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Project FWO and ARRS »The organizational development of national interest groups in a European comparative perspective« (N5-0023, ARRS/ Slovenian Research Agency)

Project Leader prof. dr. Danica Fink Hafner

## **PROTOCOL ON DEFININIG POPULATION OF NATIONAL INTEREST GROUPS FOR SLOVENIA**

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### **How to cite:**

Fink-Hafner, D., Hafner-Fink, M., Novak, M., Kronegger, L. and Lajh, D. (2015) *Protocol on defining population of national interest groups for Slovenia*, Ljubljana: Centre for Political Science Research.

Ljubljana, February 2015

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## Conducting the Survey

In this memo we present the procedure followed to form a population of national interest groups in Slovenia for conducting web survey among them. The survey is part of ‘The organizational development of national interest groups in a European comparative perspective’ project (N5-0023).

### 1. Working definition of interest groups<sup>1</sup>

We understand interest groups in a broad sense as organized groups that have some sort of constituency either in form of supporters or members and represent interest of their members and supporters or interest of others that cannot represent themselves such as children, animals, environment... These groups are either politically active or their political activity is latent. They have interest and capacity to be active but most of their time their activity is not political. In case they would come across a new political issue of their interest they may become politically active. This definition of interest groups includes trade unions, societies and religious groups. We will exclude law firms, consultancy firms, and all types of companies and firms. We will only take in consideration national level groups and exclude groups that are active only at the local level.

### 2. Source

We will form a population of interest groups with a bottom-up approach. Our main source for defining the population is Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJPES), primary source of official public and other information on business entities in Slovenia. Link: <http://www.ajpes.si/>. AJPES includes all entities that engage in economic activities in Slovenia and is connected to different other databanks: Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia. Our first search for the interest groups is the list of taxpayers available at website of Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia: [http://www.durs.gov.si/si/storitve/seznami\\_davcnih\\_zavezancev/](http://www.durs.gov.si/si/storitve/seznami_davcnih_zavezancev/), where we will get the full list of interest groups and the following variables: name, address, tax code, activity code (šifra

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<sup>1</sup> As agreed at the meeting on 17. February 2015 at the Faculty of social sciences. Present: Danica Fink Hafner, William Maloney, Mitja Hafner Fink, Frederik Heylen, Damjan Lajh, Luka Kronegger, Meta Novak.

dejavnosti) and registration number (matična številka). For additional variables we will look for in AJPES.

### 3. Selecting the units

#### 3.1 Selecting the units: Step 1<sup>2</sup>

From the list of taxpayers ([http://www.durs.gov.si/si/storitve/seznami\\_davcnih\\_zavezancev/](http://www.durs.gov.si/si/storitve/seznami_davcnih_zavezancev/)) we selected all organizations that have been assigned the NACE (Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne) code S 94, which refers to organizations that represent the interest and views of specific constituency. NACE classification system consists of 6 digit codes and is available here: <http://www.stat.si/klasje/tabela.aspx?cvn=5531>. The code S94 includes environmental and development NGOs, cultural and recreational organizations, religious organizations as well as business, employers and professional membership organization. Full definition of S94 code is: *'This division includes activities of organizations representing interests of special groups or promoting ideas to the general public. These organizations usually have a constituency of members, but their activities may involve and benefit non-members as well. The primary breakdown of this division is determined by the purpose that these organizations serve, namely interests of employers, self-employed individuals and the scientific community (group 94.1), interests of employees (group 94.2) or promotion of religious, political, cultural, educational or recreational ideas and activities (group 94.9).'* We can find **18274** entities registered in Slovenia under this code on 17. February 2015.

Code NACE 94					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	94110	171	,9	,9	,9
	94120	1492	8,2	8,2	9,1
	94200	3079	16,8	16,8	25,9
	94910	1040	5,7	5,7	31,6
	94920	155	,8	,8	32,5
	94991	239	1,3	1,3	33,8
	94999	12098	66,2	66,2	100,0

<sup>2</sup> The first step of population formation is taken over from Beyers, Jan and Bert Fraussen (2015—forthcoming) *Who's In and Who's Out? Explaining Access to Policymakers in Belgium*. Acta Politica *forthcoming*.

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Total	18274	100,0	100,0
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## Code S94

S				
3	S94.1	Dejavnost poslovnih, delodajalskih in strokovnih združenj	Activities of business, employers and professional membership organisations	S94
4	S94.11	Dejavnost poslovnih in delodajalskih združenj	Activities of business and employers membership organisations	S94.1
5	S94.110	Dejavnost poslovnih in delodajalskih združenj	Activities of business and employers membership organisations	S94.11 46
4	S94.12	Dejavnost strokovnih združenj	Activities of professional membership organisations	S94.1
5	S94.120	Dejavnost strokovnih združenj	Activities of professional membership organisations	S94.12 327
3	S94.2	Dejavnost sindikatov	Activities of trade unions	S94
4	S94.20	Dejavnost sindikatov	Activities of trade unions	S94.2
5	S94.200	Dejavnost sindikatov	Activities of trade unions	S94.20 1818
3	S94.9	Dejavnost drugih članskih organizacij	Activities of other membership organisations	S94
4	S94.91	Dejavnost verskih organizacij	Activities of religious organisations	S94.9
5	S94.910	Dejavnost verskih organizacij	Activities of religious organisations	S94.91 31
4	S94.92	Dejavnost političnih organizacij	Activities of political organisations	S94.9
5	S94.920	Dejavnost političnih organizacij	Activities of political organisations	S94.92 51
4	S94.99	Dejavnost druge nerazvrščenih članskih organizacij	Activities of other membership organisations n.e.c.	S94.9
5	S94.991	Dejavnost invalidskih organizacij	Activity of membership organisations for disabled persons	S94.99 33
5	S94.999	Dejavnost druge nerazvrščenih članskih organizacij	Activities of other membership organisations n.e.c.	S94.99 1228

### 3.2 Selecting the units: Step 2

We will search for organizations from attachment 1 and **include** them **directly** in our final population. If the organization is not on our list of 18274 organizations we will add it. Organizations in Attachment 1 (92 organizations) were interviewed in frame of our survey among 97 most active interest organizations from 11 policy fields in 2012.

### 3.3 Selecting the units: Step 3

We will search for organizations from attachment 2 and **include** them **directly** in our final population. If the organization is not on our list of 18274 organizations we will add it. Organizations in Attachment 2

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(26 organizations) were interviewed in frame of INTEREURO project (N5-0014) on selected 20 legislative proposals.

### 3.4 Selecting the units: Step 4

We will select/ include the following organizations from the list of our 18274 organizations. The organizations that will not be selected are not part of our population and won't be included in the survey.

Organizations that:

- Have in their name ZVEZ\* (association) OR
- Have in their name SLOVENIJ\* OR

This includes the organizations which have in their name: zveza or Slovenija or slovenska zveza or zveza Slovenije.

- Have their address (headquarters) in one of the city municipalities<sup>3</sup>:
  - Ljubljana
  - Maribor
  - Ptuj
  - Celje
  - Kranj
  - Novo mesto
  - Nova Gorica
  - Koper
  - Murska Sobota
  - Slovenj Gradec
  - Velenje.

This leaves as with 3526 organisations + organisations that have already been directly included.

### 3.5 Selecting the units: Step 5

From the new list we will exclude all the organizations that are:

- Župnija (parish) (11 organizations)

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<sup>3</sup> Slovenia has 211 municipalities, 11 municipalities are city municipalities. To avoid high number of purely local organisations we decided to include in our database only organisations from bigger cities (city municipalities). Organisations that are active predominantly on national level are more likely registered in one of these cities. In the phase of collecting data we will additionally exclude all the irrelevant organisations active purely on local level.

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This leaves us with 3515 organizations + organisations that have already been directly included.

### 3.6 Selecting the units: Step 7

From 3515 organizations we exclude those that are no longer present in register of AJPes (Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services). These are so-called erased organizations and are no longer active. This excludes from our population another 32 organisations.

### 3.7 Selecting the units: Step 7

From our list of 3483 organizations we will next exclude political parties. This is the sub-code S94.92 and S94.920. There are 51 political parties in our data base. We now have 3432 units of analyses. By adding organizations that were directly included in final population list (17 organizations unfortunately don't have tax number) we now have 3510. Attachment 3 specifies our units in the sample according to NACE code.

### 3.8 Selecting the units: Step 8

To our list of 3510 organizations we add also all organizations (regardless of their NACE code) that have in their name one of the following word root: SLOVEN\* or ZVEZ\*. From 116.838 units (these are all units at the taxpayers list) there are 5281 organizations that meet this criteria. We make sure there are no double entries in our database. This means additional 2217 new units in our sample. Our current sample now counts 5727 units.

The rationale behind these criteria is that some of the most visible associations that are also politically active were not assigned the NACE code S94 but some other code. For example sport associations such as e.g. the Olympic Committee of Slovenia; the Alpine association of Slovenia, etc. that are not registered under NACE code S94 are active in policy process and therefore relevant for our survey. These organisations need to collect money for their sport disciplines and are often connected to political parties via the leading cadre. Since these organizations are also relevant for our survey we apply step 8 to selection procedure.

Another rationale behind this step is that in selection step 4 we used to narrow root of word Slovenija—that is SLOVENIJ\*. Societies with the following forms of the word: slovenski, slovenskih, slovensko etc. were not included in our sample though they should be. 756 units with code NACE S94 were now additionally added to the sample by choosing wider root of the word Slovenija.

### 3.9 Selecting the units: Step 9

By selection step 8 we obtained in our sample also some organizations that are indeed some sort of firm or completely local organizations that have in their name their local town such as SLOVENSke Konjice, SLOVENj Gradec, SLOVENSka Bistrica, SLOVENSke Gorice as well as parish, political parties, international company with branch in Slovenia or companies with their headquarter abroad, state institutions, research institutes and cooperatives (Zadruga) etc. To exclude these units from our sample we go manually through the database and erase the units that are not relevant for our survey. By this step we exclude 940 units from 2217 new units. We now have in our core sample 3510 units and in our additional sample 1277 unit.

### 3.10 Selecting the units: Step 10

In this step we acquire additional data from AJPES. For each unit of analyses AJPES provides as data for variable activity (*aktivnost*) with the following values: 1. business entity operates; 2. Business entity does not operate; 3. Died; 4. No data (*»1 - Poslovni subjekt posluje«, »2 - Poslovni subjekt ne posluje«, »3 – Umrlo« in »9 - Ni podatka o poslovanju«*). They provide us data for 4727 units out of 4787 units, since 60 units are no longer registered. From our basic sample of 3510 units 3467 units are still registered and 3000 units operate. From our additional sample of 1277 units 1260 units are still registered and 1103 units still operate. We keep only the business units that operate. Our sample now counts 4103 units.

Sample	No. of units	No. of registered units	No. of units that operate	No. of units that do not operate
Basic	3510	3467	3000	467
Additional	1277	1260	1103	157
overall	4787	4727	<b>4103</b>	624

### 3.11 Selecting the units: Last step

In the last step we will start collecting contact data for all organizations on our list. In this step we will go through manual selection procedure. If we identify local organizations, non-active organization and organizations that are not interest groups and removed them from the list. Coders will mark the organizations that they believe do not belong to our organization (Not in Target). Member of research team will go through the list of unselected organizations and verify if the organization should be excluded from the sample.

## 4. Contact collection: INSTRUCTIONS FOR CODERS:

### 4.1 I. Part- collecting the data and identifying contact person

Contact collection will be done with help of platform ACIM Database Management system set up by Antwerp team. The following variables need to be filled in contact collection platform:

- Title: Name of the organization that would appear in invite letters etc. *Use the form that is provided at the website of the organization. Use capital letters.*
- Original Name. *Correct, if the name is not properly recorded. Use capital letters.*  
Acronym. *Enter only official name.*
- Contact address 1: Street, Number& Box (poštni predal), Postal code, Municipality, Country, Phone (without spaces, only second box, no phone code for country), E-mail, URL. *Information about the organization.*
- Contact person: Title, Last Name, First Name, Job Title, E-mail, Phone (without spaces, only second box, no phone code for country). *Name is written in small letters with capital initials.*
- Contact person 2. Title, Last Name, First Name, Job Title, E-mail, Phone (without spaces, only second box, no phone code for country). *Name is written in small letters with capital initials.*



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- f. Comments. *Always enter a comment when the group is not in target, when there is a need to call or when the entry needs to be checked by someone else.*
- g. Options: Not in target. To call. Done. Supervisor check?

**Always double check phone number and e-mail. Make sure there are no typos.**

#### 4.2 II. Part- excluding irrelevant units from the sample- Not in target organizations

Verify whether the organization is indeed one of the organizations in which we are interested in

- h. We are interested in **National interest groups** (lobby groups):
  - i. An interest group has an organizational form (to set it apart from broad public movements)
  - ii. it is politically active as it tries to influence policy, or is a society (društvo) with a potential to be politically active
  - iii. and it does so by informally contacting politicians (so **it is no part of the government, in this sense, political parties are not included**)
  - iv. Most of the interest groups, 'group', so to speak, the interest of individuals, companies or other legal entities. This comes down to the fact that most of the time these organizations have a membership structure.
  - v. We include only national level groups. By this we mean that any municipal (občinske), intermunicipal (medobčinske), regional or local groups are excluded. These organizations are recognized in contrast to national interest groups by its focus solely on the part of Slovenia or particular town in Slovenia.

#### In case of inactive organizations:

In case for some organizations we do not find contact data and we are not convinced if the organization should be included in our population we manually check whether they are politically active with internet mining.

Organizations that:

- do not have a website or are a social media profile (Twitter, Facebook ...), **AND**
- do have a website but we cannot find any position papers, raised issues or news about political sector they are active in, **AND**
- no member of the research groups has any knowledge of their activity

are identified as non-active and excluded from our population.

#### 4.3 Selecting the right contact person

**Step 1:** Open the website of the organization and check the key variables

- When no website is found, try to look for information on the organization on other websites:

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- Google search
- TIC and BIZI websites
- Facebook, Twitter...
- AJPES, ePRS (you will need to register first) <http://www.ajpes.si/prs/>
- Correct any mistakes or missing's for the key variables
- If no contact information is found such as telephone, email, webpage, you leave the unit to be rechecked or mark it as Not in target if there is low probability that this is an active interest organization.
- If you would like to return to this organization later make sure none of the boxes: Not in target. To call. Done. Supervisor check? is ticked.

**Step 2:** Collecting the names and contacts:

- Our form already lists the possibility to enter two possible contacts. Often one of the contacts is already provided. This is the representative of the organization as provided in AJPES. Although these is a good starting point, he/she is not always the best respondents
- Different organizations call for different strategies, the biggest difference is the size of the office in terms of staff. Assess the size of the organizations and move on to step 3 or 4 accordingly
  - To do this, search for 'Staff' on the website (usually found under 'about us' or under 'contact')
  - If no names are found, continue to **step 5**

**Step 3:** Small organizations (<5):

- Our primary contact person regardless to the size of the organization would be someone who is employed in the organization as for example director or secretary general also president if this is a professional position. Unemployed staff (usually presidents) is our second choice.
- Locating the 'right person' in small organizations is pretty straightforward. For example, Oceana has 2 staff members in the Brussels office: *Nicolas Fournier (Office coordinator)* and *Vanya Vulperhorst (policy officer)*. Both will be able to answer the survey, so copy both (best candidate first)
- Sometimes this page does not list the email addresses or telephone numbers, in this case three things can be done (also applies to larger organizations)
  - 1: If you have the general email address, use this to construct the email address of the respondent you are looking for. E.g. the info address is [info@uantwerpen.be](mailto:info@uantwerpen.be) and the name of the person is Frederik Heylen. You can type the following into google: 'frederik.heylen @uantwerpen.be'. If the respondent ever used his/her email address

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on a website or on a published document, google will find it. Or try google name and surname and email.

- 2. If this does not work, continue to **step 5**
- Sometimes, a small organization employs 4 policy officers and 1 managing/ executive director. In this case the highest ranking officer is the obvious first choice, but deciding upon who to use as second option could be difficult. This is because the staffs of these organizations have a high turn-over rate. Try to find out who is the second, most senior person inside the organization by reading her/his CV. Or try to estimate who covers more areas or more general areas in the organization. Person in charge of PR is also a good choice.

**Step 4:** Larger organizations (>5):

- Our primary contact person regardless to the size of the organization would be someone who is employed in the organization as for example director or secretary general also president if this is a professional position. Unemployed staff (usually presidents) is our second choice.
- The larger the organization, the higher the level of specialization. This could make it a lot more difficult to locate the right person. Take for example Business Europe:  
<http://www.besnesseurope.eu/content/default.asp?PageId=793>. In this case it is nearly impossible to identify the right person (s). So the course of action changes:
  - Yet, in larger organizations, you will have to beware that the executive director or secretary general is too busy running this large office to complete the survey. It is therefore better to target lower ranked staff members
  - Another way of filtering would be to check the occupation of these persons within the organization. For example, policy officers, project managers, (senior) policy advisors. It would be better to list these as first contact and somebody as the secretary general or head of the office as second
  - In larger organizations you should refrain from listing somebody from the board of directors. You should always look at the staff or the secretariat
  - In case of doubt call the organization or call (the PR) and ask who would be most suitable for participating in our survey.

**Step 5:** as last resort, you should call the front office (general telephone number usually listed under contact or below) with the following, short and concise question:

- “Good ( Afternoon)/Morning, I am XX, working at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of social sciences. At the Centre for political science research we are currently preparing a survey under the leadership of prof. dr. Danica Fink Hafner and in international collaboration with University of Antwerp and University of Newcastle. The survey will take place in autumn 2015. I would like to ask you on who we can turn to in your organization. I am interested in the organizational structure of your organization. Who should I contact to ask some questions?”

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- If the front office is hesitating to give you this information ensure them that providing you with the name does not mean obligatory participation in our survey. For now we would only like to know to who we can send the invite. Be short and concise.
- You will get a higher success rate if you sound happy and cheerful, nobody likes a grumpy caller. You also have to sound firm and not offer exits out.
- Even when the request is flatly refused, stay friendly and rephrase your request. Saying no, twice (even to a stranger) is difficult for most people. Certainly if you rephrase your request in a way in which it seems easier to comply to than the first request, you will have a higher change of success (**for example, 1<sup>st</sup> time: can you give me the email + phone, 2<sup>nd</sup> time: ok, but could you at least give me her name?**).
- Be aware that they will try to get you to send an email, usually this is a way to get rid of you. In this case you can comply, but you will have to follow up this conversation (make sure to get the name of the person you just contacted).
- When this fails, stay friendly and wish her/him a good day and try again a few days later. Usually, manning the front office is a part time job, so changes are high that if you call Monday morning for the first time and again Thursday afternoon, you will get another person on the phone.
- If contacting the front office fails, try to directly contact the secretary general or director and pose the same question. Usually they will redirect you to the right person because they do not want to do it themselves.
- Being persistent (but friendly) is a key. Calling back, even the same person, pays off.
- Always call during work hours.

## 5. Final number of organisations

After careful coding of our three coders and additional calls during August and September we ended up with our final population that consists of 1300 organisations. To 1300 organisations an invitation to participate in the survey has been sent. In the latter stage some additional organisations have been excluded because we came across some local organisations or trade unions of individual companies. At the end population of national interest groups consisted of 1203 units.

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## **Attachment 1**

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## **Attachment 2**

Anonamised

### Attachment 3

NACE Code			Number of units
70220			1
71129			2
72190			3
72200			3
74900			1
85590			1
86909			1
88991			8
88999			1
93120			2
93190			4
94110			46
94120			327
94200			1818
94910			31
94991			33
94999			1228

### Attachment 4

NACE Code			Number of units
1110			1
1410			1
1700			17
3120			1
3220			4
10710			1
46330			1
52220			1
58110			1
59110			2
60100			1
61100			1
63110			1
63120			1
64920			1
70220			5
71112			1
71200			2
72190			7
72200			4

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74300			1
74900			2
79120			1
79900			1
82300			2
84110			7
84120			1
84130			10
84250			122
85421			1
85510			10
85520			4
85530			1
85590			5
87900			1
88109			4
88991			46
88999			19
90010			10
90020			2
90030			11
91020			1
91030			2
93110			2
93120			233
93190			153
93299			4
94110			14
94120			175
94200			20
94910			14
94920			2
94990			2
94991			4
94999			339