

Lobbying and Corruption in the European Union Legislative Procedure

Abstract

The diploma thesis deals with influencing the legislative process of the European Union. Legislation at European Union level affects the lives of millions of citizens as well as the functioning of legal systems and law in the Member States. Although the primary law of the European Union presupposes the participation of the general public in the legislative process, which takes place precisely through interest groups, lobbyists, the issue remains neglected in the academic environment. At the same time, the word expression "lobbying" is entwined with many myths and is associated mainly with a negative meaning. The participation of lobbyists, its legitimacy, the border with the illegal influence of the legislative process is thus still perceived as a gray zone in which it is difficult to navigate.

The thesis aims to distinguish between legal and legitimate participation of interest groups in the legislative process and illegal practices – corruption. To do this, an analysis of legal norms is used, which regulates both negotiations in the first and second part of the diploma thesis. In the case of corruption, it is a complex, long-evolving and clear regulation. However, comprehensive legislation on lobbying and the participation of interest groups in the decision-making processes of the European Union is lacking. The author deals with the existing mechanisms that regulate the participation of interest groups and their practical impact and functioning in the legislative process. Based on this analysis, she then proposes some possible scenarios for the development of legislation that would clarify the situation. The work tries to deal with lobbying as a legitimate and legal part of modern democracy, it considers the controversial hypothesis of lobbying as a basic human right. The differences between lobbying and corruption are subsequently demonstrated in the third part of the thesis on several practical cases from the European Union.

Legal analysis is mainly used to deal with these research questions. Due to the fact that influencing legislative procedure is a very complex issue, this legal analysis is supported by political and empirical findings. Based on that, findings in the diploma thesis sufficiently reflect the reality of the effects on the European Union's legislative procedure.

Key words: lobbying, corruption, European Union