Titel: Lobbying
Avdelning: STS
Kontaktperson: Erik Bohlin
LOBBING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

☐ Background

This project focuses on the lobbying phenomenon, so-called interest groups, in the telecommunications sector. It will focus on the European market, to evaluate the contributions to the telecommunications regulatory initiatives over the years, with a particular focus on consultation processes convened by the European Commission and the European Parliament.

☐ The phenomenon of lobbying

The word “lobby” is used to identify organizations or groups tied together by the common will to exert pressure for their personal interest in the legislative, policy and administrative institutions. There are several types of lobbies that represent different interest of many different actors: from large corporations to trade associations, but also from environmental groups, NGOs, and the protection of social rights. Unlike what many think, giving at the lobby a negative meaning, the practice of lobbying is now consolidated in all major international and national institutions and plays a key role in the legislative and administrative framework. However, it would be interesting to study this phenomenon deeply to better understand how the work of lobbyists influence the process at national and international level.

☐ Lobbying in Europe

At European level, the institution that is most involved in this process is the European Commission, which is based in Brussels. The continued growth of the number of these pressure groups is due to the fact that European legislation is increasingly heading towards centralized legislation in many fields, that were previously regulated at national level. The structure of the EU’s legislative process expects that the European Commission submit legislative proposal to the Council and the European Parliament; then they could decide whether to approve it or not. The Commission, during the creation phase of the proposal, launch public consultations to gather the opinions of all possible stakeholders, and it is at this stage that lobbyists can best assert their interests and try to influence the decisions of the Commission to address them in their favor. Moreover, the European Parliament organizes also various decision processes to support their decision making, processes that can be influenced by lobbying.
Goals

Due to its central position in the decision process, the European Commission and also the European Parliament can be subject to lobbying practices; it would be interesting to find some information or data for:

- Be able to identify some recurring behaviors by the companies involved in the consultations;
- Find out any lobbying presence by some of the stakeholders involved;
- Verify the possibility to perform statistical analysis (clustering?, econometrics?)