European Political Science Review (2025), 1–17
doi:10.1017/S1755773925100088

EPSR

RESEARCH ARTICLE

What makes a good lobbyist for the government? Explaining intergovernmental lobbying success

Rahel Freiburghaus

Postdoctoral Researcher at the Chair of Swiss Politics at the Institute of Political Science, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland
Email: rahel.freiburghaus@unibe.ch

(Received 16 October 2024; revised 01 February 2025; accepted 24 April 2025)

Abstract

Regional governments are one of the largest but most understudied interest groups, employing a wide range of advocacy tactics like hiring professional lobbyists and face-to-face lobbying. However, we know little about why some succeed in influencing public policy while others do not. This gap arises because existing theories of interest groups and intergovernmental mobilization focus on resources—money and legitimacy—that regional governments typically lack control over. To address this, I propose a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success tailored to regional governments, emphasizing the convergence of five distinct conditions. Using new and original data on the 26 Swiss cantons' influence on federal policy and employing set-theoretic methods (csQCA), I demonstrate that no single condition explains intergovernmental lobbying success. Instead, five causal pathways lead to a regional government shaping federal policy in line with its preferences. These findings have significant implications for understanding the effects of intergovernmental lobbying on representation, inequality, and unequal policy responsiveness, potentially contributing to rising political discontent, growing rural resentment, or citizen alienation.

Keywords: Intergovernmental lobbying; interest groups; policy responsiveness; representation; inequality; multi-level governance

Introduction

In a clichéd view, 'lobbyists' are often imagined to inhabit darkened, smoke-filled rooms, and to earn good money just by whispering in the ears of government 'You've got to do a favor to *my business*, to *my corporation*'. What most people hardly think of is that the region, the state, the province, or the *Land* they live in also engages in lobbying.

However, in 21st-century multi-level governance, regional governments have indeed increasingly assumed the role of lobbyists themselves.[1] For example, more than 240 European regions maintain their own regional offices, staffed with lobbyists, in downtown Brussels—the capital of the European Union (EU) (Rodriguez-Pose and Courty, 2018, 200; see Beyers et al., 2015; Tatham, 2016;

Earlier versions of this manuscript were presented at the 29th CES Conference 2023 (Reykjavík, Iceland), at the 119th APSA Annual Meeting & Exhibition 2023 (Los Angeles, CA/United States), and at the 2025 workshop on 'Rethinking Federalism and Multilevel Governance' (Rorschacherberg, Switzerland). I would like to thank my fellow panelists, the three anonymous reviewers, and the editors for their valuable comments, which were instrumental in revising this work.

[1]Note that I use the terms 'regional government' and 'regional level' in a generic sense, referring to the (government of the) constituent units of a multi-level state that are usually '[. . .] arrayed at two nested levels between the local and national' (Hooghe et al., 2016, 15). 'Regional level' may also be denoted 'state level' elsewhere, especially in US-centered scholarship.

Huwyler et al., 2018). In the US, more than 900 State and local governments have annually spent around 70 million tax dollars on making lobbying contacts in Washington, DC (Zhang, 2022, 37). These governments-as-lobbyists make up almost a fifth of all organized interests groups with a presence in national politics (Goldstein and You, 2017, 864). All 16 German *Länder* have set up shop in Berlin (Der Bundesrat, 2025)—a major trend also observed in many other multi-level polities (e.g., Mueller, 2024b; Freiburghaus, 2024a, b; Payson and Freiburghaus, 2025). Despite the steady rise in intergovernmental lobbying[2]—where regional governments seek to influence upper-level policies in alignment with regional interests (e.g., Einstein and Glick, 2017; Freiburghaus, 2024a, b, Payson, 2020a, b; 2022; Zhang, 2022)—we still know surprisingly little about why some regional governments succeed in shaping federal policy outcomes while others do not. Explaining interest group influence or lobbying success has long been central to the study of interest and advocacy group politics, lobbying, and public policy, and more broadly, democratic representation (e.g., Truman, 1951; Dahl, 1961, 1971; Pitkin, 1967). Formative research has well explored what enables organized interests, corporations, pressure groups, and/or NGOs to achieve their policy goals effectively. But although the existing literature on interest group mobilization occasionally acknowledges that governments also engage in lobbying (e.g., Milbrath, 1963; Baumgartner and Leech, 1998; Baumgartner et al., 2009), this particular set of advocacy actors has often been excluded.

Even within the emergent field of intergovernmental lobbying, the crucial group of *regional* governments has been completely overlooked. Foundational studies of intergovernmental lobbying have predominantly focused on two areas: advocacy actions by local governments, particularly cities (e.g., Loftis and Kettler, 2015; Goldstein and You, 2017; Strickland, 2019; Payson, 2020a; Payson, 2020b; Payson, 2022; Payson and Freiburghaus, 2025; Zhang, 2022), and lobbying efforts of regional governments at the supranational level, particularly vis-à-vis the EU (e.g., Broscheid and Coen, 2007; Callanan and Tatham, 2014; Beyers et al., 2015; Spohr et al., 2025; Tatham, 2016; Huwyler et al., 2018; De Bruycker, 2024). While both literatures provide valuable insights, they fall short in addressing the distinct position of regional governments lobbying at the domestic federal level (but see Freiburghaus, 2024a). Unlike local governments, regional governments in domestic multi-level systems operate within a framework of constitutionally protected channels for participation in federal decision-making, such as bicameralism (see Watts, 2008; Benz, 2018).

In this article, I aim to explain the intergovernmental lobbying success of regional governments. I argue that, due to their unique position, neither 'classical' theories of membership-based, business-leaning interest group advocacy nor existing theories of intergovernmental mobilization are fully applicable to regional governments. Both sets of theories assume that key resources—namely money or legitimacy—are decisive for lobbying success. However, regional governments only have limited control over these key resources. Therefore, I propose a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success, specifically tailored to regional governments.

To empirically test my theoretical propositions, I rely on a new and original data set that comprehensively documents the policy influence of all 26 Swiss cantonal governments in federal siting decisions. Switzerland, long regarded as a 'federation of particular interest' (Watts, 2008, 32), serves as a 'typical case' (Seawright and Gerring, 2008)—an ideal context for exploring the varying success of regional governments in influencing federal policy decisions. Methodologically, I resort to Crisp-Set Qualitative-Comparative Analysis (csQCA) which is, as a set-theoretic

[2]I deliberately acknowledge that the term 'intergovernmental' is used in various contexts across multiple strands of the literature. In international relations, the term traditionally refers to forms of cooperation among sovereign nation states, with intergovernmental organizations like the EU serving as key forums for such collaboration. Similarly, 'intergovernmentalism' and 'intergovernmental cooperation' feature prominently in EU studies and European integration theories (e.g., Moravcsik, 1993). However, in this article, I adopt the terminology as it is used in the scholarship on comparative federalism and multi-level governance, where 'intergovernmental (relations)' specifically denotes interactions among governments within a single political system (e.g., Bolleyer, 2009).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

method, the most suitable tool to detect multiple and complex conjunctural causal pathways to intergovernmental lobbying success (e.g., Ragin, 1987; Oana et al., 2021; Schneider, 2024).

This article makes a significant contribution to the fields of comparative politics, multi-level governance, public policy, federalism, and interest group and lobbying studies. The central theoretical contribution is a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success, which bridges the gap between federalism and multi-level governance research, and interest group and lobbying studies. Despite their common roots in *The Federalist Papers* ([1787/88] Hamilton et al., 2008), these two foundational strands of political science have developed in isolation. This separation is a missed opportunity, as both areas fundamentally seek to explain political influence and the representation of diverse interests, which are core elements of pluralist democracy.

Empirically, this article provides, to the best of the author's knowledge, the first explanation of intergovernmental lobbying success for regional governments. While prior studies have explored why regional governments engage in federal-level lobbying (e.g., Jensen, 2016; Zhang, 2022) or the specific mix of advocacy tools they use (e.g., Mueller, 2024b), the critical question of 'winning' or 'losing' in lobbying efforts has not yet been addressed.[3] This oversight is a significant gap in the literature, prompting Grossmann (2013), 61 to describe intergovernmental lobbying as 'the largest hole in the mobilization literature'.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows: Section 2 critiques current interest group and intergovernmental mobilization theories, and introduces a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success. Section 3 outlines the data and methods, while section 4 presents my empirical findings. The conclusion evaluates implications and suggests future research directions (section 5).

Theoretical argument

Why existing theories of interest group and intergovernmental mobilization do not apply to regional governments

I argue that existing theories of interest group and intergovernmental mobilization are not fully applicable to regional governments. Both sets of theories assume that lobbying success depends on access to key resources—namely, money and legitimacy. However, regional governments have limited control over these key resources. The limited control over these resources distinguishes regional governments from other lobbying actors, such as business groups, which typically have greater access to these key resources.[4]

Money is the resource that is implicitly assumed by existing theories of interest group mobilization. Arthur F. Bentley, widely regarded as the original proponent of the 'group theory', 'viewed all politics [. . .] as based on group actions seeking interests, with interest defined as *economic* interest' (McFarland, 2010, 38; emphasis added; see Bentley, [1908] 1949). The strong Bentleyisian focus on economic preferences has strongly shaped the field. As a result, for much of its history, interest group and lobbying studies have concentrated on membership-based business groups and corporations (for an overview see de Figueiredo and Richter, 2014; Gilens and Page, 2014).

This economic focus has often overlooked a key distinction: Business groups possess a unique advantage—money.[5] These groups command substantial financial resources, which scholars of

[3]Research on intergovernmental lobbying success has thus far been confined to the context of local governments lobbying at the regional level, with a primary focus on the US (see Payson, 2020a; Payson, 2022).

[4]My theoretical argument asserts that regional governments—contrary to the assumptions of existing theories on interest groups and intergovernmental mobilization—have only limited control over the key resources essential for lobbying success, namely money and legitimacy. However, limited control does not equate to an absence of control. Depending on the degree of fiscal decentralization (Dardanelli et al., 2019b), some regional governments may, in fact, be quite affluent.

[5]It is important to note that asserting that business groups often have more financial resources at their disposal compared to regional governments is distinct from claiming that regional governments generally lack financial resources. I acknowledge the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

interest groups and lobbying have consistently identified as a primary factor behind their disproportionate influence in policy-making. As Schattschneider (1960, 35) famously noted, '[. . .] the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent', a critique that has been echoed across various political systems (e.g., Schlozman et al., 2012; Gilens and Page, 2014; Aizenberg and Hanegraaff, 2020; De Bruycker and Colli, 2023; Persson and Sundell, 2024; Stevens and Willems, 2024).[6] The reason is straightforward: Financially privileged groups, including business associations, can leverage their resources to engage in lobbying activities under the principle that 'more is better' (Chalmers, 2013, 47; see Potters and van Winden, 1992; Eising and Spohr, 2017).

As 'greater money is linked to certain lobbying tactics and traits' (McKay, 2012, 908), affluent actors like business groups can amplify any lobbying success factor that helps them achieve their policy goals. Whether lobbying success is attained through a bigger and/or more diverse lobbying coalition (Klüver, 2013; Junk, 2019; De Bruycker, 2024), the use of many different lobbying tactics (e.g., De Bruycker and Beyers, 2019), or more timely intervention (Crepaz et al., 2023), subsequent theoretical approaches have consistently explained lobbying success through the lens of *maximization*.

However, maximization inherently requires substantial financial resources. Regional governments face significant limitations in mobilizing such resources. Unlike business groups, regional governments cannot harness the 'power of the purse', which is typically controlled by the more financially robust federal government (e.g., Watts, 2008). This financial constraint makes it difficult for regional governments to compete using the prevalent 'more is better' approach to lobbying.

Previous intergovernmental mobilization theories, in turn, presuppose legitimacy as a resource. Legitimacy is often defined subjectively, meaning that something is 'legitimate' if it is 'in accord with the norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures accepted by a group' (Zelditch, 2001, 33). This concept closely ties to what organization theorists March and Olsen (1984) describe 'the logic of appropriateness': According to this logic, actors within a polity behave in certain ways and adopt specific roles because they perceive them to be 'right', 'appropriate', or, ultimately, 'legitimate'.

In a multi-level system, the expected actions, relationships, and roles of governments are often socially codified as well, varying by their status within the system. One key distinction arises between regional governments and local governments. Regional governments, as both the founders and sustainers of a multi-level system, hold a unique status. As classic federal theory holds, regional governments are the '[. . .] *constituent* parts of the national sovereignty, by allowing them a direct representation in the Senate' (*The Federalist Papers* No. 9, [1787/88] Hamilton et al., 2008; emphasis added). Thus, when establishing a multi-level system, these formerly sovereign regional governments are compensated with constitutionally enshrined channels that provides them exclusive, legally protected access to the federal decision-making process, such as bicameralism (see Freiburghaus et al., 2021; Hooghe et al., 2016; Benz, 2018; Mueller, 2024b).

varying degrees of fiscal decentralization across multi-level systems (e.g., Hooghe et al., 2016; Dardanelli et al., 2019a), which influence the extent to which regional governments have access to independent tax bases and, consequently, financial resources to lobby the federal government. Importantly, even affluent regional governments, such as US States like California or New York, encounter constraints on their ability to leverage financial resources for lobbying purposes. A prevailing public sentiment, that taxpayer money should not be allocated to lobbying activities (see Payson, 2022), underscores these limitations. This concern ties directly to the second key resource—legitimacy—which regional governments also have only limited control over.

[6]It should be noted that the most recent research is somewhat more equivocal, identifying the limits and constraints on unfettered business lobbying success (e.g., Hojnacki et al., 2015). But even if we know '[. . .] that business does not win all the time' (Hojnacki et al., 2015, 206), corporate interest groups still fare pretty well *relative* to other types of advocates, especially if compared to governments (e.g., Gilens and Page, 2014; De Bruycker and Colli, 2023).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Following the 'logic of appropriateness', regional governments are expected to rely on these constitutionally enshrined channels to influence federal policy-making. For example, a second chamber—often symbolically referred to as 'the regions' voice' (FreiburghausUA 2020, 972)—is widely regarded as the appropriate institutional mechanism for such influence. However, this prevailing sentiment presents a significant challenge for regional governments, as these formal channels have, in practice, largely lost their effectiveness (Freiburghaus, 2024a; Mueller, 2024b).

Consider the case of bicameralism: In the early stages of many federations, including the US and Switzerland, members of second chambers were typically appointed and delegated directly by regional authorities. However, institutional changes have gradually transformed this selection-by-appointment method, altering the way territorial interests are represented at the federal level.[7,8]

In contrast, local governments—legal entities created by their respective regional governments (Payson, 2022, 2)[9]—do not enjoy direct participation in federal decision-making. Such rights are exclusively reserved for regional governments (see Ladner et al., 2019). Following the 'logic of appropriateness', local governments are generally perceived as legitimate actors in informal lobbying precisely because they lack constitutionally guaranteed access to federal policy-making (see Goldstein and You, 2017; Payson, 2020a; Payson, 2020b; Payson, 2022; Zhang, 2022). As a result, existing theories on intergovernmental mobilization—primarily designed with local governments in mind—assume these actors possess the legitimacy to engage in informal lobbying. In contrast, regional governments cannot readily claim this resource of legitimacy.

Five distinct success conditions of intergovernmental lobbying

I propose a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success tailored specifically for regional governments, regardless of their financial or legitimacy resources. This framework identifies five distinct success conditions that, when aligned, enable a regional government to effectively shape federal policy in line with its preferences.

#1 Pressure – The importance of being urged to take action (PRESS): Policy-making ultimately revolves around addressing societal problems. However, as public policy scholars have established, defining what constitutes a societal problem is far from straightforward. Agenda-setting involves issue framing—shaping how societal problems are interpreted by elevating specific viewpoints over others (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Baumgartner and Jones, 2005; Cobb and Elder, 1972). As articulated by Peters (2018, 35), 'a problem well put is half solved'. In a regional polity, various actors vie to influence these interpretations of what a societal problem is. For instance, local governments may urge their regional government to take action at the federal level (e.g., Einstein and Glick, 2017; Strickland, 2019; Payson, 2020a; Payson, 2020b; Payson, 2022). In regions with a parliamentary system, such as Germany, the regional government often

[7]The most notable example of such an institutional change in a constitutionally enshrined channel (bicameralism) is the Seventeenth Amendment to the US Constitution in 1913, which replaced the election of senators by state (i.e. regional) legislatures with popular elections. Similarly, in Switzerland, between the late 19th century and 1979, all 26 Swiss cantons transitioned to the popular election of members of the second chamber. This shift effectively stripped regional governments or parliaments of their original authority to appoint and delegate representatives to the second chamber themselves. Today, members of second chambers are often popularly elected, rendering them dominated by party politics much like first chambers (Vatter et al., 2017; Mueller, 2024a). Consequently, regional governments increasingly resort to informal lobbying tactics, such as leveraging media campaigns or hiring professional lobbyists (Mueller, 2024b, 71–79). However, these efforts are often perceived as illegitimate, given the assumption that regional governments already possess formal channels to make their voices heard.

[8]The expectation that regional governments should use constitutionally enshrined channels to make themselves heard in federal policy-making is still widely shared, even among members of the second chamber (see Varone and Helfer, 2018).

[9]Note that in the US, 40 out of 50 US States grant 'Home Rule', allowing local governments to govern and legislate on issues without explicit permission from the State government. In practice, however, the self-rule capacity of US local governments may be severely undermined by preemption, i.e. 'situations where a higher level of government passes a law either overriding a policy enacted by a subordinate government or preventing them from enacting policies that were previously within their purview' (Barber and Dynes, 2023, 120–21).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

faces challenging questions from opposition parties (e.g., Zittel et al., 2019). Conversely, in presidential federal systems like Argentina or the US, members of parliament frequently co-sponsor bills (e.g., Fowler, 2006). In any case, all these advocacy activities pressurize the regional government to act vis-à-vis the federal level. And I expect pressure to translate into lobbying success eventually.

#2 Timing – The importance of moving early (TEMP): No matter how skilled a professional lobbyist may be, and regardless of the utility of the information they provide, if it is not delivered at the right time, it will 'simply be ignored'[10]. The importance of the right timing of lobbying efforts is 'quite substantial' (Crepaz et al., 2023, 549). Early movers possess an information advantage (e.g., Hall and Deardorff, 2006), allowing them to secure access points and take the time to build trust, loyalty, and support among fellow actors (Holyoke, 2009). To leverage this 'first mover advantage', regional governments must advocate for their interests during the initial stages of federal policy-making. These stages involve the exploration and negotiation of policy alternatives (Lasswell, 1956). Since policy formulation often occurs behind closed doors within specialized federal agencies—which tend to follow a technocratic rather than purely partisan approach—less overtly political processes provide regional governments with greater opportunities to effectively voice their preferences.

#3 Coalition-building – The importance of joining forces strategically (COAL): Interest groups and lobbying scholarship has long recognized that 'lobbying is a collective enterprise' (Klüver, 2013, 59). Forming lobbying coalitions is one of the most prominent strategies employed by interest groups (Baumgartner et al., 2009, 180). Larger (e.g., Klüver, 2011) or more diverse (e.g., Junk, 2019) coalitions are often more successful in signaling broad political support, which enhances their ability to shape policy outcomes.[11] However, regional governments have only limited control over the resources needed to pursue such a maximization strategy (as discussed in section 2.1). Rather than partnering with a wide range of interest groups from various societal and economic sectors, regional governments are compelled to strategically form ad hoc alliances with other regional governments. A coalition of several regional governments signals a consensus among the key actors who, in most multi-level systems, are responsible for implementing federal policies (e.g., Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). Strategic coalition-building therefore increases the likelihood that the federal government will take such coalitions seriously, as these regional governments possess the power to obstruct federal directives during the implementation phase if their concerns are ignored.

#4 Multi-channel lobbying – The importance of combining formal and informal channels (MULT): Depending on the issue at stake, decisions are made in different 'policy venues' (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993), each characterized by distinct rules, actors, and power dynamics. Lobbying actors must therefore adapt flexibly to the policy context, strategically 'shop around' for the most advantageous venue. The choice of appropriate lobbying strategies is crucial for success (e.g., Beyers et al., 2015; Tatham, 2016; Huwyler et al., 2018; De Bruycker and Beyers, 2019). Regional governments-as-lobbyists possess a unique advantage: They can engage in multi-channel lobbying by combining constitutionally enshrined formal channels for influencing federal policy-making, such as bicameralism, with informal lobbying tactics. This strategic flexibility allows them to shape federal policy using a mix of insider-outsider lobbying tactics (Berry, 1977) and of approaches that either 'socialize' or 'privatize' conflict (Schattschneider, 1960, 7).

#5 Information-sharing – The importance of sharing exclusive policy-relevant information (INFO): According to the influential 'informational lobbying model', lobbying revolves around the exchange of policy-relevant information with decision-makers (e.g., (Salisbury, 1969; Schnakenberg, 2017)). Interest groups, with their specialized focus, offer technical expertise

[10]This is how McLoughlin (2018), public affairs specialist at FleishmanHillard in the EU, has put it.

[11]Note that Junk (2019, 660) finds 'a strong moderating effect of [issue] salience on the relationship between coalition diversity and success' (see McKay, 2022).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

crucial for developing informed policy solutions. This information serves as the 'currency' (Chalmers, 2013, 39) they trade for access, making lobbyists more influential when they provide useful insights to politicians (McKay, 2022, 9). However, given the multitude of advocates representing diverse interests like the environment or the economy, the information provided by individual interest groups often offers limited competitive advantage. In contrast, regional governments hold a unique resource: knowledge of what works on the ground (see Watts, 2008). Because they are responsible for implementing federal policies, regional governments can foresee potential challenges and offer credible insights into effective policy implementation. By sharing this exclusive, practical information, regional governments enhance their influence over federal policy decisions, as the federal government seeks to avoid implementation failures (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Peters, 2018; Sager and Hinterleitner, 2022).

Data and methods

My empirical analyses are based on a multi-year data collection effort that involved gathering, cleaning, and compiling data from the 'legislative footprint' of all 26 Swiss constituent units (named cantons). This full sample covers all federal policy decisions regarding the location of specific facilities (i.e. federal siting decisions).[12]

For two specific reasons, Switzerland is a 'typical case' (Seawright and Gerring, 2008) to test the proposed theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success. First, in the Swiss federation, like in most federations globally, constitutionally protected channels for participation in federal decision-making have lost practical relevance, implying that regional governments need to adopt genuine lobbying tactics (e.g., Mueller, 2024b). Second, in Swiss politics, as elsewhere, 'money is often the name of the game' (Weschle, 2022, blurb), with a huge population of interest organizations competing for power forcing regional governments to lobby successfully in order to have an edge over moneyed interests (Mach and Eichenberger, 2024).

I focus on siting decisions because they are unique in that they allow measuring lobbying success as 'preference attainment'. Preference attainment is a major approach in the study of interest groups and lobbying, where 'the outcomes of political processes are compared with the ideal points of actors' (Dür, 2008, 566; see Mahoney, 2007; Baumgartner et al., 2009; Bernhagen et al., 2014; De Bruycker and Beyers, 2019). However, in practice, there often exists a 'gap' between the intended or expected outcomes of a policy and its actual effects, which may unfold differently over time (see Peters, 2018). Regional governments thus face considerable challenges in accurately *ex ante* assessing the potential impact of proposed policy initiatives, such as structural funds, on the regional economy, making it difficult for them to effectively articulate their preferences during the policy adoption phase.

In contrast, siting decisions offer a concrete issue where regional governments can conduct a relatively straightforward cost-benefit analysis in terms of the building zone it necessitates and the potential rewards in terms of e.g., additional jobs.[13] They are indeed the only federal policy-making processes where regional governments can express informed preferences before adoption. Furthermore, siting decisions create unambiguously identifiable 'winning' and 'losing' regional governments, thus enabling me to apply preference attainment measurement.

To match a given regional government's preference to either host or not host a given facility with the federal authorities' siting decision, I conducted extensive document analysis, screening official documents, archival records, and press statements for clearly articulated siting

[12]Please refer to the online Appendix where the sampling criteria are explained in detail.

[13]Note that such a cost-benefit analysis may not only follow economic or financial considerations. Instead, hosting sites often also entails 'symbolic value' (e.g., reputation). See e.g., Nugent (2009) on the different motivations underlying regional governments' interests.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

preferences and assessing whether they align with the federal policy outcome or not.[14] To cross-check the validity of my data collection, I conducted expert interviews on which I also drew to impute missing information.

In a similar vein, I proceeded with the dichotomous operationalization of the five success conditions (section 2.2). A detailed codebook including the coding rules and 'anchor examples' is provided in the online Appendix. The resulting new and original database is a truth table, i.e. a matrix with k columns, where $k = 5$ is the number of causal conditions, plus a column for the outcome Y (*SUCC*) ('1' if the siting decision aligns with preference of the regional government x_i; '0' if not; see Table 1.

Given the expectation that multiple success conditions need to converge to produce the outcome, it becomes necessary to employ methodological techniques that adequately account for the assumed 'causal complexity' (Ragin, 1987, 19) involved. Being part of a broader ever-thriving universe of 'set-theoretic methods' (e.g., Rohlfing and Schneider, 2016; Schneider and Wagemann, 2012; Schneider, 2024), Crisp-Set Qualitative-Comparative Analysis (csQCA) is among the most suitable tools to uncover the multiple causal pathways that can produce the outcome (conjunctural causation). The method also captures that a given outcome may have several mutually non-exclusive explanations (equifinality), and the non-occurrence of the outcome does not simply mirror the conditions that explain its occurrence (asymmetric causation; e.g., Ragin, 1987; Oana et al., 2021; Schneider, 2024). Set-based explanations thus model a given outcome as complex causal configurations of necessary conditions without which the outcome cannot occur, and sufficient conditions, which are always present whenever the outcome is present.[15]

To detect the multiple causal pathways that explain intergovernmental lobbying success, logical, or Boolean minimization of the truth table is applied. Following the most recent advances in computational set-theoretic methods, I implemented a new, fast, and particularly powerful minimization algorithm called 'Consistency Cubes' (CCubes), provided by the QCA package in *R/RStudio* (Duşa, 2023). To account for the challenges of 'limited empirical diversity' (Ragin, 1987, 104–13)[16], my empirical analyses follow the state-of-the-art 'Enhanced Standard Analysis' protocol (ESA). The ESA protocol starts with the necessity analysis and then proceeds to the analysis of (configurations of) sufficient conditions, calculating three different solutions that each treat the aforementioned logical remainders differently. The ESA protocol also prevents 'untenable assumptions', i.e. assumptions that are '[. . .] logically contradictory or run counter to basic or uncontested knowledge' (Oana et al., 2021, 130).

For the subsequent interpretation, I draw on the parsimonious solution that has been recently found to be the correct and the most trusted one (Baumgartner and Thiem, 2020). I ran a series of validity and robustness checks with the help of the SetMethods package (Oana et al., 2023; see online Appendix for further details).

Empirical results

Necessity analysis: no singular success condition

Is there a singular indispensable success condition without which a regional government cannot effectively shape federal policy-making in alignment with its preferences? In other words, what

[14]The document analysis approach may raise concern in terms of data validity, objecting that for strategic reasons, instead of 'going public', some regional governments may on purpose communicate their actual preferences only confidentially (e.g., in bilateral meetings). To account for this likely scenario, I also requested confidential materials, referring to the principle of public access to official documents that is anchored in Swiss public law (Federal Act on Freedom of Information in the Administration, FoIA).

[15]In terms of set theory, X is a necessary condition of Y if Y is a subset of X, with the necessity relationship formally expressed as $X \Leftarrow Y$. In contrast, X is a sufficient condition for Y if X is a subset of Y, formalized as $X \Rightarrow Y$.

[16]In about 99 % of applied QCA, the cases investigated do not populate all the rows in a truth table, implying that some truth table rows are left without enough empirical evidence ('logical remainders'; Oana et al., 2021, 140; see Ragin, 1987).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 1 Truth table (*SUCC* = 1)

PRESS	TEMP	COAL	MULT	INFO	SUCC	n	Consistency	PRI	Cases covered
0	1	1	0	1	1	5	1	1	TI.1, JU.3a, AI.3b, AR.3b, TG.3b
0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	SG.1, BS.3a
1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	VS.2b, ZH.3a
1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	AG.3a
1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	VD.4
1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	BE.3a
1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	VS.3a
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	SG.3b
1	1	1	0	0	1	5	0.8	0.8	VD.3a, NE.3a, FR.3a, GE.3a, SG.3a
1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0.5	0.5	BL.3a, TG.3a
0	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	LU.3a, UR.3a, SZ.3a, OW.3a, NW.3a
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	NW.2a, TI.3a
0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	AR.3a, AI.3a
0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	GR.3a
0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	FR.1
1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	AG.1
1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	ZG.3a
1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	VS.2a

Note: Following the ESA protocol, untenable assumptions as well as contradictory simplifying assumptions have been omitted (see section 3 for detailed information). PRESS = pressure; TEMP = timing; COAL = coalition-building; MULT = multi-channel lobbying; INFO = information-sharing; SUCC = intergovernmental lobbying success (outcome); n = number of cases represented by the same configuration of success factors; PRI = proportional reduction in inconsistency. The numbers behind the abbreviations of the cantons indicate the specific site decision: 1 = seat of the Federal Criminal Court and the Federal Administrative Court (created by the 2000 Swiss judicial reform); 2a = 2013 deployment concept of the Swiss Army; 2b = 2017 *Sachplan Militär*; 3a = network locations of the Swiss Innovation Park; 3b = further sites of the Swiss Innovation Park; 4 = location of federal asylum centers. Please refer to the online Appendix for further information on the cases examined.
Source: Freiburghaus (2024a), 537 with own adjustments.

factor is always present when a regional government succeeds in prevailing over its competitors in a contested siting decision?

Table 2 provides a clear and unambiguous answer: There is no single necessary condition that consistently explains why a regional government secures its desired policy outcomes. All conditions fall well below the conventional consistency threshold of ≥ 0.9.[17] Contrary to assumptions in interest group mobilization theories—largely developed for business groups—regional governments cannot rely on maximizing a single success condition due to resource constraints (section 2.1). The findings indicate that even if such maximization were feasible, it would not be sufficient to guarantee their policy success.

Sufficiency analysis: five causal pathways to intergovernmental lobbying success

How do specific success conditions need to converge for a federal policy decision to align with a particular regional government's preferences, given the absence of any singular indispensable condition? Table 3 identifies five distinct configurations of sufficient conditions that explain intergovernmental lobbying success. These configurations are alternative pathways, and their high coverage measures suggest they account for about 95 percent of the cases studied, indicating their strong explanatory relevance. In what follows, I will illustrate these five 'winning formulae' with concrete examples, demonstrating how regional governments successfully lobbied for the site allocations they sought within their territories.

[17]As noted by Oana et al. (2021, 69), a consistency threshold of at least 0.9 is required for a condition to be considered necessary.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 2 Necessity analysis (*SUCC* = 1)

Success condition	Consistency	Coverage	RoN
PRESS	0.50	0.882	0.90
TEMP	0.667	1.00	1.00
COAL	0.80	1.00	1.00
MULT	0.233	0.875	0.964
INFO	0.433	0.812	0.864
∼PRESS	0.50	0.833	0.850
∼TEMP	0.333	0.667	0.80
∼COAL	0.20	0.545	0.828
∼MULT	0.767	0.852	0.667
∼INFO	0.567	0.895	0.889

Note: ∼ = non-occurrence of the success condition. Consistency quantifies the percentage to which a success condition is necessary for the outcome, with a lower value of coverage indicating an empirically lesser relevant condition. Coverage expresses the empirical relevance of a success condition as the proportion of individual cases explained by a condition, relative to the total number of cases. RoN is a more conservative measure of empirical relevance (for further details see online Appendix).
Source: Freiburghaus (2024a, 557) with own adjustments.

Table 3 Five causal pathways to intergovernmental lobbying success (*SUCC* = 1)

	Causal pathway	Consistency	PRI	covS	covU	Cases explained
1	**∼PRESS*COAL*INFO**	1.000	1.000	0.368	0.368	SG.1, BS.3a; TI.1, JU.3a, AI.3b, AR.3b, TG.3b
2	**PRESS*TEMP*COAL**	0.857	0.857	0.316	0.053	VD.3a, NE.3a, FR.3a, GE.3a, SG.3a; VS.3a; SG.3b
3	**PRESS*TEMP*∼MULT**	0.857	0.857	0.316	0.053	VD.4; BE.3a; VD.3a, NE.3a, FR.3a, GE.3a, SG.3a
4	**PRESS*TEMP*INFO**	1.000	1.000	0.211	0.105	BE.3a; VS.2b, ZH.3a; SG.3b
5	**PRESS*∼COAL*∼MULT*INFO**	1.000	1.000	0.105	0.053	AG.3a; BE.3a
	M1	0.947	0.947	0.947		

Note: ∼ = non-occurrence of the success condition; ∗ = logical AND; + logical OR; PRI = proportional reduction in inconsistency; covS = raw coverage; covU = unique coverage (see online Appendix for further details). Reported is the parsimonious solution (please refer to the online Appendix where the other solutions that have been calculated according to the ESA protocol are documented). There is no 'model ambiguity', but only one causal model that can account for the configurational data (M1; see Baumgartner and Thiem, 2015): *∼PRESS*COAL*INFO+PRESS*TEMP*COAL+PRESS*TEMP*∼MULT+PRESS*TEMP*INFO+PRESS*∼COAL*∼MULT*INFO ⇒ SUCC*. The numbers behind the abbreviations of the cantons indicate the specific site decision: 1 = seat of the Federal Criminal Court and the Federal Administrative Court (created by the 2000 Swiss judicial reform); 2a = 2013 deployment concept of the Swiss Army; 2b = 2017 *Sachplan Militär*; 3a = network locations of the Swiss Innovation Park; 3b = further sites of the Swiss Innovation Park; 4 = location of federal asylum centers. Please refer to the online Appendix for further information on the cases examined. A visualization of the five causal pathways can be found in the Fiss chart (see Table 4).
Source: Freiburghaus (2024a, 560) with own adjustments.

In the most frequently occurring causal pathway to intergovernmental lobbying success, the regional government is not pressured to act by any external actor, but builds on its own initiative a coalition with at least one fellow regional government, and actively shares its exclusive policy-relevant information with the federal authorities (*∼PRESS*COAL*INFO*). The cantons of Ticino and St. Gallen are cases in point. Both were eager to host the Federal Criminal Court and the Federal Administrative Court, respectively; i.e. the two new federal courts that have been created by the 2000 Swiss judicial reform (Flick Witzig et al., 2024). On their own free will, the Ticino and the St. Gallen cantonal governments took voluntary action, seeking alliances with other cantons, most notably with the canton of Zurich that is, by far, the most populous constituency and thus carries the biggest weight in federal parliamentary votes. At the same time, the two cantonal governments also tried to convince more reluctant federal-level MPs by providing them with well-tailored information such as sophisticated construction plans. These plans outlined how they intended to convert existing neighboring buildings within their territories into a 'functional complex', which could serve as a suitable location for the new federal courts in due time.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 4 Fiss chart: five causal pathways to intergovernmental lobbying success (*SUCC* = 1)

	1	2	3	4	5
Pressure (*PRESS*)	⊖	●	●	●	●
Timing (*TEMP*)		●	●	●	
Coalition-building (*COAL*)	●	●			⊖
Multi-channel lobbying (*MULT*)			⊖		⊖
Information-sharing (*INFO*)	●			●	●

● Presence of the success condition
⊖ Absence of the success condition
Source: Freiburghaus (2024a, 561) with own adjustments.

According to the second and also often occurring 'winning formula', the pressure to act, early interventions, and coalition-building lead to intergovernmental lobbying success (*PRESS*TEMP*COAL*). This is precisely how the cantons of Fribourg, Vaud, Valais, Neuchâtel, and Geneva proceeded in the early 2010s. For decades, they have harbored aspirations to become *'cités de l'innovation et du savoir'*, a vision being repeatedly affirmed by both ambitious regional-level MPs and local government officials. The governments of those five French-speaking cantons were thus forced to start exploring collaboration opportunities early for they realized that, as a linguistic minority in a predominantly German-speaking country, they would just be outvoted if they lobbied each individually. And, indeed: They agreed on an intercantonal coalition well before the federal authorities were to officially communicate the details of the siting process, paving the way to success (SBFI, 2023).

Just as frequently, a third causal pathway can be observed. This combination of sufficient conditions is characterized by third actors exerting pressure on the regional government, and the regional government making efforts to take early advocacy action. However, simultaneously, the regional government (intentionally) avoids exploiting multiple access points (*PRESS*TEMP*∼MULT*). Such is exemplified by the canton of Vaud's efforts during the search for federal asylum centers. Migration has long been a recurrent and polarizing issue in Vaud politics because of certain small towns having been early hosts of refugee homes. In the aftermath of the 2015 migration crisis, and heightened tensions between communities, some local government members thus expressed concerns that 'it's too much'[18]. They pressured their cantonal government to intervene early and negotiate a favorable deal. Instead of employing various lobbying tactics, the Vaud government deliberately focused on a particular channel—direct and informal engagement with the responsible federal bureaucracy agencies—and, thus, secured a major concession (EFK, 2022): The federal asylum center situated in the canton of Vaud will exclusively accommodate asylum-seekers under the UNHCR 'Resettlement program'[19], as they were considered to have a higher likelihood of successful integration.

In the fourth causal pathway, intergovernmental lobbying success is achieved by the co-occurrence of pressure to act, early intervention, and information-sharing (*PRESS*TEMP*INFO*). Here, the canton of Valais during the formulation of the 2013 deployment concept of the Swiss Army serves as a telling illustration. Regional-level MPs in Valais strongly opposed the federal government's decision to shut down the Sion air base, located in the canton's capital city. As the Sion air base has always been a major employer, they thus submitted almost two dozen parliamentary bills, each pushing the regional government to take prompt advocacy action (Canton du Valais, 2024). Simultaneously, the regional government convened a working group which was to elaborate proposals how the operation of the Sion air base could become more

[18]Quoted in Swissinfo, 18 June 2018.

[19]'Resettlement' is the '[. . .] admission of particularly vulnerable refugees in a third country, where they are granted refugee status and the opportunity to integrate' (SEM, 2023). Since the 1955 ratification of the Geneva Convention, Switzerland has regularly taken in refugee groups through resettlement.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

cost-effective and profitable—and these proposals were actively shared with the federal authorities who in turn overturned their initial closure decision.

Lastly, there is a fifth explanation for why a particular regional government manages to shape federal policy-making processes in alignment with its preferences (a causal path that, in practice, occurs rather seldom, though): The regional government is put under pressure and willingly shares its exclusive policy-relevant information with the federal government but, at the same time, refrains from both coalition-building and multi-channel lobbying (*PRESS*∼COAL*∼MULT*INFO*). Here, I shall point at the canton of Berne when the federation tried to allocate sites for the 'Swiss Innovation Park', beginning in 2014. The local government of Biel/Bienne—the second largest Bernese city which has long been notorious to be home to the less fortunate (BFS, 2023)—thus pressurized the regional government, e.g., by transmitting the findings of a commissioned study that meticulously calculated how such an innovation hub would offer an important stimulus for the regional economy. Instead of joining forces with fellow regional governments and/or employing a wide array of lobbying tactics, the pressurized Bernese government empowered one of its seven cabinet members with a clear mandate to lobby the small circle of the responsible federal decision-makers confidentially, and successfully.

While, in this paper, I endeavored to explain intergovernmental lobbying *success*, knowing why regional governments lose in federal policy-making processes also bears high practical relevance. (To reiterate, please remember that due to asymmetric causality the causal pathways I have just presented cannot simply be mirrored to deduce 'what does not work'.) For reasons of brevity, I leave it with the empirically most frequently occurring explanation of intergovernmental lobbying failure, that is a configuration of a non-pressurized regional government, no multi-channel lobbying, and no proactive information-sharing (*∼PRESS*∼MULT*∼INFO*).[20] This occurs whenever a particular regional government is too confident, expecting to carry off its 'siting decision win' for sure. For example, the government of Fribourg mainly sat back as soon as the federal government suggested, in its dispatch to the federal parliament, that the capital city of Fribourg should host the newly created Federal Administrative Court. Hence, no third actor deemed it necessary to put pressure on the regional government, and hardly any advocacy action was taken, let alone the exploitation of multiple access points. And while the victorious government of St. Gallen even submitted plans how they intend to support the newly-settled federal judges in moving to the city of St. Gallen (e.g., language schools), the government of Fribourg even failed to outline possible buildings that could host the Federal Administrative Court (BBl 2001 605).

Conclusion

Nowadays, regional governments are among 'the most profilic but understudied' (Payson, 2020b, 689) lobbyists, spending million in taxpayer money on advocacy tactics traditionally associated, in a clichéd view, with moneyed and organized interests. Despite the ubiquitous phenomenon of intergovernmental lobbying, the critical question that has guided the study of interest group politics—'who wins, who loses—and why?' (Baumgartner et al., 2009, subtitle)—has not yet been explicitly addressed in the context of regional governments.

A major reason for the lack of empirical analysis of intergovernmental lobbying success is the absence of suitable theoretical frameworks. Existing classical theories of interest group advocacy, which focus on membership-based and business-leaning groups (e.g., de Figueiredo and Richter, 2014; Gilens and Page, 2014), and existing theories of intergovernmental mobilization (e.g., Callanan and Tatham, 2014; Beyers et al., 2015; Tatham, 2016; Goldstein and You, 2017; Strickland, 2019; Payson, 2020a; Payson, 2020b; Payson, 2022; Zhang, 2022), are not equipped to explain why regional governments succeed in shaping federal policy to their advantage. Both sets

[20]Please refer to the online Appendix where the empirical results for $SUCC = 0$ are reported in full.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of theories assume the availability of key resources—money and legitimacy—over which regional governments have only limited control (see Freiburghaus, 2024a).

In this article, I introduced a theoretical framework of intergovernmental lobbying success specifically tailored to regional governments. The framework centers around five distinct success conditions—pressure, timing, coalition-building, multi-channel lobbying, and information-sharing. The convergence of these success conditions provides a compelling explanation for why some regional governments 'get what they want', while others do not. According to my argument, these success conditions are crucial to understanding how regional governments can influence federal policy in their favor.

Drawing on state-of-the-art set-theoretic methods (csQCA) and examining the 'typical case' of Switzerland, I demonstrated that no single necessary success condition guarantees that a federal policy decision will align with a particular regional government's preferences. In other words, there is no single indispensable factor that regional governments must simply 'maximize' to ensure they are heard by the federal level. Instead, five distinct configurations of sufficient conditions were identified, each offering an alternative explanation for intergovernmental lobbying success.

In the most frequently observed causal pathway to intergovernmental lobbying success, a regional government acts independently—free from external pressure (e.g., from MPs or local governments)—forms a coalition with at least one other regional government, and proactively provides exclusive policy-relevant information to federal authorities. These empirical findings underscore the potential to integrate previously separate areas and fields of comparative politics, multi-level governance, public policy, federalism, and interest group and lobbying studies. Both vested interests and governments-as-lobbyists can be understood using common concepts such as lobbying tactics, as long as the resource constraints of regional governments are acknowledged.

This study is the first to specifically focus on the successful advocacy of regional governments, thereby advancing our understanding of intergovernmental lobbying. However, several promising avenues for future research remain. First, empirical analyses could and should be extended to other multi-level systems as well as to other types of federal policy decisions, or else from siting decisions, and triangulating different measurements of interest group influence (e.g., Mahoney, 2007; D ür, 2008; Baumgartner et al., 2009; Bernhagen et al., 2014). The study's theoretically grounded success conditions—derived from various fields—, combined with its configurational explanations rather than idiosyncratic ones, suggest that these findings could be relevant in other multi-level systems. Nonetheless, context-specific factors must be carefully considered in future cross-country comparisons, where researchers must balance the notorious trade-off between 'maximizing the empirical scope' and 'maximizing measurement validity'.

A second promising avenue for future research concerns the broader effects of intergovernmental lobbying beyond single federal policy outcomes. Intergovernmental lobbying has far-reaching implications for democratic representation, regional inequality, and unequal policy responsiveness. As such, intergovernmental lobbying ties into fundamental questions of democratic theory and practice: 'who governs?' (Dahl, 1961, title; see Truman, 1951; Dahl, 1971; Persson and Sundell, 2024). This study notably shows that lobbying success is not exclusive to the most populous, powerful, or wealthiest regional governments.[21] However, further investigation is needed to determine whether, across all federal policy decisions, wealthier regional governments are disproportionately able to '[. . .] to translate their economic advantage into political power' (Payson, 2022, 106), similar to the way cities-as-lobbyists do in the US (see Payson, 2020a; Payson and Freiburghaus, 2025). Just as research on major interest group and lobbying dynamics has consistently shown, it is worth exploring whether there is a systematic bias in intergovernmental lobbying success favoring regional governments with particular attributes.

[21]Note that the mountainous, fiscally weak canton of Valais receives the highest per capita net equalization payments in CHF from the fiscal equalization scheme (EFD, 2024).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088 Published online by Cambridge University Press

This potential bias could exacerbate regional inequalities such as unequal access to public services within multi-level systems, potentially contributing to rising political discontent, growing rural resentment, or citizen alienation (see Beramendi, 2012; Ejrn æ s et al., 2024; Cremaschi et al., 2024; Schraff and Pontusson, 2024).

Supplementary material. The supplementary material for this article can be found at https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088.

References

Aizenberg, Ellis, and Marcel Hanegraaff. "Is Politics under Increasing Corporate Sway? A Longitudinal Study on the Drivers of Corporate Access." *West European Politics* **43**.1 (2020): 181–202.

Barber, Michael, and Adam M. Dynes. "City-State Ideological Incongruence and Municipal Preemption." *American Journal of Political Science* **67**.1 (2023): 119–36.

Baumgartner, Frank R., Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. *Lobbying and Policy Change. Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. *The Politics of Attention. How Government Prioritizes Problems*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Baumgartner, Frank R., and Beth L. Leech. *Basic Interests. The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Baumgartner, Michael, and Alrik Thiem. "Model Ambiguities in Configurational Comparative Research." *Sociological Methods & Research* **46**.4 (2015): 954–87.

Baumgartner, Michael, and Alrik Thiem. "Often Trusted but Never (Properly) Tested: Evaluating Qualitative Comparative Analysis." *Sociological Methods & Research* **49**.2 (2020): 279–311.

Bentley, Arthur F. *The Process of Government. A Study of Social Pressures*. Bloomington, IN: The Principia Press, 1949.

Benz, Arthur. "Shared Rule Vs. Self-Rule? Bicameralism, Power-Sharing and the 'Joint Decision Trap'." *Perspectives on Federalism* **10**.2 (2018): 30–48.

Beramendi, Pablo. *The Political Geography of Inequality. Regions and Redistribution*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Bernhagen, Patrick, Andreas Dür, and David Marshall. "Measuring Lobbying Success Spatially." *Interest Groups & Advocacy* **3**.2 (2014): 202–18.

Berry, Jeffrey M. *Lobbying for the People. The Political Behavior of Public Interest Groups*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Beyers, Jan, Tom Donas, and Bert Fraussen. "No Place Like Home? Explaining Venue Selection of Regional Offices in Brussels." *Journal of European Public Policy* **22**.5 (2015): 589–608.

Bolleyer, Nicole. *Intergovernmental Cooperation. Rational Choices in Federal Systems and Beyond. Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Broscheid, Andreas, and David Coen. "Lobbying Activity and Fora Creation in the EU: Empirically Exploring the Nature of the Policy Good." *Journal of European Public Policy* **14**.3 (2007): 346–65.

Callanan, Mark, and Michaël Tatham. "Territorial Interest Representation in the European Union: Actors, Objectives and Strategies." *Journal of European Public Policy* **21**.2 (2014): 188–210.

Chalmers, Adam W. "Regional Authority, Transnational Lobbying and the Allocation of Structural Funds in the European Union." *Journal of Common Market Studies* **51**.5 (2013): 815–31.

Cobb, Roger W., and Charles D. Elder. *Participation in American Politics. The Dynamics of Agenda-Building*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1972.

Cremaschi, Simone, Paula Rettl, Marco Cappellut, and Catherine E. De Vries. "Geographies of Discontent: Public Service Deprivation and the Rise of the Far Right in Italy." *American Journal of Political Science* (2024) (Early View). https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ajps.12936

Crepaz, Michele, Marcel Hanegraaff, and Wiebke M. Junk. "Is There a First Mover Advantage in Lobbying? A Comparative Analysis of How the Timing of Mobilization Affects the Influence of Interest Groups in 10 Polities." *Comparative Political Studies* **56**.4 (2023): 530–60.

Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961.

Dahl, Robert A. *Polyarchy. Participation and Opposition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971.

Dardanelli, Paolo, John Kincaid, Alan Fenna, André Kaiser, André Lecours, and Ajay K. Singh. "Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Theorizing Dynamic De/Centralization in Federations." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* **49**.1 (2019a): 1–29.

Dardanelli, Paolo, John Kincaid, Alan Fenna, André Kaiser, André Lecours, Ajay K. Singh, Sean Mueller, and Vogel Stephan. "Dynamic De/Centralization in Federations: Comparative Conclusions." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* **49**.1 (2019b): 194–219.

De Bruycker, Iskander. "Access for All? Socio-Demographic Biases and Interest Group Access to the European Parliament." *Journal of European Public Policy* (2024) (Early View). https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501763.2024.2409822

De Bruycker, Iskander, and Jan Beyers. "Lobbying Strategies and Success: Inside and Outside Lobbying in European Union Legislative Politics." *European Political Science Review* **11**.1 (2019): 57–74.

De Bruycker, Iskander, and Francesca Colli. "Affluence, Congruence, and Lobbying Success in EU Climate Policy." *Journal of Public Policy* **43**.3 (2023): 512–32.

de Figueiredo, John M., and Brian Kelleher Richter. "Advancing the Empirical Research on Lobbying." *Annual Review of Political Science* **17**.1 (2014): 163–85.

Dür, Andreas. "Measuring Interest Group Influence in the EU. A Note on Methodology." *European Union Politics* **9**.4 (2008): 559–76.

Einstein, Katherine Levine, and David M. Glick. "Cities in American Federalism: Evidence on State–Local Government Conflict from a Survey of Mayors." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* **47**.4 (2017): 599–621.

Eising, Rainer, and Florian Spohr. "The More, the Merrier? Interest Groups and Legislative Change in the Public Hearings of the German Parliamentary Committees." *German Politics* **26**.2 (2017): 314–33.

Ejrnæs, Anders, Mads D. Jensen, Dominik Schraff, and Sofia Vasilopoulou. "Introduction: Regional Inequality and Political Discontent in Europe." *Journal of European Public Policy* **31**.6 (2024): 1465–93.

Flick Witzig, Martina, Christine Rothmayr Allison, and Frédéric Varone. "Judicial System." In P. Emmenegger et al. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Swiss Politics* (pp. 214–13). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024.

Fowler, James H. "Connecting the Congress: A Study of Cosponsorship Networks." *Political Analysis* **14**.4 (2006): 456–87.

Freiburghaus, Rahel. *Lobbyierende Kantone. Subnationale Interessenvertretung Im Schweizer Föderalismus*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2024a.

Freiburghaus, Rahel. "Rethinking Shared Rule as Intergovernmental Lobbying: A Framework for Analysis." *Regional & Federal Studies* **34**.5 (2024b): 831–58.

Freiburghaus, Rahel, Alexander Arens, and Sean Mueller. "With or against Their Region? Multiple-Mandate Holders in the Swiss Parliament, 1985–2018." *Local Government Studies* **47**.6 (2021): 971–92.

Gilens, Martin, and Benjamin I. Page. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspectives on Politics* **12**.3 (2014): 564–81.

Goldstein, Rebecca, and Hye Y. You. "Cities as Lobbyists." *American Journal of Political Science* **61**.4 (2017): 864–76.

Grossmann, Matt. "Group Mobilization from the Economy, Society, and Government." In M. Grossmann (Ed.), *New Directions in Interest Group Politics* (pp. 21–42). London/New York, NY: Routledge, 2013.

Hall, Richard L., and Alan V. Deardorff. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* **100**.1 (2006): 69–84.

Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1787/88] 2008.

Hojnacki, Marie, Kathleen M. Marchetti, Frank R. Baumgartner, Jeffrey M. Berry, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. "Assessing Business Advantage in Washington Lobbying." *Interest Groups & Advocacy* **4**.3 (2015): 205–24.

Holyoke, Thomas T. "Interest Group Competition and Coalition Formation." *American Journal of Political Science* **53**.2 (2009): 360–75.

Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks, Arjan H. Schakel, Sandra Chapman-Osterkatz, Sara Niedzwiecki, and Sarah Shair-Rosenfield. *Measuring Regional Authority*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Huwyler, Oliver, Michaël Tatham, and Joachim Blatter. "Party Politics, Institutions, and Identity: The Dynamics of Regional Venue Shopping in the EU." *West European Politics* **41**.3 (2018): 754–78.

Jensen, Jennifer M. *The Governors' Lobbyists. Federal-State Relations Offices and Governors Associations in Washington*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2016.

Junk, Wiebke M. "When Diversity Works: The Effects of Coalition Composition on the Success of Lobbying Coalitions." *American Journal of Political Science* **63**.3 (2019): 660–74.

Klüver, Heike. "The Contextual Nature of Lobbying: Explaining Lobbying Success in the European Union." *European Union Politics* **12**.4 (2011): 483–506.

Klüver, Heike. *Lobbying in the European Union. Interest Groups, Lobbying Coalitions, and Policy Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Ladner, Andreas, Nicolas Keuffer, Harald Baldersheim, Nikos Hlepas, Paweł Swianiewicz, Kristof Steyvers, and Carmen Navarro. *Patterns of Local Autonomy in Europe*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

Lasswell, Harold D. *The Decision Process. Seven Categories of Functional Analysis*. College Park, MD: University Press of Maryland, 1956.

Loftis, Matt W., and Jaclyn J. Kettler. "Lobbying from Inside the System: Why Local Governments Pay for Representation in the U.S. Congress." *Political Research Quarterly* **68**.1 (2015): 193–206.

Mach, André, and Steven Eichenberger. "Interest Groups." In P. Emmenegger et al. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Swiss Politics* (pp. 337–54). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024.

Mahoney, Christine. "Lobbying Success in the United States and the European Union." *Journal of Public Policy* **27**.1 (2007): 35–56.

March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life." *American Political Science Review* **78**.3 (1984): 734–49.

McFarland, Andrew. "Interest Group Theory." In. L. S. Maisel, J. M. Berry, and G. C. Edwards (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups* (pp. 37–56). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

McKay, Amy M. "Buying Policy? The Effects of Lobbyists' Resources on Their Policy Success." *Political Research Quarterly* **65**.4 (2012): 908–23.

McKay, Amy M. *Stealth Lobbying. Interest Grouop Influence and Health Care Reform*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Milbrath, Lester W. *The Washington Lobbyists*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally, 1963.

Moravcsik, Andrew. "Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* **31**.4 (1993): 473–524.

Mueller, Sean. "Bicameralism." In A. Vatter, and R. Freiburghaus (Eds.), *Handbook of Comparative Political Institutions* (pp. 263–75). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2024a.

Mueller, Sean. *Shared Rule in Federal Theory and Practice. Concept, Causes, Consequences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024b.

Nugent, John D. *Safeguarding Federalism. How States Protect Their Interests in National Policymaking*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.

Oana, Ioana-Elena, Carsten Q. Schneider, and Eva Thomann. *Qualitative Comparative Analysis Using R. A Beginner's Guide. Methods for Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Payson, Julia A. "Cities in the Statehouse: How Local Governments Use Lobbyists to Secure State Funding." *The Journal of Politics* **82**.2 (2020a): 403–17.

Payson, Julia A. "The Partisan Logic of City Mobilization: Evidence from State Lobbying Disclosures." *American Political Science Review* **114**.3 (2020b): 677–90.

Payson, Julia A. *When Cities Lobby. How Local Governments Compete for Power in State Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022.

Payson, Julia A., and Rahel Freiburghaus. "Governments as Lobbyists." In R. Chari, et al. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Lobbying* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2025 (forthcoming).

Persson, Mikael, and Anders Sundell. "The Rich Have a Slight Edge: Evidence from Comparative Data on Income-Based Inequality in Policy Congruence." *British Journal of Political Science* **54**.2 (2024): 514–25.

Peters, B. Guy. *Policy Problems and Policy Design*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018.

Pitkin, Hanna F. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley, CA/Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1967.

Potters, Jan, and Frans van Winden. "Lobbying and Asymmetric Information." *Public Choice* **74**.3 (1992): 269–92.

Pressman, Jeffrey L., and Aaron B. Wildavsky. *Implementation. How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oakland. The Oakland Project*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973.

Ragin, Charles C. *The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987.

Rodriguez-Pose, Andres, and Julie Courty. "Regional Lobbying and Structural Funds: Do Regional Representation Offices in Brussels Deliver?" *Regional & Federal Studies* **28**.2 (2018): 199–229.

Rohlfing, Ingo, and Carsten Q. Schneider. "A Unifying Framework for Causal Analysis in Set-Theoretic Multimethod Research." *Sociological Methods & Research* **47**.1 (2016): 37–63.

Sager, Fritz, and Markus Hinterleitner. "The Politics of Policy Implementation: A Reassessment in More Conflictual Times." In A. Ladner, and F. Sager (Eds.), *Handbook on the Politics of Public Administration* (pp. 102–13). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022.

Salisbury, Robert H. "An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups." *Midwest Journal of Political Science* **13**.1 (1969): 1–32.

Schattschneider, Elmer E. *The Semi-Sovereign People. A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960.

Schlozman, Kay L., Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady. *The Unheavenly Chorus. Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Schnakenberg, Keith E. "Informational Lobbying and Legislative Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* **61**.1 (2017): 129–45.

Schneider, Carsten Q. *Set-Theoretic Multi-Method Research: A Guide to Combining Qca and Case Studies. Methods for Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024.

Schneider, Carsten Q., and Claudius Wagemann. *Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences. A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Schraff, Dominik, and Jonas Pontusson. "Falling Behind Whom? Economic Geographies of Right-Wing Populism in Europe." *Journal of European Public Policy* **31**.6 (2024): 1591–619.

Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research. A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options." *Political Research Quarterly* **61**.2 (2008): 294–308.

Spohr, Florian, Patrick Bernhagen, and Krispin Krüger. "Subnational Lobbying on National Policymaking: Evidence from Germany." *Governance* **38**.2 (2025): e70012.

Stevens, Frederik, and Evelien Willems. "Information, Politicization, and Reputation: Assessing Interest Groups' Agenda-Setting Influence in the EU." *European Political Science Review* **16**.4 (2024): 578–95.

Strickland, James. "America's Crowded Statehouses: Measuring and Explaining Lobbying in the U.S. States." *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* **19**.3 (2019): 351–74.

Tatham, Michaël. *With, Without, or Against the State? How European Regions Play the Brussels Game*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Truman, David B. *The Governmental Process. Political Interests and Public Opinion*. New York, NY: Knopf, 1951.

Vatter, Adrian, Rahel Freiburghaus, and Ladina Triaca. "Deutsches Bundesrats- Vs. Schweizer Senatsmodell Im Lichte Sich Wandelnder Parteiensysteme: Repräsentation Und Legitimität Zweiter Kammern Im Vergleich." *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen* **48**.4 (2017): 741–63.

Watts, Ronald L. *Comparing Federal Systems*. 3 ed. Montréal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008.

Weschle, Simon. *Money in Politics. Self-Enrichment, Campaign Spending, and Golden Parachutes*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Zelditch, Morris Jr. "Theories of Legitimacy." In J. T. Jost, and B. Major (Eds.), *The Psychology of Legitimacy. Emerging Perspectives on Ideology, Justice, and Intergroup Relations* (pp. 33–53). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Zhang, Youlang. *When Governments Lobby Governments. The Institutional Origins of Intergovernmental Persuasion in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Zittel, Thomas, Dominic Nyhuis, and Markus Baumann. "Geographic Representation in Party-Dominated Legislatures: A Quantitative Text Analysis of Parliamentary Questions in the German Bundestag." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* **44**.4 (2019): 681–711.

Cite this article: Freiburghaus R (2025). What makes a good lobbyist for the government? Explaining intergovernmental lobbying success. *European Political Science Review*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925100088