down [approach]. Otherwise nobody moves. But if you push it too much, they will just move and say "yes" and not implement' (Interview 2010). In other words, the Commission needs to hit the fine balance between pushing too much and putting too little pressure on the member states. The current situation is described as being too much focused on the top-down aspect of the process.

Another aspect is that initially, SES was focusing on the upper airspace. This is assumed to be easy to harmonize, and easy to gain progress in. However, my informants stressed that 'most of the problems in this topic are in the lower airspace. Because that is really where providers are working only in their own country' (Interview 2010). The problems are in addition related to the absence of a common European legislation. 'Every country rules according to its own legislation. If you want to have a harmonization, you have to dig in to this as well' (Interview 2010). The problems with the various legislations are especially significant at control centers where they deal with traffic in multiple countries. One of my informants works at EUROCONTROL in Maastricht and pointed out this problem:

Imagine the following situation: I am a controller [from one country]. I work in [another country], for an international agency. The accident happens over Belgium but the part where it happens is a delegated airspace from the Brits. So, what do you do? [...] You can ask the experts, they have no idea how to deal with this (Interview 2010).

My informants also pointed towards the military as an obstacle for a seamless European airspace. There is noted a conflict between military needs and the increasing figures of civil air traffic. As the military aircrafts develop and demand more and more airspace, and the civil air traffic continues to increase, two contradictory needs arise:

The [military aircrafts] need bigger airspace to train in because they have become faster, and more powerful. They can do more things; they need more space to train in. So they have their demands as well, which are contradictory to what we want (Interview 2010).

A factor that the informants in IFATCA regard as suitable to overcome the current problems is the emphasis on SESAR, rather than the development of the FABs and the SES as such. SESAR, according to them, represents 'R&D' on ATM for Europe as a whole. 'SESAR seems to be the enabler for SES' (Interview 2010) in the sense that a common technical platform might be a better approach than the political top-down. '[O]nce we go there we have a big piece in the fire that can burn' (Interview 2010).

In brief, the informants of IFATCA see the same shortcomings as the informants in NATCA, and share their opinion on the project as too politicized. The answers indicated that this is a 'hotter potato' for them than for NATCA. As will be discussed in the next section, the fact that they have a Brussels liaison officer is also a clear indication that this is something they pay a great deal of attention to, and is something they regard as crucial.

Contact with EU

According to my informants, IFATCA has contact with representatives from the EU-level institutions at least on a weekly basis. The intensity of the contact, and the institutions they contact, varies throughout the year: 'on average, say once a week. There are weeks where there are [contact] 5 days a week, and there are weeks where there are none' (Interview 2010). On a question on which institutions they prefer to approach, my informants stress that it is heavily topic dependent and '[...] very much per momentum that we have to decide'. They think of their line of communication as good, especially with the Commission: 'Sometimes we have almost a direct

line to the Commission. We know the people. But officially, you have to send in letters' (Interview 2010). The European Parliament is also regarded to be of importance, especially before an election: 'if it gets towards elections of EP, it is very important to lobby and see if there are subjects that you have to talk with MEPs or future MEPs about' (Interview 2010). According to my informants, EASA also represents an interesting arena for influence. 'EASA is understaffed, at least on the ATM part. They do nice attempts, but if it really comes to operational insights, they need operational input' (Interview 2010). This means that IFATCA virtually plays on all strings at the EU-level on an informal basis.

Formally, IFATCA is granted membership in the Industry Consultation Body (ICB) (Interview 2010; European Commission 2007: 5) for aviation within EU. In addition, they participate in the Social Dialogue as a result of ATCEUCs seats there. ATCEUC has been formal part of the Social Dialogue since fall 2009⁹ (Interview 2010; European Commission 2009), and usually grants IFATCA a seat in their delegation.

As mentioned by the informants from NATCA, Representatives from the Commission, Parliament, EASA and EUROCONTROL are often invited to, and participates at, their conferences. The goal is to give their members the opportunity to ask Commission officials questions on the conferences, as well as to 'try to get those people down to our work, as much as we try to play on their level as well' (Interview 2010). Representatives from these institutions normally show up, and give presentations of the latest development within their field.

When IFATCA representatives are in contact with staff from EU, they state that the key to be able to turn contact into actual influence is to provide the European institutions with information the institutions regard relevant and important. As long as they are able to deliver valuable inputs to the EU, they often experience that their points are taken into account by representatives in the European institutions.

[...] we have gained a lot of experience as well. And they have seen that the comments that we forward, even though they are sometimes critical to them, it is worth while listening to

⁹ More on this in the section about ATCEUC.

us. We are critical but constructive. That is what they have seen on us, and honor us with (Interview 2010).

However, my informant notes that 'you have to be careful from time to time that you are not a free consultant for them. Because we have so much expertise' (Interview 2010). The fear is that they will end up in a situation where they provide a lot more assistance to EU than what they gain in terms of influence in matters they regard very important. The informant here points towards a logic where one should rationalize the efforts made at the European level in a way that will gain them the most influence and not to give EU assistance on all matters. After all, as in the case of NATCA, they have limited personnel resources.

In some cases they have felt that they managed to affect the developments significantly. For instance, in regard to the recent development of SESAR, one informant stated that: 'if you look at the development of SESAR, we have been so active that we can say that more than 50 % of the work is done in IFATCA style' (Interview 2010). According to my informants this happens frequently and is a consequence of limited expertise within the European institutions such as the Commission and EASA, and that IFATCA is well known for solid work and that it has a reputation for delivering of important professional insights to the policy-makers (Interview 2010).

According to my informants, one main reason for their high activity at the European level is that the liaison officer to Brussels is a retired air traffic controller serving IFATCA more or less full time on a volunteer basis. He lives in the Netherlands, between Brussels and Cologne, Germany. This means that he is able to attend meetings within the formal European institutions in addition to EASA, located in Cologne on short notice. He can do this for a small amount of money - virtually only to cover the transportation costs. The informants were slightly worried about the situation that will arise in the future when he will not be volunteering for IFATCA. It is not easy to recruit a person to such a demanding unpaid position (Interview 2010).

The contact with the European institutions seems to happen on a frequent basis, both formal and informal. Their own experience is also that they are actually able to exert influence on the European

institutions to a certain extent, even though they carefully try to avoid becoming free consultants for the European institutions.

ATCEUC organizational overview

As mentioned, ATCEUC represents the trade union side of the Eurogroups for air traffic controllers. ATCEUC was established in 1989 (ATCEUC 2009). The association has at present 27 member associations, all of them national trade unions for European air traffic controllers. However, it should be mentioned that some countries, such as Serbia, Norway and Switzerland, has membership in ATCEUC even if the countries are non-EU members. The trade union represents altogether some 14.000 air traffic controllers. The board is composed by seven representatives, all from different European countries. All board members serve on a volunteer basis, and are operational air traffic controllers in their respective countries. Look for instance at my informants' description of his last week:

It is all about making arrangements with your local employer. I check if I can get some working days off, which I have to try to put in the roster whenever. Today is my off-day. I came yesterday out of my nightshift, today is an off day where I am in Brussels, and tomorrow is an off-day as well. I am then at another meeting (Interview 2010).

Most of them also serve in leading roles within their respective national trade unions at the same time (Interview 2010). The only payments they receive are, like in IFATCA, reimbursement for actual expenses on duty for ATCEUC. The member unions of ATCEUC are all members through their respective national trade unions. The informants are specific on that they have certain criterions for the member unions:

All of our members have the right of striking, and the most important thing is that our members negotiate agreements [...] we have the mandate of our members to negotiate agreements at the European level (Interview 2010).

However, as mentioned earlier, there are differences from country to country whether the professional association and the trade union is the same thing. Thus, it should be mentioned that one of my informants stressed that: '[We] have a close coordination with

IFATCA because most of our members are members of IFATCA as well' (Interview 2010). I will elaborate this further in the section on organizational overlap.

In this regard, the membership is organized in the same way as in IFATCA. They are in line with IFATCA on another point as well: They seem to allow membership of one national trade union per country¹⁰. There was, however, not mentioned any criteria regarding evaluation of the size of the national associations in the interviews, so a 'first past the post' logic might be applicable here as well. According to one of my informants in NATCA, who recently participated at an ATCEUC Committee meeting, it came to a heated debate on whether a second Romanian trade union should be allowed access. Some of the Nordic and West-European trade unions meant that it should be room for two. But most East-European and Mediterranean unions tipped the scales in favor of the current Romanian trade union represented in ATCEUC (Interview 2009).

An informant described the main purpose of ATCEUC as to 'coordinate [interests] and be kind of a counter measure for the European regulations' (Interview 2010). In addition to serving as a counter measure, they regard it important to 'bring some professional input, and to defend, of course, the professional rights of controllers. That is the main purpose' (Interview 2010).

ATCEUC has a main office in France, Aix en Provence (ATCEUC 2010). The situation with this office seems to be much like the one with NATCA: The office is not used on a regular basis. When they met in February, they used facilities at the EUROCONTROL Brussels office. This location is, according to my informants, frequently used for this purpose (Observation 2010). ATCEUC has a secretary, which is the personal secretary to the current president of the association. Formally, however, she is the personal secretary for the President through the national association in which the current ATCEUC president is the leader (Interview 2010).

We are making misuse of [the Presidents'] office secretary, and she does a lot of work for this which is not being paid.

¹⁰ In the case of the Netherlands, two Unions are represented. The policy thus does not seem so strictly applied as in IFATCA (ATCEUC 2009).

She does it in her off time, or she does it when she has time for this (Interview 2010).

In general terms, the formal structure of ATCEUC appears to be quite vague. All board members, and even the secretary, do their work on a volunteer basis. Also in regard to the financial situation, it seems to be regarded of higher importance to have as many members as possible on board rather than to have a sound financial situation:

We charge [our members] € 1000 per year. But we have a lot of member from previously Eastern European countries where the income is far lower. Some pay for instance € 300. We even have unions that don't pay at all. For us, it is very important that the people are represented and that the countries are represented. The money is side effect (Interview 2010).

The identities of the informants seem to be multiple: It is clearly a difficult task to balance the affiliations towards the European trade union and the one at the national level. This may be closely related to the fact that I have interviewed two representatives, which both were leaders of their national association as well:

When I am attending a meeting at European level, I consider myself an European representative and then I give a European position. But most of the executive board people in the ATCEUC are also part of the national executive board or executive committees (Interview 2010).

However, one of the informants stressed that the sum of the national positions are the fundament for the ATCEUC, and thus not necessarily in conflict with one another. The question remains therefore more if one are able to coordinate all the national interests:

When we get back to the national level we are here to give views on what is happening at the European level. But we also have our national position. And the national positions, as I explained before, are setting up the ATCEUC policy (Interview 2010).

Committee meetings in ATCEUC

ATCEUC arranges two annual conferences called committee meetings. These meetings are arranged by one of the member associations, much like the situation in IFATCA. The chairman of the meeting is the 1st Vice President of the association. He is responsible for disputing papers, keeping the conference in line of the agenda and the formal schedule for the conference. The secretary to the board also normally participates at these conferences serving a support function. Also this is done on a volunteer basis by her: '[At the committee meetings] she takes the minutes, provides us with secretarial help and other practical matters' (Interview 2010). The fact that she is there voluntarily means that there are not necessarily so that there will be a secretary at the ATCEUC meetings, given that the next ATCEUC President has no personal secretary in his home association.

One of the main goals at the conferences seems to be to negotiate a mandate from the members associations to the board: 'policies and guidelines are given from the national level to the European level. This is during the committee meetings that we have two times annually' (Interview 2010). Another important function is to update one another about the situation of the member associations (Internal documents 2009). The member associations circulate documents where they describe their current situation, and if problems need to be discussed they take a plenary discussion on the matters (Internal documents 2009). The informants stress that they are purely exercising the mandate negotiated at the meetings:

[...] The ATCEUC policy is made of all the unions that are members of the ATCEUC. So, at national level, the members of ATCEUC give a policy and then we try to see if all the policies at national level can be organized together at European level [...] If all national things are on the contrary of what we think should be the good way to think at the European level, then we change our policy. We are obliged to follow the policy of all the national unions (Interview 2010).

This indicates that consensus should be an important principle within the meetings. However, as an informant said: 'We can discuss, but we should not endlessly discuss. Majority decides. In the end, you should say discussion is closed. Either we go for a vote, or we come

to a consensus' (Interview 2010). When an issue is being voted on, it is therefore normally sufficient with a simple majority. The exception is when statutes or rules are subject to change. In that case, 2/3 of the votes are needed according to the statutes (ATCEUC 2010).

On the question of which cases they find it hard or easy to make agreements on, the informants pointed towards similar cases as in IFATCA: Cases that have clear implications on the regular work of the air traffic controllers. A recent example is the English proficiency tests that are part of the EU common licensing policy for air traffic controllers.

There are some European countries where people do not speak as good English as in other countries. But they still have to follow these rules. Take the French example: Lots of communication on the frequencies is held in French. Certainly between French aircrafts and controllers which actually should not happen (Interview 2010).

However, in the end they agreed that it made sense to back the English proficiency tests after a vote.

Board meetings

Formally, the board meets a minimum of four times a year, but they aim to have at least five (Interview 2010). Two of the board meetings are arranged just before the committee meetings, and serve as preparatory meetings for them. As noted, the board meeting I observed took place in EUROCONTROLs Brussels office. There might be many reasons for this, but I learned that the board members were able to get the expenses for hotels and flights to the board meeting in Brussels reimbursed by the European Commission. The reason for this was that they arranged the board meeting the day before a social dialogue meeting with the Commission, which entitles the participants to get a large share of their expenses reimbursed by the Commission when they participate. Therefore, they often arrange board meetings this way (Observation and informal interview 2010). To arrange the board meetings so that they coincide with a meeting in one of the EU bodies in which they participate is a good way of reducing costs for ATCEUC. I also noticed that the board meetings were used by some of the board members to raise national questions in the forum. This was discussed quite extensively (Observation 2010)

Apart from the board meetings, the flow of communication amongst the members seems to happen at least as frequently as in IFATCA and NATCA. All informants state that they are very frequently in touch with one another, mainly via e-mail.

[There is] a lot of mail exchange, especially between me and [the president]. I have him on the phone at least once a day. When there are issues to be solved quickly, that do not need us to meet, then we do it via mail or telephone (Interview 2010).

Other board members who attended the board meeting could confirm this; it was also pointed towards extensive communication with member unions on a very frequent basis (Informal interviews 2010).

SES perceptions

In general, it is obvious that SES is a project which enjoys a great deal of attention from the representatives interviewed in ATCEUC as well. They are generally positively oriented towards the SES as such, recognizing the possible increased labor movement and common licensing policy as a positive aspect following the implementation of SES:

The [regulation on a] European common licensing (...) is a good approach, I must say. We will have a common license throughout the European states, which is good for mobility. You can actually work with your license anywhere you want (Interview 2010).

The views on SES to some extent stands in contrast to the view held by the representatives in IFATCA. The IFATCA representatives had a lot of attention on operative and technical aspects regarding SES. ATCEUC on the other hand appear to have a focus on aspects of the SES which directly affect the working situation of their members. The focus on problematic aspects hence also lies on the parts of the legislation which is assumed to have impact on their members working conditions. The main challenge with SES is pointed at as:

There is a performance scheme established, which we as Union heavily oppose. [The regulations in the SES package] are mainly meant to harmonize the systems throughout Europe, to decrease delays and be more cost efficient. This is being done by creating a so called performance scheme. Up till now, the Air traffic control system European wide is a so called full cost recovery system. Meaning the service providers says "this is what I need, this is what it costs". And then they go to the airlines saying "this is what you pay" (Interview 2010).

ATCEUC appears to be mainly positively oriented towards SES as a project, especially in regard to the assumed increased mobility of their members. The technical and operative concerns held by IFATCA were not very evident in the interviews, which is logical having in mind that ATCEUC represents trade unions whilst IFATCA represents professional associations.

Contact with the European institutions

Formally, ATCEUC is represented in both the ICB aviation and in the social dialogue on civil aviation. The right to participate in the social dialogue was recently granted ATCEUC. Formerly, European Transport Federation, ETF, was the only recognized social partner on civil aviation. According to my informants, ETF's contribution has not been very fruitful from through their point of view. This is a lot due to difference of opinion, but according to my informants also just as much because 'ETF is representing a mix of different professions' (Interview 2010; ETF 2010) and thus not representing air traffic controllers in the same way as they do. ETF does not publish accurate figures on their web pages, but claims to represent a total of 3000 air traffic controllers throughout Europe. This is a lower number than ATCEUC, and has been a key argument for them when they argued to be granted participatory rights. It is an EU policy that the union represented in the social dialogue should be the union that represents the highest number of relevant staff at European level (Interview 2010). How well ICB and social dialogue works, varies with the cases:

Like now, they have released a draft; we were speaking about this yesterday, on performance schemes for the ATM. This has been made without the consultation of the staff. EC proposed it to the Single Sky Committee, so it is still a draft and not yet

proposed to the Council and the Parliament. The first draft is here, and we have a consultation meeting after the first draft, whereas, for the SES II, there was no draft. There was first a consultation meeting, then they made a draft, and we had a second consultation meeting. So the process differs. It depends on DG TREN that is providing the meetings (Interview 2010).

On the question on which institution they are most frequently in touch with, this is as in IFATCA described as a matter that varies from case to case. Also the frequency differs a lot, depending on the level of activity within the respective EU-institutions.

If there is a specific dossier that we follow, we are very much in contact with one institution. For the time being we are very much in contact with EASA, we are following three drafting groups to set up regulations [...] [When] we are working with SES II regulations, and when it is about implementing rules, we are working with the Commission and SESAR. But it depends. When nothing is in progress, we have no contact (Interview 2010).

In regard to experienced influence, my informants find it difficult to give clear examples on matters in which they feel that their voice has been heard. However, they note that during processes at the European level, it takes '[a] long time before we see the results' (Interview 2010). It varies from time to time if they feel that they enjoy influence or if the EU ignores their amendments: '[At sessions] with EU, we give some amendments and proposals to drafts. Some of them have been integrated into the documents, some of them have not' (Interview 2010). The line of communication with the Commission is also perceived as good: 'I think that we created a way to work, and a relation of trust and confidence with the Commission in some areas' (Interview 2010).

European activity at the national level

The European strategy of ATCEUC is twofold: On the one hand, as shown, they aim at being present at EU-level when relevant policies such as SES are being drafted. On the other hand, as indicated earlier, EU-policy is thought of by my informants as having impact on the national level as well. It therefore happens quite frequently that

ATCEUC gets directly involved at national level as well – on behalf of the national unions if they need assistance:

[We write] letters on behalf of [our member] unions, for instance the Greek union or the one from Cyprus. I for instance write letters to their ministers or to the EC, we have meetings with the EC on certain aspects mainly the transforming of the European law into national law, and then follow up to check if it is being implemented accordingly (Interview 2010).

As noted, some of the board members took up national issues at the board meeting where I observed. During my observation of the board meeting, I noticed that the board planned to send letters to the Spanish and the Greek authorities regarding proposed income reduction for air traffic controllers there¹¹ as a mean to tackle the current economic crisis in these countries. This underlines that ATCEUC spends time on involvement at the national level as well, especially when it concerns matters with EU-relevance (Observation 2010; ATCEUC 2007). Some times it seems as if ATCEUC attempts to serve as a guardian of the treaties of EU: 'Greece has been taken by me twice to the European Court of Justice because they do not adhere to financing their own ATM system' (Interview 2010). If one looks into the letters sent to the Greek ministers, formulations as such is used:

ATCEUC has raised its concerns about the non-compliance by the Greek authorities to the adopted Regulation N° 549/2004¹² of the European Parliament and of the Council dated of 10 March 2004 (ATCEUC 2007:2).

As shown in the section on SES, ATCEUC representatives regard the proposed SES mainly as a good thing, which becomes clear as they

¹¹ The reductions of income are result of the attempt of these countries to reduce their public expenditures in the aftermath of the financial crisis that struck those countries particularly hard. Letters are accessible and downloadable at http://atceuc.org/atceuc_documents.php (documents dated 09/02-2010 and 10/02-2010). Visited 10.03.2010.

¹² 'The framework Regulation' for the single European sky (European Council 2004).

here actually put a member state into the ECJ for violating European legislation.

Organizational overlap between ATCEUC and IFATCA

As noted earlier, I found reasons to assume that there would be a significant overlap between the activities of IFATCA and ATCEUC. This was also something that the informants in NATCA stressed: Virtually every issue 'have its professional and trade union side' (Interview 2010). The same is pointed out by my informants from both IFATCA and ATCEUC: They look at things differently, but have a shared interest in many questions. This is quite visible, for instance, in regard to SES. The informants from IFATCA focus much more on the operational and technical aspects of SES, whilst ATCEUC focuses more on the legislative aspects, and especially the parts of the legislation that matters for the European air traffic controllers in their work. The informants in IFATCA do not deny this overlap, and also point towards a close cooperation between the two (Interview 2010). One of my informants from ATCEUC stated this:

In a very few words, ATCEUC represents trade unions, whereas IFATCA represents associations. The members of ATCEUC are the members that at national level have the power to negotiate agreements with their ministers or with their provider. IFATCA do not negotiate agreements (Interview 2010).

Another informant from IFATCA seems to be in the opinion that the two can mutually strengthen each other:

Let's take for example a topic like just culture. Of course, from a professional way of looking at it, we go in one direction. But there is also a union part to it. So it is interesting to see, and then you really have to discuss [to] see and find out where the differences are, and if you can match it and work towards a common goal. Then you see that we are idealistic and the union part is sometimes a bit more critical, saying "yeah it is very nice, but maybe we are never going to get there". But together you help each other in a good direction (Interview 2010).

The cooperation between the two also seems to be quite formalized as they tend to invite each other to their respective conferences/committee meetings. According to one informant in IFATCA, most often the Presidents of the respective associations attend each others conferences in person (Interview 2010). Another point here is that two board members in IFATCA and ATCEUC work together in the same control centre. As one informant said about this situation 'a lot of material from [the other association] I have just a few meters away from me and I can just grab it if I need it' (Interview 2010). He regards this very fruitful for cooperation. One informant from ATCEUC said that they, from their side, normally send most board members except from the 1st Vice President to the IFATCA conferences (Interview 2010).

Both associations tend to be represented at the same meetings arranged within the EU-framework as they are both acknowledged participants in the ICB. In addition, ATCEUC normally grants IFATCA a couple of their seats in the Social Dialogue meetings with the Commission:

'IFATCA is not social partner; they don't have access to the social dialogue, so we give them a seat so that they can, through us, participate in the social dialogue. So it is a good cooperation between ATCEUC and IFATCA (Interview 2010).

In total, the cooperation between the two associations seems to be close and regarded as a fortunate situation for both parties. Even though they sometimes do not share the same opinions in all matters, it seems that the fact that they to some extent have a common membership and represent the same profession allows them to develop a close and formalized cooperation. This is for instance not true regarding ETF, who represents multiple professions which may indicate that the common professional background is what allows ATCEUC and IFATCA to cooperate so closely.

Chapter 4

Choice of channel: NATCA

Introduction

In this chapter, the empirical data regarding the choice of channel by NATCA will be interpreted in the light of the theoretical expectations mapped out in the second chapter. The first part of the chapter will analyze the findings through a liberal intergovernmentalist perspective. In the latter part of the chapter, I will put emphasis on the indicators derived from MLG, and discuss the preferred EU-institutions for the European associations.

Findings in accordance with Liberal Intergovernmentalism

As elaborated in chapter 2, within a LI perspective, the national level will be of profound importance for the interest organizations. It is unlikely that they will spend much time on the European associations because they expect virtually every important decision that

potentially affects them to have its last stand at the national or intergovernmental level (Moravcsik 1998). The expectable strategy is therefore that they choose to approach the relevant national institutions. EU might be perceived to have some importance in policy development, but in general the national level represents the decisive level of governance.

This implies that the model expects NATCA to work mainly towards the Norwegian government. When working towards the European level, it is expectable that the European associations mainly will serve as a way to gather and exchange information or to serve as a forum for discussion and coordination of positions in certain issues. In addition, some extent of coordination was assumed to take place. However, as the decisive powers are expected to remain at the national level, or within an intergovernmental setting, few direct attempts to seek access to the European level are expected according to this model. This goes for both the national and the European associations.

As the findings in the interviews indicate, NATCA seem to be a reluctant participant in ATCEUC and IFATCA. For some reason they are hesitant towards active involvement apart from conferences and committee meetings. This means that a channel that is open for their active participation is fairly passively used by NATCA.

An obvious reason for this reluctance might be that European institutions are regarded of minor importance by NATCA. Thus, the reluctant participation may be a result of a well-calculated channeling of energy into the national level due to an anticipation that the national level have the last say regarding directives and regulations stemming from EU, for instance on SES. As an informant noted, Norway after all remains a non-member of the EU.

In addition, their reluctant participation could be a result of a belief that the cases that are being discussed at European level are not having much direct significance for the Norwegian ATM sector. This was also pointed out by some informants, as they underlined that the SES is assumed to have little direct implication for a normal day at work.

The interviews show clearly that exchange of information and personal contacts with representatives from other air traffic controllers associations and trade unions are perceived as core functions of the European associations. Direct contact with EU institutions is more or less absent, whilst they participate very actively at the national level. The activity at the national level, and absence of it at European level, indicates that there is reason to believe that NATCA ranks the national level of greater importance than the EU-level. At the same time, they admit that EU is of relevance to them and that they maybe should have been more actively involved in the European associations.

Some findings also indicate that the frames of the European associations are used to coordinate actions. A recent example was the attempt to establish a reference group within the committee responsible for the development of the Nordic FAB. This, and the close and to some extent formalized cooperation between Nordic unions/associations within the frames of IFATCA, indicates that coordination is a vital part of the work in the EU-level associations. In order to be able to contribute in the discussion taking place between national governments, one needs to coordinate positions and channel the attempts toward own governments. Even if they did not succeed establishing the reference group, the associations/unions seems to be coordinating their actions towards the respective national governments in a fairly unified way.

Another indication on increased coordination was found in the section on ATCEUC. After all, the informants in ATCEUC stressed carefully that their policy as a whole is a result of the committee meetings, and thus the common voice of all their national member unions. The goal to seek consensus is clearly linked to LI with the sovereignty principle of each organization in focus. However, this is not the full story. As I further questioned my informants, I discovered that they use simple majority voting in order to establish a position when consensus seems to be out of reach. I will come back to this in the next section.

Findings in accordance with Multi-level Governance

According to MLG, EU represents one decision making level in a multi-leveled system (Hooghe 2001; Hooghe and Marks 2001). The direct implication for interest organizations is that they have to be present at several levels of governance to get their voice heard. Hence, it is expectable that an interest organization within this perspective will develop a strategy where it approaches relevant policy-makers *both* at the national and the European level. As indicated earlier, it is likely that the interest organizations organize at the European level in order to attempt to negotiate and agree upon common European positions since EU-institutions do matter on their own, in contrast to LI.

Indeed, NATCA seem to have developed an outspoken strategy where one aims to get the voice heard at the level where a decision is taken. This means that the efforts to gain access to the relevant policy making processes are about seeking access both at national and European level. It is, however, questionable to what extent NATCA actually applies this strategy in practice. The main impression is that the national association (NATCA) works with national issues towards the relevant national institutions, whilst the European associations (ATCEUC and IFATCA) put the main emphasis on European issues, mainly at the European level. According to my informants, virtually all EU-level issues are exclusively dealt with by their European associations. They involve themselves at European level through participation at conferences, or through correspondence with board members. This kind of work-division with national associations working on the national level, and European associations at the European level appears to be more in accordance with the perception of EU as a layer in a multi-level system (MLG) than with LI.

A development of a common policy based on consensus is in accordance with LI. MLG rather suggests that the European level has a more independent role with delegated responsibilities. The frequent use of simple majority voting at committee meetings and conferences indicate that a significant amount of responsibility is delegated to the European level associations.

When regarding SES specifically, I expected NATCA to engage mainly at the European level that is within their European associations. To some extent one may say that they do so. However, the engagement is in any case limited and more of an outsourcing to their Euro-level associations. This might be, as I will elaborate in the next chapter, due to organizational features rather than conscious choices. According to my expectations they should anyhow have been more actively participating within their European associations.

Approached institutions

In the light of the theoretical framework, it is interesting to see which institutions the associations approach. The expectation stemming from LI would be that national institutions are approached, whilst MLG suggests that the supranational institutions will be the main targets for EU-related issues. The interviews indicated that *when* the EU-institutions are approached, this would be done by representatives from the European associations. For NATCAs part, they are remarkably absent at the European level. This finding is mainly in accordance with the expectation deriving from MLG, where the working pattern towards EU was assumed to go through the EU-level association.

There is no single answer to the question, but it seems as if the institutional preference is heavily dependent on which institution has the responsibility for the policy drafting process. The tripartite institutional relation between EASA, EUROCONTROL and the Commission immediately seems to be the most important focal point for both IFATCA and ATCEUC. The Commission lacks, according to the informants, the expertise within the ATM field. Hence, they need external expertise in many matters and provide in this way an open access point for external experts, a role the informants meant that they from time to time contribute to fill. However, also the preparatory institutions, especially EASA, lack according to the informants the sufficient manpower. Thus the choice of institutions seems, on the one hand, to be motivated by a goal to involve at an early stage in the process. On the other hand, it might be that EASA and the Commission is the preferred institutions due to the anticipated lack of expertise which is assumed to give better access.

As expected in the section on Multi-level governance and on the contrary of the expectations stemming from LI, the Council seems to

be of minor importance. This finding fits well with the expectations from the literature on interest organizations and with MLG theory. An EU that possesses some power on its own, as expected in the MLG section, implies an important and significant Commission in which interest groups will seek to get their voice heard.

Summary

In brief, the choice of channel seems to have reasoning from *both* LI and MLG. LI mainly explains why NATCA is a reluctant participant in their European associations, and why the flow of information and coordination are core functions of the associations. MLG seems to capture the main components regarding the choice of channel: Why NATCA outsources the work at the European level to ATCEUC/IFATCA, and why it seems to be so that national associations mainly involve at national level whilst the European ones focus mainly on the EU-level.

In addition, it was evident that the European associations actually worked actively at the European level, as expected in the MLG section. The choice of institution is heavily case-dependent. It seems, however, as if the associations mainly concentrate around sectoral divided and policy-oriented European institutions with permanent staff. These are represented by EASA, EUROCONTROL, the Commission and the Parliament, whilst the Council is ascribed low importance and relevance.

In sum, the findings in this chapter indicate that the European associations are preferred by NATCA when they work with EU-level issues. This increases the relevance of the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Prospects for a common European platform?

Introduction

In this chapter, I will apply the organizational model as shown in chapter 2. I will mainly look at findings from the interviews with representatives in IFATCA and ATCEUC, but also draw on some information from the interviews with the representatives from NATCA. I will focus on the variables elaborated in chapter 2; *organizational structure, organizational demography, organizational locus* and the perspectives for an *organizational identity*. As mentioned, I regard a sense of organizational identity as a precondition for the European associations to serve as a common platform. Lastly, I will come give some concluding remarks.

Organizational structure

Overall, the organizational structure of ATCEUC and IFATCA appear to be vague. The associations have, with few exceptions, no permanent staff. The large majority works in the associations on a

volunteer basis, and neither ATCEUC nor IFATCA has a permanent secretariat.

I will in this section elaborate further on the three aspects of the organizational structure which appear to be of importance in the interviews. First, I will elaborate on *organizational size*. Thereafter I will look in to the relevance of a *primary and secondary structure*, and the implications following from the multiple roles some informants had. Lastly, I will have a look at the *decision-making procedures* in the associations.

Size matters

Organizational capacity is to a large extent determined by the available personnel and economic resources. A larger organization allows the organization to divide tasks in a better way amongst the staff which allows them to attend more meetings. As mentioned, it seems as if ATCEUC and IFATCA operate with fairly modest resources.

A clear example on their limited economic capacity in this regard is that IFATCA have to arrange conferences and most of their board meetings on invitation from (and on the cost of) member unions or associations. Much of the preparatory work for the conferences in IFATCA appears to be done by representatives from various national member associations on behalf of the board. ATCEUC operates with a similar solution in regard to the committee meetings, whilst the costs of their board meetings sometimes are covered by the Commission, whilst EUROCONTROL provides the offices. This implies that IFATCA and ATCEUC, does not possess organizational capacity to arrange nor host their own meetings, conferences and committee meetings.

When looking into the figures, it is evident that the main reason for the inability to host and arrange conferences and meetings stems from the low budget these associations operate with. ATCEUC has stated to charge each member union anything from nothing to € 1000 annually, depending on the member unions economic situation. This represents close to what one could expect an *individual membership* in a national union or association to cost per annum. In comparison, the 550 Norwegian air traffic controllers represented by NATCA pay 1 % of their salaries as a membership fee to NATCA (Interview 2010). In

sum, having in regard that an air traffic controller in Norway earns from € 70.000 annually (Avinor 2010). This represents a contribution *per individual member* to the national association almost equivalent to the € 1000 most of the 26 *member unions* of ATCEUC pay annually. A member fee at this level is clearly insufficient to finance any full-time commitment within ATCEUC. Another problem is that the informants from NATCA also suggested that it was very time consuming to participate actively within IFATCA and ATCEUC, and that a more active involvement was outside of their capacity. If this is the case in many of the member associations, it is also a possibility that many of the national member associations and unions in IFATCA and ATCEUC have insufficient capacity to make a significant commitment in the European level associations.

In terms of personnel resources, the associations appear to suffer from a lack of permanent staff. Virtually everyone represented in the board are volunteering in their position, whilst having a full-time job as operative air traffic controllers. It is important to have some permanent staff in order to increase the perspectives for an organizational identity and, in practical terms, in order to have the ability to attend relevant arrangements and meetings. Because they are all working in the associations voluntarily, it need not be an easy task to give the staff sufficient incentives to ensure that someone participate at most relevant arrangements and meetings. If the assignments in ATCEUC and IFATCA were more formalized and similar to full-time employment, their chances to keep permanent pressure on items of interest would have been better. In total, the time and capacity available amongst the board members thus seem rather limited.

The assignment as board member is furthermore limited to periods of two years. Of course, it is possible to get re-elected and this seems to be the norm. However, such a short legislative term could represent an obstacle towards organizational stability in a long term perspective. This is likely to be due to the absence of any permanent staff, seen apart from the board members. The implication is that if the leadership is replaced frequently, there is no permanent staff to maintain a 'read thread' in the organizational development.

In ATCEUC, the secretary operates on a volunteer basis. This is done by her in addition to her full time assignment in the national union of the leader. IFATCA has a full time secretary who is serving IFATCA as a whole. However, the secretaries are both exclusively dealing with administrative tasks, and thus of minor importance for the policy making processes.

The liaison officer to EU (LOEU) in IFATCA is a retired air traffic controller who is by chance living in between all relevant EU-institutions. This is an indication that the access experienced by IFATCA board members to EU-institutions is rather depending on favorable circumstances and highly committed individuals than on organizational capacity in strict terms. In a long term perspective, IFATCA face a significant challenge to make sure that they have a representative available for these purposes. The recruitment of a new LOEU need not be an easy task because, after all, to serve as LOEU in IFATCA is a very time-consuming and unpaid position.

In ATCEUC, the board members are doing all the work at the EU-level. In addition, some of my informants expressed a concern that ATCEUC will have a hard time to follow up the responsibilities following the acceptance of ATCEUC social partners within the EU social dialogue. It is simply feared that they do not have the organizational capacity to provide enough participants to fill their granted seats at social dialogue meetings. The membership consists of national associations and unions, and offers no opportunities for individual membership. This is most likely a contributor to the modest economic situation experienced by ATCEUC and IFATCA.

In total, the economic capacity and personnel resources of ATCEUC and IFATCA appear to be limited. The striking absence of permanent staff and firm organizational structures, such as a permanent secretariat, leaves ATCEUC and IFATCA without prospective for significant access to the EU on a permanent basis. If and when granted access at the EU-level, it is likely to be due to fortunate circumstances rather than due to their capacity in organizational terms.

Primary/secondary structure

All my informants are or have been part of the work in associations or unions at both the national and the European level. In an

organizational perspective, it can be expected that the primary structure to which an individual belongs will represent the structure with the most influence on the individuals' identity, interests and loyalty (Egeberg 2004:203-204; Egeberg et al. 2009). Normally, the primary structure is thought of as the structure in which the individual spends the most time. In most cases, the primary structure represents the national level. However, most individuals take part within other structures, frequently referred to as secondary structures that might have some effect on their identity, interests and loyalty as well. My assumption was initially that ATCEUC and IFATCA represented such secondary structures.

For the representatives in NATCAs, it seems as if their primary role and function is firmly anchored in their national association. The participation in ATCEUC and IFATCA is limited to participation at conferences and/or exchange of information with board members, and thus of secondary importance to my informants. The membership therefore appears to represent a secondary structure to the representatives in NATCA. However, the experienced mutual learning process and the exchange of information are regarded as valuable and useful. All informants would have wanted to be more active at the European level, if they had more time available. Hence, the national level is regarded the most important but it is not unlikely that the representatives identities are developed through the participation at the European level.

For the representatives in ATCEUC and IFATCA, it is slightly harder to conclude which structure that represents the primary or the secondary one. Both my informants in IFATCA had no duties in their national level association. IFATCA could therefore be likely to represent their primary structure. The informants from ATCEUC were in addition to their role in ATCEUC serving as leaders in their national unions. They stated, however, that they spent the most time on the European association. Thus, the informants from ATCEUC appear to have more of a multi-hatted character than the ones from IFATCA. It is in sum hard to conclude whether the national or the European association has the most effect on the attitudes, identities and ideas for the informants in ATCEUC.

When looking at the exchange of information between the national and European level, it is obvious that it runs both ways, and that one hence can speak of mutual benefit between the parties. It is therefore likely that representatives at both levels are affected by one another, in terms of contribution to the development of their respective ideas and identities.

It is important to keep in mind that most of my informants are committed to NATCA/ATCEUC/IFATCA on a volunteer basis. Most of them work 100 % as operative air traffic controllers. Hence, it could be argued that their *profession* represents their primary structure, whilst both the national and European association represents subordinate affiliations to their job. They meet there like professionals, with other professionals. In reply to the question on how they identified themselves, virtually all my informants stressed that they recognized *professional identity* as the core of their identity. I will elaborate further on in a later section

Decision making procedures

As noted in chapter 2, it is advantageous if an organization possess the opportunity to arrange voting when they negotiate positions on policy issues in contrast to relying on consensus in order to agree upon a position. It is assumed to somewhat improve the efficiency (Beach and Connolly 2005).

One interesting aspect that should be noted, before entering the discussion, is that the number of meetings where all member unions summit, the conferences and the committee meetings, are low. On an annual basis, two committee meetings are arranged in ATCEUC whilst IFATCA only arrange one conference¹³. This might imply that the member unions and association will experience it as hard to exert influence on the policy on a permanent basis.

Formally, both ATCEUC and IFATCA seek consensus to an as large extent as possible, but simple majority voting are accepted as the legitimate decision making procedure when consensus appears to be out of reach. As mentioned in chapter 3, ATCEUC recently arranged a voting on a sensitive issue which provoked a great deal of

¹³ IFATCA arranges two annual conferences, but as mentioned in chapter 3 only one of them are solely for the European part of IFATCA.

discussion – the proposed inclusion of a second trade union from Romania. The present Romanian union was able to convince the majority of the union delegates to vote in their favor. It remains open if majority voting would have been accepted if the vote turned against the Romanian union, but this incident indicates that simple majority voting is regarded sufficient at the committee meetings; also when dealing with sensitive issues.

Simple majority voting increases the possibilities to reach a common position for ATCEUC and IFATCA, especially in sensitive issues. This allows the associations to act independently in a wider range of issues than what would have been the case if a consensus principle was applied in every single case. It is important in this regard to stress that it is of vital importance to have good proposals and working papers at the conferences and the committee meetings. The capacity of the boards to come up with proposals and working papers seems to be rather limited. As became evident in the interviews with representatives from ATCEUC and IFATCA, in addition to the observation of an ATCEUC board meeting, good proposals for action and working papers appear to stem from national unions and associations to a fairly large extent.

Profession matters

Organizational demography, and in my case profession, is in the organizational perspective assumed to possess some additional explanatory value besides the organizational structure regarding the shape of identities, values and loyalty to the organization (Egeberg 2007; Zuna 1999). This variable is assumed to have more significance when the organizational structure is weak. The sections above indicate that this might be so in my case. Especially because the member unions/associations of a given European association all represent the same profession, this can be assumed to be an important factor.

Virtually all informants stressed that they to some extent felt that national or European terms of thinking were subordinate to the profession as their point of reference. The tasks dealt with are to a large extent profession-specific and technical, especially in IFATCA.

Most informants also stressed that mutual learning processes and exchange of information was the most important aspects of the associations. When they meet at conferences and committee meetings, they are normally discussing professional issues in a forum where almost every attendant have a full time assignment as air traffic controllers. Within a setting like this, one may expect that their shared profession can contribute to a socialization of the representatives on the basis of the shared profession. This is likely to consequentially strengthen the significance of sectoral and functional thinking amongst the representatives.

The profession and the interest of the members of the associations could in turn lower the significance of the potential national conflicts. As mentioned, the interest of the members was assumed to lie both at the European and the national level by the informants from NATCA. This was also described as the main motivation for participating in the European associations.

Whilst ATCEUC is solely dealing with *union* issues, IFATCA is dealing solely with professional and technical matters. The interviews indicated that national, and also intra-national conflicts, are more frequent in ATCEUC than in IFATCA. In addition, the sections on Single European Sky in the empirical chapter clearly show that they are focusing on different aspects of the project. However, the shared professional identity seems to allow cooperation that informants from both associations tend to recognize as fruitful and mutually beneficial.

Professional identity also shows significance for the meetings in the social dialogue. A long standing issue between ETF (European Transport Federation) and ATCEUC on the proper representation of the air traffic controllers in the social dialogue has its roots mainly in the differing point of view on certain matters. These were ascribed their different demographic backgrounds as ETF contains a mix of professions, whilst ATCEUC is specifically representing air traffic controllers.

In sum, the common professional background leaves good prospects for an organizational identity to evolve. It is likely that the common background can represent a common point of reference which helps

to overcome eventual national differences and hence supports the rise of a European (or global), professional identity.

Travelling circus and locus

The organizational locus was in chapter 2 assumed to possess some explanatory power in regard to the evolvement of an organization. Face to face contact is in general regarded preferable when critical decisions are to be taken (Jablin 1987; Therborn 2006). In addition, and especially relevant in this case, is that locus might as well be of importance for the access to the important and relevant European institutions. An organizational identity is in addition assumed to evolve better within the frames of a main office with which board members and representatives identifies. In sum, a suitable location for the associations has potential impact on the organizational identity and is of relevance on a day-to-day basis.

Neither ATCEUC nor IFATCA have permanent main offices located at a location close to a transport hub or anywhere the board members can gather easily and meet on a frequent basis. In addition, their formal offices are located distant to relevant EU-institutions. Indeed, this is probably closely related to the financial situation in the associations, keeping in mind that office spaces in Brussels or nearby is expensive.

IFATCA operates with a solution where they take advantage of member associations to arrange meetings and find suitable locations – everything on an ad hoc basis – and on rare occasions they meet at their main office in Montreal. ATCEUC has a main office, but this is rarely used. The consequence is that board members tend to meet on different locations throughout Europe, wherever invited, or on locations such as Eurocontrol's Brussels office. This absence of a main office has several potential implications for the associations. Below, I will elaborate on some of the major implications.

The absence of a main office implies that the board members have little face-to-face contact on a regular basis, apart from the board meetings. In practical terms, this makes it a challenge for the board members and representatives to gather on short notice if a matter of contingency should arise. Not only are they living all over Europe,

but they also need to book appropriate meeting facilities when they are planning to have a board meeting. Every meeting is thus subject to careful planning. To some extent, electronic means of communication can contribute to overcome these challenges. The informants all stated that they have daily mail exchange in addition to Skype-conferences and phone calls when needed. This means that they manage to stay frequently in touch with one another, despite the absence of a main office as such.

The main problems in this regard are related to the prospects for organizational stability over time. Dealing with meeting activity that can be described as a 'travelling circus', to paraphrase one of my informants, represents by no means ideal circumstances under which an organizational identity can arise with ease.

Skype-conferences and frequent contact is unlikely to be a sufficient substitute for the daily face-to-face contact that takes place in organizations with a main office. Given that ATCEUC and IFATCA represents secondary structures (to their profession), the prospects for these associations to influence on its members identities can be assumed to be lower when they meet each other via internet while they are located at the locus of their primary structure. (To the extent their primary structure offers a locus). A permanent office in which they met frequently would have supported the perspectives for an organizational stability over time to a larger extent.

In addition, the absence of a main office located approximate to the European institutions has some implications which are particularly problematic for European associations. To rely solely on representatives that live close to Brussels and Cologne is by no means viable in order to ensure access to relevant institutions in a long term perspective. It may also prevent the participation of qualified representatives from countries in the EU-periphery.

Prospects for an organizational identity

In this thesis, organizational identity was initially thought of as the product of the above mentioned variables; *organizational structure*, *organizational demography* and *organizational locus*. As this chapter indicates, the prospects for a strong and characteristic organizational identity that transcends the national ones (Young 2001; Albert and

Whetten 2004) appear to be weak. The findings also indicate that the prospective for such identity to evolve will remain low.

First, there is hardly possible to recognize an organizational structure in formal terms. Everyone is more or less committed voluntarily, and the economic capacity is insufficient to fulfill primary tasks such as arranging conferences single handedly. Hence, IFATCA and ATCEUC appear to have a challenge in regard to choosing relevant meetings and arrangements to attend. The access and influence they may have does not owe a lot to a firm organizational structure but rather to fortunate circumstances such as low capacity in the EU-institutions and deeply committed individuals within the associations.

Second, the organizational locus represents serious obstacles towards the development of an organizational identity. As mentioned, face to face contact amongst the board members is limited to the few annual board meetings. Apart from that, a lot of the communication happens via electronic means of communication. As noted, relying to electronic means communication and a low number of meetings is regarded as little fruitful in terms of developing a common platform.

Lastly, demography, in the sense of shared profession, and favorable decision making procedures, represents the only variables on which an organizational identity may evolve. It appears as if the informants identify quite strongly with their profession, and that this together with the decision making procedures raise the opportunity at least for a limited organizational identity. However, in sum, the analysis indicates that the prospects for a strong organizational identity are low, which leaves low prospects for a viable, enduring common platform.

Concluding remarks

In brief, this chapter shows that the strong professional identity experienced by the informants, seen through an organizational perspective, is far from a sufficient foundation to build a sound common European platform upon. Of the analyzed variables, organizational demography is the only one in which ATCEUC and IFATCA scores fairly high. Their presence at the European level, and

experienced influence which some of my informants suggested were significant, in turn owes more to dedicated individuals volunteering for the associations than to a solid organization which provides an option for a common platform. In this regard, it is tempting to label ATCEUC and IFATCA as more of coordinative bodies for national trade unions and associations than as independent organizations with the capacity to act. Their capabilities to maintain pressure at the European level in a long-term perspective appears to be very limited.

With so loosely structured organizations, it will also be hard to steer an association of several national member unions in a precise direction. It is unlikely that EU will consult associations and unions with limited capacity like these on a frequent basis. If EU does so, they still possess limited capacity to take advantage of the opportunities that eventually opens up for them.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Summary of the main findings

The overall purpose of this thesis was twofold. First, I intended to study how national interest organizations adapt to changed forms of governance at the EU-level. Second, and most importantly, I wanted to shed light on the prospects for EU-level interest groups to serve as a common platform on their national members' behalf, in the sense that they coordinate the national member unions/associations effectively and enable the formulation of common positions.

Below, I will summarize the most important findings from the analysis before moving on to evaluate some of the possible general implications for research on EU-level interest groups.

Channel preference

The main findings regarding channel preference suggest that NATCAs strategy towards the EU-level could be more or less

summarized as a choice to delegate IFATCA and ATCEUC a large share of the responsibility to deal with European issues at the EU-level. The channel chosen is thereby their respective European associations, a finding which is in accordance with the expectations from MLG.

It was evident that the representatives from NATCA were in the opinion that much could be achieved at the national level through participation in relevant national-level forums, and through contact with relevant policy-makers. In addition, at present, Single European Sky is assumed to have low direct impact on Norwegian air traffic management. The reluctance to participate more actively in ATCEUC/IFATCA, and the perception of information, exchange of ideas and coordination as the most important aspect of the EU-level associations, both represent findings in accordance with expectations deriving from LI.

As expected in the section on preferred EU-level institutions, a section which combined contemporary research on Euro-groups with MLG, ATCEUC and IFATCA approaches the Commission, the Parliament and other sector-specific institutions such as EUROCONTROL and EASA rather than the Council. As these institutions are all separated according to the principle of sector, this finding is fairly unsurprising and in accordance with expectations from the literature (Greenwood 2003; Eising 2007).

In sum, it appears as if the preferred working pattern at European level is to work through the European association/union. One important implication from the chosen channel is that the latter part of the analysis – the prospects for a common European platform – could be regarded a more significant research question, as the European platform is NATCA's preferred channel towards EU.

A common European platform?

In regard to the prospects for a common European platform, the absence of a well defined organizational structure and the somewhat low capacity found in IFATCA and ATCEUC is striking. Given that NATCA is fairly representative for the typical national member union/association, it appears to be so that the EU-level organizations are even more loosely structured than their national counterparts –

especially in financial terms. Hence, the question on whether this thesis is dealing with *organizations* in strict terms inevitably arises.

In general, the findings in the section on the common platform suggest that both IFATCA and ATCEUC scores fairly low on most variables investigated in the analysis. They possess the opportunity to arrange voting, and have a favorable composition of profession specific, homogenous member unions. Apart from that, ATCEUC and IFATCA suffer from a vague organizational structure, lack of permanent staff and the absence of a permanent main office in which the board members and representatives from member unions spend significant amounts of time. Under these conditions, an organizational identity – allowing IFATCA and ATCEUC to act as a common European platform for their national members – is fairly unlikely to arise.

Hence, the potential for getting access to the European institutions could be expected to remain limited. It is therefore worth putting emphasis on the good access to EU the informants reported to experience at the EU level. This appears to be in contradiction with the theoretical expectations. According to the findings in the analysis, they should have had less access to the EU-institutions and experienced less influence than what the findings in the interviews suggests. However, as mentioned in chapter 5, it seems as if committed individuals and fortunate circumstances can explain this in a short-term perspective.

What is new?

This thesis had an overall scope to fill some research gaps. As noted in the introductory chapter, research on interest group at the EU-level has mainly been oriented towards the formation of interest groups, the way they access the EU and to what extent Euro groups have been able to gain significant influence at the EU-level. Some research has been done on the choice of channel, for instance by Eising (2003, 2007) and Beyers and Kerremans (2007). Their findings are somewhat in accordance with the findings in chapter 4, both regarding the

channel chosen¹⁴, and the approached EU-level institutions. Hence, this part of the thesis could contribute to confirm present findings from this branch of interest group research.

However, there are few present studies of Euro groups applying an organizational perspective with emphasis on the organizational structure and how this affects the potential for a Euro group to act on an independent basis on its member's behalf. One exception may be Beyers (2008) who puts some attention on the potential effect of a specialized vs. an encompassing membership and the autonomy of the leadership vis á vis the constituencies (ibid.: 1201). In short, the conclusion is that the specialized organizations could have an advantage in regard to the access to EU, particularly the Commission and the Parliament. On the other hand, to specialize could allow very narrow interests to capture the leadership. A specialization could also result in a low autonomy of the leadership vis á vis constituencies, compared to more encompassing Euro groups (Beyers 2008: 1204). In addition, some Commission officials have argued that specialized organizations, such as IFATCA and ATCEUC is the easier to persuade when in negotiations, given that you argue in line *with them* (Greenwood 2002: 104). However, the fundamental question that I raised in this thesis – to what extent organizational features of EU-level interest organizations allows a common platform – remains understudied. Beyers et al. (2008: 1120) suggests that:

more systematic attention must also be devoted to the link between the intra-organizational dynamics of interest groups and their external political behavior [...] [F]ew pay attention to intra-organizational dynamics and how these relate to the large variety of political activities that groups may develop.

Hence, my thesis could be argued to represent an attempt to follow up on this call for research on intra-organizational dynamics in Euro groups. It is indeed an attempt to uncover the implications of intra-organizational dynamics for the ability of European interest organizations to be visible at EU-level in a long term perspective.

¹⁴ This differs, depending on what kind of interest organization the researchers are looking to. Here, I am referring to professional and labor organizations. I will come back to this in the next section.

What did I study?

The interest group population at EU-level is a rather heterogeneous one (Beyers et al. 2008: 1107). However, IFATCA could be said to represent *professional interests* whilst ATCEUC rather represents *labor interests*, according to Greenwoods (2003) definitions.

The nature of the air traffic controller profession indeed appears to be a boarder-crossing and internationalized one. In addition, Single European Sky represents an EU-level project with possible significant implications for the air traffic controllers in Europe. Hence, the European level could be expected to have no less importance to air traffic controllers than for most other professional or labor groups. Given my findings regarding NATCA, it is no reason to believe that the national members unions should be especially weak in economic terms, compared to the average (profession-specific) interest organization participating in some EU-level associations.

Greenwood (2003: 137) stresses that the situation among European *professional* associations is a situation where they possess limited resources, and are more or less 'shadows compared to their national counterparts'. Labor interest organizations are in the same vain expected to remain weak at the European level due to national differences in employment policies, which national stakeholders are eager to maintain. This indeed appears to be true for IFATCA and ATCEUC. In addition, the interest to maintain national regulations of the labor market sometimes coincides for employers and trade unions (Greenwood 2003: 150; Streek and Schmitter 1991: 143-144).

However, there are some prospects for *interest specialization* to pay off. ATCEUC and IFATCA represent heavily specialized organizations. According to Eising (2007: 354) 'specializing in interest representation pays off, improving the ability of groups to address the relevant contact partners and to deliver the requested exchange goods'. This is assumed to be so because 'the policy experts in the Commission and the Parliament depend [much] on the input of more specialized associations, which also suffer less from collective action problems' (Eising 2007:354). This expectation is clearly linked to the sector oriented division of tasks within the Commission and the Parliament, being organized around sectoral lines, allows the sector-

specific interest groups to find relevant contact partners relatively easily (Egeberg 2006: 21-22; Greenwood 2003). According to Bouvwen (2004: 339-340) access to EU is dependant on which *access goods* a Euro group can deliver in order to make itself attractive to the EU-institutions. Access goods could be expert knowledge, knowledge about the aggregated European interest as well as the various domestic interests (ibid.).

The following section should be read as a suggestion for the implications my thesis may have for further research in the field, rather than an attempt to generalize my findings to a blurred universe. As mentioned, the interest group population at EU-level is indeed a heterogeneous one. Hence, it appears that 'lobbying [in the EU] is both diverse and complex – a fact that makes reliable theoretical generalizations very difficult' (Bouvwen 2004: 337).

Implications and suggestions for further research

The present literature arise a number of possible implications from my thesis. First, as mentioned, Greenwood (2003) suggests that professional interests and labor interests tend to experience a fairly low impact on EU policy making. Some general explanations for the low impact of certain interest organizations have been suggested and linked to different national modes of interest representation. This is expected to have impact on the ability to work together at the European level as the national traditions vary (Beyers and Kerremans 2007). In addition, cultural differences and the decentralized mode of governance in EU are also conceptualized as a way to understand how organizations struggle to be involved at EU-level (Beyers et al. 2008: 1114). This thesis shows that the organizational features investigated in this thesis could add up as possible *additional independent variables* for understanding access to and influence on the EU over time. The perspective could possibly be included in future studies of interest groups in the EU. Below, I will draw up some possible studies where these variables could have relevance.

First, if it is so that the EU-institutions depend to a fairly large extent on inputs from interest organizations, as suggested by Eising (2007), this thesis raises a question regarding the *quality* of inputs provided by interest organizations over time. Even if they possess relevant

access goods and experience to be granted access to EU, it remains questionable if interest organizations, such as the ones in this study, are able to deliver inputs of *high quality* on a permanent basis. The organizational variables in this thesis could serve well as independent variables in a study of the quality of inputs from various interest organizations.

Second, the role of the interest organizations should not be overestimated in studies of the EU. The question arising: *How important players are actually EU-level interest organization?* EU encourages interest organizations to participate and contribute in policy making processes. Interest groups are for instance formally involved within the social dialogue and bodies such as the ICB. However, it is fairly unlikely that organizations, such as ATCEUC and IFATCA, will be able to maintain a role as a key player at the EU-level in a long term perspective. Hence, the assumed importance of interest organizations such as IFATCA and ATCEUC at EU-level may be somewhat overrated; at least if the focus lays on the *impact* interest organizations may possess on EU level policy-making.

Summarized, the findings in my thesis suggest that to apply the theoretical framework in this thesis to a larger population – in order to test the external validity of the findings – could be a fruitful future project. If the findings should appear to be valid for a significant share of the Euro group population, this raises possibilities for including organizational features as independent variables in future studies of interest organizations' access to EU.

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Appendix

Appendix1: Interview guide for ATCEUC and IFATCA representatives

Background information

- What is your position in ATCEUC/IFATCA?
- Part-time or full-time position? If part-time: Full time job as an Air traffic controller?
- For how long have you had the specific position?
- Earlier relevant experience from ATCEUC/IFATCA or a national trade union/professional association?
- Do you have any representative status within your national union/association?
- If yes: How are you structuring your days, and what representative status represents the heaviest workload?

Subject 1 - Single European Sky

- Describe the intention with SES, as you perceive it.
- How will SES affect the work of the regular European Air Traffic controller?
- Strengths and weaknesses regarding SES.

Subject 2 - Organizational factors.

- What do you regard the main purpose of your organization?
- How is your work in ATCEUC/IFATCA financed? Do you volunteer, or are you paid by ATCEUC/IFATCA? Do you take shifts operative positions in addition to your position in ATCEUC/IFATCA?
- Role of the secretariat: (F.eks. To what extent do your permanent secretariat contribute in the preparation of meeting documents)?
- Full time employees taking care of preparation, or is the workload to a large degree on you? (lieferant of premises)
- Approximately how many representatives are ATCEUC/IFATCA containing of (the board)? Many full-time employees?
- Professions: Only air traffic controllers, or diversity in members?

- Organizational 'locus':
 - o 1) Where is your formal HQ located?
 - o 2) Do you frequently meet at other locations?
- Bounded rationality: Too many tasks for the limited resources?
How to select items with more profound importance than others?

Subject 3 – Meetings in ATCEUC/IFATCA

- Could you give a brief overview of a typical ATCEUC/IFATCA-meeting? How are they organized?
- When deciding on a matter: Consensus/Voting?
- How is the cooperation among various national trade unions/professional associations? Incongruity of positions?
- How do you prepare a meeting? Do you regard your role in meetings as merely to serve as the agenda-setter and discussion leader, or do you have to 'lead' the meetings more actively?
- Do you remember any difficult sessions? If so, could you tell me about one of experience?
- Easier to reach agreement in some cases than in others?
- How often do you arrange 'board meetings' and members conferences?
- Other meetings? Mail, Skype, phones etc? Devote much time to that?

Subj. 3.1 – Organizational overlap

- If you should compare your role with that of IFATCA/ATCEUC: Where are the differences, where are the similarities between the associations? Is it much contact between you?
- Does it happen that you attend IFATCA/ATCEUC sessions?
- Which other EURO-groups do eventually you cooperate actively with?

Subject 4 – Preferred channel

- What channel do you regard the most important – the national or the european one (for instance when you attempt to influence the legislation developed for the SES).
- Development over time: EU more important now (or still coordinated actions towards national unions)
- What makes EU/the national level the most important channel to work with

Subject 5 – Access to and importance of EU

- To what extent do you regard EU the main liferant of regulations, directives etc. regarding air traffic control (in an European perspective).
- How is your cooperation with EU structured? Do you primarily use formal or informal channels?
- Could you mention a specific matter where you felt that you enjoyed some of influence on the decision-making process in EU?
- Do you experience EU as a good ‘listener’ when you are giving your view on specific matters?
- How frequent is your contact with the European institutions?
- Commission, Council, Parliament, EASA, EUROCONTROL, etc.
- Specific Commission/Parliament staff you have a formalized and contionous contact with?
- FABs – overview over the influence of ATCos in the different major FABs? (nevne NFF som har adgang kun *via* arbeidsgiver, og fikk avslag på ønsket om å opprette en ‘referansegruppe’).

Subject 6 – Identity

- Identity: Europe/national/technical/professional/expert identity
- Do you consider yourself more of an European representative now than when you started your current assignment (om representant har sittet lenge)?

Sumup

- Clarifications.
- If the access to EU is experienced as good: Which EU-institutions they cooperate most actively with. If not: Get a sumup of why the access is experienced as limited.
- Feel free to add information you regard relevant, or that you feel I have paid to little attention to, or questions I have treated to briefly.

Appendix 2: Interview guide for NATCA representatives

Introduksjon

- Om tema for masteroppgaven.
- Informantens betydning for prosjektet.
- Forsikre informant om at alt vedkommende sier behandles i tråd med forskningsetiske retningslinjer og at vedkommende får anonymitet.

Bakgrunnsinfo

- Stilling i NFF?
- Hvor lenge?
- Deltid, fulltid?
- Tidligere relevante verv.

Tema 1: Bakgrunn: Single European Sky, informantens kjennskap til området

- Kjennskap til SES
- Hvordan påvirker SES potensielt deres arbeidsdag?
- Styrker, svakheter og potensielle problemer ved SES.

Tema 2: Liberal Intergovernmentalisme: Viktigheten av det nasjonale nivå?

- Kontakt med norsk forvaltning.
- Hvilke deler av forvaltningen? (Spesifiser om nødvendig hva jeg mener med forvaltning).
- I forbindelse med SES? Hvem jobber man opp mot?
- Hvis dere skal trekke frem noen fagforeninger som er viktige samarbeidspartnere: hvilke og hvorfor?
 - o Relevant for spørsmål relatert til SES?
- Kontakt med andre lands myndigheter viktige? (eks: Finland, Island – andre som tar del i NEFAB, eller Sverige, Danmark – NUAC)
 - o Alternativt: Fagforeninger i andre land dere jobber tett med

Tema 3: Flernivåstyring. Har EU mye å si for NFFs arbeide?

- Til hvor stor grad er EU leverandør av reguleringer, etc. for luftfarten i Norge?
- Dere deltar i ATCEUC/IFATCA på EU-nivå.
- Fortell om ATCEUC og IFATCA. Hvilke formål brukes sammenslutningene til, og på hvilken måte?

- Kanal for informasjon, eller brukes de mer direkte for å påvirke spørsmål av betydning?
- Hvordan er deres medlemskap i hhv. IFATCA og ATCEUC organisert? Individuell representasjon?
- Mange involvert i sentralorganisasjonen?
- Hvor lenge sitter lederen. Fast stilling, eller er det et verv i tillegg til et annet?
- Relevans av disse sammenslutningene ifht SES.
- Anvendelse av fagforeningene til andre formål?
- Har dere selv direkte kontakt med personer i EUs institusjoner?

Tema 4: Har informanten hatt verv i IFATCA/ATCEUC eller deltatt på møter innenfor sammenslutningenes rammer?

- **Dersom informanten har hatt/har verv i IFATCA/ATCEUC:**
- Hvordan har **dere** opplevd møtene? Fortell om et typisk møte i ATCEUC/IFATCA (stiller det åpent først, i håp om å fange opp relevante ting uten å stille for spesifikke spørsmål).
 - o Hvis for generelt svar:
 - o Konsensusorientert? Kvalifisert flertallsvotering?
 - o Steile fronter mellom nasjonale fagforeningsrepresentanter?
 - o Godt organisert av ledelsen?
- Klar agenda for møte, ledelse i sammenslutningene virker forberedte → tilretteleggerfunksjon, eller mer aktiv (som en leder)?
- Be eventuelt informanten fortelle om en utfordrende opplevelse fra et møte i ATCEUC/IFATCA.
- Noen spørsmål/saker som er enklere å komme til enighet om enn andre?
- Hvor ofte finner møtene sted?
- Inntrykk av ATCEUC/IFATCA i forhold til EU. Har dere tett kontakt med EU gjennom sammenslutningene?
- Kan de brukes aktivt for å holde styr på utviklingen av europeisk luftfartspolitik?
- Brukes ATCEUC/IFATCA til forskjellige formål/behandling av ulike typer saker?
- Jeg ser for meg tre muligheter for hvordan du opplever din rolle i ATCEUC/IFATCA
 - 1) Dere er nasjonale representanter
 - 2) Dere føler at dere er europeiske representanter

3) Dere føler at dere er fageksperter

Avslutning

- Prøve å ta tak i uklarheter, notert underveis.
- Klargjøre om nasjonalt nivå eller deltakelse i europeiske sammenslutninger/evt direkte kontakt med EU er foretrukket arbeidsmåte
- Oppfordre informanten til å prate om ting han/hun synes er viktig.

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