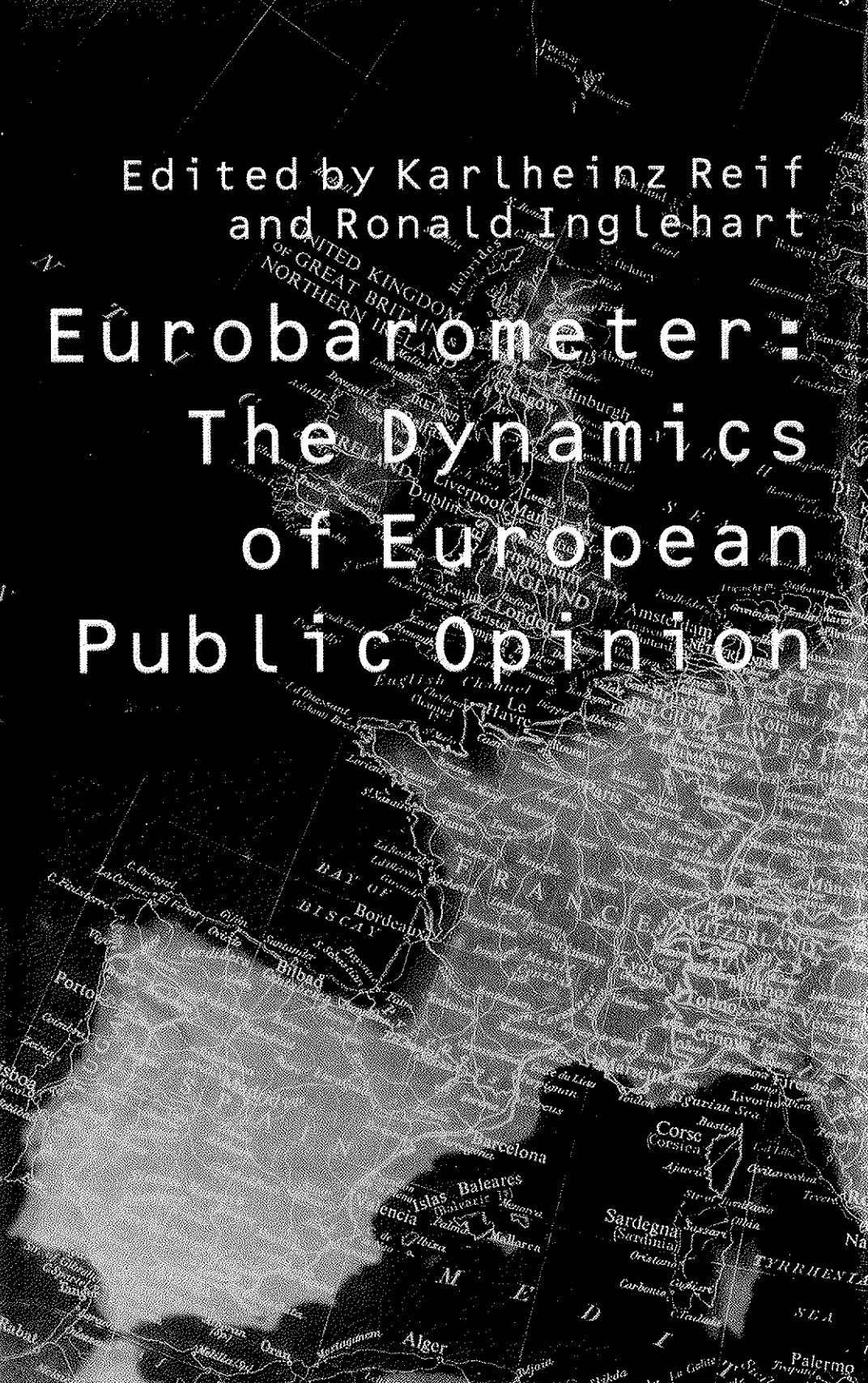


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# Eurobarometer: The Dynamics of European Public Opinion



# 8 The Role of South European Interest Groups in the European Community:<sup>1</sup> a comparative approach

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The transition from authoritarian regimes to democracy and pluralism is the new trend in world politics. It began in Latin America and in Southern Europe and is spreading rapidly among the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The South European countries, Greece, Spain and Portugal became members of the European Community (EC) in order to consolidate and develop their new or recovered democratic regime. Their adaptation to the Community's system was facilitated by their market economy and the quick integration of their political parties and interest groups in the network of European institutions and associations. In fact, one of the characteristic features of the EC is its large pluralistic network of different organizations, groups and autonomous centres of decision. At the political stage this pluralism is exemplified by the presence of various political parties and free elections, at the socio-economic stage it is symbolized by the diversity of groups which reflect a variety of activities, interests and values.<sup>2</sup>

The Community, endowed with powers of a political nature but limited in scope and essentially economic, governs not only certain aspects of the behaviour of Member States but also groups and individuals. In fact, this emerging European authority presents an entirely original trend with its capacity to take decisions which affect groups, enterprises and people as well as the Member States. By directly influencing the actors of the socio-economic scene, the EC incites a vast movement of re-groupment of, in particular, the interests which have already been organized at the national level. As a consequence of this a network emerged consisting of interest groups, at the Community level around the principal decision centres of the EC. Obviously, these European groups, about 600 of them, have neither the structure nor the capacity comparable to their national

TABLE 8.1: *Inclusion of the South European interest groups within the groups of the Community*

Country	Integration	1970	1975	1980	1986
Greece	1980	–	2	66	154
Spain	1986	–	5	167	189
Portugal	1986	–	–	85	113
Total number of interest groups in the Community		308	346	431	515

counterparts, but all the same, they are better organized and more efficient than the international organizations of the same nature. Their actions are more intensive and tangible, corresponding, in principle, to domains at which the EC takes decisions and formulates common policies. From a different angle, this European network of organizations, their structures as well as their governing organs' formation and their membership are, in fact, the indicators of the real power of the Community and the intensity by which the informal socio-economic integration has been achieved in the EC.<sup>3</sup>

The coming into force of the European Single Act on 1 July 1987, has vigorously accelerated the activities at the Community level in which the interest groups have been actively involved. It is assumed that the interest groups have found their structures and functions strengthened by the idea of a Europe without internal frontiers as well as by the developments of common policies and structural funds.

The Greek interest groups' integration proceeded rather slowly and in a manner not conforming with the trend so far followed. If we compare this situation with the entry of Portuguese and Spanish groups of interest, we can see that the latter countries' groups have established organic and substantial relations with those of the Community much earlier than their formal entry and much more intensely than their Greek counterparts. How to explain this inconsistency? Are the Greek groups insufficiently disposed regarding necessary personnel or means for representation at the European level? Do the cost, the distance or the language form barriers in the way of their participation in the activities of the European groups? On the other hand, are the Greek groups simply less in number, less well-structured or more turned inward compared to the groups of the other two South European countries?

The groups of the new members of the European Community follow, more or less, the same route that the groups of the founding countries have followed: the groups which are most interested in and most motivated by the European Community establish relations first with the groups of interest at the Community level and others gradually follow depending on

how well they feel their interests are represented. This process takes a relatively long period of time, somewhere about five years, to reach a sufficient level of representation. For example, the agricultural groups of interest of the Community, on account of the formulation of a common agricultural policy, have established organic relations first. The industrial sector and the services attract the recently adhering groups to the EEC according to their sectors and type of interest.<sup>4</sup> In the case of Greek and Portuguese interest groups, after the agricultural groups it was mainly the liberal vocational groups and trade unions which sought representation at the European level.

Concerning the Turkish interest groups, one can observe a certain hesitation on the side of the Community groups of interest. At the present time, four Turkish groups are members of the Community groups. They take part in the Permanent Conference of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EEC, the European Confederation of Trade Unions and the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organizations of the EEC. The Turkish Confederation of Employers, which was a member of the UNICE, resigned later on account of conflicts regarding assignment of quotas, but has recently been re-integrated following Turkey's demand for entry into the EC.

The comparison of the interest groups of South Europe is not easy because of differences that exist between the three countries, although they are situated in a part of Europe which is more or less homogenous in many respects. Regarding their histories, their traditions of cooperation, the evolution of the interest groups are different and also the legal frameworks and socio-economic environments vary from one country to the other. In the meantime, these countries which belong to similar parts of Europe can also be associated with Ireland, a country with an economic level within the lower group in the EC.

According to the statistical data concerning the EC (European Parliament), *Les Progrès de la construction européenne*, 1987 (p. 9) the per capita incomes were in 1985, roughly 2 600 ecus in Portugal, 4 500 ecus in Greece and 5 500 ecus in Spain. This difference becomes less vivid when purchasing parities (PP) are compared; the difference which is very small between Greece (about 7 000 ecus) and Portugal (about 6 500 ecus) is rather high in the case of Spain (about 9 000 ecus).

Taking into account all these differences, we find ourselves in a position to compare these interest groups between themselves and with the European groups with respect to three dimensions: the organizational and functional dimension; the decision-making dimension and the Community dimension.

Regarding the *Community dimension* the approach to matters pertaining to the Community in general of the interest groups of the South European

countries is mainly governed by three factors. First of all, their interest is the main factor which determines their behaviour. The second factor has to do with their financial and administrative capacity. The large central organizations of the South European countries were the first to participate in the activities of the Community groups, as associate members in the beginning, gradually becoming corresponding members and then full members. They are usually the employers' organizations acting in the fields of commerce, industry, agriculture and also in the capacity of employers' unions. The last factor is the advantage of obtaining first-hand information from the EC without passing through the official channels. This priority in obtaining information is particularly important when the sector in which the group acts is involved in matters concerning the Community. These three factors, organizational, decision-making and Community dimension, not only guided the formulation of our questionnaire but also influenced the orientation of our studies.<sup>5</sup> But it is also necessary to add another factor: European socialization accomplished by a common learning process of group leaders and members of the European Parliament also plays a decisive role in determining the behaviour of the South European interest groups when faced with questions concerning the Community.

#### THE INTEREST GROUPS AND TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

Contrary to Spain and Portugal, Greece has suffered only one interruption in the democratic process after the war, between 1967 and 1974 under the colonels' regime. This interruption did not have major effects on the interest groups, whose structures or management had in fact enjoyed a certain stability under the dictatorship which practised a liberal economic policy. The trade unions, on the other hand, which were already weak under democracy, suffered a further setback and marginalization under the military regime.

From the point of view of the interest groups, the return to democracy in 1974 did not bring any significant changes at the structural level; however, it emphasized the autonomy of the organizations and caused changes at the management level. This continuity of structure and administrative style of the professional organizations is also one of the reasons for the rigidity of the Greek groups which, despite the long period elapsed since their application and acceptance, still require very little support from the Community groups to improve their standing at the national level. This may be one of the reasons for the slow progress of the process of adaptation of the Greek groups to the Community environment.

The evolution in the two Iberian countries has been quite different. Paradoxically, the socio-economic groups of these countries had not reached a development which could have been expected under a corporat-

ist system. In fact, in that context, the political authority had been seeking means of slowing down or controlling the progress towards autonomy of employer or labour groups, imposing on them vertical organizational systems. This State intervention had given rise to the development of underground or parallel systems, especially the Communist oriented trade unions (the Portuguese *Intersindicale* and the Spanish Workers' Commissions). The socio-economic structures, as they are today, had begun to emerge and to establish themselves progressively with the implementation of a gradual opening and liberalization programme of the economies of these two countries: see the role of the Opus Dei, of the sixties in Spain during which time the exceptional economic growth was accompanied by in-depth changes in the economic structure; also the liberalization policy implemented by the Gaetano government during the years preceeding the Portuguese Revolution. This Revolution of 1974 has, in reality, caused a break much sharper than that which took place in Spain with the coronation of Juan Carlos I in 1975; from then onwards, despite a slight setback due to the revolutionary, unstable period between 1974 and 1976 in Portugal, both countries have taken decisive measures towards the democratization of their socio-political structures.

With the transition to democracy in Portugal, the trade unions came up from their clandestine positions. By 1976, the hegemony of the *Intersindicale* had been overcome by the tertiary sector unions, supported by the SP and SDP. A second central labour organization, the UGT, with socialist and social democratic leanings was established as a result of dissident movement at the heart of the *Intersindicale*. A similar chain of events took place in Spain after the enactment of the law recognizing the freedom of unionist activities in 1977, which allowed groups of trade unions to organize at the expense of the vertical unions of the old regime and to form two main branches, the UGT, which had socialist leanings, and the Confederation of Unions of Worker Commissions which sympathized with the PCE.<sup>6</sup>

The employer organizations were somewhat slower and were established from 1975 on, in reaction to the socializing policy of the pro-communist Portuguese government. The Confederation of Portuguese Industry (CIP) was founded in 1975 and the Confederation of Portuguese Trade (CCP) in 1976. During negotiations with the IMF, they gained influence due to the fact that the minority government of the socialist Soares needed their support to be able to come to terms with the IMF. On the other hand, following the launching of the agricultural reform and the nationalization in 1975, the Confederation of Portuguese Farmers (CAP) was established. Both the CIP and CAP supported the SP and the SDP to put an end to the revolutionary period. The three confederations met regularly in order to coordinate their activities in favour of a liberal economic policy which, in fact, corresponds to the EC's orientation. Their legitimacy and their

influence have since been enhanced with the institution in 1983 of the Permanent Council for Social Cooperation and their affiliation to groups at the Community level. The attachment of Portuguese professional groups to the EC organs has also reinforced their standing at the national level.

The Spanish employers' organizations have been formed and recognized following the enactment of the law of 1977. The Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organizations (CEOE) was founded in 1977 along with the other organizations of the CEPYME and the AEB. The National Confederation of Farmers and Breeders was also established at the same time. At the beginning of the transition period, a certain confusion reigned concerning the respective roles of the political and socio-economic leaders, due in part to the fact that the new political personalities were, to a significant proportion, also responsible for professional groups. The leaders of employers' and labour organizations also assumed leading political functions especially as a result of their representation at the Parliament during the first legislative periods of the new regime.<sup>7</sup> This situation changed following the signing of the 'Pact of Moncloa' in 1977 and the birth of the principal parliamentary parties, from which members of unions and employer organizations have been excluded. After this division of responsibilities, the employers' and trade unions' leaders gradually began to manifest their group desires to establish their autonomy with regard to the State and the political parties. A desire to pursue common views and interests both from the point of view of groups and of the political parties was no longer evident or necessary as it was during the beginning of the transition to democracy.

As compared to the other two countries of the South, Spain displays a peculiarity due to its autonomous regions like Catalonia. Its status of autonomy (gained in 1979) could suffer from entry into the EC, due to certain restrictions concerning the role assigned to the central government in activities at the Community level. While supporting European integration and the 'Europe of the Regions', the Catalan authorities seek to preserve or increase their autonomy by applying measures which abide by the rules, and by executing decisions of the Community that are within their competence (art. 27 al 3 of the Status of Autonomy), and by supporting the actions of the regional groups. In 1982, the government established the 'Patrona Catala, Pro Europa' to facilitate the integration of various sectors to the EC. By 1986, it had installed a Catalan office in Brussels to serve Catalan interests and also to provide a seat for the officials and private representatives of the region. Thus, the Catalan employers associations are in direct contact with Brussels. Sometimes, a regional association like the Catalan Confederation of Commerce participates directly at the level of European Confederation of Retail Trade. This tendency towards regional representation gained force by the presence of certain German 'Länder' and certain regional interest groups, and is likely to become more widespread with the realization of a single borderless market for 1993.

The foremost industrial region of Spain, Catalonia accommodates thirty-eight (20 per cent) of the 189 national Spanish interest groups represented at the Community level. Another sign of the presence of the region is manifest in the predominant role it plays in the national interest groups. Examples are: the Spanish Intertextile Council created in 1980 in view of integration, which is a member of the Comitextil; the Spanish Association of the Mesh Industries, a member of *Mailleurop*. These organizations, most of the leaders of which are the former leaders of regional organizations, have now undertaken the representation of the national interests in Brussels.

Even if Turkey does not have a quite comparable pattern, its case is studied in the double perspective of its process of democratization and of its demand for integration into the EC. After many interruptions in the democratic process and three years of military regime, Turkey has once again returned to the democratic path since 1983. In this new context, the interest groups, whose activities had been suspended during the military regime, have regained their functions following the parliamentary elections in 1983 and within the framework of the liberal economic policy of the Özal Government. The aim was the modernization of the economic structure by the introduction of the competitive market system and opening up of the economy to the outside, and particularly to the EC. Before that, the Turkish economy had been a protected economy since the establishment of the Republic, where the state enterprises which were created about fifty years ago for the promotion of industrialization, continued to occupy a central place. In fact, they employ more than half of all the workers in the manufacturing industries, and the state investments constitute 55 per cent of the total of investments. In this situation, the definition and readjustment of the role of the State in the economy becomes a priority. In this sense, a series of measures have been taken to adapt the public enterprises to the laws of the market economy. Evaluating the attitudes of the principal Turkish interest groups in view of adaptation to a liberal economy and opening up to international competition, one has the impression that the process may be slow as the majority of these groups are in favour of a halfway policy between a liberal and a state-controlled economy. The most outstanding exception to this situation is the truly liberal position of the Textile Employers' Union and of MESS (Metal Industries Employers' Union). Textiles represent more than a third of all the exports of Turkey, and the Union mentioned is the unique representative to the EC Commission. An important point is the centrist position of the principal workers' union Türk-Is, which is in favour of the EC in its expectation of its influence on the stabilization of the democracy and attainment of a higher level of protection of the rights of workers. Opening themselves to competition and to the conditions of market economy, Turkish interest groups are preparing for participation in Community activities.

### THE ATTITUDES OF THE INTEREST GROUPS TOWARDS THE EC

From the political point of view, the perception of the integration process of the Spanish socio-economic groups is, in general, positive. Both the employers' groups – the majority of which hold a positive view with none against – and the spokesmen for the unions consider Spain's entry into the EC a positive move and in support of the development of the democratic political system. The views on the economic consequences, however, vary; the leaders of the employers' organizations express more optimistic views than those of the unions, the more optimistic ones being nearer to the government. On the other hand, the more pessimistic organizations are mostly sectoral ones or those farther away from the governmental position.

A similar attitude is found among the Portuguese interest groups. With the exception of the groups in alliance with the PCP, most of the groups express views which converge towards a positive attitude. Consensus exists that the EC would contribute to the stabilization of the democracy. This general positive attitude was much more *nuancée* at the period of negotiations with the EC, during which time the interest groups had been confronted with various substantial problems. Since then, the employers and their various sectors have expressed reservations and assumed a position for better claiming protection of their interests. In the meantime, following the integration of Portugal, this circumspect attitude has been transformed to a more positive attitude recognizing the reality of integration and the need to take as much advantage as possible of this new situation.

In Greece, the principal political advantages of integration are the services rendered in support of the general interests of the country and its contribution to institutional and juridistic modernization. Most of the representatives of the employers' organizations still dwell on its economic advantages and disadvantages. For certain groups like the Greek merchant marine, the integration brought neither gains nor losses. Many groups appeared to fear the adverse effects of external competition, especially on account of the more advanced technological level of some of the EC countries. Nevertheless, none took a general stand against the EC. The farmers' organization Pasesges, which always stressed the danger of external competition, keeps a positive balance: however, this is mainly due to the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes, modernization of the agricultural sector and various aids.

On the side of the trade unions, despite the relatively favourable opinion of the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE), their perception of integration is in general less positive than the employers'. The trade unions which are nearer to the Communist Party or the left wing of PASOK carry still less favourable opinions. An example is the Athens Labour Exchange which is controlled by the Communist Party.

Altogether, the Greek interest groups manifest less favourable attitudes,

with a more pronounced cleavage between employers and trade unions, and also in general a higher level of indifference and distance towards the EC. This general observation does not apply to the central employers' organizations but is more in relation to certain sectoral organizations and trade unions.

Most of the Turkish organizations regard the Association Agreement in a negative perspective, with the exception of the Textile Organizations, the ISO (Istanbul Chamber of Industry) and the ATO (Ankara Chamber of Commerce). The overwhelming majority are in favour of immediate integration and expect that as a result of this the Turkish economy will gain in dynamism. Certain groups like the TGS (Turkish Journalists' Association) and the TESD (Associations of Turkish Artisans and Tradesmen) are of the opinion that the application for membership in the EC should have been made under more favourable economic circumstances.

### ADAPTATION TO AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Greek central employers' organization has progressively established and developed relations at the European level since 1962, the date of the enactment of the Association Agreement. Since the entry of Greece into the EC, these relations have been intensified. Becoming a member of the UNICE after many years of contacts, the SEV is now a participator in the activities of the UNICE and in its working groups and keeps a permanent representative office in Brussels. It is also represented in a series of advisory organs. This institutional participation is reinforced by a network of informal contacts. In addition to that, the SEV has established close relations with the employers' groups of many member countries, with those of Germany in particular. This multi-faceted participation is carried out by many SEV leaders, especially its President.

Participation in sectoral organizations vary according to sectors. For example, the Union of Greek Shipowners takes part in the Council, and also in the working groups of the Committee of Shipowners Association of the EC (CAACE) as well as in the Economic and Social Committee since the entry of Greece into the EC. They maintain regular and frequent contacts with the Commission. On the other hand, the approach of the Union of Greek Cotton Industrialists and that of the Union of Greek Wool Mills display significant differences. While the cotton people participate actively in the activities of COMITEXTIL and of the Eurocoton, collaborate with the Commission and develop bilateral relations especially with their French and Italian counterparts; the wool people have only occasional contacts with the COMITEXTIL – which they consider an 'overgrown monster' – to the degree in which it can provide them with useful

information at reasonable cost.<sup>8</sup> These two forms of participation reflect the modernistic-traditional dichotomy.

In different cases the participation is made difficult by an absence of equivalent structures at the EC level: the Union of Exporters of Industrial Products, for example, is represented sometimes through the Panhellenic Association of Exporters, or SEV or through the Ministry of Commerce. PASEGES, member of COPA and of the COGECA, works through a permanent representative office in Brussels which facilitates contacts with the Commission as well as its various committees or working groups.

The level of participation is also high on the part of the organizations of architects, engineers, lawyers, medical doctors and especially on the part of the travel agents (Group of National Unions of Travel Agencies of the EC – under Greek chairmanship). Nevertheless, many other groups do not express as much need for pursuing relations or being involved in organic cooperation with their counterparts in the Community.

The participation of the trade unions is marked by a considerable delay according to the GSEE and the Athens Labour Exchange themselves. The GSEE takes part in the activities of some commissions of the ECTU-European Confederation of Trade Unions as well as in certain international sectoral organizations (eg. restaurant and tourism workers). The Federation of Textile Workers, although formally a member of the European Committee of Textiles, Garments and Leather Unions, declares that they are not participating in any unionist activity at the European level which they consider lacking in class-consciousness and class politics.

The consequences of the entry of Spain to the EC, as evaluated by the Spanish interest groups, are considered positive by the majority of representatives, both at the level of employers and of the trade unions. One of the signs of the adaptation of the Spanish groups is the numerous surveys and analyses made by them concerning the EC, carried out for the purpose of assuring a more efficient representation at the EC level (three-quarters of the twenty interviewed). The structural adaptation has not created any problems; many of the organizations which were recently established have taken into account the European dimension and many of them have found there a stimulating factor or seen possibilities of support. From this point of view also the comparison between Spanish and Portuguese interest groups is obvious, due to their parallel emergence and development.

Spain is the leading country among the new members and even among some older members, owing to its high number of groups already integrated in the Community network. Almost all the employer or trade union groups of any importance at the national level take part in one or more European organization. The effective participation in European associative life is growing on a par with the increasing participation of Spain in advisory or decision-making organs. All the interviewed employers' groups encourage their affiliates to become members of at least one European

organization; almost a third of them are members of two or three Community organizations. Unions which sympathize with the SP or the SDP have good connections in the unionist groups at the Community level; the two other unions, the CNT and the Workers' Commissions, even if more internationalistically oriented, wish to participate in the ESC. Altogether, participation in one or the other aspect of the Community by this or that group is being pursued actively with the aim of coordinating action at the European level.

The employers' organizations also maintain bilateral relations with their counterparts in other member countries, either directly or through the related European groups. One representative stated that these contacts were of decisive importance for his organization. Other spokesmen declared these relations were complementary, serving to update information.

In nine cases out of ten, the participation is evaluated as positive, the appraisal of the employers' groups being slightly more positive than the unionist groups. In general, the participation of Spanish delegations in Brussels is, for the majority of groups, periodic but of a very high frequency and regularity. They vary depending on several factors: the importance and efficiency of the Community group, its power of influence as well as its level of intervention, the role of the EC in various sectors of the economy<sup>9</sup> and above all the budgetary means, which, rather low for Spanish groups, are limiting their levels of participation. This last argument is also underlined with more emphasis by the spokesmen of the Portuguese groups. These evaluations appear in fact more relative if compared with the even lower level of participation of Greek groups in general. Nevertheless, as a general rule, the interest groups are inclined to complain of the insufficiency of means at their disposal.

In Portugal, the principal organizations have reinforced their structures and their capacities following entry into the EC. This led to the recruitment of additional staff and helped accelerate modernization of the equipment of certain groups. For example, the CCP has installed a permanent post in Brussels (1987) where it has representatives in about fifteen advisory committees. Since 1986, it has become a member of the Federation of European Associations of Wholesale and Foreign Trade; notwithstanding its activities rest mostly on its sectoral associations, affiliated to European commercial groups. In the domains of industry and agriculture, participation is mainly accomplished by the two central organizations, the CIP and the CAP, and some sectoral groups oriented towards exportation, like the ones concerned with textiles. The degree of participation depends normally on the budgetary means of the national groups which they are endeavouring to expand since 1986, this leading the way also to a general reinforcement of the groups themselves. The first of these organizations to establish contacts at the European level has been the CIP, becoming first

an associate and then a full member of the UNICE; it also installed a permanent representative office in Brussels in 1982. The CAP has also reinforced its representation by becoming a member of the COPA in 1985, assuming its vice-presidency in 1987 and establishing a permanent representative office in Brussels.

The situation at the level of the trade unions reflects a well-known conflict; the entrance of the UGT to CISL since its creation has facilitated its subsequent affiliation to the ETUC, giving it an advantage over its rival, the CGTP-IN, whose several attempts for acceptance have remained fruitless. This inequality of access between the two confederations is partially neutralized by an equal representation by both of them at the Economic and Social Committee. In these circumstances, it is quite normal that the CGTP-IN attaches great importance to its participation in the ES Committee, as it is kept outside the European Trade Unions Confederation.

Since the country's membership in the EC, all the important Portuguese groups have intensified their activities at the Community level. The delegations representing all the groups travel regularly, about once a week, to Brussels in order to take part in various meetings, and especially in those of the Economic and Social Committee. The Portuguese groups which have only recently established contact with the Community organs appear to assign greater importance to the Economic and Social Committee than the other groups. This is also the case for the CGTP-IN for the above-mentioned reason.

The membership of the Turkish groups in the Community organs are at the level of 10 per cent as compared to the groups of the other three countries of Southern Europe, totalling up to only fifteen in 1986. This level is below that of Spain at the time of its application for entry into the EC, and roughly comparable to that of Greece in a similar period. The TISK (Turkish Employers' Confederation) which had suspended its membership in the UNICE on account of financial deficiencies, has meanwhile re-assumed its place there. An exceptional case which requires mentioning is the case concerning the Turkish representative of the textile industries, who plays a prominent role as the only spokesman in the negotiations with the Commission, and who is also responsible for the distribution of annual quotas between the Turkish textile enterprises. The evolution of the Turkish groups' activity will probably follow a similar pace to that of the Greek groups in their participation in the Community organs, which gained momentum after Greece's entry into the EC. On the other hand, the process of integration of the Spanish and Portuguese groups took place much earlier and faster, already before 1980.

Our survey in Greece indicated the existence of two conflicting approaches towards European integration in the industrial sectors; the food industries are better integrated than the other industrial branches; on the other hand, the textile industries (with the exception of cotton), chemistry

and metallurgy appears to be insufficiently integrated in the Community groups. The inverse practice is observable in Spain, where most of the industrial groups are well integrated with the European groups with the exception of the food industries sector. In Portugal, the industrial groups are integrated unequally and on the average despite the recent progress made on the part of the central interest groups. In principle, the degree of participation corresponds to the level of membership, taking in account that Greek and Portuguese groups suffer comparatively more from lack of sufficient means.

In the three countries the liberal professions, services and commerce are well represented, with the exception of the Spanish craftsmen, the intensity of participation varying in terms of the impact of the Community policy on the sector, and the relative importance of the sectors concerned, as well as the means at their disposal. This observation, which could be extended to other sectors, must be interpreted in the light of the perception that the leaders of the groups are concerned regarding their relations with the Community groups and the institutions of the EC in terms of a cost-benefit analysis. In the same line of thought, we have observed that the agricultural groups are, in general, well-integrated and more active as agriculture remains an important field of activity in the three countries, and in the Community: agriculture is the object in relation to a substantial form of encouragement within the framework of the CAP special contributions made to the farmers of the South European countries. These inputs have sometimes also a significant political dimension, as in the case of Greece.

#### THE FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL INTEREST GROUPS AS RELATED TO THE EC

Among the principal functions of the interest groups with relation to the European integration, the following are the predominant ones: information studies and analysis, representation and coordination, influence, promotion or defence of interests. As elaborated in the past in our previous work,<sup>10</sup> the information function comes first in importance among the activities of the European groups. Progressively, with the development of the integration process, other functions also begin to assume more importance. In the South European countries and especially in Spain and Portugal, their processes of democratization brought forward the legitimization function of national groups through membership in the Community or international organizations. Their belonging to the European associations is, in a way, the recognition of their representativity and consequently of their legitimacy, which mostly results in the reinforcement of their status and their influence at the national level.

In Greece, all the groups utilize the traditional channels of information --



circulars, bulletins, reports etc. to keep their members abreast of current European problems; in addition, the exporters also operate a databank. The information is concentrated on specific questions like industrial development under SEV. The Technical Chamber and PASEGES furnish rich and regular information on the integrated Mediterranean Programmes. On the other hand, the information provided appears insufficient in the opinion of trade unions, with the exception of the textiles trade union. In Spain as well as in Portugal the demand for information has significantly increased since their integration. The dissemination of information is accomplished through the regular and periodic means to which publications and up-to-date reports are added. The primary function of the groups, it appears, is to act as instruments for the retrieval and dissemination of information concerning the EC. They constitute a means of reducing the distance between their members and the EC, as well as of facilitating the action of their members in European matters. Thus, for example, the members of Portuguese organizations interviewed mostly regard their organizations more and more like a conveyor belt of information – evaluated as more efficient than national administrations – rather than real pressure groups. Moreover, in the three countries, the great majority of leaders of the groups interviewed are of the opinion that the national administrations furnish incomplete information parsimoniously, and that it is through their contacts and their participation at the Community level that the interest groups are informed of the prevailing problems and decisions taken in the Community. According to the principle of division of work, the general information is disseminated through the central organizations, the specialized organizations being responsible for sectoral information.

Other functions of the groups tend to develop as the impact of the EC on the tangible interests of their members increases: aggregation of the interests of its members and of definition of common attitudes; representation and negotiation within groups or advisory organs of the EC; elaboration of strategies and their coordination with those of other national groups; protection of the interests of their members; pressure in order to influence the positions of the Community groups as well as the decisions of the EC. In addition to these functions of pressure group or lobbying, the interest groups assume also a more general role: they contribute by the diversity and richness of information to the transparency and through the plurality of the decision centres to the democratization of the socio-political system. This role of the national groups is reinforced by their integration within the network of European groups. Finally, altogether and in their various levels and degrees they bring their contributions to the process of 'European socialization' of their leaders and their members.

The means and accesses used by the socio-economic groups of the three countries are not fundamentally different from those available to their European counterparts: the principal means are the advice, the reports and

the positions the groups transmit to their European organizations, and which they seek to have prevail at national or Community level. It is only occasionally that groups use other means like the media or exceptional manifestations (eg. manifestations of European farmers organized by the COPA). The difference, according to the leaders of South European groups, as expressed in interviews with them, lies mainly in the magnitude of means available to them in the form of financial resources, the level of competence or the number of delegates or experts available. As referred to before, the Greek and Portuguese as well as Spanish leaders emphasize the insufficiency of their financial resources as an obstacle in the way of keeping an active and continuous participation within the professional and official organs of the EC.

#### EVALUATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST GROUPS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

The basic issue, and also the most difficult one, concerns the evaluation of the influence of the socio-economic groups on the process of decision-making both at the national and at the Community levels. In our previous studies devoted to this subject, we had to analyse and evaluate the weights of various indicators of power, investigate the various accesses and means available to obtain results and through these various approaches, try to reach an appraisal of the potential capacity of influence of interest groups.<sup>11</sup> This method which consists, to begin with, of approaching and surrounding a central problem by means which are easy to observe, is finally completed by an analysis of certain cases of influence. In full consciousness of the deficiencies of this approach, we have found it pertinent to extract certain general conclusions based on our observations, inquiries and our knowledge of the subject.

Without carrying a general judgment, one can conclude that the predominance of specialized organizations is a sign of efficiency of technical action. General action, on the other hand, is difficult to define; a general agreement is mostly in the form of a compromise of approaches or ideas. When the decision rests on general problems, pressures are imprecise and indistinct and have less chances of exerting any real influence. On the other hand, technical action is more limited, but also much more precise. A draft regulation concerning beer or jam suggested by European organizations has a much better chance of approval by the EC authorities than a commercial or antitrust policy proposed by a central organization. At the present stage of European integration it appears that specialized, limited or technical influence will have an upper hand over general influence. This observation seems quite plausible, as it is much more difficult to evaluate the general influence of organizations like the UNICE or the ETUC as

compared to the more precise and incisive action of COPA, for example. However, this observation is not meant to give an exaggerated impression of the influence of specialized or technical groups.<sup>12</sup> A general evaluation of the influence of the interest groups is a hazardous exercise: it implies analyses of a multitude of factors in a chronological perspective as well as an appraisal of a complex model of inter-influences somewhat akin to a polygon of forces, of decisions and of pressures evolving from the framework of a special process which is in general inseparable from the overall national or Community level processes.

Due precautions having been taken, a concrete distinction, however, could be established between the general and the sectoral or specialized influence. The representatives of the Spanish groups, in general, value sectoral influence as much more effective and important than general influence. The responses to these questions are inversely proportional, with 70 per cent of the interviewed rating sectoral influence maximum, and about 65 per cent judging general influence minimum. The majority of the Spanish groups, subject to our research, are of the opinion that the capacity for influence of the groups is increasing following Spain's entry to the Community. The effect at the national level is evident, as perceived from the responses of the majority of our interviewees whether from the trade unions or the employers that the influence of the professional organizations have increased since the entry of Spain into the EC.

This dimension occupies an important place in the views of the Portuguese and Greek socio-economic leaders. It is significant that being part of a European group greatly facilitates intervention in the decision-making process concerning Portugal. In the same way, for the representatives of the employers' organizations the integration of Portugal in the EC contributes to the reinforcement of the engagement of the country in a market economy system and obliges it to revise the constitution in that sense. This is, at least, their expectation, which also coincides with the efforts deployed by the SDP government.

The experience of the Greek groups deserves further attention. It is interesting to note that the evaluation of the principal Greek employers' groups of the European groups' influence, although quite laconically expressed, is positive and quite effective in general. Only the exporters are of the opinion that their influence is weak and the real power passes through the government and the European Parliament. This reference to the European Parliament suggests that the evaluation is largely a function of the relations and views of the interviewees, and that it should be moderated by the real weight that the European Parliament has in the Community system.

The Technical Chamber, the liberal professions and the PASEGES perceive the influence of the European groups differently, although the majority agree on attributing to them a real or potential part of influence.

According to most of them, this influence is a function of the capacity of the European groups in formulating tangible and sectoral proposals. Only the PASEGES made a critical evaluation of the influences of the COPA and the COGECA on common agricultural policy. Nevertheless, this affirmation is greatly toned down by its following observation according to which the Commission takes back or modifies its proposals each time a strong majority of member groups of COPA opposes it, indicating thus their 'veto power'. When it comes to trade unions – as could be judged from their level of participation – they are mostly sceptical in this respect.

If it is important to find out how the national groups evaluate the capacity of influence of the European groups, it is also significant in this context to analyse their opinions on their own influence within the European socio-economic groups. In this respect, one can assume in principle that those who attribute a high degree of influence to the European groups of which they are members, usually tend to evaluate their own influence positively within their European groups. Such is the case with the modernistic employers' fractions – SEV, EEE, Cotton – who claim to have a certain influence within the organizations of which they are members. Taking into account its resources and the dimensions of its membership, the SEV admits to be not as influential as the great European employers' organizations, while the EEE claims to have a great influence as it represents the most important merchant fleet in the EC. Various other groups like the PASEGES declare themselves influential within the European groups, like the COPA. The PASEGES emphasizes that it is essential, for the protection of the interests of the group, to seek alliances with its counterparts of the other member countries. Finally – with surprise – one finds that the majority of the representatives of the workers consider themselves as influential in the Community groups of which they are a member. This statement raises doubts and one tends to suspect wishful thinking on the part of certain groups. It is a general tendency observed regarding various groups, to overrate their influence in an attempt to increase their importance in front of their members and the decision-making bodies.

The principal Greek groups mainly agree that their affiliation to European organizations has had a positive effect on their relations with the government. For example, the Association of Medical Doctors declares that their affiliation to the European organization renders them able to criticize the government policy whenever it deviates from the decisions taken at the Community level. The Bar's representatives declares that their relations with the government and the Ministry of Justice are quite good, so that there is no reason to criticize the government. While many other groups complain of a lack of consultation on the part of the government, the PASEGES, on the contrary, claims that its exchange of information and assistance with the Ministry of Agriculture and its participation in the

Community groups, has gained it the advantage of informal but continuous collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture.

This collaboration in the agricultural sector is not particular to Greece but is encountered in most of the EC countries: in France, in Germany, in Denmark or in Italy but mostly in Spain and in Portugal. Many arguments have been raised in explanation of this phenomenon, especially stressing the fact that agriculture – often in difficulty or regression – remains as a sector politically and socially worthy of attention, or of some sort of special protection by the governments. Some workers' organizations appear to draw certain benefits from their international or European affiliations, especially in the form of support for their claims at home.

On the whole, with the exception of certain Greek groups, the groups from Southern Europe are of the opinion that the governments keep them out of the process of decision-making. Contrary to what happens in the other European countries, the practice of consultation with socio-economic groups does not appear to be a general tendency. Probably, the integration of a country into the EC and of its national groups into the European groups, contributes to the development of the process of consultation which many governments practise regardless of their political colour. Finally, one can wonder if other substitutes or additional relations exist, especially in the form of personal relations. Already there is good reason to believe that the foreseeable evolution in the countries of Southern Europe will progressively increase the transparency of relations between the enterprises and their groups on one hand, and the governmental bodies on the other.

## CONCLUSIONS

Despite the structural differences among them and a certain degree of difference in their timing of affiliation to European groups, the interest groups of the three new member countries display comparable modes and often convergent behaviours. With their return to democracy, the emerging interest groups of the three new members have found themselves stronger and with more autonomy with regard to the government and the political parties. In this way, they contribute to an increase in the representation of diverse socio-economic interests and to the revival of social pluralism.

Taking as an example the general process of creation of the Community groups, the central national organizations were the first to adhere to the large European organizations like the UNICE and the COPA. The *process of integration* of the sectoral groups also conforms with the general trend observed in the EC: the interests most affected by the policies and decisions at the Community level tend to integrate first, the others follow

gradually in relation to the rate at which Community level action penetrates their field of activity. In Greece and in Portugal, first the central and then the sectoral national groups affiliated to the EC groups, while in Spain – as a result of the autonomy of regions – this process at the national level was followed by affiliation of a certain number of regional groups. This regionalization is also reflected within the national groups, in the composition of their leaders and in the distribution of authority.

An *analysis of the attitudes* of the principal leaders of the interest groups taken as basic factors of behaviour, leads to the conclusion that their attitudes are in general positive from the viewpoint of general policy. In fact, the groups are of the opinion that the entry of their countries to the EC would constitute a firm anchorage to the democratic Europe reinforcing the stability of their young democracies. On the other hand, as one investigates further in individual domains and especially within various sectors, one finds that the attitudes become more subtle, more prudent and even more reserved. The fear of unequal competition from enterprises better-equipped and technologically much more advanced begins to emerge. However, following the adhesion to the EC and direct experience within the EC, these apprehensions begin to subside and turn into an attitude which is more positive and active in pursuit of profit from the opportunities and the advantages offered by the EC.

This upwards evolution corresponds, in general, to the trends of *public opinion* in the three countries; the initially less favourable public opinion about integration with the EC in Greece since 1981, has turned up following 1983 reaching the 50 per cent limit by 1987 and a little over that in 1988; in Portugal, the ratio of those in favour of integration was about 30 per cent between 1980 and 1985. It made a jump between 1985 and 1987, attaining a value of about 60 per cent in 1987; with a small decrease, it was slightly over 50 per cent in 1988. The opinions concerning the beneficial consequences follow the same evolution between 1986 and 1988 and remain slightly below those in favour of integration; in Spain, the public opinion in favour of integration has remained relatively stable and increased only slightly between 1980 and 1988, exceeding the 60 per cent mark; but contrary to the other two countries, opinions concerning beneficial consequences display a considerable difference compared to the opinion on entry: while remaining at a much lower level, it rises by 15 per cent in 1986 to near 25 per cent in 1988.<sup>13</sup>

By comparison, the *adaptation* of the Greek interest groups appears quite slow, and their *participation* in the Community level activities less effective, with the exception of the central employers' organization and the shipowners. Although it became a member six years later, Spain has reached the level of 167 in 1980 and of 189 in 1986, numbers much above the number of Greek groups taking part within Community level groups. The dimensions and diversification of its economy, which is much beyond

those of the Greek economy, are probably the decisive factors in this development. The comparison of the rates of affiliation of the Greek and Portuguese groups is interesting to note; in 1980 the number of Portuguese groups affiliated was 85 as compared to 66 from Greece; however, Greece has caught up with and surpassed Portugal in 1986, with 154 against 113. It appears that the constitution or rather reconstitution of the Spanish and Portuguese interest groups, with the return to democracy of these countries, enables their adaptation to be faster and their need for affiliation to and their participation in the Community groups larger. In a lesser degree, these factors are equally valid for Greece.

The employers-trade unions *conflict*, which is more pronounced in Greece as compared to the other two countries, is also discernible in the attitudes as well as in the degrees of participation of the interest groups. The intensity of participation appears, in a way, less than that which prevails in Spain or Portugal; the trade unions close to the governmental parties are participating more actively within the ETUC. However, the intensity of participation, although indicative of the influences of employers/trade unions and communist/socialist cleavages and conflicts, equally depends on the respective weights of other factors like the impact of the Community policies and decisions on the interest groups, the importance of the sectors affected, their opening up to the EC and on the resources available to the interest groups concerned.

An *analysis of the functions* of the interest groups reveals a confirmation of the results previously obtained: to begin with, access to information plays a predominant role: next to that come functions of representation, common strategies and the protection which increase as the field of influence of the EC grows. Also of importance is the fact that the more the impact of the EC becomes tangible and immediate, the larger is the spectrum of functions with regard to Community affairs that the interest groups assume.

The *real degree of influence* of the interest groups is also rather difficult to assess, as the groups tend to manifest a general inclination towards overestimating their influences. In this perspective, it is quite probable that they slightly exaggerate the importance and influence of the Community groups also, to emphasize their own weights at the European level. Despite all these overevaluations, all the groups confirm that their joining the Community groups and their participation at that level increased their capacities of access and their influences within their governments. In this context the Turkish textile groups constitute an extreme case.

As a rule, the national interest groups are directly in touch with the Community echelons without passing through the channels of the national administrations. This direct access at the European level also reinforces their positions in negotiations at the national level. However, there is another mode of approach also observed as regards the national groups,

which involves using their access at the level of national administrations as an additional means of influence to affect the decisions of the Council where national ministers sit and vote.<sup>14</sup>

All the experience gained from studies on the interest groups indicate that the global and general influence of the groups is more difficult to ascertain as a result of the various factors and actors which enter the play, to say nothing of the other pressures, informal influences due to certain situations, to the atmosphere or to the dominant ideas of the moment as well as the 'invisible' interaction of people, of groups and of officials. The complexity of the global socio-political processes makes it difficult to assess the parts of influence attributable to various actors. On the other hand, our inquiries confirm most of our previous conclusions, and especially the one that in the present state of the European integration, the sectoral influence which is more specific, more technical and somewhat more striking is also more easily distinguishable by the available techniques of observation.

By concentrating our analysis on the interest groups themselves, we ought to keep ourselves away from fallacies which may lead to overemphasizing their weights on the European and national level decision-making processes. In reality, as a result of our work, we reached the conclusion that the weights of the European as well as the national groups of interest on processes of decision-making and management at the Community level remain relatively modest as compared to those of the governments and their representatives. But we have to take into account that, in turn, the governments can be influenced by their national groups, the weight of which varies from country to country. The fact remains that alongside institutional centres of decision, the political parties and the electors, the groups – reflecting a multitude of socio-economic interests – assume a variable but effective role in their national communities and also in the European Community.

#### NOTES

1. This synthesis reproduces the results of research on the political parties and interest groups in their relations with European units and groups performed under my direction in collaboration with Dr. U. Ayberk and with the aid of the Volkswagenwerk Foundation. It is based on the following papers: Carlos Garcia, 'Les groupes socio-professionnels espagnols et la Communauté', University of Geneva, October 1987; Anna Melich, 'Problématique centre-périphérie en Espagne: Intégration à la CE des groupes dont le siège n'est pas dans la capitale', University of Geneva, October 1987; Maximos Aligisakis, Ioannis Papadopoulos, with the collaboration of Marianna Cossina, 'Aspects de l'insertion des groupes d'intérêts grecs dans la Communauté Européenne: la perception des élites en tant qu'indicateur d'intégration', University of Geneva, October 1987; Guilhermina Marques, 'Quelques aspects de l'intégration des

- groupes d'intérêts portugais au niveau européen', University of Geneva, March 1988; Ural Ayberk, Emre Boduroglu, 'Les groupes d'intérêt turcs face à la Communauté Européenne', University of Geneva, October 1987.
2. Sidjanski, D. (1979) *Europe élections: de la démocratie européenne* (Paris: Stanké).
  3. Meynaud, J. and D. Sidjanski (1971) *Les groupes de pression dans la Communauté européenne 1958-1968* (Bruxelles; Editions de l'institut de Sociologie).
  4. Sidjanski, D. and Ural Ayberk (1987) 'Bilan des groupes et du processus de décision dans la Communauté européenne des Six', *Rex Publica* No 1, 1974 and 'Le nouveau visage des groupes d'intérêt communautaires', *Revue d'intégration européenne*, 2 and 3.
  5. The collection of data on the groups of the south of Europe has been completed following eighty-four in-depth interviews with the leaders of central employers' organizations, industrial and commercial, agricultural organizations, trade unions as well as with some sectoral organizations. Cf. Sidjanski, D. and U. Ayberk (1989) *Rapport sur les partis politiques et les groupes d'intérêt en Europe du Sud dans leurs relations avec les formations et groupes européens*, Stiftung Volkswagenwerke/SVW, October.
  6. In the final elections the Spanish UGT has obtained the greatest number of delegates followed by the CC.OO. which has the majority in various cities and large industrial enterprises.
  7. Condomines, J. (1984) 'Les syndicalistes parlementaires en Espagne', Department of Political Science, Geneva.
  8. The contacts are considered difficult on account of cost and therefore not established except on an occasional visits of individual members of the Union.
  9. See Sidjanski, D. and U. Ayberk (1974) 'Bilan des groupes...', *Res Publica*, which emphasises the parallelism between the impact of Community policies and actions on the one hand and the emergence or importance of the Community groups on the other.
  10. Meynaud, J. and D. Sidjanski (1967) *L'Europe des affaires* (Paris: Payot) and *Les groupes de pression dans la Communauté européenne*, op. cit.; D. Sidjanski and U. Ayberk 'Le nouveau visage des groupes d'intérêt communautaires', op. cit.
  11. See our works realized mostly with Jean Meynaud, Ural Ayberk, José Barroso and Jonas Condomines. In our analyses we have made reference to indicators of the capacity to influence such as: 1. The importance of the sector and the grouping in the sector in terms of turnover, per cent of workers and the sales; 2. the importance and the validity of the cause or interests defended; 3. the representivity and the number of its members, eg. unions, farmers, enterprises; 4. financial assets; 5. organization and efficiency: a) actual number of staff, b) competence of administrators, c) their authority and prestige; 6. image and reputation of the group; 7. homogeneity or divisions; 8. relations with other groups (coalitions, rivalries); 9. means of contact with or access to institutions and centres of decision.
  12. Sidjanski, D. (1982) 'Les groupes de pression dans la Communauté européenne' *Il Politico* 3, 559 and 560.
  13. Eurobarometer 29, June 1988.
  14. See the general action diagram of Community and national groups in our article 'Les groupes de pression dans la Communauté européenne' in *Il Politico*, 3, 1982, pp. 553-5.

## 9 Trust between Nations: Primordial Ties, Societal Learning and Economic Development

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### ABSTRACT

Though widely criticized in recent years, the concept of political culture is useful in understanding the nature and sociopolitical impact of interpersonal trust. For trust – both in others of one's own nationality, and toward other nationalities – seems to be an enduring characteristic of given cultures that can, partly, be traced to long-term societal learning. Trust is also strongly related to a given society's level of economic development. Primordial ties, such as race, religion or geographic proximity, have surprisingly little impact on trust, when we control for the effects of economic development and shared historical experiences. Trust ratings of seventeen nationalities, made by ten Western publics, show a remarkable cross-cultural consensus that certain nationalities can be trusted more than others. The evidence suggests that economic development is conducive to trust – but that inter-personal trust may also be a prerequisite for economic and social modernization.

### INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal trust plays an important role in economic and political cooperation, as has long been recognized (Wylie, 1957; Banfield, 1958; Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1966; Hart, 1973; Luhman, 1979; Hill, 1981; Miyake, 1982; Abramson, 1983; c.f. Miller, 1974; Citrin, 1974; Marsh, 1977). Nevertheless, little empirical research has dealt with trust between different nationalities; the most relevant work is Deutsch, 1952; Buchanan and Cantril, 1953; Deutsch, *et al.*, 1957; Merritt and Puchala, 1968; Nincic and Russett, 1979.

Trust or distrust help shape one's expectations under conditions of imperfect information; they can be crucial factors when the leaders of one nation interpret the actions of another nation. Trust is the expectation that