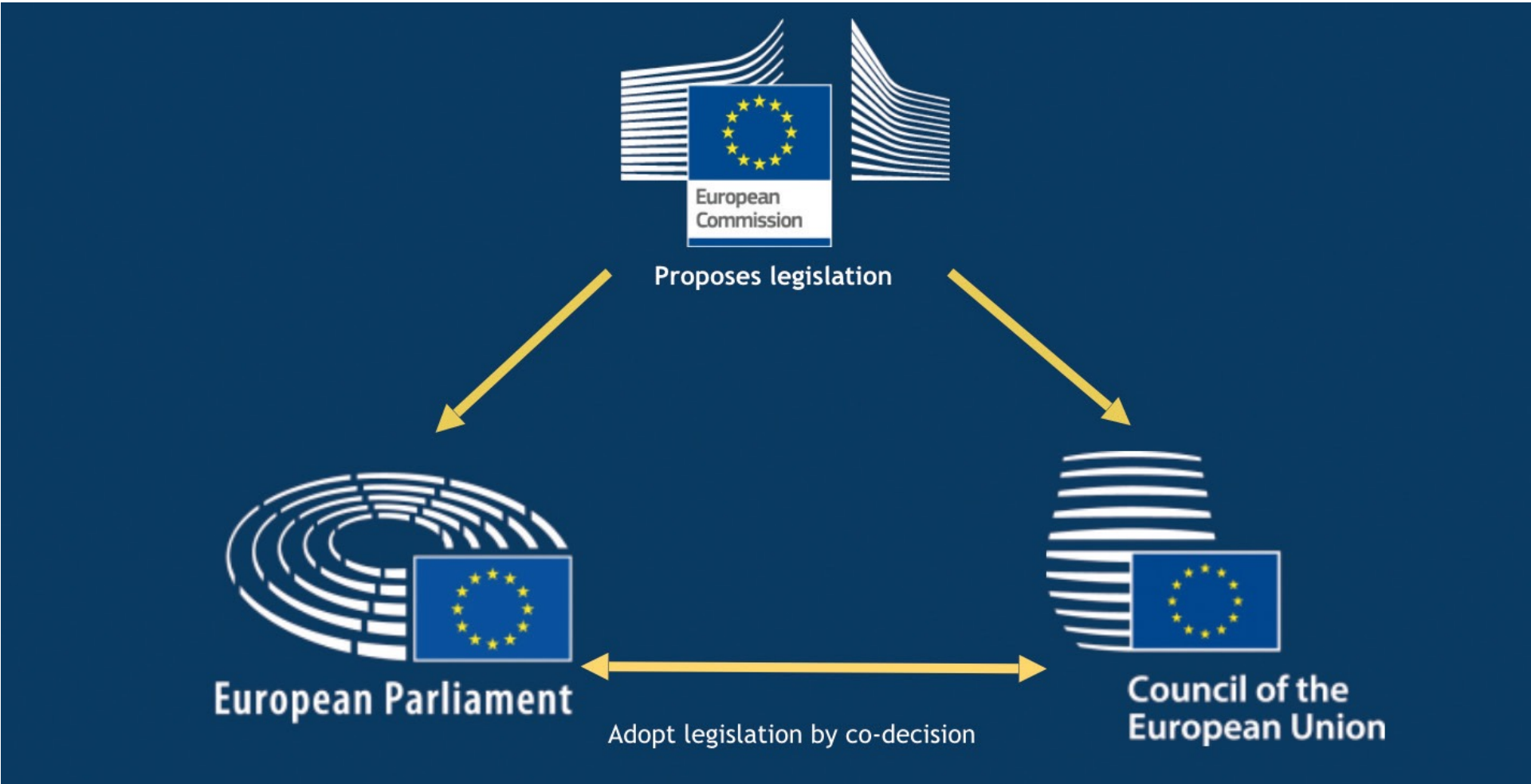


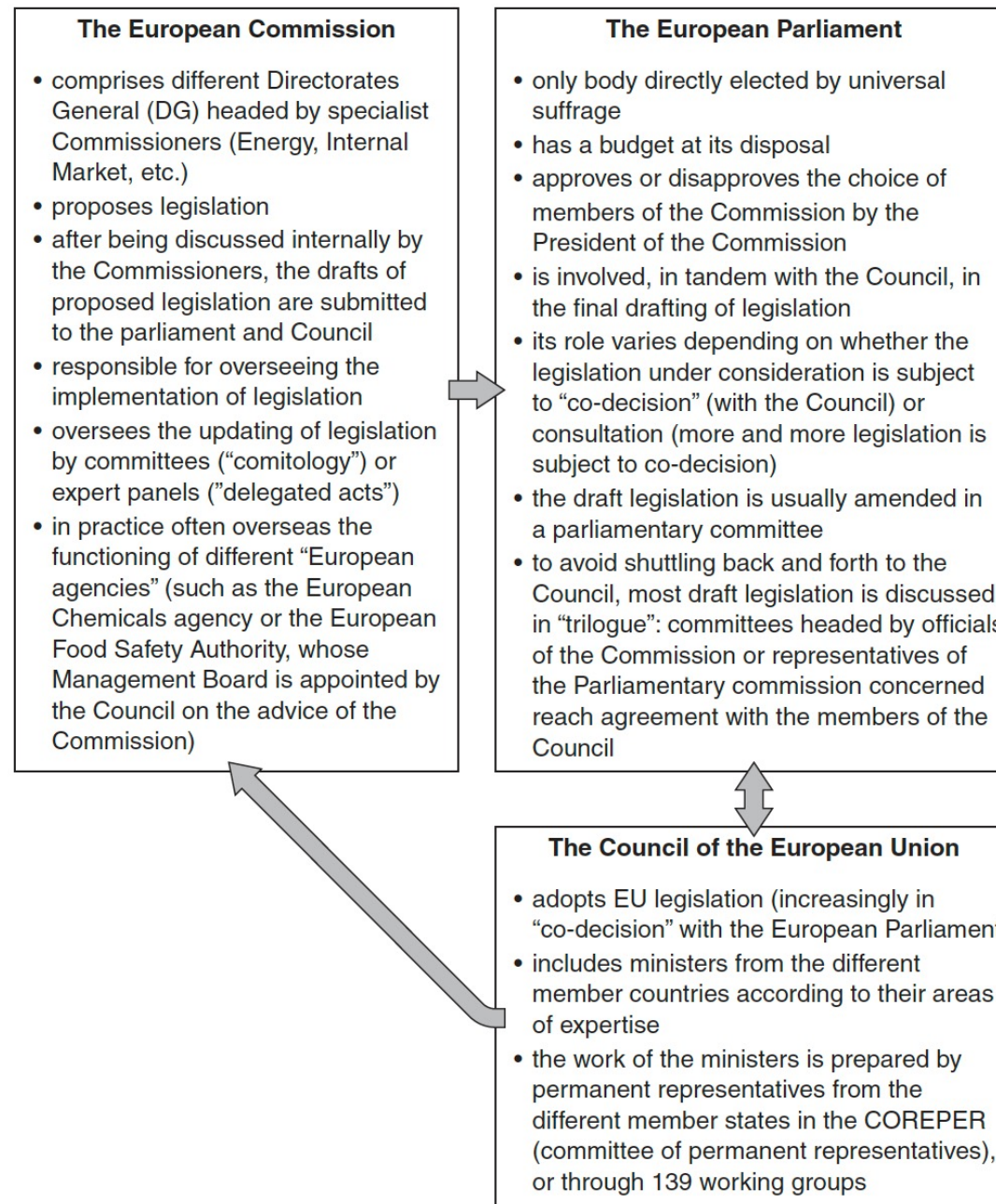
# Chapter 3: Lobbying the EU

How would you define 'lobbying'?

## I/ Situating lobbying in the EU legislative process

How would you describe the EU legislative process and explain its functioning?





Sylvain Laurens, *Lobbyists and Bureaucrats in Brussels. Capitalism’s Brokers* (Routledge, 2017).)

Figure I.1 Simplified diagram of the decision-making cycle in the EU.<sup>4</sup>

**Christian Lahusen, *European Lobbying. An Occupationnal Field between Professionalism and Activism*, Routledge, 2023.**

Lobbying is part of political life in the European Union (EU). It is particularly striking how much the political representation of interests is a normal part of what happens in Brussels. A large number of associations, companies,

**Why is it so?**

## Neo-corporatism.

EU institutions have favoured lobbying as the privileged form of their relations with stakeholders (civil society).

Also a way to compensate the relative weakness of the EU administration (since ECSC).

EU political system: seek (efficient) policy-making rather than a democratic relationship to the citizens (which is rather understood in terms of transparency and accountability, than in terms of citizens' participation).

Are lobbies (interest groups) representative of civil society?

→ Differences in terms of resources (human, financial, capacity to frame claims in terms of policy-making).

Lobbies bring 3 kinds of resources to the EU Commission:

- Expertise (information, data, ...);
- Link with the national level, autonomous from states and governments (e.g., European trade associations).
- Legitimation of EU policy-making.

The gradual formation of a closed administrative world that included lobbyists was necessary to the recognition of the Commission's legitimacy, notably by member states. This history means that lobbyists still spend much of their time

Historically, the development of EU lobbying (i.e., association of stakeholder to policy-making) has accompanied the process of European integration.

Permits to:

- Reduce the number of interlocutors of the EU Commission (e.g., European social dialogue).
- Formalize claims in line with European policy categories (technicity of the 'dossiers').
- Use stakeholders 'European agents' distinct from the EU Commission (e.g., assistance to new member states and candidate states).
- Same goes for the implementation of European public policies.

BusinessEurope's website:

<https://www.besnesseurope.eu/news/warm-welcome-our-new-ukrai>

The screenshot shows a news article on the BusinessEurope website. The date '29/09/2023' is displayed in the top right corner. The article is categorized under 'NEWS' and has the title 'Warm welcome to our new Ukrainian members!'. The main text of the article reads: 'The [Federation of Employers of Ukraine](#) and the [Union of Ukrainian Entrepreneurs](#) will join BusinessEurope as Observers on 1 October. Welcoming the new members President Fredrik Persson said: "Warm welcome to the new Ukrainian members in our ranks! We look forward to closer cooperation with representatives of the vibrant Ukrainian business community in these difficult times. We reiterate our support to Ukraine, its people and their European ambitions. Now it is time to turn these ambitions into actions and help Ukraine to fulfil all the key requirements of EU membership."'

Institutionalisation of the dialogue with stakeholders favours European resources (e.g., ETUC and UNICE organize training in EU Affairs for their members).

=> Lobbies are not only lobbies (variety of activities, including mobilisations of members, framing of claims, etc.).

Some of them also intend to go beyond a role of pure representation of interests, to promote their view of European integration (e.g., ETUC, social Europe, social justice).

But being a stakeholder at the EU level dismisses certain repertoires (e.g. ETUC is very reluctant to organize strikes).

Lobbies form a space (a field?) of struggle, competition between them (e.g., [BusinessEurope](#) vs [ERT](#)).



## Lahusen

2013; Vargovčíková 2015; Coen et al. 2021). The same also applies to civic groups, grassroots initiatives, and social movement organisations, whose action repertoires focused on public campaigning, mass mobilisation, and street protests. More often than not, the scale shift of their activities towards the EU also implied a move from confrontational public protest mobilisation to conventional and institutionalised forms of interest representation (Bursens 1997; Lahusen 2004; Balme and Chabanet 2008; della Porta and Parks 2013).

The EU institutions have not only encouraged and supported a wide array of lobby and advocacy groups to engage in legislative processes, but were also able to accommodate them within the consultative bodies and processes of the various policy domains, exposing them to the regulatory approach and collaborative style of policy deliberation (Woll 2012; Michalowitz 2019). The homogenisation of European lobbying within an organisational field marked by fragmentation and competition thus seems to be demand-driven.

# Steady growth of the organisational field

Various waves:

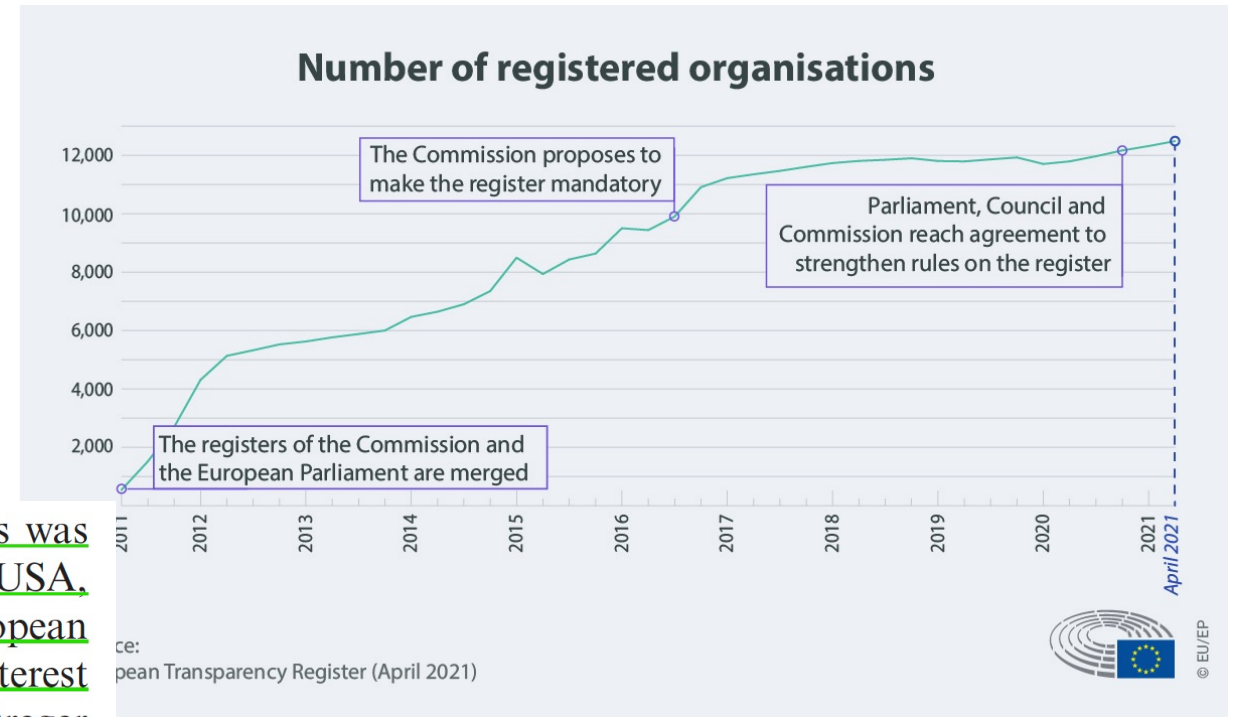
1950/60s: European federations

1980s: individual representations

1990s: civil society

1990s: commercial consultancies

## EU transparency register



in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1992, the number of active interest groups was 3,000, which is significantly below what is known for the USA, where the field grew to over 16,000 groups by 1998 (Woll 2005). The European field continued to grow in the following years: In 2013, over 5,500 interest groups were listed in the EU Transparency Register (Greenwood and Dreger 2013); in 2016, over 9,700 organisations were counted (Greenwood 2017: 13). However, the EU does not come close to the US situation. As expected, the number of active lobbyists exceeds the number of interest groups. In 2010, this was estimated at over 15,000 individuals (Alter-EU 2010: 23), but there are also estimates that suggest between 30,000 and 50,000 full-time workers (Corporate Europe Observatory 2011: 6; European Parliament 2018).

## **But what is civil society?**

EU Commission: defines civil society as social partners, representative organisations of socio-economic interests, NGOs (no matter the cause), all organisations devoted to citizens' participation in local/municipal life, and religious communities.

Commission's white book on civil society (2001): critical reactions from social partners (ETUC and UNICE). Question of representativeness of organisations, not mentioning the relevance of the interests they represent.

The representation of interests is a space of competition.

Lobbyists are part of the field of eurocracy (Laurens, Courty&Michel).

They meet Commission officials more often than MEPs.

Porosity between private and public spheres (careers in the field of eurocracy, between lobbying positions and EU institutions).

Lobbying positions can be an entry point into political and administrative positions in EU institutions.

For private firms, the goal (of lobbying) is to turn the Commission's action in their favour (e.g. by setting manufacturing standards).  
See Laurens:

Consequently, much of the action of today's "lobbyists" is not about trying to reduce the power exerted over markets by officials or persuading them to convert to liberalism (most of them are already liberals). It is usually about trying to steer the Commission in a direction to their commercial advantage, for example by promoting manufacturing standards that most closely reflect their own production processes. From this perspective it would be wrong to think that, in the name of economic liberalism, business lobbyists are all uniformly interested in seeing the disappearance or reduction of the standardising role of administrations in general and of the EU administration in particular. On the contrary, the growing dependency of businesses on the administrative and juridical resources of the Commission has been a driver in the recognition of Brussels as a new seat of power over markets, and so in the proliferation of lobbyists on the doorsteps of the EU institutions.

Keep in mind that private companies compete with each other (same goes for member states).

**Don't overestimate the influence of economic interests!**

(Many) examples where private firms react and adapt to regulations proposed by public authorities, instead of inspiring them.

Case of EMU and medicines.

=> Banks and the pharmaceutical industry favour lobbying at national level.



Lahusen: European lobbying = 'fluid boundaries'.

Hard to provide data on the number of lobby groups.

Same goes for the number of lobbyists.

Sociological studies (Laurens, Lahusen) may be of some help here.

dominant classes, this book focuses on the professional world of the business lobbyists and the way they promote business interests through routine interactions with administrative and political decision-makers. It immerses us in a set of social relations that have been little studied, but often have far-reaching effects on our daily lives.

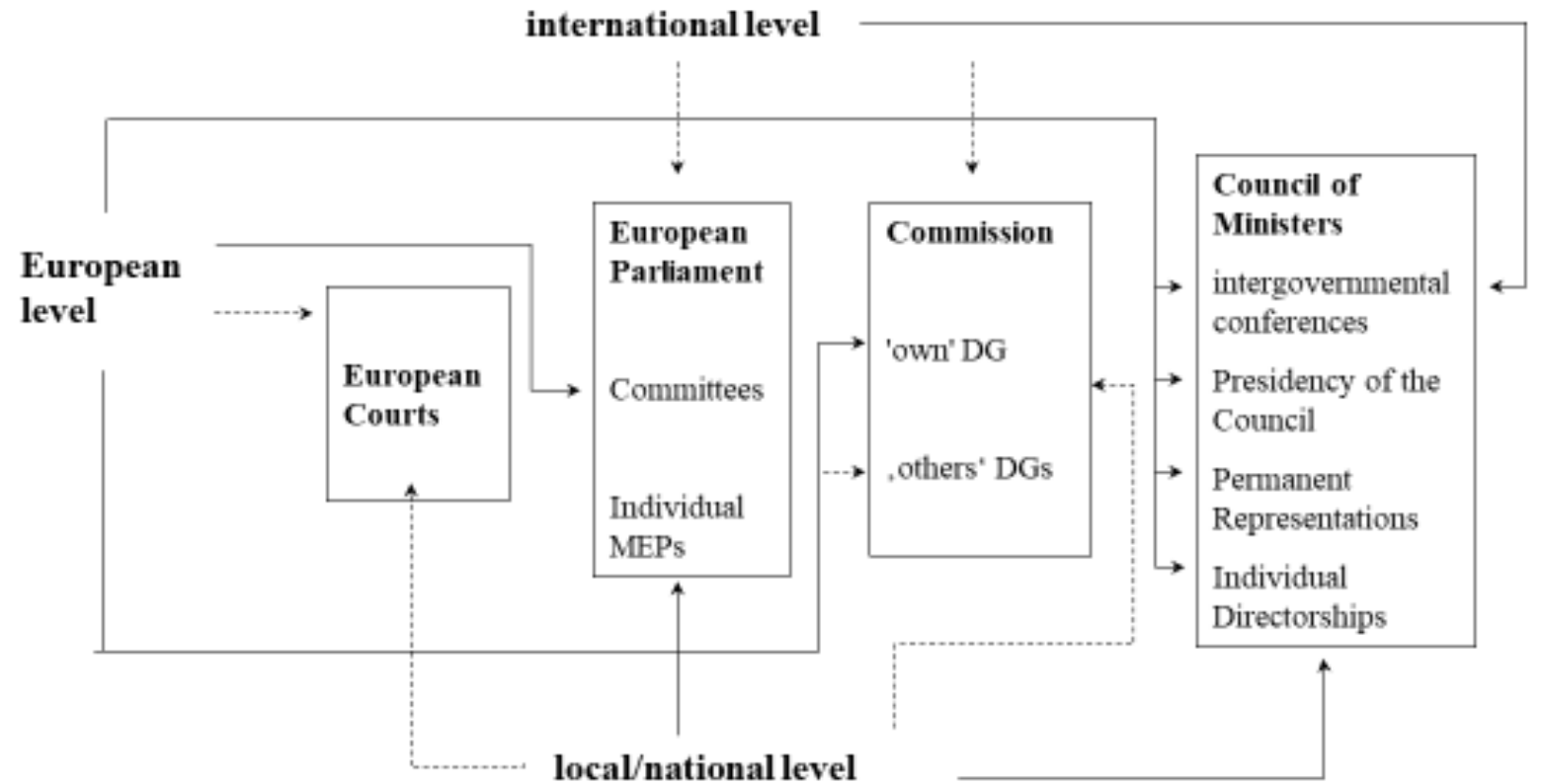
But media images of shadowy advisers who sometimes have more or less official meetings with political leaders on their clients' behalf offer only a partial reflection of the reality. First, they tend to portray as secret or deceptively cloaked in informality the routine work of staff whose roles are in fact entirely public, with their own professional organisations<sup>3</sup> and university courses. This is

particularly true of the French media. The French "journalist" tradition off

## II/ Lobbying as an occupational field (sociology of lobbyists)

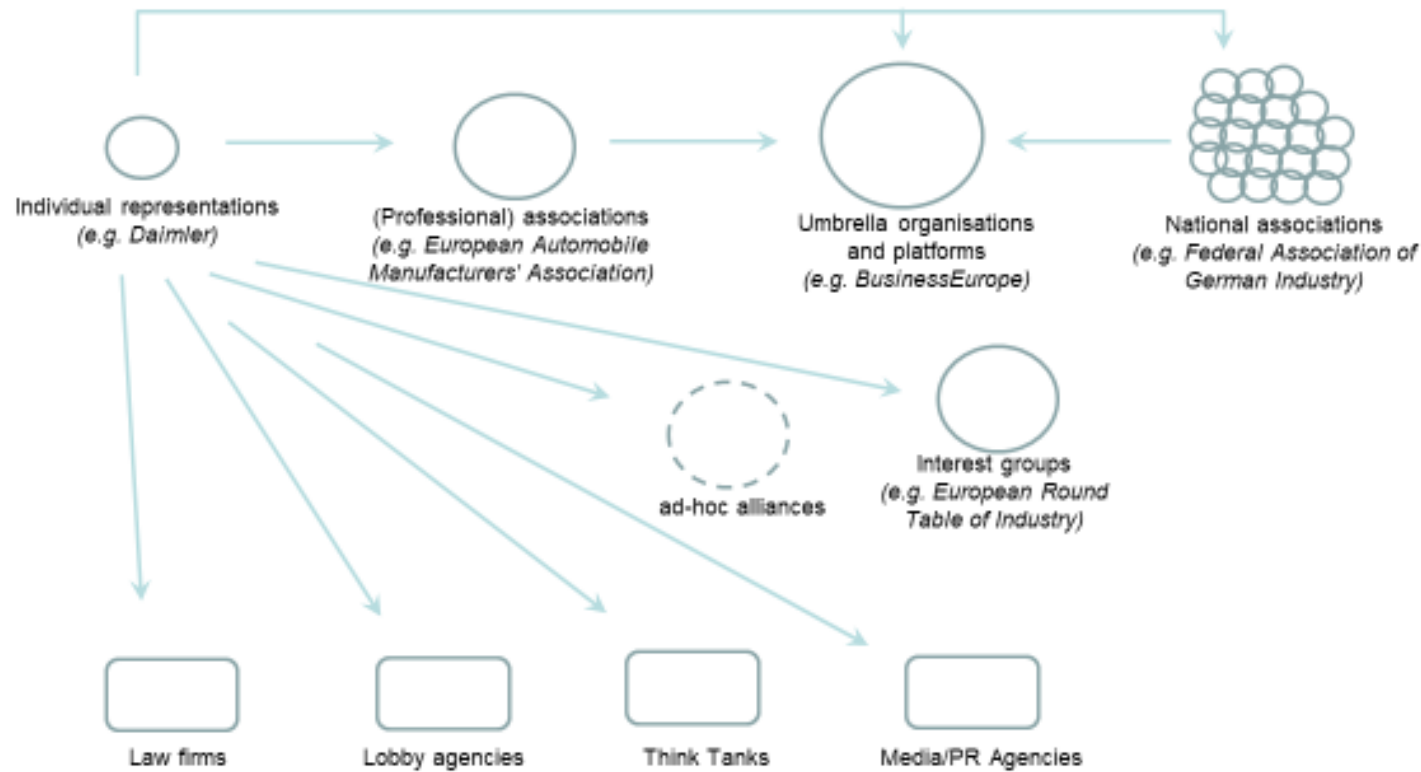
# Differentiation of lobbying activities and strategies

- inter-institutional
- multi-level





Pluralisation and fragmentation of the organisational field.  
Higher competitiveness between and within interest sectors.



But also astroturfing, i.e., ‘consumer movement’.

Companies or business associations create organisations that look like NGOs but whose existence is in reality privately funded for commercial purposes (see Laurens).

In Brussels the proliferation of public consultations and the possibility for lobbyists to be certified as stakeholders are two aspects of a system in which the legitimacy of decisions relies on the balancing of so-called “business” and “consumer” interests. Astroturfing subverts the need to seek out the opinions of consumers by enabling lobbyists to don two different hats. More and more PR companies thus offer the launching of a “consumer movement” as part of their standard service to business associations, including strategies to defend against any public revelation of the manoeuvre.<sup>7</sup> There are few studies of this phenom-

Example: Friends of glass.

<https://www.friendsofglass.com/gb/>

One of the structural dynamics underpinning the launch of the Friends of Glass movement is undoubtedly the struggle conducted by the main European business association for the glass packaging industry against the plastic (polyethylene terephthalate, known as PET) bottles industry. This association, which has been

of the product, and also with consumer organisations. The language used by the Commission to promote a low carbon economy seemed to open up the potential for a “public” voice in favour of glass as a “clean” product. But this voice could not be seen as directly stemming from a glass industry still making massive use of oil fired ovens to produce its bottles.

The launch of a “consumer movement for glass” made it possible to sidestep this potential contradiction. The movement would promote “glass” as a product spontaneously perceived as ecological, without obliging the sector’s business association to adopt a position on the current mode of glass production, which still emits carbon. To this end, the association employee in charge of communications had been working “for two and a half years” with a Brussels-based PR agency “specialising in social media” to “mobilise consumers”, “offer them tools”, talk about the “benefits of glass and how to promote glass”.

forming them into the provision of a service. Providing an equivalent to the activism of a classic NGO, the staff of these agencies thus imitate sustained activism in the service of a business association (or company), creating and running a website, mounting media campaigns and providing consumers with campaign materials (posters, model letters and so on). Delegating this activity to a PR agency ensures the necessary minimum distance between the consumers who are mobilised and companies in the sector.

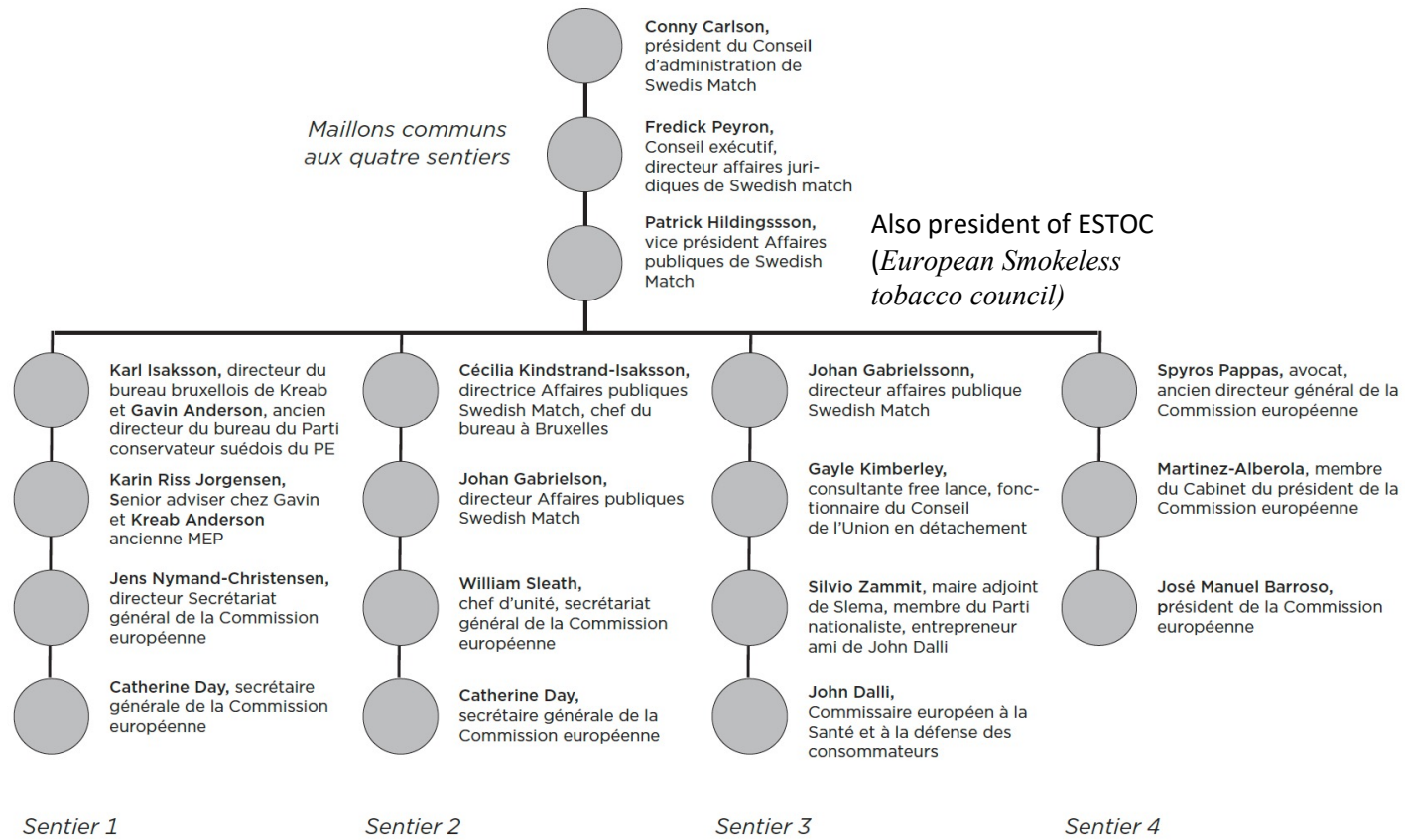
In the case of Friends of Glass, routine management of the “movement” was thus not undertaken by the staff of the European business association for the glass industry, but by the staff of a PR agency called These Days, which kept the industry regularly updated on its activities. Friends of Glass was constructed to appear as a consumer “movement” in support of the use of glass bottles (based on the idea, for example, that “wine is better when it is kept in a glass bottle”). The name echoes that of the environmental organisation Friends of the Earth and it is nowhere explicitly stated on the website or Facebook page that Friends of Glass is not an organisation of environmental activists. The website does contain a link to the business association, but for consumers and internet users, ascertaining that Friends of Glass is not an organisation entirely separate from the industry would require them both to click on the link and to realise that it leads to a business association which, to the uninitiated, also appears as a non-profit organisation.

using social media. The agency uses several very costly computer programs to monitor and respond to what is happening on social media (“People prefer to drink their Coca-Cola in a glass bottle!”). Social media users are contacted by an employee of the PR agency or by a “community manager” (employed by a glass company somewhere in Europe) in the name of Friends of Glass. Particular targets are “bloggers who are very active on recycling issues, people who have a lot of friends or followers”. Following American marketing companies in according

SACRISTE Guillaume, « Sur les logiques sociales du champ du pouvoir européen. L'exemple de l'affaire Dalli », *Politique européenne*, 2014/2 (n° 44), p. 52-96.

Or, il apparaît que cette *chaîne d'influence* ne s'établit pas au hasard au sein du champ du pouvoir européen. Elle tend plutôt à s'adapter aux logiques sociales de son fonctionnement. C'est ce que révèle l'analyse des différents « sentiers » la composant. Sans nécessairement y voir une stratégie consciente et globale de la part des cabinets d'affaires publiques et/ou des entreprises, on peut faire l'hypothèse que les acteurs de la chaîne d'influence résolvent un ensemble de problèmes pratiques auxquels ils se trouvent confrontés afin d'influencer le système institutionnel européen. Les réponses qu'ils





Les quatre sentiers de l'influence

## Paradoxical developments:

- ❖ heterogenization of the field of interest groups, while
- ❖ homogenisation of the field of professional activity:
  - ❖ established patterns of interest representation
  - ❖ entrance requirements
  - ❖ accommodative pressures

→ which are the homogenising forces?

- institutional and organisational?
- professional!



## Laurens

Business employers are clients who must be managed but are rarely present and appear only occasionally in the different social arenas we observe. They deign to travel only to the quarterly meetings of the board of their business association or for an occasional discussion with a European commissioner. Through a classic process of delegation, it is the specialist staff of business associations rather than executive managers of major companies who promote business interests in Brussels on a daily basis. The representation of commercial interests in European institutions is subject to a division of labour. It has become institutionalised in new business and trade associations located close to the EU bureaucracy. The everyday relations between these “specialised employees” – to borrow Gramsci’s term – and the European Commission form the main focus of this book.

## Why are professions relevant?

- occupational aspect:
  - paid activity linked to specific tasks and competences
  - establishment of a specialised labour market, career patterns and orientations
  - exclusion of voluntary, honorary work
- professional aspect:
  - monopolisation of tasks and activities, skills and competences
  - homogenisation of practices with reference to superior knowledge
  - struggle for social status and reputation
  - discourse of professional legitimacy

## The study (Lahusen).

- Research project funded by the German Research Foundation (2014-2019)
  - qualitative stream:
    - document analysis
    - internship and participant observation in Brussels
    - interviews with experts (16) and lobbyists (29) from all interest sectors
  - quantitative stream:
    - standardised survey among 699 lobbyists via multimodal fieldwork (phones)
    - registered lobbyists (Transparency Register, N= 7069)
    - across sectors and countries



## Occupationalisation

- the field is dominated by paid employment, thus marginalising unpaid voluntary work:
    - 83% of respondents in paid full-time, 9% in part-time paid work
    - 85% employees of organisations
- strong homogenisation of the labour market across sectors and countries: high 'professionalism' as standard

- high sectoral permeability of the labour market:
  - lobbyists report about work experiences in at least 2.5 sectors on average
  - all combinations quite normal:
    - Consulting firms;
    - Authorities, agencies;
    - Political/social organisations;
    - Trade associations;
    - Private companies;
    - Research/education;
    - Trade unions;
    - Think tanks;
    - Media/PR;
    - Law firms.
  
- even though sectoral differences emerge in regard to length of work: business vs. social NGOs vs. consultancies

the labour market is (semi-) autonomous in regard to the institutional field of the EU:

- no ,revolving' but ,sliding doors'
- occupational position determined by the labour market:
  - entrance requirements
  - work experience and previous job positions
  - insider status and 'stable smell' in Brussels

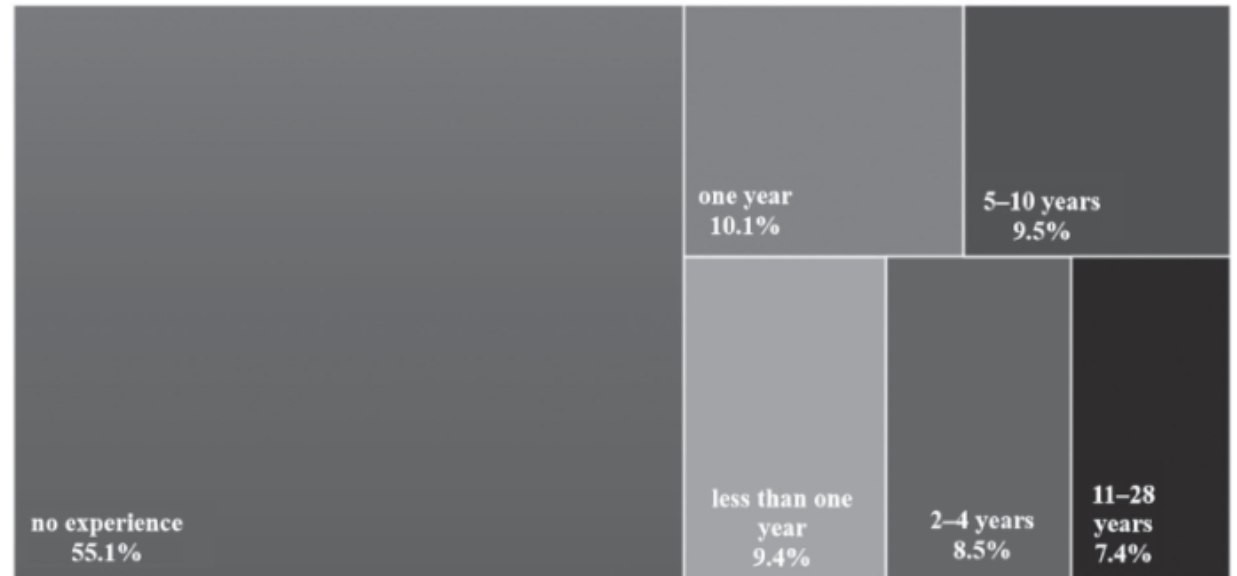


Figure 5.2 Work experience within the EU institutions (N = 597).

- internal inequalities within the labour market (between sectors, age groups, gender)
  - not determined by formal employment
  - but by income:
    - 50% earn <50,000€, 20% 50-80,000€ and 25% >80,000€
    - sectoral inequalities in income potentials
    - high profile lobbying linked to well-paid positions (across sectors)
    - motivates commitment to lobbying careers

# Professionalisation

- process of academisation of the work-force:
  - 2% of respondents have primary or secondary education, 89% Bachelor or Master degrees, 9% a PhD
  - 42% hold a degree in Social Sciences (Political Science and European Studies), 34% in business and law, only 7% in MINT
  - growing dominance of Social Sciences among the younger cohorts



- Consensus about professionalism in terms of skills and capitals
  - 70% beliefs in privileged expertise, agreement on EU-related knowledge and Public Affairs skills, less on sector specific expertise
  - consensus about professional ,excellence‘
    - transforming resources in professional capital:
      - contact networks in relationship capital
      - Information in policy-relevant arguments
      - insider knowledge in the right intuition
      - organisational resources and adequate dosage of presence
    - generating symbolic capital
      - “having a name”: reputation and repute
      - “being one of us”: belonging

## A joint professionalisation project?

- Professional ethos widely disseminated
  - Public Affairs as a professional practice accessible only to those initiated, and applicable across sectors
- but divisions between sectors and positions
  - main drivers are consultants and business interests
  - managerial positions with high income (social distinction)
- and conflicts about political legitimacy
  - shared belief in the general principle of interest representation, yet
  - distinct concepts of legitimacy (particularistic vs. universalistic notions of 'legitimate' interests) and
  - mutual forms delegitimation

# Conclusions

- EU-Lobbying as highly ‚professionalised‘:
  - full occupationalisation as a labour market
  - partial professionalisation (high in terms of ‚esoteric knowledge‘, low in professional identities)
- The rationale of ‚professionalisation‘:
  - a (false) promise of equality between interests across sectors and countries
  - an implicit strategy of perpetuating social inequalities between political interests

**III/ Public/private relations in the field of eurocracy:**  
**insights from the PolEco study**

PolEco project: to situate movements towards the private sector in the general context of trajectories within the field of eurocracy. (Sébastien Michon & Valentin Behr)

Quantitative and qualitative study.

**1/** database on the trajectories of parliamentary assistants in the European Parliament (APAs): 439 assistants from the 7<sup>th</sup> parliamentary term (2009-2014).

Working for an MEP active in six parliamentary committees:

- Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI);
- Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE);
- Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO);
- Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON);
- Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI).
- Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL);

**2/** 45 interviews conducted in French or English (February- October 2021).

## Occupation after the end of the parliamentary term (2014)

	Numbers	%
European Parliament	270	62
<b>In Brussels</b>		
European institution	55	13
Lawyer	1	0
Representation of local and regional authorities	7	2
<b>Consultancy</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>
Journalist	1	0
<b>Representation of NGOs</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Representation of private interests (business, trade, industry)</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>
Think tank	2	0
<b>In member states</b>		
Lawyer	5	1
Political aide	42	10
Local and regional authorities	34	8
<b>Consultancy</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Private firm</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10</b>
Public institution	58	13
Journalist	4	1
<b>NGO</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Representation of private interests (business, trade, industry)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>13</b>
Total	439	100

## Why do interest groups seek to hire former APAs?

*'They're sought after them afterwards because **they've seen the inside world, they have contacts they know the procedures...** there's a lot of aspects of course that are then afterwards for an employer very interesting.'*

(Interview with Karl, former APA to a German MEP (ADLE), then lobbyist for the tech and telecom industry in Brussels)

It is rarely the expertise in a specific policy sector that is sought by their future employers. Instead, they place more importance on **the institutional, political and bureaucratic knowledge** acquired by former APAs:

*'I think this is really crucial to know a little bit how things are working, also in terms of you know, procedures. **What is a group, what is an advisor, when do you go to trilogues, what happens there,** so to know a little bit the structure behind and I guess also a certain understanding of environmental policies definitely helped. [...] **And then becoming a kind of you know, public affairs expert on circular economy packaging and all that stuff this anyway has to be done once there** [in the company], once I started in the company and then also had different trainings and discussions with them, with really our scientific experts working on packaging and material for instance.'*

(Interview with Jan, former APA to a German MEP (EPP), then lobbyist for a multinational company in Brussels)

## Why do APAs join the lobbying sector in Brussels?

Is it for money?

Is it because lobby groups try to hire them specifically?

⇒The importance of the **professional opportunity structure**.

*'As a corporate lobbyist of course there's always a bit of suspicion against you... they always assume that there is a strategic dark force in the background that orchestrates everything, and they completely ignore **the personal side** of the people. Someone who comes out of the Parliament and joins a tech company is not going to go there because the tech company went to the Parliament and grabbed someone. No, I applied there, and I was actually happy to get a job and **I might have gone somewhere else**, so when you look at it from the outside it will look very strategic and they're buying influence and blah blah blah. No, it was just simply my decision to apply there, they would have never taken me [if I had not applied]. [...] Also, from the European Commission you know, when do people leave the European Commission? If they are contractual, they never pass the concours and at the end of the six years... they need to feed their kids. [...] And then of course companies are one of the many options in Brussels so yeah, people need to realize we're all humans, we're not born lobbyists, certain things just happen like that.'*

(Interview with Karl, former APA to a German MEP (ADLE), then lobbyist for the tech and telecom industry in Brussels)

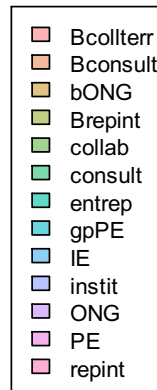
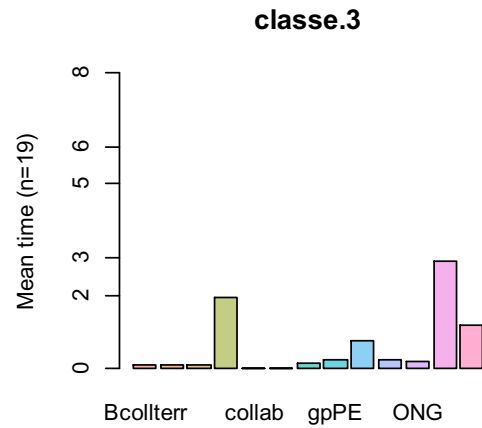
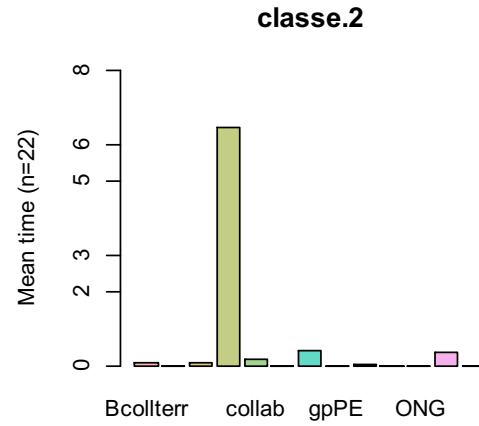
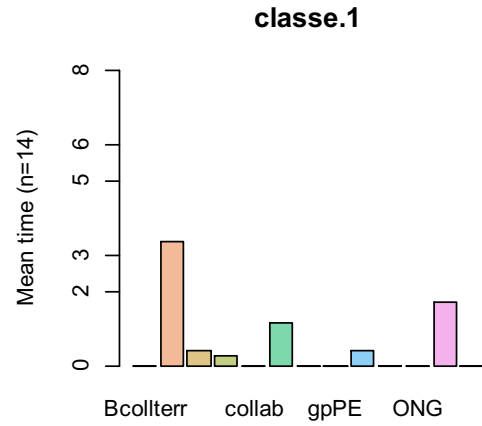


**Those who ‘take the door’ and join the private sector:** Three sets of specific characteristics compared to their former EP colleagues:

**Background before the EP:** They have more often studied and worked abroad, particularly in Brussels. They are slightly younger, and their professional careers are shorter when they enter the EP (1.6 years compared to 2.4 years otherwise).

**Position in the EP:** The MEP they worked for was more often positioned on the right of the hemicycle (EPP group). They were involved in a policy area in which the EP is a co-legislator. APAs characteristic of the revolving door more often worked on files discussed in the IMCO, ENVI, and ECON parliamentary committees.

**Professional careers:** They stay less long at the EP than others (3.8 years at the EP before 2014 compared to 4.3 otherwise): the EP represents 50% of the professional time spent in Brussels (compared to 88% otherwise). Overall, when they leave the EP, they tend to specialise in a private career in Brussels (6.5 years in the private sector from 2014 onwards out of a possible 8 years; 11 years in Brussels over the whole career).



**Cluster 1** = permanent consultants (4.8 years in the private sector). Career focused on consulting in Brussels and to a lesser extent at national level (on average 5.5 years in Brussels). With a degree in political science, they are more often former assistants to EPP MEPs, involved in the ECON Committee.

**Cluster 2** = permanent representatives of economic interests in Brussels (6.9 years on average in the private sector, and 7.0 years in Brussels). Their careers are even more homogeneous than those of the previous group, they have been involved in the representation of economic interests almost exclusively in Brussels. Former assistants of ALDE MEPs and working in ITRE, IMCO, ENVI committees.

**Cluster 3** = intermittent (temporary) representatives of economic interests in Brussels or at national level. More diverse and less homogeneous careers: 6.3 years in Brussels after 2014, they more often stayed in the EP after the 2014 elections, and they have moved around between different types of organisation. Their careers seem less anchored in the private sector (3.5 years). More likely to have been employed by an S&D MEP who was involved in ECON or ENVI. More often women and graduates in European studies, highly internationalised.

Former APAs have **resources, knowledge and know-how that are relevant to both public and private activities.**

Their **expertise in EU politics**, especially of its institutions, bureaucracy, and social agents, is sought after by private interests who need that specific knowledge to elaborate their strategies of influence on policy-making.

APAs turned lobbyists do not radically change their **working habits**: they keep playing the **multi-tasked role of planner, scribe, compromise facilitator, information broker, advisor and advertiser.**

*'There are similarities, but **we are on the other side of the table**, that is to say that when I was a parliamentary assistant, I was the recipient of the lobbyists' communication. And now it's the other way round. But in the end, **the common point is this dialogue that can exist between those who take decisions and the various stakeholders.**'*

(Interview with Constantin, former APA to a Romanian MEP (ADLE), then lobbyist for the pharmaceutical industry in Brussels)

As lobbyists they keep playing the role of **intermediaries between different stakeholders**, negotiating and advocating a position at the different stages and levels of the European decision-making process:

*'So it really depends on the status of the legislation, like for instance, currently the Commission is preparing a revision of the packaging directive. Which is a huge topic as I said, for industry, the food industry as such. And so currently on this packaging revision it's more outreach to the Commission because for Parliament it's still a little bit early with other dossiers. So, it depends a little bit on the state actually where we are, where we are having the file going or sitting but it's very, it's really everything in the Perm Reps, Commission obviously, Parliament, sometimes even the regions, other industry players, industry associations, food industry, but also beyond food industry and it's kind of broad NGOs obviously also. I mean we're trying to reach on also and test our ideas with NGOs and see how they feel about it and the other way around.'*

(Interview with Jan, former APA to a German MEP (EPP), then lobbyist for a multinational company in Brussels)

Same goes for lobbyists in NGOs:

*'Once **the job consists of convincing people to do something**, whether it's via a political party or via an association, basically the job is the same: get people together around the table, negotiate until we reach a compromise and then push on.'*

(Interview with Robert, former APA to a French MEP (Greens), then lobbyist for an environmental NGO in Brussels)

Elaborate an **influence strategy**, identify the relevant channels and levers:

*'The particularity of my job is that I'm going to be the team's lobbying referent, which means that basically, when we don't really know... well, how to deliver a message to the right person so that it has an impact, **my job is to identify who we're talking to, at what time and to say what**. [...] Because people don't understand how it works, it's normal, it's complicated. I mean, it's complex. Try to understand what a plenary session of Parliament is. And what is decided there? And then the meeting of the college of commissioners, what do these people do? And what is a trilogue?'*

(Interview with Sandrine, former APA to a French MEP (Greens), then lobbyist for an environmental NGO in Brussels)

**Trade associations, federations of industries = a significant part of the job (inside job).**

*So, the headquarters of B. are in Berlin, it's a rather big organization, more than 100 people working there so it's a quite strong trade association, but they had a small satellite office in Brussels, **small representative office, two people**. I was the head of office and there was one more junior person and so my role was on the one hand reporting back on what's going on, then making sure that B. was also seen there, so we did also four or five big events per year you know, organizing a debate, moderating it, giving speeches. I occasionally testified in parliament sometimes, like in committee hearings and then of course the lobbying part. So, B. would produce position papers in Berlin in its working groups and on the basis of these position papers I would then develop advocacy campaigns in Brussels and go out and talk to parliamentarians and commissioner officials. And of course, B. in itself was also part of [a European federation of digital industries], so I also took part in the working groups of [that federation] and tried to influence their positions according to my B. position.*

(Interview with Karl, former APA to a German MEP (ADLE), then lobbyist for the tech and telecom industry in Brussels)

That inside job in associations of industries can resemble the one in the EP (negotiating, compromise making).

*'And things make it through the different levels and like papers are developed, it's really funny, because the whole of Brussels is based on compromise making, every rule, everything that happens in Brussels is a compromise between a lot of very diverse positions, it's very interesting.'*

(Interview with Karl, former APA to a German MEP (ADLE), then lobbyist for the tech and telecom industry in Brussels)

*'The negotiation can be extremely similar to negotiation in the Parliament. You have a text, then you have a proposal and then one company would like to see this, the other company would like to see another element, and then you try to find a compromise.'*

(Interview with Jan, former APA to a German MEP (EPP), then lobbyist for a multinational company in Brussels)



## GENERAL CONCLUSION (Laurens)

Lobbying as an occupational field (Lahusen).

Professional opportunity structure.

=> Field of eurocracy approach invites to rethink the boundaries between public and private (they are more entangled than divided).

As soon as we enter into the detail of individual careers it soon becomes apparent that, for some young graduates of the international schools, lobbying may be nothing more than a way into the politico-administrative sphere in Brussels, a potential springboard towards better paid positions. Once again, by claiming to reveal what is hidden, the hasty media view reinforces the false image of an administration that is by definition distinct from the commercial world. If we

## GENERAL CONCLUSION (Laurens)

EU policy-making based on compromise making between a variety of stakeholders (public, private ; public authorities, industry, NGOs, ...).

=> A mode of government that relies on the entanglement between public and private interests.

would, in the absence of lobbying, be made to serve the public interest. There is a fundamental difference between suggesting that a democratic system has been simply perverted by lobbying and the hypothesis that the existence of lobbies is an integral part of a mode of government in which the weight of legitimacy conferred by universal suffrage counts for nothing compared to other criteria. Our

All these elements of our discussion insist on one main argument, which is that the continual readjustment of the business world to the expectations of the Commission cannot be explained by ideological convergence alone, but is also driven by the structural entanglement of the sphere of business representation with that of Commission officials. Above all this book describes how the circularity of social relations has led this world to close in on itself over time.