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EU Lobbying Through Everyday Practices

An ethnographic study on relational power
in transnational in-house EU lobbying
in Helsinki and Brussels 2017–2020

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ABSTRACT

Although EU lobbying has been extensively studied, surprisingly little is known about its everyday practices and how lobbyists understand them. This dissertation is an effort to understand EU lobbying practices from the perspectives of Helsinki and Brussels based lobbyists working in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions, and professional associations (UAs), or in trade and business associations (TBs) when the European Green Deal was emerging (2017–2020).

The potential of the practice approach has been largely overlooked in International Relations (IR) research focusing on EU lobbying. Building on existing IR research, showing how not only interests and worldviews but also practices make world politics, this study argues that practices constitute the *power to do* transnational EU lobbying. By understanding EU lobbying through a Bourdieu-inspired practice approach, the study elaborates a theoretical approach to relational power in EU lobbying within IR research. The empirical observations herein, on how practices constitute the power to do EU lobbying, contribute to the existing literature on transnationality, lobbying style, and relational power in EU lobbying. Moreover, this research contributes to EU studies through multi-sited and transnational ethnographic research that enables to study practices across Member States and Brussels.

The research questions are: How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying? What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying? And lastly, what constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying? The ethnographic research data, gathered through shadowing, non-participant observation, and interviews, comprises the observation dataset from transnational fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels, 59 recorded semi-structured interviews, and research diary notes.

The study shows how essential for the EU lobbyists' habitus is the feeling of *being in* a disposition to do EU lobbying and to understand EU politics, without being very visibly engaged. Additionally, different dispositions in EU lobbying (in-house lobbyists, consultant lobbyists, decision-makers) are relational rather than separating,

when previous experience of EU lobbying and changes in disposition are considered across a longer perspective.

This study moreover illustrates how EU lobbying is closely related to EU politics. Thus, EU lobbying needs to adapt to what is current in EU politics and to be organised transnationally across Member States and Brussels to be considered relevant. However, analysing timing and spaces in transnational EU lobbying demonstrates that EU lobbying practices cannot be understood solely as the basis of EU politics. Timing in EU lobbying relates to timing in EU politics, but lobbying occurs slightly in advance and entails constant, long- term engagement. Moreover, analysing the relational spaces in EU lobbying illustrates how the practices taking place among lobbyists relate to the practices of public and closed-door EU lobbying. Thus, focusing solely on practices visible to decision-makers reveals only part of EU lobbying.

By analysing relational resources, the study shows how the power to do in-house lobbying demands economic resources to be able to engage in EU lobbying transnationally. Moreover, previous transnational experience from different dispositions, relevant current positions in recognised organisations, and a suitable status in the hierarchy (cultural capital), as well as the ability to gain access to informal information through networks (social capital) is needed. Most importantly, gaining and maintaining trust (symbolic capital) is essential to competent EU lobbying, with trust constituting power relations within transnational in-house EU lobbying.

However, the understanding of competent EU lobbying is also exclusive; incompetence in practices leads to exclusion from EU lobbying, both by decision-makers and fellow lobbyists. As EU lobbying is an institutionalised way to be heard in EU decision-making, interests lacking competent EU lobbying may not enter the debates. Overall, the research outlines how practices in EU lobbying constitute the power to do it: not only does the content of the lobbying matter, but also how, when, and by whom EU lobbying is done. Thus, the *feel for EU lobbying* is not about winning or losing one game, but about being able to do transnational EU lobbying across the long-term.

Key words: Practice research, EU lobbying, power, transnationalism, ethnography, shadowing

TIIVISTELMÄ

Vaikka EU lobbausta on tutkittu laajasti, arjen käytännöistä ja siitä, miten lobbarit ne ymmärtävät, tiedetään yllättävän vähän. Tämä väitöskirjatutkimus pyrkii ymmärtämään kansalaisjärjestöissä (NGO), ammattiliitoissa ja ammatillisissa yhdistyksissä (UA) ja talous- ja elinkeinoyhdistyksissä (TB) työskentelevien lobbareiden näkökulmasta EU-lobbauksen käytäntöjä Helsingissä ja Brysselissä, kun Euroopan vihreä kehityksen ohjelma oli syntymässä vuosina 2017–2020.

Kansainvälisen politiikan tutkimusalalla käytäntöihin pohjautuvan tutkimuksen potentiaali on jäänyt suurelta osin huomiotta tutkittaessa EU:n lobbausta. Pohjautuen aiempaan alan käytäntötutkimukseen kansainvälisessä politiikassa, joka osoittaa, miten paitsi intressit ja maailmankatsomukset, myös käytännöt tekevät maailmanpolitiikkaa, tutkimuksen argumentti on, että käytännöt konstituoivat valtaa tehdä transnationaalia EU-lobbausta. Tutkimuksen teoreettisen tarkastelun pohjautuessa Bourdieu-lähtöiseen käytäntötutkimukseen, tutkimus kehittää teoreettista lähestymistapaa ymmärtää suhteellista valtaa EU-lobbauksessa kansainvälisen politiikan tutkimuskentällä. Empiiriset havainnot siitä, miten käytännöt konstituoivat valtaa tehdä EU-lobbausta puolestaan tuovat uutta keskeistä näkemystä transnationalismin, lobbaus tyylin ja suhteellisen vallan tutkimiseen EU-lobbauksessa. Metodologisesti tutkimus edistää EU-tutkimusta tarkastelemalla käytäntöjä jäsenvaltioissa ja Brysselissä valtioiden rajat ylittävällä etnografisella tutkimuksella.

Tämän tutkimuksen kolme tutkimuskysymykset ovat: Miten in-house-lobbareiden habitus ja EU-lobbauksen transnationaalisuus linkittyvät valtaan tehdä EU lobbausta? Mitkä materiaaliset ja symboliset resurssit konstituoivat valtaa tehdä in-house EU-lobbausta? Sekä lopuksi, mille pohjautuu ”tunne EU-lobbauksesta” ja miten ulossulkeminen näyttäytyy transnationaalissa EU-lobbauksessa? Shadowing-seurannalla, passiivisella havainnoinnilla ja haastattelemalla kerätty etnografinen tutkimusaineisto koostuu Helsingissä ja Brysselissä toteutetun transnationaalisen kenttätyön aikana kerätystä havainnointiaineistosta, 59 puolistrukturoidusta haastattelusta ja tutkimuspäiväkirjojen muistiinpanoista.

Tutkimus osoittaa, kuinka EU-lobbareiden habituksessa oleellista on tunne mukanaolosta ja asema, josta voi tehdä EU-lobbausta ja ymmärtää EU-politiikkaa

ilman ilmeistä osallistumista. Lisäksi erilaiset dispositiot EU-lobbauksessa (in-house-lobbarit, konsulttilobbarit ja päättäjät) ovat ennemminkin suhteellisia kuin erottavia, kun aiempi kokemus EU-lobbauksesta ja muutokset asemassa otetaan huomioon pitkällä aikavälillä.

Tutkimus tuo lisäksi esille, miten EU-lobbaus liittyy läheisesti EU:n politiikkaan. Oleellista EU-lobbauksessa onkin sopeutuminen EU-politiikan ajankohtaiseen nykytilaan ja EU-lobbauksen organisointi valtioiden rajat ylittävästi, jotta mukanaolo jäsenmaissa ja Brysselissä on relevanttia. Ajoittamisen ja tilallisuuden tarkastelu osoittaa kuitenkin, että EU- lobbauksen käytäntöjä ei voi ymmärtää pelkästään EU-politiikan näkökulmasta. Ajoitus EU-lobbauksessa linkittyy vahvasti siihen, mikä on kulloinkin EU-politiikassa ajankohtaista. EU-lobbaus tapahtuu nimittäin hiukan etukäteen ja pohjautuu jatkuvaan, pitkän tähtäimen mukanaoloon. Lisäksi EU:n lobbauksen tilallisuuden analysointi osoittaa, miten lobbareiden keskinäinen kanssakäyminen liittyy julkiseen ja suljettujen ovien takana tapahtuvaan EU-lobbaukseen. Näin ollen keskittyminen vain päättäjille näkyviin käytäntöihin paljastaa pelkästään osan EU-lobbauksesta.

Tutkimalla suhteellisia resursseja tutkimus osoittaa, miten kyky tehdä in-house EU-lobbausta edellyttää taloudellisia resursseja, jotta EU lobbaus on mahdollista organisoida transnationaalisti. Lisäksi oleellista on transnationaali kokemus eri lobbauksen dispositioista, relevantti asema tunnustetussa organisaatiossa ja sopiva asema hierarkiassa (kulttuurinen pääoma) sekä kyvykkyys saavuttaa epävirallista tietoa verkostojen kautta (sosiaalinen pääoma). Mikä tärkeintä, luottamuksen voittaminen ja ylläpitäminen (symbolinen pääoma) on oleellista kompetentissa EU-lobbauksessa ja luottamus konstituoi valtasuhteita transnationaalissa EU lobbauksessa.

Lobbareiden ja päättäjien jakama ymmärrys kompetentista EU-lobbauksesta on kuitenkin myös ulossulkeva. EU-lobbauksen ollessa vakiintunut tapa tulla kuulluksi EU:n päätöksenteossa, osaamattomuus EU-lobbauksen käytännöissä voi johtaa siihen, että osaamattomasti lobattu intressi ei tule kuulluksi. Tutkimus tuokin kokonaisuudessa esille sen, että merkitystä ei ole vain tiedon relevanssilla vaan myös lobbauskäytännöt konstituoivat valtaa tehdä EU-lobbausta. Merkittävää nimittäin on miten, milloin ja kuka lobbaa. Näin ollen EU-lobbauksessa on lopulta kyse kyvykkyydestä transnationaaliin EU-lobbaukseen pitkällä aikavälillä.

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PREFACE: SETTING THE STAGE FOR MY ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Had I known how much ethnography would change my research process, I doubt I would have been so eager to embark upon it. Having done so, I cannot overlook how interesting it made the past six years and how reflexive[1] it made me as a researcher. Therefore, as a preface to my study, I want to outline how I became an ethnographer and started to study EU lobbying, as well where this has led me. In this way I also explicitly state my position as an IR researcher favouring an interdisciplinary approach through political sociology, practice research, and ethnography.

International Relations (IR) research has traditionally been heavily dependent on formal textual sources, text-based analysis, and discourses (see, for example, Neumann 2002; Pouliot 2007; Kuus 2013). However, as a doctoral researcher in IR I found myself asking questions such as: How is EU lobbying done in practice, how could I have access to it, and how could I understand it as the lobbyists do? Thus, my main motivation for conducting empirical research on EU lobbying was an urge to understand more about EU lobbyists' practical knowledge. I also felt that I could not answer these questions relying solely on textual sources.[2] I had to see lobbying

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[1] By reflexivity I refer to a special kind of awareness when reflecting practices that is often forgotten in the heat of the moment (Bourdieu 1990b, 80–82; Martin 2003, 356). As part of ethnographic fieldwork, it is important to pay attention to how engaged with the field one is and to be reflective when it comes to research practices (see, for example, Atkinson 2020, 53). In this study, reflexivity is important when reflecting both upon EU lobbying practices and my own research practices, including with respect to writing.

[2] At the beginning of my research, my entry point into practice theory combined with ethnography was motivated by the aim to move beyond discourses. This kind of entry point has been criticised for lacking a more profound understanding of ethnography (Vrasti 2008). However, as my research proceeded I became aware of how further reflexivity was needed in my work.

in practice.[3] All this, together with encouragement from my supervisor[4], led me towards an ethnographic and abductive research process, and later specifically to Pierre Bourdieu's relational approach to practices and power, as well as how this approach has been subsequently applied and developed within IR scholarship and beyond (see, for example, Adler-Nissen 2011; 2012a; Kauppi 2003; 2005; 2018; Bigo 2011; 2020; Pouliot and Mérand 2012; Kuus 2015).

When conducting ethnographic research, the research process seldom starts without previous knowledge, based on earlier research or personal experience (Powdermaker 1966). As part of the ethnographic research process, I can clearly outline my own previous experience, networks, and knowledge of lobbying before I started this research.[5] I think making this visible is relevant, as my previous experience was perhaps the main driver that enabled me to see EU lobbying as something worthy of study as an IR researcher. However, I have never considered myself an expert in EU lobbying.[6]

Regarding ethnography at the practical level, doctoral researchers doing ethnography face many difficulties if they want to do fieldwork (Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 4). In my experience, persevering with ethnographic data gathering, requiring leaving the "armchair" to do empirical research, is still considered a strange adventure. The ethnographic process involves lots of hard work before the actual

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[3] Perhaps it also underlines how my research connects to learning as transformation and how my understanding of learning as a doctoral researcher is related to knowing in everyday situations (Lave 2019).

[4] I am grateful to my PhD supervisor, Eero Palmujoki, who, after carefully listening to my concerns in relation to my study process, simply asked: *"Have you ever considered doing ethnographic research?"* This helped me to find my way as a researcher.

[5] In the early stages of my career, I worked for a few months in the Advocacy Office of an NGO platform. There I also participated in the meetings of the EU platform, with many other national advocacy officers. I have also worked as a Junior Expert in an NGO that has close links to the Finnish Farmers' Union. While working there I did not participate in the advocacy work since my work was to manage international development projects. However, I heard many conversations about advocacy work related to food, forest, and trade. Before 2018, when I started to work as a full-time doctoral researcher, I had been working for almost three years in the field of higher education and in project management, in completely different networks. Therefore, I considered myself an "outsider" when I started gathering my research data. Still, I had contacts and networks, especially in Finland. Also, some people who I contacted towards the beginning of my research mentioned that they vaguely remembered my name and therefore agreed to participate in my research. Agreeing to the ethnographic observation was a somewhat different process, as explained in Chapter 4, as I think the trust and access built during the interviews played a bigger role than in previous networks.

[6] Being considered competent in EU lobbying, as I argue in this work, requires capital for symbolic power. Now when completing my PhD, I have expertise and capital in researching EU lobbying empirically, but not in actually practicing EU lobbying.

"writing up" happens[7], as it is impossible to write first and then do the fieldwork. This makes the research process slow and perhaps delays the pace of publishing. As acknowledged, fieldwork is personally, emotionally and intellectually a risk (Atkinson 2020, 51), and even more so for junior researchers (Crewe 2021). Moreover, the practices of conducting fieldwork are often implicit, and not always transparent, in political science (Kapiszewski, MacLean, and Read 2015, 3; Kapiszewski and Karcher 2021).

The limited implications of ethnography also connect to practices within IR research (Vrasti 2008; 2010). This further connects to the history of my discipline, to the understanding of the division between competing theories, and the ways of controlling what is considered to be novel research inside the field (Waever 1998). Alternative and interdisciplinary ontologies, both in IR research and in political science, are deemed irrelevant and beyond the scope of the discipline (Kauppi 2018, 67). This also limits the ability to adopt interdisciplinary research in practice, as it is hard to justify research inside IR when it seems to fall outside of what is regarded as the academic way of doing research. Thus, the avenues that interdisciplinary research and ethnography could open up in IR research are often overlooked when it comes to actual research practices and ways of knowing (Vrasti 2010).

As Aalto, Harle, Long and Moisio (2011, 5) ask: "If in social sciences, in general, theories and methods are not universally accepted why should they be in IR?" Neighbouring disciplines can help us to "leave the armchair" and approach the everyday by offering new insights with regard to epistemology and methodology (Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 4–5). Moreover, the interdisciplinary approach in practice research, both conceptual and methodological, would enable us to better answer our research questions, but also to pose better questions (Kuus 2015). Also, taking the time to reflect on the knowledge production practices of one's own field and comparing them to practices in other fields can enhance interdisciplinarity in research epistemology and methodology (Vrasti 2010).

This study underlines the value of interdisciplinarity to empirical research, when the frameworks and tools available in IR research do not always suffice to tackle emergent issues. In this, I join a long line of researchers arguing for interdisciplinary research, based on their own studies (see, for example, Biecker and Schlichte 2021,

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[7] In ethnography, writing should be considered as something beyond the technical activity of "writing up" the results at the end of the research. Writing has already started when fieldnotes are taken and involves considerable reconsideration of the ethnographic style suitable for a chosen field of research at a given time. (Atkinson 2020, 2.) Also, it is impossible to write first and then do the fieldwork – the process does not proceed in that order in ethnography. Nevertheless, I was writing and thinking simultaneously, as I had been keeping a research diary and taking fieldnotes throughout my research.

1). My motivation for turning to interdisciplinary research was similar to Biecker and Schlichte's (2021, 1–3) – the standard tools, distinctions and vocabulary of IR research seemed to be unable to cover what was emerging during my fieldwork.

In light of my own research, I consider that IR research still has much to learn from interdisciplinary research, regarding both the research process and framing of the phenomena under study. Perhaps because of my earlier experiences and networks, I chose to base the research process in my interest in a certain phenomenon, EU lobbying. The "primacy of practice" and observation of it led me to considering abduction (see Rytövuori-Apunen and Friedrichs in Hellmann et al. 2009; Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009).

In abduction the reasoning starts at the intermediate level (abduction), instead of beginning at the theoretical and abstract level (deduction) or simply through observing "the facts" (induction) (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009). Moreover, in abduction and in reflexive ethnography, the researcher's positionality is at the core of methodology and analysis (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Abduction leaves room for reflexive knowledge production and practices during the research and also makes it possible to explicitly discuss the researcher's self-awareness (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009; Hellmann et al. 2009, 645–647). In this way the researcher's positionality at different times is also relational to the interpretation. It also aids in narrowing the possible theoretical leads as the abductive research process proceeds. (Timmermans and Tavory 2012.)

The abductive research approach enabled me to move between the empirical data, the researcher's positionality, and the theoretical framework and to explicitly develop the research approach throughout the research process. In my experience, however, abductive research design and the researcher's changing positionality throughout the research process are still difficult to communicate inside IR research, as they seem to go against the expected deductive process. An abductive process makes the research process look "wrong", proceeding in the wrong order and phase, as well as including too many changes during the journey for researchers used to deductive research.

Overall, conducting interdisciplinary research has allowed me to open dialogue with EU lobbying research and practice research across disciplinary boundaries. Nevertheless, first and foremost I am writing a dissertation within the field of International Relations. This is especially noticeable in the introduction, context chapter and theoretical chapter (Chapters 1–3), where I locate my research approach knowingly within IR research.

I also want to underline that this research is just one example of combining ethnography, an abductive research process, and interdisciplinary research. Thus, this dissertation should not be considered as a general model for fieldwork in IR research, nor for any future fieldwork that I may do. One cannot enter a field claiming to know it already or to know what the fieldwork will yield.[8] This is also why ethnography enables reflexive and transformative learning through the research process.

Style of writing and structure of the work

The shift to write as an ethnographer has not been easy for me. For almost ten years I approached the act of writing as a critical social scientist, with my 'self' remaining in the background. I did not even realise how automatic this was but came to realise how difficult it was to unlearn that specific impersonal academic writing style. I also noticed that I perceived that writing style as a criterion for scientific reliability and validity. It came as something of a shock to start to write "I" in research texts without feeling that I was doing something terribly wrong.

I therefore experienced a sense of relief when I started to read other researchers' reflections on reporting ethnographic research. For example, Iver B. Neumann (2012, 185–186) describes very well the tension between expected writing styles in different fields of study, as his major challenge in shifting from political science to anthropology was with the writing style. Writing political science is writing objectively and from nowhere, whereas reporting ethnography includes reflection, is very much context-based, and, for the taste of political scientists, excessive in its description of the research process instead of just "getting on with the job". In political science one is expected to explicitly state results, while in ethnography it is more a matter of showing it, not saying it – "letting the data decide the form of presentation" (Neumann 2012, 187; see also Neumann and Neumann 2017, 82–84).

As Vrasti (2010, 86) puts it, "no matter how we go about collecting our data, the most powerful methodological tool in all social research remains writing". In ethnography, the practice of writing relates largely to questions of representation. It

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[8] In her book, Hortense Powdermaker (1966) describes how all her fieldworks have been different due to the different research topics, but also because as a researcher she has changed, as has the world around her. Her examples aptly describe the ever changing and unstable nature of social sciences research.

can be seen that in ethnography, description, interpretation, experience, and theory are inseparable (see, for example, the discussion in Vrasti 2008).

By engaging in ethnography, I also engage in the troublesome history of the assumed right to tell stories about other people (Behar 2003). Thus, adapting ethnography calls for me to critically review my role as a researcher writing ethnography. As Rancatore (2010) argues, the ethical dilemmas that research using ethnographic methods encounters are potentially useful findings. In my case, the ethical stress related to writing and representation sometimes felt overwhelming. How could I ever produce a text that would be approachable and achieve the "right" kind of representation of EU lobbying, both for academic purposes and for the people involved?

Often in ethnographic writing it becomes apparent that its readers are not only fellow researchers but also the people whose stories are represented (Behar 2003; Neumann 2023). Rancatore reminds us that "'The crisis of representation' should not paralyse research". Rather, it is useful to observe how the representations were created. In this way it is also possible to move away from understanding the text produced in positivistic terms, as describing the "truth" (Rancatore 2010, 73.) In my case, I overcame the difficulties related to writing by explicitly reflecting the disposition from which I am writing. This is the work I could produce from my disposition as an observer within the field of EU lobbying (more on this in Chapter 4).

Writing practices in ethnography are far-reaching, reflexive, and entail ample reconsideration of the ethnographic style suitable for the chosen field of research at the given time (Atkinson 2020, 2, 28–30). For me ethnography and the writing style that I use are more widely connected to reflexivity and embodiment, as discussed further in Chapter 4. It is also connected to the wider interdisciplinary movement in writing styles (Behar 2003, 35–36). As such I do not want to reduce ethnography to a certain way of writing, but to adopt a way of writing that enables me to describe the field of my research.

This also underlines the idea that ethnography is a form of expression that can make visible the doubts, epiphanies and improvisations encountered throughout the long research journey, not just the end product of a completed manuscript (Vrasti 2010). This is also to recognise that, especially in the writing phase, it becomes visible

if the views of the observer and those of the actors observed clash in some way. As Czarniawska (2007, 39) so elegantly puts it: "A dialogue does not have to be a duet".[9]

Within my writing process, as soon as I understood the need to integrate reflexivity into the production of the text, I started to enjoy writing again. I allowed for the readers, both academics and practitioners, to be the judges of the reading experience, from their own standpoints. However, I want to explain how I have decided to write my research in practice, as I believe this will make the research more approachable. Even though the research process has been abductive, the structure of this dissertation follows the conventional structure of a dissertation in IR. However, the writing style changes slightly throughout the chapters, which is common in ethnographic monographs (Atkinson 2020, 20). To summarise the structure and writing styles:

Here, in the preface, I explicitly outline my entry point to the research and my writing practices as an ethnographer. I have taken some liberties in making my own voice heard and justifying the abductive research process. The writing style utilised enables me to foreground personal accounts and can thus be considered a 'confessional' style of writing in ethnography (Atkinson 2020, 21, 55–65, 100–102).

Next, I restart the introduction to my research (Chapter 1) in the more traditional IR writing style I was initially taught. I situate my research within interest groups and lobbying IR research, and outline the theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions this study makes. Moreover, I offer an overview of EU lobbying and the theoretical and methodological frameworks used, and summarise my research aims and questions. A reflection (see, for example, Atkinson 2020, 27, 50–55) intensifies as the introductory chapter proceeds.

The context chapter (Chapter 2), where I outline in more detail EU lobbying, in-house lobbyists and the emergence of the European Green Deal as the temporal research context, and the theoretical chapter (Chapter 3) continue in a similar writing style. However, it is important to note that even in these chapters I cannot overlook the methodological aspects and empirical work. In practice research, and especially in Bourdieu-inspired research, they are intertwined.

Also, the theoretical chapter flows directly into Chapter 4 on methodology and conducting ethnography in practice research. I first discuss ethnography, and then "leaving the armchair" in practice to do fieldwork. When it comes to my writing style, my voice and position as a researcher become more perceptible as I revise my

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[9] It is important to recognise that when engaging in fieldwork, the ethnographer does a lot more than engage in dialogue (see, for example, Tedlock 1986), as discussed further in Chapter 4.

empirical work by reflecting upon my research diary notes alongside theoretical thinking on ethnography. Thus, the chapter includes a description of graphic presence (Atkinson 2020, 68–70) within the field of EU lobbying. Throughout the chapter I also reflect on my role as a researcher. In these parts, the writing style becomes more confessional, as in the preface. At the end of Chapter 4, I also specify how I moved from fieldnotes to field-thoughts (Atkinson 2020, 47), and present elaborated research questions before embarking on the analysis.

Chapters 5 to 8 are analytical chapters. I engage in a dialogue with my research and the participants of my research by presenting examples drawn from my data, and commenting and reflecting on them (Atkinson 2020, 73, 77). I also bring the voices of other researchers into the analysis, by indicating relevant earlier literature on EU lobbying with similar or contradictory findings.

To outline the structure of the analysis further, in Chapter 5 I analyse the key actors and their relational dispositions within the transnational field of EU lobbying, and how the ability to organise EU lobbying transnationally relates to economic capital. However, this analysis of the in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnational social field of EU lobbying is not intended as an exhaustive description. Rather, it sets the scene for the analysis of relational power in EU lobbying and deepens as the analysis proceeds.

In Chapter 6, I analyse the relational spaces within transnational EU lobbying and how cultural capital relates to access. In Chapter 7, I analyse timing in EU lobbying and how social capital relates to the ability to obtain information enabling competent EU lobbying. Chapter 8 is based on the preceding analytical chapters when unveiling symbolic power in EU lobbying, as I analyse symbolic capital (trust), feel for EU lobbying, and exclusion in EU lobbying.

Lastly, the main findings and conclusions are brought together in Chapter 9, where I reflect upon them further in relation to previous literature to draw wider conclusions. I also outline some potential areas for future research. I think now, after this quite extensive preface, it is time to step into the everyday of EU lobbying.

1 INTRODUCTION: THE PRACTICE APPROACH AND FOUR CURRENT WAYS TO FRAME EU LOBBYING

While media coverage of lobbying is often related to scandals and wrongdoing (Dinan 2021, 242)[10], there are currently over 12 000 listed interest representatives claiming to influence European Union (EU) policy and decision-making (European Union 2022b), and these lobbyists have become an integral part of the EU's political life (Lahusen 2023; Courty and Michel 2013; Bunea 2019). Thus, scrutinising lobbying and interest groups' role in it is considered relevant in understanding the EU as a political system (Hix and Høyland 2022, 2–3; Greenwood 2007; Dür and De Bièvre 2007). Although EU lobbying and lobbyists have been extensively studied over the past 20 years (see, for example, Woll 2006; Coen 2007; Beyers, Eising, and Maloney 2008; van Schendelen 2013; Bitonti and Harris 2017; Greenwood 2017; Kluver 2013b; Lahusen 2023; Courty and Michel 2013), we seem to know surprisingly little about the current everyday practices of EU lobbying and how lobbyists' understandings intertwine with system-level features of EU lobbying (see, for example, Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 19; Beyers et al. 2020, 275). Thus, this dissertation is an effort to understand everyday EU lobbying practices from the perspective of Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists during the emergence of the European Green Deal (2017–2020).

Building on existing International Relations (IR) research, showing how not only interests and worldviews but also practices make world politics (Adler and Pouliot 2011b; Neumann 2012; Adler-Nissen 2013; Bueger and Gadinger 2018; Drieschova, Bueger, and Hopf 2022), I argue that practices constitute the power to do transnational EU lobbying. As Adler-Nissen (2016, 88) claims, the main theoretical contribution of the practice turn in IR is that it enables to rethink how power works, through resolving "the tension between structure and agency in the moment of practice". In studying power in relational terms beyond influence, Pierre Bourdieu's views are considered relevant to addressing the symbolic struggles and practices of

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[10] In 2022, for example, the news on Uber EU lobbying and the Qatar scandal.

dominance as the orderliness of practices is emphasised (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 121–122).[11] Also, by using Bourdieu's concepts, such as habitus, field and capital, the research becomes more open-ended and less tied to the boundaries of a nation-state or formal political institution (Kauppi 2018, 9–11). Thus, Bourdieu's approach allows us to understand the internal logic of distinct fields of political actions in Europe (Favell and Guiraudon 2009, 565) and to study empirically the interplay of several national contexts by enforcing a transnational perspective that fuses the national and the supranational (Kauppi 2013, 6; 2018, 67–69).

Currently the potential of practice research is largely overlooked in IR research on EU lobbying, in spite of a few outstanding studies (Firat 2019; Courty and Michel 2013). As the chosen framings direct the research focus and scope (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 30), I give an overview of what I see as the four current ways to frame EU lobbying (interest groups, European governance, comparative studies, and behavioural definitions)[12] in IR research. I further consider how the Bourdieu-inspired practice approach that I adopt moves beyond these framings. First, much of the focus of earlier research on EU lobbying has been on *interest groups*, for example, why these actors do lobbying and what their role is as intermediators connecting citizens to policymakers in the EU (Eising 2007; 2017; Albareda 2018; Rasmussen, Carroll, and Lowery 2014; Pallas, Fletcher, and Han 2017). Moreover, to broaden the scope of relevant actors in lobbying research, business actors are studied in similar terms (for example, Coen 1997; Coen, Vannoni, and Katsaitis 2021; Woll 2007; Marcel Hanegraaff and Poletti 2021). Thus, it is acknowledged that various actors bring important expert resources to EU decision-making (Greenwood 2007, 340; 2017), there is a significant resource dependency between EU institutions and EU lobbying (Rasmussen 2015), and lobbyists are an integral part of the EU political system (Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023). However, how different lobbyists relate to each other and decision-makers in everyday EU lobbying seems to be overlooked, even though research shows that the chances of exerting influence depend on the ability to build long-lasting relationships with other lobbyists and decision-makers (Varone et al. 2017).

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[11] Practice approaches vary as to what is put at the centre of an analysis and examined (Schatzki 2018). Approaches that focus more on change and contingency, such as those following the thinking of Schatzki, Boltanski or Latour, do not put power at the centre of the analysis. Thus, they also struggle to analyse power in the context of long-term stability, even though they consider it to be an important dimension of relations (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 121.).

[12] These framings often overlap in empirical research.

Second, studies on *European governance* have focused on decision-making structures and contextual factors (see, for example, Eising 2004; Klüver, Braun, and Beyers 2015), and integration and Europeanisation (Warleigh 2000; 2001; van Schendelen 2013; Dür and Mateo 2014; 2012; Klüver 2010) in EU lobbying. However, these studies have been criticised for being overly EU-centric, as lobbying is seen as a phenomenon that may occur in any political system (Woll 2006, 457; Coen 2007). Instead, as a third approach, large-scale *comparative studies* have enhanced the understanding of institutional opportunities and constraints beyond the EU (Pritoni and Vicentini 2022, 8–9; see also Beyers et al. 2020; Hojnacki et al. 2012). For example, it is outlined how not culture but differences in institutions, issues and interest group characteristics constitute lobbying style in the USA and in the EU (Mahoney 2008), and how in "quiet politics" corporate interest groups seem to dominate (Culpepper 2010). Despite bringing new insights to structural and large-scale issues, both in governance and comparative framings EU lobbying in Member States is separated from the EU level, rather than everyday EU lobbying practices being considered transnationally across them.

Fourth, explaining power, institutional access and influence has been at the core of *behavioural research* on EU lobbying (Coen 2007; Hojnacki et al. 2012; Pritoni and Vicentini 2022). As a result, extensive empirical research has mainly focused on lobbying outcomes and on measuring interest groups' influence rather than on studying power as a relational concept (Woll 2007, 57–58; Eising 2017; Coen 2007). A broader relational approach to power, looking beyond "winners and losers" in specific political processes, is called for (Woll 2007), as previous studies remain fairly descriptive (Woll 2006) and excessively focused on case studies (Coen 2007; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2008). Also, studies based on behavioural definitions seem to miss the overall picture of everyday EU lobbying, as the tacit knowledge and continuation of the *feel for EU lobbying* across different cases and despite agenda changes in the EU is overlooked.

Considering this background and research gaps in previous literature, I turn to practices to gain a more nuanced understanding of everyday EU lobbying, and particularly the relational power to do it from in-house lobbyists' perspectives. I adopt a Bourdieu-inspired practice approach and focus on practices as epistemic objects through ethnographic research. Thus, practices are considered as the meeting points of disposition (habitus) and position (field) (Bourdieu 1993, 72–77; see also Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 30).

The in-house lobbyists are considered as participants working for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions and professional associations

(UAs), or trade and business associations (TBs) at the time of participating (for an overview of different types of lobbyists, see, for example, Thomas and Hrebenar 2022). By conducting multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork, I have studied empirically the everyday EU lobbying practices situated *in space* (Helsinki and Brussels), and *in time* (during the emergence of the European Green Deal 2017–2020) (Ekengren 2002, 161; Mérand 2021, 5; see also Meyer-Sahling and Goetz 2009). Thus, the emergence of the European Green Deal is the temporal context of my transnational fieldwork, rather than studying influencing to the agenda based on behavioural framing or through focusing event framing (cf. Crepaz et al. 2022; Junk et al. 2022).

Based on this framework, I ask three questions in this study: How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying? What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying? And lastly, what constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying? As a theoretical contribution, I demonstrate how turning to a Bourdieu-inspired practice approach allows me to grasp an understanding of relational power in the everyday of EU lobbying, previously overlooked in IR research.

The empirical contribution this dissertation makes lies in furthering understanding of transnationality, lobbying style and relational power in everyday EU lobbying. Thus, this research answers the call to make everyday relations in EU lobbying more visible (Dinan 2021), rather than focusing on the possible large-scale biased nature of interest representation in EU lobbying (Lowery et al. 2015; Berkhout, Hanegraaff, and Braun 2017; Berkhout and Hanegraaff 2019) or sociologically analysing lobbyists' career paths and the professionalisation of EU lobbying (Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023). In this way empirical findings on EU lobbying in particular prove the value of adopting a relational and reflective research approach (Bourdieu 2021, 5; Ekengren 2002, 21).

Regarding transnationality, starting from practices rather than actors enables me to make empirically visible how EU lobbying is a transnational social field beyond Brussels. By unravelling the everyday relations and mutual dependency in EU lobbying across Brussels and Member States, I show how EU lobbying relates to EU politics transnationally and how in-house lobbyists' habitus is tied to a certain favoured sense of their place in current EU lobbying. The study makes visible established, yet overlooked, everyday practices relating to the organisation of in-house EU lobbying transnationally across Member States and Brussels. Also, different roles in EU lobbying are relational rather than separating, when previous transnational experience of EU lobbying from different dispositions is contemplated

over a longer period (see also Lahusen 2023; Halpin and Lotric 2023). Thus, this study shows how EU lobbying is relational to EU politics yet a separate transnational field of power.

This research contributes to existing literature on EU lobbying style (Woll 2006; 2012; Coen 2002; Mahoney 2008; Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017), by showing how focusing solely on those practices visible to decision-makers and moments of influencing reveals only part of EU lobbying style. Adjusting transnational engagement with EU decision-makers (frontstage) relates to everyday practices among the lobbyists (backstage). The study demonstrates how backstage practices of in-house EU lobbying include compromising, internal exclusion of controversial issues, competition, and creating coalitions to adjust frontstage public and closed-door EU lobbying style. Also, to time frontstage EU lobbying competently, in-house EU lobbying is considered rather as a continuum than as a process with a start and a finish. Thus, part of adjusting EU lobbying style is the necessity of staying one step ahead of what will take place in EU politics next and establishing transnationally ongoing working relations with relevant EU decision-makers and fellow lobbyists.

By providing empirical observations on how practices constitute the power to do transnational EU lobbying, this research contributes to the still limited literature on relational power in EU lobbying (Woll 2007; Bocse 2021). In terms of relational power resources, the study shows how power to do in-house lobbying calls for economic resources to be able to engage in EU lobbying transnationally. However, it is also important to recognise non-economic resources to understand the power to do transnational EU lobbying. Previous transnational experience from different dispositions, relevant current positions in recognised organisation, and a suitable status in the hierarchy (cultural capital), as well as the ability to exchange informal information through networks (social capital) are also needed in everyday EU lobbying. Also, the study confirms that gaining and maintaining trust (symbolic capital) is essential to competent EU lobbying (for example, Woll 2012; Coen 1998; 1999) – yet, trust also constitutes power relations within transnational in-house EU lobbying.

Overall, not only does the content and context of the lobbying matter, but also how, when, and by whom EU lobbying is done, as the understanding of competent EU lobbying is also exclusive: incompetence in practices leads to exclusion from EU lobbying, both by decision-makers and fellow lobbyists. In this way it is possible to unravel how interests lacking competent EU lobbying may not even enter debates, as EU lobbying seems to be an institutionalised way to be heard in EU decision-

making. Thus, the *feel for EU lobbying* is not about winning or losing one game, but about being able to practice transnational EU lobbying in the long-term.

Furthermore, this research contributes to interdisciplinary IR research, through adopting methodological and empirical approaches that rely on political sociology, practice research and ethnography. Even though methodological development in lobbying research is tied to its broader development in social science research methods (Eising 2017), political interest group research has benefitted from a theoretical and methodological eclecticism (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 6). Yet, the most recent empirical lobbying and interest group research tends to favour quantitative approaches (Pritoni and Vicentini 2022). Regarding qualitative approaches, ethnography still seems to be a marginal approach in current lobbying research, despite a few recent ethnographic studies offering valuable insights (Firat 2016; 2019; Nothhaft 2017; Tyllström and Murray 2021). By showing how transnational and multi-sited ethnographic research can be conducted in practice, this research strengthens the qualitative research approach to EU lobbying and opens further avenues for ethnographic research in IR, on EU lobbying and beyond. I also contribute herein to ethnographic and shadowing literature, by demonstrating how in practice negotiating field access is an ongoing process throughout the fieldwork.

I also recognise that my research is part of the IR Research that can emerge now, after the practice turn (Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, and Evon Savigny 2001; Adler and Pouliot 2011a; Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 8)[13] and ethnographic turn (Sande Lie 2013; Vrasti 2008) in IR. It is also important to note that by shifting to a practice approach and ethnographic research, my intention is not to challenge prior research on EU lobbying. Rather, this research is based on the view that "different ontologies each get something right about the world" (Schatzki 2018, 158). Thus, there is no one single truth about EU lobbying, and by framing EU lobbying through a practice approach it is possible to study it differently and to pose different kinds of research questions regarding it.

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[13] For a short history of practice thinking in IR, see Drieschova, Bueger, and Hopf (2022).

1.1   EU lobbying and in-house lobbyists in space and time

"Dear Lobbyists, [….]",

I read from a sign that reminds lobbyists to activate their badge each day they wish to enter European Parliament buildings in Brussels, under the terms of the European Transparency Register (EUTR).[14] I am queuing to enter Willy Brandt building as an MEP's visitor. Earlier during an interview, a Brussels-based in-house lobbyist told me that the word "lobbyist" is not often used in Brussels, not at least in the printed text. Yet here I am, in the lobby of one of the European Union Institutes, and the word "lobbyist" stands there for everyone entering the building of the European Parliament to see. Why avoid the word "lobbyist" when clearly it is needed to give instructions to them in the premises of the European Union?

Research diary notes, Brussels, autumn 2018

It is acknowledged that lobbying is quite a contested concept in research, with lobbying and lobbyists being difficult to define (see, for example, Holyoke 2018, 21–22,29–30; Eising 2017; Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 22–43; Baroni et al. 2014; Beyers, Eising, and Maloney 2008) and several definitions existing simultaneously (see Zetter 2011, 3–4 for a summary of a few). Also, as lobbying research is fragmented under different disciplines, there is a danger of scholars talking past each other (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 22, 36).

To outline why and how I use the term EU *lobbying* in my research, it is useful to consider the history of its practice. In the early days of democracy[15,] the term lobbying was invented to describe locational and temporal practices in the lobbies of parliaments to influence or to deliver vital information to the decision-makers prior to decisions being taken. It is not called "chambering" as the practices do not seem to have been located in the official spaces of decision-making, but physically in the lobbies of the decision-making arenas, where the decision-makers and those trying to engage with them could interact (see van Schendelen 2013, 57; also Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 33–34; Binderkrantz and Bitonti 2020).

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[14] This has been the rule since 2011. However, later on I learnt that in practice not many lobbyists activate their badge as there are several other ways to enter the buildings (as MEPs' visitors or with some better badge, for example the badge for the EESC members). Nor does lobbying necessarily take place inside the walls or lobbies of the European Parliament, that was at the time of my fieldwork the only location that the terms of Transparency Register covered. As discussed further in Chapter 4, there are practical limitations concerning finding the relevant lobbyists based on the EUTR registration data.

[15] Whether the term originated first in the USA or in England remains open to debate.

When discussing lobbying nowadays, it should be borne in mind that social interactions were quite different when the term originated. Several studies underline that lobbying is contingent upon the political context and decision-making structures in which it takes place (see, for example, Eising 2004; Klüver, Braun, and Beyers 2015) and that how EU lobbying has evolved is closely connected to the history of the EU (see an overview, for example, in Mahoney 2008, 17–26; Levitt, Bryceson and van Mierlo 2017). Also the institutionalisation of EU lobbying, formally and informally, as an integral part of the EU political system is emphasised (Greenwood 2007; 2017; Dionigi 2017; Christiansen and Piattoni 2003; Kleine 2014; Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023). Yet, as in the early days of lobbying, differences in locational and temporal premises seem to separate EU lobbying from more formalised practices, such as diplomacy, within the EU political system (Firat 2019).

In my study, I deepen the understanding of current spaces and timing in everyday EU lobbying.[16] Adopting a practice approach has enabled me to consider *lobbying* as the practice that I study, and as the epistemic object of my research. I consider EU lobbying to be a neutral term as I am keen to know more about its everyday practices. Also, whether it is called (direct or indirect) lobbying, advocacy, or interest group representation[17], it is the practitioners' (lobbyists') insights into the everyday that interest me.

The practice (lobbying) was allegedly named first, before the actors practicing it began to be called *lobbyists* (Zetter 2011, 8–9; van Schendelen 2013, 57–58)[18]. Thus, defining lobbying has started from naming the practice that was empirically happening, rather than being based on who was doing it. However, researching lobbying often makes defining *whose* lobbying is studied inevitable. Defining the relevant actors in lobbying can be more difficult than, for example, when studying formal political actors (see, for example, Eising 2017). There are uncertainties around whether or not lobbying organisations and individual lobbyists register their information in the European Transparency Register (EUTR), and which of them are

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[16]Although an interesting avenue for future research, comparing the everyday practices of EU lobbying with those of diplomats (Firat 2019) or other decision-makers is beyond the scope of this ethnographic research project where I have focused on studying lobbying practices empirically. However, I do discuss the revolving door experience in relation to EU lobbying practices.

[17] Different terms are frequently used to study the same empirical object, as scholars do not always use the same concepts. However, it is also acknowledged that the terms are not always interchangeable (see Pritoni and Vicentini 2022).

[18] It has also been claimed that the term "lobbyists" originated with a politician's annoyance with the interaction (Zetter 2011, 8).

actively involved in EU lobbying (see the discussion in Greenwood 2017, 13–14; Lahusen 2023, 78–81).

In my study, I understand everyday EU lobbying practices from the perspective of Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists, working in i) non-governmental organisations (NGOs), ii) trade unions and professional associations (UAs), and iii) trade and business associations (TBs) at the time of participating. For practical reasons and to gain access, my research proceeded from an EU Member State where I had contacts (Finland) towards the EU's decision-making arenas in Brussels. This is explained further in Chapters 4.4. and 4.5. In contrast to an interactionist approach, where pre-constituted agents are the starting point for analysis, a relational approach starts with the moment of taking part in the practice (Bigo 2011). As part of the ethnographic research, the participating in-house lobbyists entered my study as they were *engaging in the practices of EU lobbying* – they themselves claim to engage in EU lobbying as registrants in the EUTR, others have talked about them doing EU lobbying, or I have observed them doing EU lobbying (for a detailed description of the participants, see Chapters 4.4. and 4.5).

It is also noteworthy that, because of my IR background, I consider the term NGO broadly, as extending to all non-governmental actors engaging in lobbying.[19] However, as soon as I started to gather research data, I realised that the participants were using more differentiating categories when referring to themselves and others, both in terms of the type of in-house lobbying organisation and also through making a distinction between in-house lobbying and consultant lobbying. Therefore, I also started to use more distinct categories for the participants, following from their possible registration in the EUTR or, if missing, based on how they categorised themselves.

Nevertheless, it is good to acknowledge that when discussing whether these participants saw themselves as *lobbyists*, a common answer was that they rather identified themselves as something else (such as experts or advocates), even though some of them proudly declared themselves to be lobbyists. Overall, they considered their ability to engage in EU lobbying to be more relevant than what they were called. Thus, I have taken the liberty of referring to *in-house lobbyists* throughout this research project.

As I conducted my multi-sited fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels from 2017 to 2020, it became apparent that EU lobbying has been anything but stable. Political

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[19] The term "NGOs" in western research is mainly understood to refer to non-governmental organisations and formal actors, while the whole of the non-governmental sector also includes, for example, organised crime (Bendell 2006, xii).

dossiers come and go, lobbyists change organisations or become decision-makers via revolving doors (the phenomena of moving back and forth between lobbying and politics), and coalitions as well as connections to decision-makers are in a constant state of flux. At the same time, the habitus of in-house lobbyists, transnationality, and the "feel for EU lobbying" as the inner logic of competence in EU lobbying started to make sense to me. This is also when I realised that my research interests had shifted away from certain dossiers or outcomes of EU lobbying to understanding the relational practices and power to do EU lobbying, from the in-house lobbyists' perspectives. Eventually, extending my data gathering on EU lobbying to 28 months allowed me to gather a randomised sample across different issues to draw wider conclusions (see also Mahoney 2008, 45).

Thus, adopting a relational approach is also evident in how I understand the context of studying everyday EU lobbying. "A field" in this research does not refer to a physical place or predefined structure (see also Kauppi 2018, 69) but is constructed through transnational fieldwork that took place *in space and time*. Regarding the *space* aspect, everyday EU lobbying is studied in one Member State, Finland, and in Brussels, as one does not need to study every occasion in order to say something about the practices (Schatzki 2005). Yet, by including in the study EU lobbying practices both in Finland and in Brussels it is possible to understand transnational aspects from the in-house lobbyists' perspectives. This also changes the notion of international from being something between nation states or formal institutions, and enables research on transnational spaces, groups and knowledge (see, for example, Kauppi 2018).

Regarding *time*, *the emergence of the European Green Deal* is understood as the temporal context of my transnational fieldwork, as *when* I studied EU lobbying, instead understanding it as a context of a case study or studying lobbying influence on the agenda. Two weeks after leaving the field of EU lobbying in February 2020, COVID-19 emerged. This is not, however, a study of EU lobbying when COVID-19 was emerging, as it was not something that was foreseen within the field that I observed. Similarly, "EU lobbying practices pre COVID-19" would be a stamp that could be given to this work only in retrospect. The European Green Deal, however, was foreseen by the lobbyists and can be understood as the zeitgeist of my empirical research (discussed further in Chapter 2.3). Overall, despite EU lobbying constantly being on the move and agenda changes taking place in the EU, in this study I have captured everyday EU lobbying from in-house lobbyists' perspectives in space and time.

1.2   The practice approach and main concepts in the research

Within IR practice research, Pierre Bourdieu's relational approach[20] is seen to contribute to IR research through empirical studies on power relations (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 42; Bigo 2011) through affording analytical tools for empirically driven work rather than as a structuralist approach to power (see, for example, Pouliot 2016). As an IR researcher, I adopted a Bourdieu-inspired practice approach as it reinforces a relational way of understanding practices and power through empirical research.

Bourdieu's relational approach manifests in his understanding of **practices.** Bourdieu sees practices as bundles of both activities and discourses that evolve over time, are situational and dispositional, and should be understood in their contexts (Bourdieu 1977, 2–3, 118; see also Wuthnow 2020, 34–35). Thus, in practices both discourse and undiscussed come together, likewise the symbolic and the material (Bourdieu 1977, 167–168). As adopting Bourdieu's relational approach implies, understanding EU lobbying and the feel for it (Bourdieu 2021, 50, 67–69) in space and time is an outcome of my empirical research.

In IR practice-oriented research one is encouraged to approach world politics by focusing on practitioners. This helps to gain "the 'big picture' of world politics" and to empirically discover the practices that produce effects on world politics. (Adler and Pouliot 2011a.) Bourdieu's concept of **habitus** opens an avenue to study EU lobbying practices empirically from the practitioners' perspectives, as it emphasises how points of view are views taken from a certain disposition within the social space, field (Bourdieu 1986; 1977, 161; 2021, 6). Moreover, habitus is "coming from the inner knowledge of the field", as field and habitus exist only in relation to each other and therefore should be studied empirically together (Bigo 2011, 240–243). In my study, instead of focusing on decision-makers' views, I understand EU lobbying practices through the habitus of Helsinki and Brussels based *in-house lobbyists*, working in i) non-governmental organisations, ii) trade unions and professional associations, and iii) trade and business associations at the time of participating.

The relational understanding of EU lobbying practices emphasises seeing EU lobbying in transnational rather than international terms. Interestingly, early European scholars focused on transnationalism and practices more than current scholars (Adler-Nissen 2016). Even though transnational interaction has increased in social life, political studies on the transnational have not kept up (Kauppi 2018,

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[20] Also known as structural constructivist political sociology (see, for example, Kauppi 2003; 2018).

67–69). As outlined above, studies on EU lobbying have also overlooked transnationalism.

Bourdieu's concept of **field** is considered to afford a transnational understanding beyond nation states (Adler-Nissen 2011; 2012b, 3; Kauppi 2018; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 36; Bigo 2011; Pouliot and Mérand 2012; Go and Krause 2016). In Bourdieu's thinking, a field is understood as a social space structured along three principal dimensions: power relations, objects of struggle, and the rules taken for granted within the field (Bourdieu 1993, 72–77). Thus, a field can be understood "as a space of positions" (Bourdieu 2021, 5). Moreover, a field does not have formal boundaries, nor should it be understood as a certain special configuration or as spatially similar to a state (Bourdieu 2021, 8–9; Leander 2011; Kuus 2015, 371; Büttner et al. 2015). Understood in this way, a transnational field is not a statistic, nor is it pre-determined, but it is constructed as part of the empirical research (Kauppi 2018, 65).

By framing EU lobbying as a transnational field, I study how the practices and power to do EU lobbying relate transnationally, according to Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists. More specifically, I analyse how in-house lobbyists see their habitus in relation to consultant lobbyists and decision-makers, how the social field of EU lobbying relates to EU politics transnationally, and lastly, how timing and spaces in EU lobbying relate to those in EU politics. Overall, I aim to understand *how lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying in-house relate to the power to do EU lobbying.*

Considering the concept of **capital**, Bourdieu's relational approach to power becomes more apparent. Bourdieu defines capital as a form of power that is effective within a specific field, where it also produces effects of differentiation (Bourdieu 2021, 16). Thus, in addition to the economic and cultural capital that are fundamental to all social fields, Bourdieu's theory is empirically grounded in studying the material and symbolic forms of capital at work within a specific field (Bourdieu 1993, 31; 2021, 16, 48, 283). Through Bourdieu's relational approach, and from the in-house lobbyists' disposition, I elaborate a relational understanding of power in EU lobbying by analysing *what material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying.*

Lastly, practices also have a normative aspect, relating to what are considered 'sensible' practices within a specific field and thus rational to those who understand those practices (Bourdieu 1990b, 66). In IR research, Bourdieu's practice approach is considered to be an "ordering" theory of practice, as it focuses on how practices stabilise and organise social life as well as on how agents are recognised as competent (Adler-Nissen 2016). Also, more widely, it is outlined that how and when practices

are carried out distinguishes between competent and novice actors (Nicolini 2012, 222).

Bourdieu's take on **doxa** and **symbolic power** affords an opportunity to study the intangible and incalculable "feel for the game" at the empirical level. Doxa could be defined as the knowledge taken for granted inside a specific field at a certain time, and is thus connected to what is considered to be *sensible* within the field (Bourdieu 1990b, 68–69). In my study, I use the concept of doxa to analyse what is understood as competent EU lobbying. In addition, symbolic power draws attention to the social reality amongst agents who are both enabled and constrained by material and symbolic structures (Kuus 2015; Adler-Nissen 2012a; Kauppi 2005). This Bourdieu-inspired approach also draws attention to symbolic power and processes of exclusion (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 2, 4), as well as to what separates insiders from outsiders, and what role social resources play therein (Bourdieu 1990b, 108; see also Kuus 2015). Thus, I study empirically *what constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying*.

1.3 Ethnographic transnational fieldwork to study EU lobbying on the move

Introducing the practice turn in EU studies affords an opportunity to use a wider range of research methods to understand the everyday in Europe (Adler-Nissen 2016). Ethnographic methods are one option in practice research when researching power in the EU. This kind of research design makes it possible to describe the EU's "history of the present" in detail, to understand everyday practices and their wider social significance, and to evidence power struggles "between insiders and outsiders" (Favell and Guiraudon 2009, 567). Also, in IR research, adopting Bourdieu's concept of *field* and conducting empirical research are considered to be intertwined, as using the concept assumes that it will be studied empirically (Bigo 2011).

In practice, I have adopted an embodied engagement in ethnography and a tool-kit approach (Nicolini 2012) through combining interviewing, passive observation and shadowing during my transnational fieldwork, conducted both in Helsinki and Brussels. The research data, gathered between November 2017 and February 2020 (28 months), includes observational data gathered in my ethnographic fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels (hundreds of hours of observation, resulting in over 800 pages

of notes)[21], 59 recorded semi-structured interviews[22], and research diary notes, including documentation of the steps carried out during the data analysis and summaries of informal discussions from September 2017 until the end of 2022 (over 900 pages). In addition, I have used data from the EUTR and relevant policy documents as background data to outline the context of the study (the research data is further outlined in Chapter 4.4.).

As the current issues within the field of EU lobbying are constantly in motion, and the practices of EU lobbying take place in many physical locations simultaneously, as a researcher I adopted a suitable ethnographic toolkit (Nicolini 2012, 214–219), to enable me to move along with EU lobbying. In my research, the main ethnographic tools during the arrival phase were interviews and passive observation, to gain a basic understanding of EU lobbying and to gain the trust of the participants, as explained in detail in Chapter 4. When entering the field, I used *shadowing*[23] as the main ethnographic technique as this allowed me to conduct multi-sited ethnography and to keep pace with EU lobbying transnationally. In addition, I continued observing EU lobbying at various events and meetings, with the help of both lobbyists and the decision-makers.

When shadowing, the researcher can be pictured as a shadow that moves along wherever the shadowed goes (McDonald 2005, 456). Thus, the researcher closely follows the selected people in their everyday practices for a while and is able to move along with them (McDonald 2005, 456; Czarniawska 2007, 13, 18). Even though shadowing was originally developed to shadow human and non-human actors, it can also be applied to shadowing practices to see the different occasions in which they

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[21] I observed lobbying practices through different ethnographic techniques, mainly by shadowing nine lobbyists in their daily work for 3–11 working days (in total, 58 days, over 300 hours). In addition, four lobbyists invited me to observe internal meetings, seminars, or events for one to three days (total 29 hours). Also, four MEPs kindly agreed to let me observe their lobbying meetings in the European Parliament in Brussels or in Strasbourg (27 lobbying meetings or events in the European Parliament, 15 hours of observation in total). The shadowed and observed occasions included formal and informal, public and private interactions with decision-makers and other lobbyists, such as meetings, observing public appearances, and internal and external events.

[22] 38 recorded interviews with in-house lobbyists (18 in Finland and 20 in Brussels), 21 recorded secondary interviews with other informants (10 MEPs, politicians, or political assistants; five government or Directorates-General (DG) workers; four consultant lobbyists; two activists).

[23] The term shadowing originated during Harry Wolcott's research in the 1960s, when he observed a school principal in his everyday practices and acquired the nickname *The Shadow* (Czarniawska 2007, 23–24). The roots of shadowing are interdisciplinary, as it developed in different disciplines and in several places in parallel. The classic examples in social sciences arose from education, sociology and management (see more in Czarniawska 2007, 20–25; McDonald 2005, 460–461; Gill, Barbour, and Dean 2014, 70). Shadowing has also been conducted in and around political institutions by others (Busby 2013; Miller 2022; Miller 2021).

take place (Nicolini 2009). In my research, I physically shadowed humans but focused on the practices of EU lobbying. Thus, the in-house lobbyists were the intermediaries of the practices of EU lobbying that I observed passively (without engaging in the situations as an active participant) through shadowing.[24]

However, embodied engagement with ethnography goes beyond data gathering (Kapiszewski, MacLean, and Read 2015, 9–10; Neumann 2023). As Jackson puts it "the researcher *is* the research instrument" in the field, when an interpretative orientation is adopted, and in this way the researcher's individual experiences become part of the research (Jackson 2008). It is moreover recognised that a researcher is also a tool when interpreting the collected research data (Sarikakis 2003, 424). In addition, adopting interdisciplinary research practices in IR research calls for an understanding of the roots and critics of the practices adopted (Vrasti 2008; Jackson 2008; Rancatore 2010; Vrasti 2010; Biecker and Schlichte 2021). Thus, in the methodological chapter (Chapter 4) I also outline my involvement as a researcher when arriving, entering, and exiting the field of EU lobbying. In this way it is also possible to overcome the tendency to reduce ethnography to mere data collection, writing style, or theoretical sensibility towards practices rather than discourses (Vrasti 2008; 2010).

Moreover, as I have adopted Bourdieu's relational approach, my aim is to make visible not only the theoretical and methodological roots, but also the thought processes and elaboration of my research. Following Berling's (2012, 60–63) views, the reflexivity embedded in Bourdieu's thinking challenges the distinction between the theory and the reality studied. This includes becoming aware of the practices of conducting research, ways of knowing, and the role of the researcher. Throughout this study, I show how being aware of one's own research practice is essential when conducting relational and reflective practice research. My approach to ethnography, fieldwork, and the research data, as well as the data gathering process, is explained further in Chapter 4.

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[24] Appendix 4 summarises further the shadowing participants and where shadowing took place (in Helsinki, Brussels, or transnationally across them).

1.4   Research aims and research questions

When asked what I as a researcher should understand about EU lobbying, one interviewed Member of the European Parliament (MEP) answered:

> "It is good that it is recognised how this thing [EU lobbying] works, and that it could be explained to a wider audience as well how it works – maybe that is the most valuable thing."

<div align="right">Interview, MEP_6</div>

They also added that in the longer run this could contribute to better transparency and the opportunity to address potential misbehaviour in lobbying.

As I outlined in the preface, my motivation in this research is to understand EU lobbying from the perspective of the lobbyists. Thus, I wish to make lobbying practices more visible and comprehensible to citizens, decision-makers, researchers, the lobbyists themselves – and to myself as a researcher. As such, my research motivation resonates with the idea of engaging with the participants to understand their social situation and what they deem relevant, and, based on that, bringing practices to consciousness to raise awareness and potentially lead to emancipation (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 6, 9). In this way my research objectives are not defined before the empirical research but as part of the abductive research process.

Moreover, my research aim is apolitical in nature. I do not automatically assume that some political changes are needed or try to choose the research questions according to some political debate.[25] Nor do I make moral assumptions about lobbying as a profession or the various actors involved in it. On the contrary, I try to lead my research towards a more profound understanding and new perspectives, to reveal the nuances of EU lobbying. My research may later contribute in some way to the evaluation of lobbying practices.[26] However, making changes or challenging the status-quo in EU lobbying is not the starting point for my research.

Nevertheless, my research is not neutral in a theoretical or methodological sense. As Robert W. Cox puts it "theory is always for someone and for some purpose" (Cox 1981, 128), which can also be seen to resonate with Bourdieu's reflective approach to research (Berling 2012, 71). My theoretical and methodological choices allow me to do relational, transnational, and reflective research on EU lobbying practices. Moreover, after gaining an understanding of EU lobbying practices

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[25] An example of the explicitly political research agenda in ethnographic research (Rastas 2007).

[26] For example, if we need a more equal system to have a voice in EU arenas.

through my empirical research, I present some critical observations, especially in the last analytical chapter (Chapter 8) and in the conclusions.

It is suggested that a research question should direct theory and concept selection in interest group and lobbying research (Pritoni and Vicentini 2022). In my research, I have started from a research interest in the everyday of EU lobbying, and through an abductive research process I have ended up moving beyond the current way of framing EU lobbying in IR research. Firstly, I am interested in how in-house lobbyists understand their role and the present decision-making structure in the EU in relation to EU lobbying. Secondly, I am interested to know what gives the ability to do EU lobbying nowadays and how lobbyists understand this ability. Thirdly, I am keen to understand EU lobbying from the perspectives of in-house lobbyists, to see the full spectrum of EU practices transnationally – what the "feel for EU lobbying" is and what it is not.

As a result, my research aim is to understand relational power in transnational EU lobbying. By looking at everyday EU lobbying practices from the perspectives of Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists, I ask the following three questions:

RQ1: How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?

RQ2: What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?

RQ3: What constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?

Overall, my research framework can be summarised as follows:

RQ1: How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?

- Habitus
- Field
- Relational spaces (frontstage and backstage)
- Timing

RQ2: What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?

- Economic capital
- Cultural capital
- Social capital
- Symbolic capital

RQ3: What constitute a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?

- Doxa
- Symbolic power

Transnational fieldwork, in Helsinki and Brussels, when the European Green Deal was emerging 2017–2020

Figure 1. Research framework

Next, I specify EU lobbying, in-house lobbyists, and the emergence of the European Green Deal as the temporal research context. I then outline in more detail the theoretical and methodological frameworks that allow me to conduct my empirical research and to answer the research questions posed.

2 CONTEXT CHAPTER: EU LOBBYING, IN-HOUSE LOBBYISTS AND THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

In political science, lobbying and interest group research is seen as a "niche field" (Beyers, Eising, and Maloney 2008), and criticised for elegant irrelevance due to conceptual shortcomings, lack of continuity, and disconnection from research in other fields (see, for example, Baumgartner and Leech 1998; Beyers, Eising, and Maloney 2008; Eising 2017). However, more recently interest groups and lobbying research has become an established and lively focus within international political science. Because of the distinct research foci, the diversity of theoretical perspectives is likely to persist when studying lobbying in politics. (Pritoni and Vicentini 2022.) Taking practices as a starting point for studying EU lobbying, I depart from its more traditional framings in IR, while maintaining a common interest in understanding EU lobbying.

To outline these common issues and differences in departure points, I first outline how the study of EU lobbying has shifted from a *sui generis* attitude towards comparative studies – yet, a transnational everyday practice approach to EU lobbying, addressing the main features of lobbying in the current EU political system from the lobbyists' perspectives, is still missing. Secondly, I discuss in-house lobbyists and their symbiotic relations within the EU political system. Here I outline how EU lobbying simultaneously relates to more formalised practices yet can be understood as a distinct professionalised social field within the EU political system. However, the spaces and timing of the everyday relations between lobbyists and decision-makers are still opaque. Thirdly, I outline the emergence of the European Green Deal as a temporal research context within which to study power in EU lobbying. This offers an opportunity to move beyond a behavioural and case study framing of influence towards a relational approach to power in EU lobbying.

1.1 Researching lobbying in the EU political system

In aiming to understand how the EU as a political system works, studying the participation of interest groups and the role of EU lobbying is considered relevant (see, for example, Hix and Høyland 2022, 2–3; Greenwood 2007). Early research on EU lobbying, to some degree sparked by the increase in EU lobbying since the '80s and aiming to understand this empirical phenomena, focused largely on mapping the growing interest group population within the EU political system (Woll 2006; Coen and Richardson 2009, 3–6; Hix and Høyland 2022, 175). However, the tendency to study the participation of the interest groups in the EU in *sui generis* terms has also been challenged, emphasising the need for comparative studies of the lobbying taking place in different contexts (Woll 2006; Coen 2007). Indeed, in recent years comparative studies have been one of the most prominent avenues in political lobbying research (Pritoni and Vicentini 2022; Beyers et al. 2020).

These comparative studies have focused, for example, on the similarities and differences between lobbying in the US and in the EU. In both contexts, lobbying is considered an integral part of policy processes (Mack 2005). Yet, lobbying style in the EU is more softly-spoken, consensus-oriented, and based on trusted long-term relations (Woll 2006, 461–462; 2012; Coen 2002). It is also argued that it is not the cultural aspects but differences in institutions, issues, and interest group characteristics which constitute lobbying in both the USA and the EU (Mahoney 2008). More recently, Hanegraaff et al. (2017) have demonstrated how both American and European lobbyists adjust their lobbying style to the transnational institutional context, despite lobbying styles remaining markedly different in the US and European institutional context.

In this study I focus on analysing how adjusting lobbying styles – or rather practices – takes place transnationally across the Member States and Brussels within everyday EU lobbying. Thus, rather than conducting comparative research, I study how EU lobbying practices relate transnationally, across Member-states and Brussels. In some studies, different aspects of national and EU level lobbying are compared (see, for example, Binderkrantz and Rasmussen 2015; Eising, Rasch, and Rozbicka 2017; Eising et al. 2017; Wonka 2017; Kohler-Koch, Kotzian, and Quittkat 2017; Berkhout, Hanegraaff, and Braun 2017), or power in EU lobbying is studied at both the national and EU levels (Dür and De Bièver 2007). However, these comparative studies seem to be based on the idea of multilevel governance, such that EU lobbying in Member States is separated from the EU level rather than everyday EU lobbying being considered transnationally across them. This research adds

empirical and theoretical insights to existing studies on lobbying styles. It contributes a transnational understanding, that opens up the space to study EU lobbying practices in Member States and Brussels together from a relational perspective.

It is acknowledged that the EU is difficult to define as a democracy, amongst other things because of its features of representation and engagement of organised civil society (Greenwood 2007). Based on the pluralist theory of representative democracy, the participation of interest groups in EU politics is often justified based on their ability to act as transmission belts and thus bring diverse stakeholders' voices into EU decision-making (Easton 1971; Truman 1971; Putnam 1994; Rasmussen, Carroll, and Lowery 2014; Albareda 2018). Also, in the deliberative approach, the participation of various stakeholders is seen in positive terms, as increasing legitimacy and overcoming the EU's democratic deficit (Greenwood 2007; Kohler-Koch 2010).

There are, however, more critical views on the participation of organised civil society, as their privileged input legitimacy and elitist role to participate in the EU's governance is questioned (Greenwood 2007, 334, 339; Christiansen and Piattoni 2003). Thus, studies have drawn attention to inequalities in opportunities and capacities between interest groups to conduct EU lobbying (Wessels 2004, 199) and to participate in the formal and informal aspects of EU governance (Christiansen and Piattoni 2003; Kleine 2014; 2017). Previous research also indicates that NGOs tend to prioritise effectiveness in advocacy over citizen participation, thus strengthening foremost EU's output legitimacy (Sudbery 2003; also Warleigh 2003).

Instead of seeing the participation of interest groups either in positive or negative terms, the institutionalisation of EU lobbying within the EU political system is emphasised. Previous research shows how lobbying has become an integral part of the EU political system (Greenwood 2007, 340; Dionigi 2017, 1), also called for formally and informally by institutional actors within the EU (Costa and Brack 2018, 211–212). Within and beyond the European integration agenda, the European Commission in particular has had an active role in the formation of EU level interest groups, through granting them preferable access as well as funding (Greenwood 2007, 343–346; 2017, 15–18; Courty and Michel 2013; Dinan 2021). The funding and support received from the European Commission also balances the representation of interests at the European level, by providing resources for non-profit organisations (see, for example, Woll 2012, 199–200).

Thus, EU lobbying has become an established way to bring much-needed expert resources into EU decision-making (Greenwood 2007, 340; 2017; Eising 2007; Bouwen 2002; 2004), whereby resource dependency between EU institutions and

EU lobbying is established (Rasmussen 2015). Furthermore, the White Paper, the Green Paper on the Transparency Initiative, and later on the establishment of the EUTR, underline the institutionalisation of lobbying within the EU political system (Hyvärinen 2009; Dinan 2021), although it has also been highlighted that lobbying has been an integral part of this development (Michel 2013; Bunea 2019). Thus, it is fair to say that lobbying intertwines with all EU regulation, including those relating to the transparency and openness of EU lobbying.

Moreover, how EU lobbying has evolved is closely connected with the development of the political system, treaty development, and processes of integration in the EU (see an overview, for example, in Mahoney 2008, 17–26; Levitt, Bryceson, and van Mierlo 2017; Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023, 54–76). Thus, it is important to underline that in my research I focus on EU lobbying in the post-Lisbon setting. The Treaty of Lisbon changed the EU decision-making process, for example, by increasing the relative power of the European Parliament amongst the EU institutions (Zetter 2011, 372, 376–377).

On the one hand, it has been stated that even following the Treaty of Lisbon the European Parliament remained relatively weak when compared with the European Commission and the Council of Ministers (Goetze and Rittberger 2010; Kauppi 2018, 72–75). On the other hand, research focusing on policy outcomes in the post-Lisbon setting has emphasised the importance of the European Parliament as a lobbying venue in Brussels, alongside the Commission, whereas lobbying of the Council is considered as taking place mainly in the Member States' capitals (Dionigi 2017; also Carroll and Rasmussen 2017).

Also, it has been outlined that EU politics is not coherent but takes place simultaneously between different European institutions (Costa and Brack 2018; Warleigh 2003; Coen and Richardson 2009), across power-relations, through formal and informal practices within EU institutions (Hartlapp, Metz, and Rauh 2014; Ahrens, Elomäki, and Kantola 2022; Puetter 2014), and transnationally across the Member States, including Finland (Raunio and Saari 2017; Elo 2021; Hyvärinen and Raunio 2014). In my research, it is important to analyse how lobbyists understand the current decision-making structure in the EU in relation to EU lobbying practices.[27]

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[27] However, studying the EU decision-making structure or EU decision-makers' everyday experiences (see, for example, McNamara 2015; Kauppi 2005; Georgakakis and Rowell 2013; Busby 2013; Firat 2019; Miller 2022; Heiskala et al. 2022; Merand 2021) falls outside my research, as I focus on EU lobbying everyday practices.

2.1 In-house lobbyists and their symbiotic relations

Interest groups are currently considered an important channel for citizens to express their opinions to decision-makers. Thus, it is relevant to study their role in democracies, as well as look deeper into the power of interest groups and how this is distributed amongst them (Dür and De Bièver 2007). In the case of the EU, "'interest representatives' carrying out activities to influence EU policy and decision-making process" are expected to register their information in the European Transparency Register (EUTR) (European Union 2022b). To give a general idea of the current scale of lobbying in the EU, at the end of 2022, after the eligibility checks, there were 12 425 registrants in the EUTR.

The categories for EUTR registration vary from self-employed individuals and companies to consultants and organisations (such as trade and business associations, trade unions, professional associations, and non-governmental organisations) conducting EU lobbying (see categories for registration European Union 2022a). As the table from the annual report on the functioning of the Transparency Register 2022 below shows (Table 1), "non-governmental organisations, platforms and networks and similar" was the biggest registrant category[28] followed by "companies and groups", and then "trade unions and professional associations". The table also shows how the three in-house lobbyist categories included in this research (NGOs, UAs and TBs) together encompassed 57 % of the EUTR registrants at the end of 2022.

Regarding the transnationality of EU lobbying, 18 % of the organisations in the EUTR are Belgium-based, which is "likely to be due to the EU institutions being located in Brussels" (The Transparency Register Management Board 2022, 17). The **Brussels-based umbrella organisations**, as I call them in this study, are almost all associations of other organisations, Member State based national associations, or other European associations (Greenwood 2007, 347). Both European federations and European civil society have established relations and presence in and around the European institutions through these Brussels-based umbrella organisations (Costa and Brack 2018, 211–217; Courty and Michel 2013; Woll 2012, 199).

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[28] There might be some mis-categorised think tanks as well as trade associations and business associations registered as NGOs in the EUTR (Dinan 2021, 240), thus here I am using the latest revised data.

Professional consultancies	552
Law firms	84
Self-employed consultants	143
Companies and groups	3 035
Trade and business associations	2 630
Trade unions and professional associations	967
Non-governmental organisations, platforms and networks and similar	3 483
Think tanks and research institutions	561
Academic institutions	315
Organisations representing churches and religious communities	51
Associations and networks of public authorities	161
Entities, offices or networks established by third countries	2
Other organisations, public or mixed entities	441

Table 1. EUTR registrants broken down into sections (The Transparency Register Management Board 2022, 16).

As EU legislation is wide-reaching, affecting the EU Member States and beyond, the EUTR also covers organisations across and beyond the borders of the 27 Member States (The Transparency Register Management Board 2022, 17). In fact, at the end of 2022, the majority of the registrants had their head office located somewhere other than Belgium, of which 2% were in Finland – I call these **Helsinki-based organisations**. As will be discussed in the analysis, these Helsinki-based organisations, excepting NGOs, often also had a local office in Brussels with Brussels-based staff. As part of EU lobbying practices, Helsinki-based staff travelled regularly between Helsinki and Brussels before COVID-19 while also conducting EU lobbying in Finland. Moreover, everyday transnational communication and information sharing was continuous between Brussels-based umbrella organisations and organisations based in Member States. Thus, everyday EU lobbying seems to be transnationally more connected than previous research on lobbyists' career paths necessarily recognises (Courty and Michel 2013, 194).

It is also relevant to acknowledge that it is quite impossible to know the exact number of stakeholders in EU lobbying solely based on the data in the EUTR - various stakeholders, including national interest groups, seek to influence EU politics both directly and indirectly throughout Europe (Dionigi 2016, 1). Thus, often when researching the EU interest group population, researchers combine different sources to overcome the limitations of the information in public registers (Berkhout and Lowery 2008; Wonka et al. 2010). As I discuss in greater detail below (Chapter 4.5),

I also became aware of the limitations of the EUTR information, combining it with other information to identify relevant in-house lobbyists during my research.

Despite the difficulties in knowing the exact EU lobbying population, the potentially biased nature of interest representation between different kinds of actors has been a relevant concern in lobbying research (Lowery et al. 2015). Large individual firms have been found to have better access to the Commission than EU-level associations (Bouwen 2002) and business interest associations more capable to represent their members' interest than NGOs in EU lobbying (Berkhout, Hanegraaff, and Braun 2017; cf. Dür, Bernhagen, and Marshall 2015). Partly contradicting these results, through comparing advocacy group populations at the national and transnational levels, the results of a recent study indicate that business bias becomes smaller when considered beyond the national level (Berkhout and Hanegraaff 2019).

Also, the existing research indicates that the professionalisation of interest groups does not vary systemically across interest group type in EU lobbying. Although well financed interest groups seem to be more professionalised, interest groups are similarly professionalised across interest group types to meet the needs of European institutions to participate in EU lobbying in a professional and constructive way (Klüver and Saurugger 2013; see also Beyers 2008 on access). Also, in the Finnish context, studying different kinds of interest groups has shown that interest group type is not the best explanation for differences in activity level, and in general different kinds of interest groups have a similar ability to influence national politics (Vehka 2023).

By studying consultant lobbyists, it is also demonstrated that not all EU lobbying is done through in-house lobbying: not only business actors but also different types of interest groups use consultant lobbying as an additional resource for strategic reasons (Tyllström and Murray 2021; Ylönen, Mannevuo, and Kari 2022, 92–97). Also, drawing attention to coalitions in lobbying demonstrates how different actors co-operate and use each other's assets (Kluver 2013a), which has also been found to positively affect lobbying success (Junk 2020). It has even been stated that the same representatives can lead and represent several organisations simultaneously (Michel 2013, 74). Thus, in my research, instead of focusing on the possible large-scale biased nature of interest representation in EU lobbying, I elaborate the current understanding of the relationality between lobbyists in everyday EU lobbying from both Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists' perspectives.

In considering the history of lobbying, the close contacts between lobbyists and decision-makers have often been seen in a negative light with worrying consequences

for democracy (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 83–88). Also, lobbying was historically done by those close to the decision-makers, as they enjoyed a similar status in society (Zetter 2011, 8). The current mutual dependency has been acknowledged, for example, by outlining alliances between party politics and interest groups (Wessels 2004) and in the national system for preparing EU affairs (Hyvärinen 2009). It is also argued that in the EU, lobbying is often targeted at like-minded decision-makers (Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017), thus supporting them in achieving common goals.

Additionally, in previous research Brussels-based EU lobbyists are considered as part of the Eurocrats (Georgakakis and Rowell 2013), with sociologically similar European socialisation and destinies to many European civil servants (Courty and Michel 2013; Laurens 2018). Thus, perhaps contrasting participation as a decision-maker or via interest groups means that something remains unseen (Greenwood 2007, 338). Indeed, recent research on revolving doors, the phenomenon of moving back and forth between lobbying and politics, has elaborated the understanding of symbiotic relations in EU lobbying (see, for example, Coen and Provost 2022; Belli and Bursens 2023; cf. sliding door phenomenon in Coen, Vannoni, and Katsaitis 2021).

Yet, studying revolving doors has also made visible the significance of embodiment – how actors simultaneously carry previous institutional knowledge and themselves adapt through socialisation to the new role as they move between politics and lobbying (Tyllström 2021). It is also pointed out that lobbying literature has placed emphasis on the revolving door experience while overlooking the relevance of the "multiple' doors" of other experiences in generating the contacts and specialised expertise needed in lobbying (Halpin and Lotric 2023).

In an extensive recent sociological study of the professionalisation of the social field of EU lobbying via large survey data, which enabled generalisation, Lahusen (2023) concluded that EU lobbying has become an established profession, characterised by specialised skills and shared consensus about the profession amongst lobbyists working in different kinds of organisations. Also, while EU lobbying has "evolved into a specialised occupational field", the labour market is spread across different lobbying sectors, job changes are the norm, and career paths seem to develop via multiple doors. Thus, while revolving door experience remains relevant and common amongst EU lobbyists (45% of the respondents), gaining

experience in EU lobbying more widely through different sectors and positions is significant.[29]

Moreover, everyday practices in EU lobbying seem to separate lobbyists from decision-makers within the EU political system. For example, Firat (2019, 3–4, 14, 20, 175) outlines both lobbying and diplomacy as cultural work and as "increasingly two sides of the same coin", in the accumulation and transmission of knowledge and information, as well as in combining formal and informal channels. However, she acknowledges the more interstate, formalised and enduring nature of diplomacy as well as differences in the everyday practices (norms related to rules and taboos, as well as symbolic codes) in lobbying and diplomacy. Also, Hyvärinen (2009) states that lobbyists have different social networks, information channels and influencing opportunities from bureaucrats within the EU political system. Overall, EU lobbying is characterised as a fairly unknown profession with its own practical knowledge, often learnt through doing, that does not require any specific educational or formal background yet demands specialised skills not available to everyone (Firat 2019, 20; Lahusen 2023, 153–154, 174, 179–186).

However, here it gets tricky. Based on survey data and interviews it is possible to outline how lobbyists actually seem to agree as to the skills and knowledge required in their profession and what it takes to become a professional in EU lobbying (Lahusen 2023, 186–231). Nevertheless, how tacit knowledge of EU lobbying relates to actual everyday practices and relations with other lobbyists and decision-makers is not grasped. Also, while highly relevant in mapping the professionalisation of EU lobbying amongst lobbyists with a direct line to the European institutions in Brussels, national contexts are overlooked because of difficulties with available data on lobbyists (discussion in Lahusen 2023, 80–81; see also Büttner et al. 2015). This limits the understanding of EU lobbying to Brussels, excluding empirical study of the spatial and temporal dimensions of everyday EU lobbying practices.

As Dinan (2021, 242) notes, despite efforts to make EU lobbying transparent via EUTR, interactions taking place between lobbyists and EU decision-makers (politician and bureaucrats) seem to be invisible to the wider European public while

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[29]This research mapping out the social field of EU lobbying structurally and thus making visible the professionalisation of EU lobbying in Brussels is highly relevant. However, it is important to note that in my ethnographic research I do not systemically analyse the career paths of the in-house lobbyists or give very detailed background information on the participants because of anonymity and gaining trust to study everyday practices, as explained further in Chapter 4.4. Also, in this study the research focus is more on the everyday practices, or what gives the in-house lobbyists their ability to carry out EU lobbying and how lobbyists understand their relational ability to conduct EU lobbying, rather than studying how they became lobbyists.

being essential to the actors themselves in Brussels. By analysing EU lobbying as a transnational social field, from in-house lobbyists' perspectives and beyond Brussels, I aim to make the spaces and timing of everyday relations in EU lobbying more visible.

2.2 The emergence of the European Green Deal as the temporal research context

It is widely agreed that EU lobbying needs to adjust to what is current in EU politics to be considered relevant (see, for example, Klüver 2010; Beyers and Kerremans 2007). However, it is also acknowledged that the EU's policy agenda is influenced not only endogenously and exogenously, but as being constantly intertwined with current transnational issues, such as climate change, that are outside the control of the actors conducting their daily work within the EU political system (Coen, Vannoni, and Katsaitis 2021, 112; Mahoney 2008, 108).

I witnessed the adjustment to current transnational issues firsthand during my research process. When I conducted my transnational fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels (between November 2017 and February 2020) not only climate change but also the Presidency of Donald Trump, Brexit, immigration and populism were present topics being reflected in EU politics and in the research interviews with lobbyists and decision-makers. The EU budget for the future (Multiannual Financial Framework, MFF) and the future of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) were still under negotiation despite the many attempts to push these issues forward. First the uncertainty surrounding Brexit and then the certainty of the UK leaving the EU delayed both the EU budget and the CAP, due to disagreements amongst the Member States and within the European Parliament (EP). Afterwards, in literature addressing the emergence of the European Green Deal, this time was considered turbulent, mainly because of Brexit and EU Member States disagreeing on the scope and ambitions of climate policy (Dupont and Torney 2021).

The wider framework and goals of the European Green Deal are rooted in the International Climate agreements, especially the Paris Climate Agreement, as well as in the EU's ambition to take on a leadership role with respect to climate issues (Bloomfield and Steward 2020; Siddi 2020; Dyrhauge and Kurze 2023). The development of this agenda also intertwines with broader historical developments since the 1970s, relating to the debate on sovereign statehood and global environmental responsibility (Falkner 2012, 503–504, 514). It has also been argued

that the ideological and structural changes in environmental politics have enabled non-state actors to enter the debates on sustainability and greening as solution providers rather than trouble-makers (Kentala-Lehtonen 2019). Also, the United Nations adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, that brought together the poverty reduction and sustainability agendas to call for action not only from developing countries but from all countries globally (Sachs 2012; Hák, Janoušková, and Moldan 2016).

Starting in autumn 2018 there were, however, transnational issues that sparked the momentum for the European Green Deal to emerge. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report in October 2018, warning about the impacts of global warming at a level of 1.5° Celsius was widely publicised, climate issues were debated in different sectors, and public demonstrations by youth climate movements took place across Europe. Also, the European Commission and European Parliament publicly addressed the seriousness of the climate situation. The emergence of the Green Deal was perhaps also pushed forward by the trends and discussions around the Green New Deal simultaneously taking place in the US (Bloomfield and Steward 2020; Dupont and Torney 2021; Siddi 2020).

In spring 2019, Finnish parliamentary elections and European Parliament elections took place. After the elections a new government with its own Government Programme was formed in Finland and a new European Commission was chosen to put forward its priorities, strategic plans and work plans. Green parties across Europe did relatively well in the EP elections in 2019, and in summer 2019 the Commission President-designate Ursula von der Leyen was publicly communicating the seriousness of the climate situation (Dupont, Oberthür, and von Homeyer 2020). "Our house is on fire", was stated several times in Brussels in the summer and autumn of 2019 when Amazonia was burning, and as climate change and the European Green Deal emerged on the EU agenda. Moreover, Finland held its third EU presidency in autumn 2019, when I observed how most of the in-house lobbyists were already getting ready for Germany's EU presidency in autumn 2020. In this temporal context took place the hearings and appointment of a new Commission that claimed to take climate issues seriously (Bloomfield and Steward 2020).

In December 2019, the new European Commission released its strategy for the EU, the European Green Deal, which aims to make Europe the first carbon neutral continent by 2025 (European Commission 2019a). As the European Green Deal touches upon a wide range of different political sectors, it is seen as the new building block of the EU's economic model now and in the future (Bongardt and Torres

2022) that was not even watered down by the COVID-19 pandemic (Dupont, Oberthür, and von Homeyer 2020).

It should be noted that science has a different time from the practices outlined in research. As the analysis for research is often done in retrospect, a researcher does not have similar uncertainty of the outcomes than the actors had at the time of data gathering. According to Bourdieu's epistemology, this issue should not be overlooked. Rather, when analysing practices, they should be understood within their time and also make epistemological reflections on the temporality visible in the research (Bourdieu 1977, 9; 1990b, 81). Thus, I present EU lobbying at a time when the European Green Deal was emerging and when I conducted my fieldwork as a doctoral researcher.

Surrounded by the current topics and simultaneous transnational issues[30] outlined above, the abductive research process truly showed its value as I proceeded with the empirical research. When gathering the interview data, from November 2017, I tried to determine what my research was all about – a "case of what" and EU lobbying in what context? Despite my original intention to focus on accountability and environmental governance with respect to food-related issues in EU trade lobbying, during the interviews trade issues were discussed but not so much from the perspective of food. The main concern was Trump and the halted Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations at the end of 2016, which was considered either a good or a bad thing (for different reasons). Yet when I gathered my interview data, TTIP was already old news and not likely to re-emerge on the EU agenda any time soon. These issues made me question my research framing early on.

I often simply tried to decide what the research context was. But if I got excited about some specific dossier, like Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) or Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs), then in the following interviews completely different dossiers would surely be addressed. Moreover, issues such as Due Diligence and Social Europe also emerged that did not seem to fit into my neat framing of the EU environmental governance context.

Moreover, I realised that actors in Finland and in Brussels were focusing on slightly different issues and dossiers, because of how timing and transnationality play out in EU lobbying. Also, conducting fieldwork during the EU elections and when a new Commission was taking shape did not help in finding an area to focus on –

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[30] It is relevant to emphasise that the imminent COVID-19 pandemic was not on the horizon and was only sometimes mentioned during the very last months of my fieldwork.

this was a time when not so much was going on, but at the same time everything was being addressed as the direction of the EU was up for debate. Without fully grasping it at the time, through lobbyists I was introduced to the simultaneity of European presents, meaning "a parallel series of enforced moments of exchange and decisions" (Ekengren 2002, 96).

In the end, however, it was a valuable lesson in ethnography and abductive research to enter the field of EU lobbying without knowing exactly what my research was about. This meant I was able to learn in practice how the "case of what" may shift as a result of fieldwork. In December 2019, while observing Ursula von der Leyen speaking in the European Parliament in Brussels and describing how the European Green Deal was a revolutionary "Europe's man on the moon moment", I realised that I had been observing the field of EU lobbying when the European Green Deal was emerging – without knowing what was about to come at the beginning of my research process.

Thus, in this research the transnational field of EU lobbying is constructed through the empirical research I conducted simultaneously in Helsinki and Brussels when the European Green Deal was emerging. Beyond being a case study of lobbying influence, my study captures the everyday of EU lobbying in its time, when the European Union's current growth strategy (the European Green Deal), set to transit the EU economy sustainable and leaving no one behind, was emerging.

3 THEORETICAL CHAPTER: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO PRACTICES AND POWER IN TRANSNATIONAL EU LOBBYING

"It is commonplace to say that doing Bourdieu-inspired research may be the farthest thing on earth from taking a shortcut." (Pouliot 2012, 54)

'Practice theory', or 'theories of practice', is a wide social theory drawing on the works of Bourdieu, Giddens, Taylor, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and the later works of Foucault (see, for example, Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, and Evon Savigny 2001; Reckwitz 2002; Nicolini 2012; Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012; Schatzki 2018). A practice approach can be understood as family resemblance, following Wittgenstein's idea, in research focusing on practices and aiming to understand them through discursive and nondiscursive actions in social life (Reckwitz 2002; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 19; Schatzki 2001, 2,11; Nicolini 2012, 3–4, 7, 9; Schatzki 2002, 77). As practices are understood as social, the situations in which they occur, observable processes, and patterns of activities become more relevant than the intentions or motivations of actors (Bueger and Gadinger 2015, 451; Drieschova, Bueger, and Hopf 2022). Moreover, a practice approach challenges widely accepted conceptual dichotomies, such as agent and structure, individual and institutional, mind and body, cognition and action, objective and subjective, as well as free will and determinism (Feldman and Orlikowski 2011, 1242; Adler-Nissen 2012; Bueger and Gadinger 2018; Bigo 2011; Schatzki 2018).

Despite common interdisciplinary roots and perspectives, a practice approach should not be seen as a unanimous grand theory or treated as such (Reckwitz 2002, 244; Schatzki 2001, 11; Bueger and Gadinger 2015). It should also be noted that the term "practice" is not limited to a certain scale or size but can be applied to studying both large- and small-scale phenomena (Nicolini 2012; 2017a; Schatzki 2018; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 107).

Also, there are no general standards or labels as to what qualifies as a practice theory (Schatzki 2018, 153). Moreover, the turn to practices has varied between disciplines, as well as diverging into subfields of practice research (see, for example, Adler and Pouliot 2011b; Corradi, Gherardi, and Verzelloni 2010; Eikeland and

Nicolini 2011; Schatzki 2018). At the beginning of an interdisciplinary practice turn, the differences between approaches were perhaps downplayed to create a bandwagon effect of shared interest toward practices (Gherardi 2021, 2). It is also acknowledged that many IR researchers talk about practices without adopting a practice approach as such (Bueger and Gadinger 2015, 450).

Some scholars are currently calling for further distinctions between practice approaches (for example, Gherardi 2021, 2). Rather than separating, my research resonates strongly with the idea that practice research can be pragmatic and combine approaches to offer thick descriptions of everyday life (Nicolini 2012, 9, 11, 216–219). A similar idea, of understanding the practice approach "as a social space or a trading zone", has also been put forward in IR research (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 14–19), and in relation to Bourdieu's thinking in IR (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 13).

Accordingly, theory should primarily be understood in functionalist terms as a toolbox allowing us to see the world through practices (Reckwitz 2002; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 136). Also, a practice approach leaves room for the empirical research to direct the study more than any pre-set definition or subdiscipline of practice research (Nicolini 2012, 216–219; 2017b, 24). Thus, practice-oriented research can be pragmatic when it comes to a theoretical framework (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 128). This also resonates with how I adopt the relational practice approach and toolbox thinking in my research.

3.1 Leaning towards a Bourdieu-inspired relational practice approach

Throughout my abductive research process, the focus of my study and its theoretical framework have shifted. Initially, I aimed to study EU lobbying through discourses based on Gramscian approaches to power. However, at an early stage it was the gathered interview data and encounters with the lobbyists and decision-makers that highlighted the importance of discursive and non-discursive everyday practices in EU lobbying. As a result, I shifted from Gramscian approaches to interdisciplinary practice approaches, and then immersed myself in a Bourdieu-inspired relational approach to practices and power.[31] It was specifically the relational way of

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[31] As with Gramscian approaches, Bourdieu's thinking includes a preoccupation with relations of power and structures of domination (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 26). This critical approach and Bourdieu's practice approach can also be seen to come together in "unravelling hidden power relations"(Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 121–122). In contrast to Gramsci, Bourdieu did not see

understanding practices and power as well as the emphasis on empirical work that caused me to lean towards Bourdieu-inspired thinking in understanding EU lobbying.

Pierre Bourdieu's[32] impact has been quite limited in IR research (Bigo 2011), although approaches inspired by his work have been used to study, for example, diplomacy, security, migration, and environmental politics (see an overview in Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 39–41; Adler-Nissen 2012b, 1). Bourdieu's work has also been central to recent EU studies on sovereignty, integration, and Europeanisation (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 8–9; Kauppi 2003; 2018; 2005).[33]

Bourdieu characterises his work as *constructivist structuralism* or *structuralist constructivism*, referring to applying a *relational* mode of thinking to the social world (Bourdieu 1989). In IR readings of Bourdieu, the relational approach and reflexivity are seen as central to overcoming the tension between objectivism and subjectivism in research (Bigo 2011; Adler-Nissen 2012b; Pouliot and Mérand 2012). Thus, in Bourdieu-inspired research, the aim is not to generalise from one field study but to use interdisciplinary skills to carry out in-depth empirical research (Bigo 2011).

Accordingly, *practices* are perceived as evolving over time, situational, and dispositional, and as such they should be studied contextually (Bourdieu 1977, 2–3, 118; Wuthnow 2020, 34–35). Therefore, practical logic is understood through embodiment and grasped in action, as practices are the meeting points of disposition (habitus) and position (field) (Bourdieu 1990, 92; 1993, 72–77; see also Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 30). Moreover, a practice should be understood beyond a mechanical reaction or determinism, as uncertainty as to the outcome remains as opposed to causality (Bourdieu 1977, 9, 73, 76).

Bourdieu takes the view that a practice also implies a cognitive operation, as it is structured by the social whilst at the same time also structuring the social (Bourdieu 1977, 96–97). Also, social aspects of practices are visible in the moments and tempo considered appropriate for them. This practical understanding is relatively independent of external necessities but yet expected to be respected as an element

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"classes" as a good starting point for research but as predominant structures for the analysis (Guzzini 2012, 84).

[32]Pierre Bourdieu can be seen as belonging to the "first generation" of practice theorists (Schatzki 2018, 154). The roots and legacy of Bourdieu's thinking in social science research have been outlined by many authors before me (see, for example, Bigo 2011; Pouliot and Mérand 2012; Wacquant 2008; Kauppi and Swartz 2015). Thus, I focus on outlining Bourdieu's relational approach and those concepts relevant to my empirical research on EU lobbying.

[33]Beyond IR research, excellent Bourdieu-inspired ethnographic research includes Loïc Wacquant's (2004) description of pugilists' everyday lives and Beverly Skeggs' (1997) research on working-class women and gender.

constructing the group itself and its representation (Bourdieu 1977, 163; 1990, 81–83). Such ritual practices may be difficult to comprehend "from outside", whereas for insiders they seem reasonable within the condition and from their disposition. Thus, to understand ritual practice, one has to go beyond reconstituting its internal logic by also outlining its practical necessity in its real condition – why it is done, what the means are for doing it, and what relational aspects, such as power, are involved. (Bourdieu 1990b, 96–97.) Thus, practice research should aim to provide an understanding and shed light on shared meanings rather than listing activities (Nicolini 2012, 13).

There are also certain limitations to Bourdieu's practice approach. For example, it is criticised for not adequately addressing materiality (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012, 23), for its conceptual ambiguity (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 42–44), and for overlooking feminist contributions (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 6). Moreover, Bourdieu's approach may be overly focused on stability and hence overlook issues of change, as repetition and reproduction of the norm is focused upon more commonly than challenges to it. Thus, in Bourdieu's thinking shifts from the norm are often considered to be rare and to result from revolutionary events (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 101; see also Hopf 2022). In addition, Kauppi (2018, 52–54) points out that Bourdieu-inspired research may give too static a picture of power and political transformation, such that the messiness of processes, temporality, and also co-operation may be overlooked. This is particularly the case with respect to transnational spaces.

To overcome some of these limiting aspects, I incorporate insights from other researchers when conducting Bourdieu-inspired practice research.[34] Thus, in this theory chapter I outline how I combine Bourdieu's relational practice approach with approaches on transnationality in studying Europe (Kauppi 2018; 2003; 2013; Adler-Nissen 2016; 2011; Pouliot and Mérand 2012; Kuus 2015; Bigo 2011) and symbolic power in IR research (Adler-Nissen 2014; Kuus 2015). Moreover, by adopting the onto-epistemological position embedded in Bourdieu's thinking, my empirical work is also present when outlining the theoretical framework in this chapter. However, I focus more on the epistemological and methodological aspects in Chapter 4.

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[34] I recognise that perhaps Bourdieu himself would not have appreciated this kind of approach (see discussion in Kauppi 2022b).

3.2   Transnationality in EU lobbying

It has been argued that the mutual ignorance observable between political scientists, sociologists and historians is one of the main shortcomings in European studies (Cohen 2011). Bringing theoretical and methodological ideas from political sociology into IR research could broaden the framing of power in such studies (Kauppi 2018, 1–3). Also, EU research integrating anthropology and practice-oriented research could not only supplement mainstream EU research but also challenge and contradict its findings (Adler-Nissen 2016). In this section, I outline how combining a sociological approach and Bourdieu-inspired practice research has opened up a way to conceptualise and study EU lobbying practices transnationally as well as in relation to EU politics.

In political EU research, there is a tendency to study merely the EU institutions or the authorities' dimension of EU decision-making in order to study 'Europe'. In this way studies start with the institutions as their research objects, rather than looking at processes or different kinds of political spaces. This may also lead to excluding practices that are considered 'apolitical' from the point of view of EU research (Adler-Nissen 2016; Favell and Guiraudon 2009).

In contrast, the transnational sociology of the European Union enables interdisciplinary research on the EU beyond the formal institutions, with respect to issues not immediately perceptible on the surface (Favell and Guiraudon 2009, 552, 558–559, 569). Thus, adopting a sociological approach to EU politics can provide avenues to study the broader human dimension in issues also relevant to IR research (Kauppi 2018, 17–18). However, the call in EU research to take account of wider issues in society is not to claim that they could be understood without politics, but rather to state that they should be studied together, as politics cannot be understood without society and vice versa (Favell and Guiraudon 2009, 552).

More specifically, transnationalism provides an alternative way to study Europe and the interplay between several national contexts without falling into the dichotomy of "inside/outside" via state-centric internationalism (Kauppi 2018, 67–69). The idea of a state or the EU as a unanimous actor can be further scrutinised through Bourdieu's relational approach. The state-centric view, common in IR research, is challenged through arguments that the state is not at all an actor but rather a specific field where the struggle for power takes place (Bigo 2011; Adler-Nissen 2011).

In this way Bourdieu's thinking can also be used to understand non-state actors and their challenging of "the state's regalian functions", as well as issues which in IR

research are often considered "low politics" (Adler-Nissen 2012, 2, 19). In my research, adopting transnationality and Bourdieu's analytical concepts when studying EU lobbying empirically has been ground-breaking, as discussed below.

3.2.1 *Habitus* to study everyday EU lobbying from in-house lobbyists' perspectives

In practice-oriented IR research, researchers are encouraged to look at practices through practitioners' experiences to empirically discover everyday practices and their relation to world politics (Adler and Pouliot 2011b; see also Austin and Leander 2022). When studying practices and power in the EU, however, the selection of relevant actors seems to be fixed to assumptions about powerful elites, such as heads of state and governments, senior politicians and officials, as well as diplomats. This framing excludes other actors, as it seems to be based on a taken-for-granted assumption about power (Berling 2012, 69). In order to enhance and broaden EU research, it is essential to study the everyday of different kinds of people in Europe using different quantitative and qualitative research methods (Favell and Guiraudon 2009, 552, 558–559, 569). In my research I approach practices and power in EU lobbying through Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists' habitus.

Bourdieu defines *habitus* as systems of durable, transferable dispositions that are structured, as they integrate all past experiences and designate the way of being and seeing within a field (Bourdieu 1977, 72, 78–79, 82, 161; 1986; see also Bigo 2011). Thus, habitus "implies a 'sense of one's place' but also a 'sense of the place of others'" within a social field (Bourdieu 1989, 19). In this way the concept of habitus is one example of overcoming the dichotomy between agency and structure in practice research (Adler-Nissen 2016), as habitus is "socialised subjectivity" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 126).

Moreover, the homogenising of group habitus results from a similarity of conditions of existence. Habitus is an embodied product of the distribution of material properties and symbolic capital, as well as shared representations of the position (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013). The shared habitus also limits what is conceived of as appropriate to be carried out (Bourdieu 1977, 80–81). As such the practices of group members may be better harmonised than is assumed or desired by the agents.

Habitus also structures and regulates practices and representations, as deviation from the expected unravels what is expected as the common style of practice

(Bourdieu 1977, 72, 86; see also Nicolini 2012, 48, 56, 63, 83–85). Thus, even though not all group members have the exact same experiences, it is more likely that they have experiences similar to each other than to those of actors with different habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 85). Yet, habitus should not be understood as causal or as directly producing certain outcomes – more than that, it inclines actors towards certain practices (Bourdieu 1977, 95; see also Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 30).

Moreover, all past experiences are integrated in habitus and show in varying styles of reflecting the habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 86–87). Also, in the IR research it is emphasised that the concept of habitus should not be confused with that of strategy, as habitus does not necessarily involve conscious thought (Bigo 2011, 242). However, Bourdieu did not exclude the possibility of the conscious control of habitus, and also saw the potential in making that control visible through research (Bourdieu 1977, 76; see also Adler-Nissen 2012b, 5).

While the concept of habitus is often used in research mapping lobbyists and studying the professionalisation of EU lobbying (Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023), I study in-house lobbyists' embodied everyday experiences and sense of their place in current EU lobbying in relation to other actors. This approach leans more toward an IR reading of habitus, and how it can be applied to study different actors shaping international politics and raising collective awareness of their everyday practices (Adler-Nissen 2012b, 2, 5; 2016).

More specifically, I use the concept of habitus to outline in-house lobbyists' practical understandings of everyday EU lobbying, their relational disposition in EU lobbying, and what is considered competent/incompetent in EU lobbying. Moreover, conscious control of habitus is discussed in relation to public and closed-door EU lobbying practices that are visible to decision-makers. Also, understanding EU lobbying through Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists' habitus allows for consideration of EU lobbying transnationally.

3.2.2   The *transnational field* and EU lobbying in relation to EU politics

In his studies, Bourdieu focused primarily on large phenomena (such as education, economy, politics) through his ontology of fields and by looking into the practices in which individuals and collective actors engage within the field (Schatzki 2016, 4). Even though Bourdieu himself focused primarily on national fields, it is argued that his field analysis affords an understanding of transnational fields beyond nation

states (Adler-Nissen 2011; 2012b, 3; Kauppi 2018; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 36; Bigo 2011; Pouliot and Mérand 2012; Go and Krause 2016).

Following on from Bourdieu's thinking, a *field* includes its laws of functioning and dispositioned actors, and is structured along three principle dimensions: objects of struggle, power relations, and taken-for-granted rules (Bourdieu 1993, 72–77; see also Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 30). Thus, in Bourdieu-inspired research in IR, a field is understood as collective – it is a field of individuals and of the institutions they make. Therefore, the "reality" of a field is considered to be relational, based on the understandings of the groups being investigated and the relations between them (Bigo 2011, 238–239).

The European context and the EU provide ample opportunities to study transnational fields (Kauppi 2018, 71; Büttner et al. 2015). Transnational fields are primarily social fields, based on interdependencies and power relations, and are often less structured than national fields. However, some sectors of a field can be more structured or controlled than others at a given historical moment. (Kauppi 2018, 69–71.) In IR research, the concept of the transnational field is useful for theorising lateral and hierarchical differences, for example, when looking at how national origin, institutional location, and perceived social positions fit in (Kuus 2015).

Within a broader framework of integration and professionalisation, by using the transnational field as a heuristic prism, Büttner et al. (2015) have shed light on the wider, distinct, and horizontal field of the actors involved in EU affairs, including lobbyists, who "do" Europe in their everyday beyond the Brussels Bubble. This opens the way to studying the established rules within the field and possible overlaps with national fields. Yet, the everyday practices and actual professional means of conducting EU affairs are explicitly overlooked.

In my study, I lean towards an IR reading of the transnational field to study everyday practices empirically and in relation to power relations (Bigo 2012; 2020; Adler-Nissen 2012b, 2; Busby 2013). This kind of approach to the transnational field, combined with ethnographic fieldwork, "can help make roles, motives, and resources more visible and hence help us gain a more nuanced understanding" (Busby 2013, 206). Thus, to supplement existing sociological analysis on the institutionalisation and professionalisation of EU lobbying (Michel 2013; Courty and Michel 2013; Lahusen 2023), I focus on analysing everyday EU lobbying practices across Member States and Brussels through a relational perspective. This allows me to study the adjustment of EU lobbying style transnationally and how lobbyists relate to each other through everyday practices.

Moreover, in Bourdieu-inspired IR research it is important to understand and study a field in relation to other fields in order to know how autonomous or dominated it is, as many intertwined fields populate society simultaneously (Bigo 2011, 239). To these ends, Bourdieu's idea of studying empirically how heteronomous and autonomous a field is (Bourdieu 2021, 9–11) is used in IR research, for example, to analyse contemporary art in world politics (Bethwaite and Kangas 2019), or international tax justice (Vaughan 2022). The concept of heteronomy also brings into focus the interconnections between fields, in that actors may well occupy different fields simultaneously. One field may be used as a strategic tool to gain power in other fields (see, for example, Bethwaite and Kangas 2019; Cohen 2011, 335–339). This aspect is relevant when it comes to the phenomena of moving back and forth between lobbying and politics, called the revolving door phenomenon (see, for example, Coen and Provost 2022; Tyllström 2021; cf. sliding door phenomenon in Coen, Vannoni, and Katsaitis 2021).

In my study, the idea of autonomy-heteronomy is used to study how the transnational field of EU lobbying relates to EU politics. To elaborate understanding of the everyday inter-dependency of EU lobbying and EU politics, I analyse how the field of EU lobbying is perceived and how EU lobbying is organised in practice in relation to EU politics.

3.2.3   Relational spaces within the field of EU lobbying

Within practice approaches, there is a strong argument for understanding practices within their historical context, as in different times and in different societies the same practice can vary quite significantly (see, for example, Nicolini 2012, 3–4, 10, 48). Thus, studying a field empirically is perceived to be a spatial and temporal practice (Bigo 2011, 238–239). In order to understand a practice it is useful to have an overview of the social phenomena, rather than it being required to study every occurrence of it (Schatzki 2005). In this study, I empirically studied EU lobbying practices in Helsinki and Brussels during the emergence of the European Green Deal without trying to define EU lobbying exclusively or studying every occurrence of it.

Particularly when studying practices in transnational spaces, empirical work that is theoretically informed, localised, and historically sensitive is needed to move beyond a focus on nation-states (Kauppi 2018, 67–68). Thus, the state-centric view in IR research has been questioned in practice research with the claim that it limits our thinking around 'where'. If we rather start with the 'where' question, it directs us

to look to different places, beyond national or formal settings (Kuus 2015). To study interlinkages between different sites and to broaden the view of relevant places, the anthropologist's "multi-sited" perspective can be combined with a practice approach (Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 108–109; Schia 2017; see also Neumann 2023). Moreover, through Bourdieu's relational approach, political processes can be analysed in different kinds of transnational European political spaces (Kauppi 2003).

Thus, to include the aspect of relational spaces in my transnational study of EU lobbying, I look into frontstage and backstage practices (cf. inside and outside lobbying Dür and Mateo 2016; Junk 2016; Hanegraaff, Beyers, and De Bruycker 2016). The idea of front (stage) and back (stage), based on Erving Goffman's theory (1959), is used, for example, in studies focusing on deliberation theory (Naurin 2007b; 2007a) and in communication research (Nothhaft 2017) in EU lobbying. Interestingly, Goffman is also considered one of Bourdieu's favourite mental 'sparring partners' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013). According to my fieldwork, the approach can be applied to study not only public and closed-door practices with decision-makers but also practices taking place amongst lobbyists when the decision-makers are not present.

In Goffman's theory, other actors act as an audience. During my interviews, lobbyists primarily perceived relevant decision-makers to be their audience, rather than the general public. Further, during my fieldwork, I saw a lot more backstage behaviour matching Goffman's theory when the decision-makers were not present, and tailoring of practices, as well as conscious control of habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 76; see also Adler-Nissen 2012b, 5), when they were. This seems to suggest that actual backstage interactions happen between lobbyists when the decision-makers are not present (cf. Naurin 2007b; Nothhaft 2017). Thus, my research elaborates upon the understanding of how to locate the spaces of frontstage and backstage in transnational EU lobbying.

This also brings new insight to studying access and representation in EU lobbying. Even though gaining access is considered "a condition *sine qua non* to exercise influence" and a good indicator of influence in the EU legislative process (Bouwen 2002, 366), for national members gaining access to EU lobbying may in practice happen indirectly via Brussels-based umbrella organisations. Thus, studying how frontstage and backstage practices relate transnationally also becomes relevant. This also challenges the notion of access being a good indicator of influence, if access is measured in the wrong place within EU lobbying. This also shifts the attention to lobbyists' views on access rather than looking at access from the decision-makers'

perspective or through its institutional aspects, as is currently common in EU lobbying research.[35]

Moreover, by including the issues evident in transnational spaces, it is possible to make visible further practices with respect to representation. The assumption of cohesion among interest groups is questioned through pointing out the internal divisions that may also fragment them. The internal division within an EU-level umbrella organisation may be richness but may also cause paralysis when facing issues on which members remain seriously divided. Moreover, as heterogeneous EU-level umbrella organisations must abstain from taking a position, *ad hoc* coalitions or even establishing a new umbrella organisation may occur (van Schendelen 2013, 209-210). Through studying backstage relations, my research draws attention to the practices of compromising, co-operating, and competing in transnational EU lobbying between the lobbyists and how these relate to the interactions with the decision-makers.

3.2.4   Timing in EU lobbying

It is important to include the element of time when considering the representation of practices, as practices are temporally constructed (Bourdieu 1977, 5, 8–9). Assuming "the intemporal time of science" when studying and outlining practices overlooks how practices unfold and correlate with time (Bourdieu 1990b, 81). Also, research on EU lobbying during COVID-19 shows how changing realities impacted lobbying practices in European countries (Crepaz et al. 2022; see also Junk et al. 2020).

When it comes to lobbying research, however, timing is a largely overlooked aspect. Even though looking more closely at temporal relations beyond case studies or total volume of lobbying is considered important, one identified reason for overlooking timing in EU lobbying has been missing data (Toshkov et al. 2013). This relates to the informal, quiet and opaque nature of EU lobbying (Binderkrantz and Bitonti 2020; Nothhaft 2017; Culpepper 2010), that makes it challenging to know when EU lobbying actually takes place and to have access to study it. Thus, also development of theory relating to timing in lobbying has been limited, although timing has been an implicit concern in research focusing on influence, policy cycles,

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[35] Often in interest group research, access and gatekeeping are studied from the decision-makers' and sometimes media's perspective (see, for example, Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017).

venue shopping, and access in lobbying (Crepaz, Hanegraaff, and Junk 2023, 533–535).

A recent study, Crepaz, Hanegraaff, and Junk (2023.) outline how timing is an important predictor of lobbying influence. Yet, first mover advantage depends on how the lobbying organisation is considered relating to the lobbying issue (affected or not affected) and on the staff resources. It is also acknowledged that interest groups enter into long-lasting exchange relations with decision-makers beyond any one specific lobbying process – yet, studies focusing on the demand function of lobbying are "largely based on very lump temporal observations" and on measuring the lobbying activities of different stakeholders (Toshkov et al. 2013, 53). Thus, it remains obscure how and when in practice lobbying inputs are supplied and demanded in EU lobbying, and how formal and informal information relates to timing in EU lobbying.

Studying timing allows for showing how irreversibility, rhythm, tempo, and directionality are constitutive in practices (Bourdieu 1990b, 81). Also, practical mastery is evidenced in the appropriate rhythm to perform "each thing in its time" (Bourdieu 1990b, 75). In this study, focusing on timing in EU lobbying enables me to analyse how tacit knowledge with respect to EU governance timings (Ekengren 2002) and transnational non-stop engagement play out in the practices of EU lobbying.

3.3 An interdisciplinary and relational approach to power in EU lobbying

The concept of power lurks behind most, if not all, IR research (Baldwin 2016). Even before the discipline was established, power was a core issue for several thinkers to whom IR research is indebted and relies upon. Thucydides, Aristotle, Machiavelli and Hobbes all discussed the concept of power, as did many thinkers, such as Max Weber, before the Second World War (Baldwin 2016, 2). However, there has never been agreement as to the definition of power and how it works in practice. Nor has there been agreement on what the elements of power are or on how it should be studied in International Relations (see, for example, the discussion in Forsberg 2011, 208–211).

It is also argued that the taxonomies of power in IR research are disconnected from those in other disciplines.[36] This is evident in research that assumes much about power rather than studying it empirically. Thus, IR research on power could benefit from an interdisciplinary reading of power. Moreover, empirical studies based on an interdisciplinary taxonomy of power could broaden conceptions of relational power. (Forsberg 2011, 207–227.)

In turning to an interdisciplinary understanding of power, Lukes (2005, 1) states how "[…] power is at its most effective when least observable". To understand domination and how it works, it is first important to know when such power is at work, and thus to look for the hidden and least visible forms of power (Lukes 2005, 86).

Lukes (2005, 15–29, 59, 69) distinguishes three faces of power: the pluralist/behaviouralist view on power as outcome, the elitist view on decision-making and non-decision-making, and thirdly, the three-dimensional view of power emanating from the critique of the behavioural focus of the first two models. This critique draws attention to latent conflicts and encourages the study of deeper power relations as well as of the interplay between power and structure.

Power also plays a role in constituting what is considered "natural", according to the prevailing and unquestioned rationality of the time (Lukes 2005, 115–116). Lukes also discusses "adaptive preferences" and domination in relation to Bourdieu's (2001) ideas by outlining how symbolic violence and symbolic domination also shape habitus, and how class struggle actually becomes "the classification struggle" (Lukes 2005, 140–142).

Regarding studying power with regards to lobbying, political influence and the power of non-governmental actors over public policy have attracted researchers' attention in recent decades (see, for example, Dür and De Bièver 2007; Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 36–38).[37] Power in lobbying research, however, remains an area of confusion and disagreement (Dür 2008a; 2008b; Baumgartner and Leech 1998, 13; Leech 2010), even though several authors have been keen to clarify the situation (see,

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[36] See, for example, Hart (1976) for three main approaches to power in IR research: control over resources, control over actors, and control over events and outcomes. Hart takes the view that the third approach (control over events and outcomes) is somewhat superior to the other two, as it takes into account interdependency and collective action, is more general, and produces analysis that has both descriptive and normative advantages. Moreover, in the control over approach it is assumed that the reasons for controlling resources or other actors "arise out of the desire to achieve certain outcomes" (Hart 1976, 296). Hart, however, conceptualises power in IR through nation-states and in interstate relations, thus ignoring non-governmental actors and transnational aspects.

[37] Also, see an overview on the faces of power in lobbying research (Thomsen 2019; see also Lowery 2013).

for example, Dür and De Bièver 2007 an introduction to a special issue on power and influence; also Lowery 2013).

Empirical studies where power and resources are framed through influence on EU lobbying have also yielded contradictory findings (Dür 2008a). Also, by focusing on the end stage of the process, there is a risk of overlooking the varying aspects of power and assuming the conditions for influencing rather than studying them empirically. However, studying the earlier phases may not be straightforward, as they are opaque, and qualitative methods, such as interviewing or ethnography, may be needed for data collection (Leech 2010, 541–544). Moreover, influencing may not be the only aim of lobbying, or independent from other aims, as ensuring the survival of the interest group organisations and their reputations have also been found to be important in previous research (Berkhout 2013).

Despite this criticism, it seems that the superiority of rational choice theory with respect to power has entered interest group research. Many studies on power focus on measuring influence empirically through case studies and "trying to determine the 'winners' and 'losers'" when it comes to EU lobbying power. As Woll states, the problem lies first and foremost in the conceptualisation of power and influence in lobbying research based on a behaviouralist conception. (Woll 2007; see also Leech 2010, 547.)

Woll (2007) proposes another way to conceptualise power in EU lobbying: a relational and systematic analysis of the resources of power could provide more information on exchange relationships in lobbying. The key in shifting to analysing power in relational terms is to look at the control of resources (power resource approach) rather than focusing on the exercise of power.

This power resource approach can shed light on power struggles that are not clearly visible as open conflicts. It also provides a tool for understanding the inner logic of lobbying interactions, what role different resources play in it, and how stable relevant relationships are. As a result, it is also possible to say something about the resources required to access the exchange relationship under study. (Woll 2007.)

Dür (2008a, 1215) claims that "many of the resources supposed to be used by interest groups to gain influence cannot be measured empirically", such that we do not know, for example, how much information or knowledge lobbyists possess. I propose a different way of addressing this matter, following on from Woll's idea of a relational and resource-based approach: through Bourdieu's relational approach, empirically studying lobbyists' views on the relational resources and practices they engage with rather than aiming to measure those resources. In this way it is possible

to study what resources the practitioners consider important and how resources work for those who have them as well as those who do not (Kuus 2015).

Seeing power as a form of relational resource, or capital, is part of Bourdieu's field theory (Guzzini 2012, 80–85; Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 123). It should also be noted that Bourdieu's power analysis is not a causal analysis of influence (see, for example, Bourdieu 2021, 36). Rather, it directs the analysis toward understanding the logic of a specific field – why something is considered a resource within the field. Also, the causal relationship between having some resources and influencing certain outcomes is questioned. The analysis is directed more to understanding other elements of a field, such as habitus and doxa. (Guzzini 2012, 80–81.)

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of different forms of capital as a source of power is seldom applied in IR research (Forsberg 2011, 219–220). When it comes to lobbying, studies referring to Bourdieu's approach to resources and power seem to be lacking, other than a few exceptions where limited concepts are traceable to Bourdieu's work (for example, Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2011). However, similar analyses of power in EU lobbying using Bourdieu's relational approach which have taken place, for example, in IR research on diplomacy (Kuus 2015; Adler-Nissen 2014), are still lacking. Through conceptualising power in relational terms, as well as using Bourdieu's relational approach in identifying power resources (capital), I elaborate on the understanding of what gives the power to do EU lobbying and how exclusion is constituted in transnational EU lobbying.

3.3.1 Economic, cultural, and social capital

Throughout Bourdieu's relational approach and concepts, material and symbolic aspects remain in dialogue (for example, Bourdieu 1977). Thus, to understand the structure and functioning of the social world, it is important to recognise capital in all its forms, beyond just the economic. Theory that relies on strictly economic practices offers only half the picture, as non-material and not easily quantified aspects are overlooked. (Bourdieu 1986.) Moreover, forms of capital should not be studied on the basis of a prior determination but analysed in a specific context: capital important in one field may not be valued or signal belonging in other fields (Bourdieu 1993, 31; 2021, 16, 156–157). In my analysis and in the outline below, I focus on economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, as based on my empirical research these forms of capital were valued and signalled belonging with respect to in-house EU lobbying.

According to an IR reading of *capital*, it can be understood as "a legal tender" of the field, as it is field-specific and something that is recognised within it (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 35). Thus, the focus is more on informal social resources than on formal institutional structures (Kuus 2015), as power is tied to the control of capital (Guzzini 2012, 80). Briefly, whoever has most of the resources that other actors in the field also recognise, has power – but power is not a resource in itself. Power is about having the recognised resources.

Economic capital is fundamental to all social fields (Bourdieu 2021, 48) and refers to capital that is directly and instantly convertible into money – "income, wealth, financial inheritance and monetary asset" (Skeggs 1997, 15). Economic capital can be institutionalised in the form of various kinds of economic rights, such as property rights (Bourdieu 1986). Also, economic capital has a privileged status as a socially and objectively constituted measure rather than being considered to be a value judgement (Bourdieu 2021, 160–61). Yet, as a particular field is structured by the operation and distribution of particular forms of capital, economic capital is not always the most important in terms of profit and success, despite its relevance to all fields (Bourdieu 2021, 164–65). For example, the academic field is structured only secondarily through economic capital, and primarily through cultural and symbolic capital (Williams 2012, 135; cf. Kauppi 2022a).

During the interviews and fieldwork, it was often mentioned that money plays a role in EU lobbying, but it is not enough. In addition, the decision-makers sometimes criticised lobbyists, especially consultant lobbyists who were billing their customers according to conducted work, wishing to meet and wine and dine them often, without having anything new to bring to the table. They saw this as a waste of economic resources and unnecessary work, perhaps even as not respecting decision-makers' time and tight schedules. According to views from the field, it was important to consider resources of power beyond the economic. Also, Bourdieu himself was keener to study other forms of capital, that he saw as "abandoned by others" (Bourdieu 1993, 32). Yet, as my analysis shows, economic resources are significant in organising in-house EU lobbying transnationally, and being able to participate and produce effects therein (Bourdieu 2021, 157).

Similarly to economic capital, *cultural capital* is fundamental to all social fields (Bourdieu 2021, 160, 283), and could be understood as what one has and knows, including both inherited and acquired properties (Bourdieu 1986).[38] According to

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[38] Bourdieu differentiates cultural capital from the concept of human capital, which he sees as more rooted in studying economic inequalities and as emerging from less sociological research interests (Bourdieu 2021, 162–66).

Bourdieu, cultural capital can exist in three forms: i) in apparently natural embodied, long-lasting dispositions of mind and body, ii) in an objectified form and cultural goods, and iii) in an institutionalised state, such as educational qualifications or titles, that can be understood as a form of objectification and guaranteed goods (Bourdieu 1986; 1993, 177; 2021, 161–62). Under certain conditions cultural capital is also convertible into economic capital, for example, in various job opportunities based on prior investments (Bourdieu 1986). In my analysis, I focus on embodied cultural capital (*previous experience, of both transnational EU lobbying and EU politics*) and institutionalised cultural capital (*a current official title in a well-known lobbying organisation and good hierarchical position*), in relation to gaining access in everyday EU lobbying.

Social capital can be understood as who one knows – it refers to social obligations and connections, membership of a group, and institutionalised relationships based on mutual recognition (Bourdieu 1993, 32; 1986). Social capital is generated through relationships (Skeggs 1997, 15) and is collectively owned (Bourdieu 1986). Thus, the extent of the network and the ability to mobilise it, as well as the capital possessed by the members of the network, directs social capital (Bourdieu 1986). Also, economic or cultural capital may not guarantee access to the most closed off and selective spaces of the "club effect", where social capital is needed (Bourdieu 1999, 128–129). In this way social capital also reaffirms the limits of the group – it sets limits beyond which constitutive exchange cannot take place (Bourdieu 1986). Moreover, it is possible to study "the social work" that goes into reproducing social capital amongst legitimate occupants (Bourdieu 1993, 33; 1999, 127–129). In my analysis, I look at social capital in relation to decision-makers and other lobbyists, also considering the impact of nationality, as all of these are relevant with respect to gaining information in transnational EU lobbying.

Bourdieu also points out that various forms of capital are obtained before being put to timely use. This requires those possessing such capital "to have invested a lot and for a long time" (Bourdieu 1977, 55). Thus, by looking at EU lobbying beyond any specific EU policy dossier or process it is also possible to draw attention to how relevant resources for EU lobbying are obtained before influencing takes place. This aspect is especially relevant in relation to symbolic capital and how it is established through long-term engagement.

3.3.2 Symbolic capital and trust in EU lobbying

In an IR reading, what is considered to highlight relationality in Bourdieu's view of power, is the cognition and recognition of symbolic capital (Guzzini 2012, 81). *Symbolic capital* is different from other capital, defined by Bourdieu as the "denied capital" – something that is recognised as legitimate within the field but is at the same time misrecognised as capital (Bourdieu 1990b, 113; 2021, 140–41). Thus, symbolic capital is "any species of capital when it is perceived, recognised and acknowledged" within a field (Bourdieu 2021, 158; see also Guzzini 2012, 81).

Symbolic capital exists in the practices recognised by the individuals or groups within the field at the moment of study (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013). Symbolic capital also relates to recognition of an individual's existence and belonging within a field: "to be object of a riposte by a major holder of symbolic capital means that you have been granted existence", yet complete omission is a way of ruling someone out (Bourdieu 2021, 16, 119). Moreover, the unequal distribution of symbolic capital is an invisible but active structuring principle within a field. To operate competently within a field, it is necessary to know how symbolic capital is distributed and to be aware of one's placement regarding that distribution. (Bourdieu 2021, 74, 91.)

Another dimension worth mentioning is that symbolic capital is always broadly understood as credit. This means that it is granted to those in the group offering the best material and symbolic guarantees. In this way symbolic capital is also integrated into groups' shared ideas and recognition of its value, which to outsiders may appear arbitrary. (Bourdieu 1977, 181, 183.) Symbolic capital is also considered to be quite fragile, as well as weakly objectified – thus, there is a need to renew and maintain symbolic capital through relationships, and to make use of it from time to time, for example, when seeking transformation or being considered worthy of being listened to. This also makes the accumulation and maintenance of symbolic capital costly and time consuming. (Bourdieu 2021, 17, 83, 91, 94.)

In comparative literature on EU lobbying style, trust and long-term relationships with decision-makers are often discussed as cultural elements or political resources when aiming to explain the consensus-oriented EU lobbying style (Woll 2006, 460–461; Coen 1998; 1999). Within the debate as to what explains varying lobbying styles in different contexts, cultures, or institutions, institutional arguments are finding support, as lobbyists seem to strategically adapt to the context in which they are operating (see, for example, Mahoney 2008; Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017). On a slightly different note, it is highlighted that institutional constraints affect

lobbying behaviour but it is difficult to ensure that culture is an effect and not a cause of institutional developments (Woll 2012).

The institutional arrangements in EU politics enforce a compromise-oriented and soft-spoken EU lobbying style that entails long-term, trust-based relationships with decision-makers as a rational choice when seeking continued influence (Woll 2012, 207–210; Coen 2007, 335). As a result of this "consistent conciliatory consultation", policy-making in Brussels is found to be "reliant upon both 'social capital' and 'deliberative' types of trust" (Coen 2007, 335; also Coen and Richardson 2009, 152; Coen 2002). How trust is gained and maintained in practice, however, remains obscure. In my study, the concept of symbolic capital is used to study trust, to analyse which form of capital (economic, cultural, or social) relates to the legitimation of trust as symbolic capital and practices of gaining and maintaining trust, as well as how trust constitutes power relations within transnational in-house EU lobbying.

3.3.3 Doxa and symbolic power in EU lobbying

Adler-Nissen (2016) sees Bourdieu's practice approach as an "ordering" theory of practice, as it focuses on how practices stabilise and organise social life as well as how agents are recognised as competent. In this way practices also have a normative aspect, with respect to what are considered 'sensible' practices within a specific field and thus rational for those who understand them (Bourdieu 1990b, 66). It is also outlined that how and when practices are carried out distinguishes between competent and novice actors (Nicolini 2012, 222). This also became apparent during my research, especially with experienced lobbyists, who sometimes seemed to consider the practices of EU lobbying so sensible that answering my questions on practices seemed absurd. Especially at the beginning of my research, it was made visible that they knew the *feel for EU lobbying*, whereas I did not.

Doxa is the relationship established between a habitus and the field. It could be defined as the knowledge taken for granted inside a specific field at a certain time. It is also connected to what is considered to be sensible and coherent with respect to the common sense understanding within the field (Bourdieu 1990b, 68–69). To identify a field and to understand the origins of the struggle for resources, it is useful to look into the processes of naturalisation, meaning the doxa, within the field under study. This includes asking questions about the boundaries of the field under study, as well as those agents included in it and their dispositions within the field (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 32).

In my study, I analyse the doxa of competent EU lobbying. Thus, the normative nature of practices is relevant for understanding what is considered to be competent and incompetent EU lobbying. This included understanding what kind of tacit knowledge EU lobbying entails and how informal practices are considered part of competent EU lobbying. This also reveals what is excluded from EU lobbying due to perceived incompetence.

In addition, studying symbolic power opens up the opportunity to study the intangible and incalculable 'feel for the game' at the empirical level. Meaning, what separates the insiders from the outsiders and what roles social resources play (Bourdieu 1990b, 108; see also Kuus 2015). Bourdieu sees *symbolic power* as an invisible power that works through the participation of those who do not want to know that they are facing it or those who are themselves exercising it. As a relational view on power and recognition, symbolic power can produce real (material) effects without any apparent effort, as actors submit to and believe in it. (Bourdieu and Thompson 1991, 164, 168–170.)

Moreover, symbolic power can also become the power to preserve or transform objective principles and current classifications in the social world (Bourdieu 1989). Also, in relation to symbolic power, objective relations of power tend to reproduce themselves, as agents put into action the symbolic capital they have gained in advance. With these symbolic properties agents gain recognition in the social space. However, not all recognitions stand on the same line, as the holders of large amounts of symbolic capital are in a position "to impose the scale of values most favorable to their products". (Bourdieu 1989.)

According to an IR reading, Bourdieu's relational approach has the potential to make visible powerful agents acting as gatekeepers of the field, thereby excluding other agents. Often argumentations for legitimacy and authority open the gateway to understanding the boundaries of a field, and the inclusion in and exclusion from it. (Bigo 2011, 239–240.) Rather than trying to define why actors win and lose in EU lobbying, I aim to make visible those practices which constitute the power to do EU lobbying and those which lead to exclusion from it.

Bourdieu's ideas surrounding material and symbolic properties also emerge through reading social reality. Instead of focusing either on objective 'reality' or representations that agents form of 'reality', in Bourdieu's relational view these two aspects are not independent. The key to this is to integrate (scholarly) knowledge of the object with the (practical) knowledge that the agents under study have on the matter. In this way it is possible to understand scarcity and competition for goods in relational terms. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013.) Thus, my aim is to create a dialogue

between theoretical and practical knowledge of EU lobbying, as well as incorporating my own interpretations as an embodied researcher, gained through transnational fieldwork. This is outlined in the next chapter. Moreover, at the end of the next chapter (Chapter 4.7.2.), I return to the key concepts presented above and outline further how they relate to the proposed research questions, as answered in the analytical chapters 5–8.

4 METHODOLOGICAL CHAPTER: ETHNOGRAPHY AND LEAVING THE ARMCHAIR IN PRACTICE

Ethnography has emerged in IR research since the mid-1980s. The call to focus on real-life experiences in IR was first promoted by feminist scholars, opening the way for grounded research, situated knowledge, and embodied research to overcome the exclusion of female experiences in the political (Vrasti 2008). The ethnographic turn also relates to the turn towards discursive and non-discursive practices in IR research (Sande Lie 2013; Neumann 2002; Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, and Evon Savigny 2001).

However, these turns and calls are also fraught with historical baggage and pitfalls within IR research (see, for example, Vrasti 2008). The hunger for ethnography and the desire for stories of the "really real" in IR draw our attention to the contradictory knowing practices and questions of representation (Behar 2003; Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 6–7). Also, myths and misconceptions regarding ethnography persist in political research (Boswell et al. 2019, 61–63; see also Hopf 2022).

Rather than contributing directly to ongoing debates on the nature of ethnography and appropriate ways of conducting an ethnographic IR study (Vrasti 2008; Jackson 2008; Rancatore 2010; Vrasti 2010; Biecker and Schlichte 2021), I create links to these debates as I reflect on my own role as an IR researcher doing and writing ethnography. Thus, in the first part of this method chapter, I locate the chosen methodological framework and ways of knowing within ethnographic research in IR. More specifically, I outline the understanding of fieldwork as a positional and relational process that can take place across multiple sites to construct the field as part of the research and the toolkit (interviews, passive observation and shadowing) that allowed me to study EU lobbying practices transnationally. Lastly, I present an overview of the research data that I gathered during my transnational fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels.

During fieldwork a researcher may face many challenges simultaneously and even a minor mistake may jeopardise the whole data gathering process (Kapiszewski, MacLean, and Read 2015, 7). It is also recognised that when conducting fieldwork, a researcher is an agent with a dual capacity, as she follows the norms of her academic discipline but also becomes part of the social reality under investigation (Sarikakis 2003, 435; Collins 1998, 3.2; Neumann 2023). Moreover, when studying a field of

practices, a researcher's own work practices can also be studied (Czarniawska 2007, 9). By committing to ethnography as an interdisciplinary research method, the way of doing research and how the researcher situates herself in relation to it become part of the study (see, for example, Cerwonka and Malkki 2007; Neumann and Neumann 2017).

Thus, in the second part of this chapter, I focus on the fieldwork in practice, as I trace my research process through the stages of arriving, entering, and exiting the field.[39] Within this quite detailed second part, I want to underline how conducting fieldwork involves reflectivity and conscious engagement, as well as being creative and adaptive when something unexpected emerges. Throughout the second part, I also continue the discussion started in the preface around the role of an IR researcher in doing and writing ethnography, reflecting upon how I managed to answer Bourdieu's call to leave the armchair (see, for example, Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 25; also, for examples of Bourdieu's fieldworks, see Bourdieu 1977; 2010).[40]

4.1   Ethnography, reflective epistemology, and embedded fieldwork

Conventionally, the term "ethnography" refers to both methodology and method, as they are linked (Jackson 2008). Ethnography can also be understood as a methodological attitude that takes the researcher's positionality into account rather than following a specific technique or individual method. As such ethnography involves reflecting on research practices and processes, representation, research ethics in practice, and real-life experiences. (Vrasti 2008; Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 4–5; see also Neumann 2023.) I adopt the latter position on ethnography, as I want to underline that acknowledging the interdisciplinary roots of the method, reflexive epistemology, and an embodied approach to fieldwork made my research an ethnography.

Bueger proposes that when studying practices, perhaps a more suitable term could be "praxiography", as the focus of the studies is not culture (ethno) but

[39] Also called pre-field, in-field, and post-field phases (see, for example, Neumann and Neumann 2017, 1).

[40] As a defender of empirical research, Bourdieu did not believe that the world or the views of social actors could be understood by staying in the "armchair" (Bigo 2011). Thus, a researcher should leave the "armchair" and enter the field to understand the specific moment of history and the reasons and practices behind it (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 25).

practice (praxis), which is then described, recorded and written (graphy) (Bueger 2014; also Bueger and Gadinger 2018, 132). As part of the notion of praxiography, the idea of fieldwork is also challenged (Bueger 2021). However, I wish to retain the term ethnography and embrace fieldwork for three reasons.

First, I commit to interdisciplinary research in understanding the roots of ethnography and its methodological implications. As Vrasti (2008; 2010) argues, current ethnographic IR research largely ignores the recent anthropological literature and problematisation of ethnography, and thus also the interdisciplinarity of ethnography. This results in a selective and instrumental notion of ethnography, devoid of a wider understanding of what ethnography is and does.

Vrasti encourages interdisciplinarity when reflecting on the methodology in ethnography and what ethnographic methods can do. This would encourage a more cautious stance towards and use of ethnographic practices, the ability to critically revise the adopted knowledge practices, and the ability to "take full advantage of the radical promises of ethnography". (Vrasti 2008.) Therefore, rather than embracing a relatively new term (praxiography), I adhere to the term ethnography and reflect on my approach to it (cf. Bueger 2021, 29).

My second point relates more profoundly to the ability to reflect on the knowledge practices adopted. According to an IR reading, Bourdieu's relational approach entails a strong premise for an onto-epistemological position, where theoretical concepts should not be separated from empirical research (Bigo 2011), as well as for a reflexive epistemology (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 26–28).

At the core of reflexive epistemology is the quest to understand the researcher's own research practices when conducting the research. This means having an "objective objectivation" toward one's own research, as well as a "science of science" that allows us to see the historical conditions of scientific knowing during the time when the research is conducted. (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 28.) In this way it also becomes apparent that the researcher's position is not disconnected from the rest of the world (Kauppi 2018, 66–67).

Neumann (2023, 43–45) also highlights the importance of situatedness or positionality when doing ethnography in IR research as this allows one to reflect on how the researcher is situated in relation to the fieldwork. Thus, situatedness is about knowing oneself as an ethnographer, and generating and interpreting the data created through embedded and relational fieldwork. This kind of research has been called for in IR over the past ten years (Berling 2012, 67) yet these aspects often remain implicit (Neumann and Neumann 2017, 8–9).

Thus, I wish to stick with the term ethnography and reflect on the research practices within it through reflexive epistemology. As a result, I outline below how fieldwork is not only about gaining access and *going native* but also about being reflective about the fieldwork role that the researcher adopts, recognising when it is time to exit the field, and being explicit about the practices used to interpret and analyse the research data.

Thirdly, by stating explicitly that I did ethnographic fieldwork, it is possible to demonstrate how the abductive research process and reflections upon embodiment were essential in understanding power relations. Thus, even though Bourdieu's method of including the identification and representations of the field in the study may not be "a pleasurable choice for those who want to do field research" (Bueger 2021, 33), this is exactly what I have done.

Moreover, due to openness with respect to methods in ethnography, it is possible to unravel relations and phenomena during the research process beyond the original research scope (Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 12). This also draws attention to how the researcher immerses herself in the world of the participants – that the research is done in certain locations at a specific time, not from the nowhere of an academic world (Berling 2012, 63–64). It is also recognised that when doing ethnography, a researcher may find herself in the midst of gendered structures and power hierarchies (Sarikakis 2003; Mikkonen and Miller forthcoming). These power relations may be based on hierarchies and formal positions, as was the case during my fieldwork. Overall, embracing reflexive and embedded fieldwork allows me to make visible how I gained an understanding of EU lobbying practices (ethno), as well as how recording and writing (graphy) took place throughout the fieldwork – on arriving in, entering, and exiting the field.

4.2   Multi-sidedness and constructing a field as part of transnational fieldwork

It is argued that Bourdieu's approach can be applied to any scale of social life but that it does not necessarily translate easily into empirical research (Schatzki 2018). However, it should always be kept in mind that thinking in terms of a field is to "think in terms of relations" (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 32). It has also been pointed out that relations between different sites are as important as relations within a specific site in IR research (Schia 2017, 74).

Yet, when it comes to IR research, there are practical limitations to observing international practices, and thus researchers may turn to methods other than ethnography (Hopf 2022). Also, the multi-sitedness, change (time) and uncertainty of international practices are not seen as working well with the idea of fieldwork (Bueger 2021, 34–39). However, these arguments seem to be based on a problematic way of thinking of a field as a pre-defined structure which a researcher needs to enter and remain within.

Along with others addressing multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995; Wright and Shore 1997; Falzon 2016; Schia 2017), I argue quite the opposite – I claim that fieldwork aiming to understand practices is necessarily and always multi-sited, as practices occur in many places at once (Czarniawska 2007, 16; see also Marcus 1995, 100). Moreover, as people have become more mobile, and their social fields more transnational, the research approaches adopted in EU studies should take account of this (Adler-Nissen 2016, 98).

To answer this call, multi-sited fieldwork allows one to capture relevant connections between different sites and thereby to strengthen the validity of the research (Schia 2017, 70). At the core of the multi-sited ethnography approach is the idea that when researching a field, the focus should be on understanding how different sites and settings are related rather than aiming to draw neat boundaries based on nation-states (Kuus 2018, 163). Therefore, multi-sited ethnography also connects to supra-local understandings and methodological choices when studying transnational phenomena (Falzon 2016, 15, 19–20).

Moreover, part of multi-sited ethnography is also ethnographically constructing the spatial canvas of the research, by tracing connections across the lifeworld of variously situated subjects and systems (Marcus 1995, 96, 98; also Wright and Shore 1997, 11). Throughout this research, the term fieldwork also relates to Bourdieu's concepts and a way of understanding a field, as not a predetermined structure but something which emerges during the study. Thus, in contrast to Bueger's argument (2021, 30) that "in the majority of cases, there is no 'field'", I argue that the field is positional and constructed as part of the research.

It is also recognised that making generalisations based on transnational fieldwork may be problematic (Kuus 2018). However, the constructions of the field under study should not be confused with "reality" directly or seen as covering the whole of reality. Rather, when understood through reflexivity, understanding reality is interactive and connected to the choices the researcher makes during the research process. Hence the approach to constructing a transnational field is understood as

an instrument in a process of scientific rationalisation rather than an attempt to make sense out of reality. (Kauppi 2018, 65–66, 70–71.)

This brings us to the question of how reflexivity connects to questions surrounding the bias and realness of the everyday that is studied through ethnography (Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 12). It is actually argued that research based on fieldwork is likely to be less biased because personal relations during the fieldwork demand honesty with the participants and continuous presence in the context of the field (Kapiszewski, MacLean, and Read 2015, 11). Moreover, the aim in Bourdieu's reflexive epistemology is to search for meaning and gain understanding by entering the field rather than seeking for truth or natural laws (Pouliot and Mérand 2012, 25–27).

In IR and EU research, multi-sited ethnography has shown its value in understanding transnational fields of practices (see, for example, Schia 2017; Kuus 2018). More specifically, multi-sited ethnography can trace connections across everyday worlds at different sites (Wright and Shore 1997, 11) as well as unravelling "off-stage" knowledge by making visible what happens at different transnational sites beyond formal practices (Marcus 1995, 106; Kuus 2018, 157). In my study, multi-sited and transnational fieldwork allowed me not only to construct the transnational field of EU lobbying practices as part of the research but also to observe EU lobbying practices between lobbyists based in both Helsinki and Brussels, and further to understand the connections between frontstage and backstage practices in EU lobbying.

However, it is also recognised that multi-sited ethnography requires constant renegotiation of access, as well as researcher adaptation, when moving across different sites (Marcus 1995, 112). In addition, interpersonal relations may play an accentuated role in multi-sited and transnational fieldwork (Kuus 2018). During my fieldwork, I became familiar with both of these aspects, especially when arriving and entering the field of EU lobbying both in Helsinki and Brussels. Also, as I outline below in more detail, multi-sited ethnography is arduous work because constant embodied adaptation may take its toll and exiting the field is also a demanding process following an all-encompassing period of fieldwork.

Despite understanding a field as multi-sited and transnational, it is also true that an ethnographer can only be in one place at a time. This is an unfortunate reality that I had to face during my fieldwork. However, the ethnographer does not have to stay still when the relevant practices are on the move. Next, I outline how the toolkit approach to ethnographic methods enabled me to move along EU lobbying transnationally.

4.3 An ethnographic toolkit to move along transnational practices: interviews, passive observation, and shadowing

In ethnography, it is common to combine different perspectives to ensure the quality of the research data and practices (Biecker and Schlichte 2021, 15–16; Falzon 2016, 15). In Bourdieu-inspired research the use of various and heterogeneous research techniques is also encouraged (ethnographic interviews, observations, the use of historical archives and statistical data), as well as adjusting them according to the needs of each study (Bigo 2011, 245). Moreover, one cannot know what will work in practice before entering the field and trying out ethnographic techniques within a specific field.

In practice, I combined several ethnographic tools (interviewing, passive observation, and shadowing) at different stages of the research between 2017 and 2020. Thus, I applied a "toolkit approach" to studying practices (Nicolini 2012, 214–219), wherein it is not always clear where one method ends and another begins. Czarniawska (2014) also reminds us that the strict separation of field techniques may be counterproductive, as in practice the researcher may use many overlapping techniques.

Throughout the arrival phase, I was gaining competence in EU lobbying as well as gaining access to the field, both needed in ethnography (Neumann 2023, 40), mainly through interviews and passive observation. When entering the field in Helsinki and in Brussels, I continued observing EU lobbying at different kinds of events and meetings, and conducted some supplementary interviews to gain further access. In addition, I used shadowing as an ethnographic technique to move along EU lobbying practices transnationally.

When shadowing, the researcher can be pictured as a shadow that follows wherever the shadowed goes (McDonald 2005, 456). Thus, the researcher closely follows the selected people in their everyday routines for a while and is able to move along with them (McDonald 2005, 456; Czarniawska 2007, 13, 18). Nicolini claims that even though shadowing was originally developed for shadowing human and non-human actors, it can also be applied to shadowing practices to see the different occasions when they take place (Nicolini 2009). In my research, I physically shadowed humans (in-house lobbyists in Helsinki, Brussels, or both) but focused on the practices of EU lobbying. Thus, the in-house lobbyists were the intermediaries of the practices of EU lobbying that I observed through shadowing.

Both when observing and while shadowing, I remained in the fieldwork role of a passive observer. Czarniawska is of the view that when studying practices, there are

certain benefits to becoming an observer rather than entering the field as an active actor. She argues that an observer is able to see and distinguish among alternatives in real time. Thus, one has to step back in order to observe. Actors, in contrast, are engaged with the action and able to see alternatives only afterwards, during moments of reflection, as the constant awareness of the multiple alternatives would be paralysing while acting. (Czarniawska 2007, 9.) This highlights that what is actually needed in ethnography is not necessarily taking part in the practices under study but active and reflective observation.

Many authors outline the advantages and disadvantages of shadowing as a qualitative method in different phases of the research process (McDonald 2005; Czarniawska 2007; Gill, Barbour, and Dean 2014; Bussell 2020). One benefit of shadowing is the ability to see a profession as closely as possible without having to acquire the knowledge or resources needed to perform the profession (Czarniawska 2007, 13). On the one hand, shadowing may be quite intimate and intense as the researcher follows one person at a time, rather than a community, and thus interpersonal relations are essential to gaining access (Czarniawska 2007; Gill 2011, 117). On the other hand, shadowing as an ethnographic method can broaden our understanding of the spaces where practices occur and how they connect to other practices, as the intermediaries (shadowed person, artefacts, or inscriptions) are shadowed wherever they go (Nicolini 2012, 231). In practice, as I discuss below, a researcher may encounter physical and mental barriers when moving along, even when not actively taking part in the practices.

It has also been highlighted that a researcher is hardly invisible while gathering research data through shadowing. She may also be active in asking questions and openly taking notes. Thus, even though the researcher does not participate in the observed practices, she is active in observing and understanding the observed. (Vásquez, Brummans, and Groleau 2012; McDonald 2005, 456.) Moreover, shadowing is expected to produce rich and comprehensive research data that also takes into account embodiment (McDonald 2005, 456–457). It has also been stated that gender, together with other aspects, shapes the researcher's experience and interpretation of the field (Gill 2011). I return to these issues below when discussing embodiment during my fieldwork.

Overall, I have combined different kinds of ethnographic methods appropriate to the various occasions and stages of my research. As many scholars have pointed out, however, there are no strict rules as to how long ethnographic fieldwork should last, how many participants should be included, or how detailed the field notes should be (see, for example, Marcus 2007; Czarniawska 2007, 14–15; Gill, Barbour,

and Dean 2014). These factors depend upon the overall focus of the study, and the data gathering strategy adopted within it. Thus, before explaining my fieldwork process in detail, I present an overview of the data gathering and research data.

4.4 Overview of the data gathering and research data

For practical reasons, I empirically mobilised the transnational in my research by proceeding from an EU Member State where I had contacts (Finland) towards the EU's decision-making arenas in Brussels, where Finnish participants helped me greatly to find relevant contacts and to gain access. **The research data**, gathered [41] between November 2017 and February 2020 (28 months) in Finland and Brussels, consist of:

I. **59 semi-structured interviews:** 38 recorded interviews with in-house lobbyists (18 in Finland and 20 in Brussels), 21 recorded secondary interviews with other informants, including ten Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), Finnish politicians, or political assistants; five Finnish government or EU Commission Directorate Generals' (DGs) workers; four consultant lobbyists; two activists.

II. **Ethnographic observation data:** 13 in-house EU lobbyists allowed me to observe their meetings and events. Nine of those lobbyists were furthermore shadowed with their permission. In addition, four MEPs allowed me to observe their lobbying meetings.

III. **Research diary notes** from 2017–2022, including notes from unofficial conversations and unrecorded discussions, as well as notes and reflections on researching and writing practices.

The primary interview data[42] includes 38 interviews with EU lobbyists (18 in Finland and 20 in Brussels) who, at the time of interviewing, worked in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade and business associations (TBs), or trade unions and

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[41] It is also acknowledged that talking about data collection or gathering is not perhaps appropriate within ethnography, as it gives the wrong kind of picture of the process. Thus, it would be more appropriate to talk about creating the data, as this highlights the situatedness and relationality of the fieldwork process (Neumann and Neumann 2017, 3–4; Neumann 2023).

[42] Prior to their interviews the interviewees were informed both verbally and in writing about the research, their rights as participants, and the use to be made of the data. The participants also provided written consent to the interviews (see Appendix 1, also see Appendix 2 for the interview themes and questions in English).

professional associations (UAs). For *the secondary interview data*, I interviewed 21 other informants (10 MEPs, Finnish politicians, or political assistants, five Finnish government or DG workers, four consultant lobbyists, and two activists) to broaden my understanding of relational power within the transnational field of EU lobbying, as seen from different dispositions. After each interview, I wrote down my first impressions and noted the key issues discussed. As all the interviews were recorded, I also reflected on these first impressions when analysing the interviews more carefully, sometimes adding additional points or modifying my initial impression.[43]

In order to gather *ethnographic observation data* transnationally, I entered the field of EU lobbying in both Helsinki and Brussels between March 2019 and February 2020 (12 months). During the fieldwork mainly English and Finnish were used, but on some occasions also Spanish and minimal French. I observed lobbying practices via different ethnographic techniques, mainly by shadowing nine lobbyists in their daily work for 3–11 working days (in total, 58 days, over 300 hours). In addition, four lobbyists invited me to observe internal meetings, seminars, or events for one to three days (total 29 hours) without the observation amounting to actual shadowing of their daily work. With these four participants, the access was more limited to certain occasions, and it was indicated, explicitly or implicitly, that actual shadowing would not be taking place. The shadowed and observed occasions included formal and informal, public and private interaction with decision-makers and other lobbyists (such as meetings and internal events), and observing public appearances at external events.

In addition, four MEPs kindly agreed to let me observe their lobbying meetings in the European Parliament in Brussels or in Strasbourg. I observed 27 lobbying meetings or events in the European Parliament, (2–12 meetings for each MEP, 15 hours of observation in total). Three of these 37 meetings/events took place without the MEP's presence, where they were taken care of by their assistant.

The most intensive period of my fieldwork was when I moved to Brussels from September 2019 to February 2020 (5.5 months). During that time, I was also a Study Visitor for two months in the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS)[44,] which gave me physical access to the European Parliament buildings, where many lobbying meetings, seminars, and events take place. During that time, I wrote up my

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[43] For example, sometimes I realised that I had misheard something during the interviews, overlooked some valuable observation, or projected my own thoughts too much (see also Neumann and Neumann 2017, 69–70).

[44] The EPRS Study visit also proved be very helpful with respect to learning the practices of the European Parliament in general.

research diary almost daily in addition to the observation and shadowing notes, as I also participated almost daily in relevant seminars and events. These occasions included events held by the European Commission, events organised in the European Parliament, or events organised near the EU institutions by various lobbyists or think tanks. In summary, during my ethnographic fieldwork, and especially when living in Brussels, I observed and shadowed almost every day and on all possible occasions. Overall, and with help from the participants, I managed to gain access to observe the everyday practices of EU lobbying on many kinds of occasions. As a result of hundreds of hours of observation, my ethnographic observation data consist of 800 pages of fieldnotes.

The importance of the *research diary* and documentation of the choices made throughout the whole research process is emphasised in relation to research ethics and research integrity (Ruusuvuori, Nikander and Hyvärinen 2010). Keeping a research diary was essential to my process, especially in terms of reflecting. Somewhat different from the ethnographic observation data, that include notes on observing and shadowing, my research diary notes include documentation on the steps taking during data analysis and summaries of informal discussions from September 2017 until the end of 2022. Throughout my research, the research diary became an important and powerful tool for me, and it often helped me to trace back my own thinking. It was easy to forget why certain methodological or practical decisions related to the research process had been made, my feelings after each interview, and the current issues at different moments of my research, when the future was unknown. As a result, my research diaries consist of over 900 pages of notes.

Besides keeping a record of current issues, keeping a research diary also made me reflect and write even when I had writer's block or thought that I had nothing to say. Thus, keeping a research diary also proved to me that I was moving forward with my research and helped me to lay bare the incompleteness of ethnographic research. This was especially necessary during the long process of data gathering and writing a monograph dissertation – where nothing is finished until everything is.

In addition to the above detailed research data, I used the EU transparency register data as background information to verify and broaden the views on resources, networks, and memberships in EU lobbying. Also, I used relevant EU policy documents as background information to understand the emergence of the European Green Deal and the EU's decision-making in a post-Lisbon setting.

Moreover, as I conducted ethnography on social practices, I could not discuss my research data without discussing the people involved in my research. I

profoundly considered the ethical issues even before the first interviews, and especially after gaining the personal trust of participants. In conclusion, the interviews and observation data will remain anonymous while presenting a realistic and honest insight into EU lobbying practices. Some participants have mentioned that they would not mind if their names were used. However, others preferred anonymity, and as such I will use pseudonyms[45] for all participants – even though the 51 direct quotations used were revised by the participants.[46]

To preserve anonymity, I cannot, for example, give very detailed background information about the organisations included in the study, but nor can I keep the anonymity too strict, as it could undermine the integrity of the research.[47] As a result, I have decided to include separate tables listing the participants and interviews using the pseudonyms (Appendix 3), a table that summarises the in-house lobbyists who participated in shadowing and observation (Appendix 4), and lastly, a table that summarises all data, including observation data and my research diaries (Appendix 5).

The following chapters on the ethnographic research process (arriving in, entering, and exiting the field of EU lobbying) outline how in practice I gained access to EU lobbying and how I engaged with the participants. I also reflect upon my position as an observer within the field of EU lobbying. Moreover, I stress that

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[45] When using the pseudonyms, "NGO" stands for non-governmental organisations, "TB" for trade and business associations and "UA" for trade unions and professional associations, to indicate in which kind of in-house lobbying organisation the lobbyist was working at the time of participating. Regarding other than in-house lobbyists, "MEP" stands for Member of the European Parliament, "DM" for Finnish politicians, political assistants, Finnish government or DG workers, "PC" for consultant lobbyists, and "Activist" for activists. Moreover, the abbreviation "Fin" means that the participant was mainly based in Helsinki and "EU" that the participant was mainly based in Brussels – although this kind of distinction was difficult to make in relation to some of the participants as they operated transnationally.

[46] During this revision, one direct quotation was removed, as the participant did not want the other sectors' lobbyists to know how much power they might have, as the pseudonyms indicates their organisation type. I have still included the content without the direct quotation, as the content was still found to be accurate and was not challenged. I also stylised a few quotations according to the lobbyists' suggestions, as this editing did not change the essence of the quotations. For example, from one quotation I have removed a swear-word following a request from a lobbyist – including it would have reflected the blunt and honest atmosphere during the interview but removing it did not change the point made about EU lobbying. In one case, a lobbyist suggested more accurate wording, according to how they would express the issue, when the quotation was translated from Finnish to English. There were also three lobbyists who I could not reach (following job changes) or who did not respond to my request to revise the quotations – these quotations are included, based on the written consent form signed during the interview.

[47] Kuus (2018, 161) also pinpoints the difficulty of making the research data as transparent as possible and not revealing individualised details of the participants that would break anonymity.

ethical considerations can and should be considered prior to the fieldwork, but to some extent will always appear ad hoc at the field – as my fieldwork shows. It is also worthwhile to reflect on how the position adopted and research method worked in practice – if it was possible to study what it was my intention to study. In the second part of this methodological chapter, I will focus on reflecting on these issues within my ethnographic fieldwork.

4.5   Arriving in the field: Starting from the practices and proceeding from Finland to Brussels

As outlined below in detail, I entered the field of EU lobbying at a very early stage in my research (autumn 2017) for quite practical reasons: I needed to find relevant participants for my research to be able to observe EU lobbying in practice. Thus, I commenced data gathering from "doing EU lobbying" rather than relying on any ready-made list of relevant lobbyists to be included in the study. In this way the research practices at the arrival stage leaned towards poststructuralism rather than ethnomethodology (Bacchi 2017; Wickes and Emmison 2007; Gherardi 2009), as the practices of EU lobbying are constitutive of the subjectivity of "in-house lobbyists".

It is acknowledged that personal connections often play an important role in ethnographic IR research when it comes to gaining access (Kuus 2013). I learnt that the personal connections I had established prior to my research were helpful, especially at the arrival stage. Lobbyist circles in Finland are quite small and change slowly, as also discussed during the interviews. Thus, I still had some contacts amongst the in-house lobbyists and decision-makers (politicians, their assistants, or government officials) because of my work history, detailed in the preface. These contacts helped me at the very beginning of my research.

However, I soon realised that my networks were quite limited and included mostly NGO and UA participants. Thus, I acknowledged that as a researcher my perspective on relevant participants taking part in EU lobbying was not broad enough, and I started to expand it. Because of my previous experience, I think I also had an idea of where to go and how to proceed in engaging with EU lobbying more widely. In Helsinki, I started to participate in different public events and meetings that seemed relevant. If there were relevant lobbyists present, and if it suited the organisers as well as the nature of the event, I introduced myself and circulated a list for people to leave their contact information if they were willing to participate in my research. Sometimes I approached potential participants more privately, for example

after their public speeches or comments in a bigger event. I also continued to use this tactic on arriving in the field of EU lobbying in Brussels, as there, too, this proved to be a very good tactic for expanding the range of participants. Moreover, I noticed that after *hanging around* relevant events long enough, potential participants started to recognise me and also approached me to share some insights into EU lobbying. In retrospect, I think making my face familiar through my presence also helped to gain trust bit by bit – I came across as someone who knew the relevant occasions to participate in and managed to gain access to participate in them.[48]

One aspect that worked in my favour during the arrival phase was that people doing EU lobbying are often quite easy to spot – they were normally the first ones to come to talk to me at a networking event or the first to ask questions in the Q&A part of a seminar. As the in-house lobbyists explained during the interviews, they did not go just to "hang around" in different events – they were there to be heard, to be seen, and to network. Also, it seemed that the lobbyists who approached me wanted to know if I was possibly some new decision-maker or lobbyist, working on issues relevant to them, as they had not met me before. It soon came clear that I was not relevant to them in that sense – but despite that, I was treated respectfully, and these encounters were very pleasant. Sometimes I managed to make appointments for interviews after these encounters or the lobbyists helped me in other ways (by putting me in contact with relevant people or by later facilitating access for me to carry out observations).

I also used the European Transparency Register (EUTR) to find both Finnish and Brussels-based in-house lobbying organisations which publicly declare that they do EU lobbying[49], and thereby contacted relevant organisations directly. However, this would not have been sufficient to find relevant participants for my research. During the arrival phase it became apparent that some Finnish actors were not registered directly with the EUTR, but rather via their Brussels-based umbrella organisation or EU partner. Moreover, I observed during my fieldwork that the EUTR is not (in practice) a precondition for EU lobbying. Although many MEPs' offices check if an organisation is a registrant prior to accepting a request for a meeting, there are several other ways to gain physical access to the European

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[48] Later it became easier to identify these relevant occasions, as the participants also told me if there was something relevant taking place and often facilitated my access to these occasions, especially if an invitation was needed. Also, I was only hanging around at work-related occasions (cf. hanging out, Nair 2021).

[49] The organisations themselves register their information and possible members in the EUTR.

Parliament[50.] Moreover, not all EU lobbying takes place on the premises of the European Parliaments or even in Brussels, as EU lobbying practices are transnational. Also, pre-planned meetings with decision-makers are only one aspect of EU lobbying. For all these reasons, outlined further in Chapters 2 and 5, it is impossible to say how many organisations or actors actually engage in EU lobbying. Other researchers have also acknowledged these difficulties, with respect to knowing the interest group population in lobbying research, as well as missing data on informal lobbying (see, for example, Eising 2017).

As I became aware of some of the limitations in relation to information in the EUTR on arriving in the field, I used one more tactic to identify relevant participants. At the end of each interview, I asked who else I should interview (*the snowball method*) and if contacting the recommended people, I could mention who had recommended me to interview them. This approach was especially useful in finding relevant participants in Brussels, as the Finnish participants often signposted me to their umbrella organisations and networks in Brussels and put me in contact with them. In retrospect, I think this was one of the best ways to proceed in multi-sited and transnational fieldwork – it was extremely helpful to have recommendations from national members or networks when aiming to gain access to EU lobbying in Brussels.

In addition, when revising the interviews, I also listed all the other lobbying organisations mentioned, either as allies or "nemeses", to see which organisations were often mentioned (indicating that they were recognised and potentially also powerful ones). I also made sure that the majority of the mentioned in-house lobbying organisations were included in my research. Moreover, I started to become aware of the transnational networks, both formal and informal, between the participants. This was helpful in gaining an understanding of the formal and informal ties within the field of EU lobbying.

Overall, I chose the primary participants, working in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade and business associations (TBs), or trade unions and professional associations (UAs), based on three criteria:

- **Have access and do EU lobbying by participating in official instruments or other activities in the field of EU lobbying.** For example,

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[50] For example, by being invited by a MEP, having an entry badge as a member of the *European Economic and Social Committee* (EESC), or having an entry badge for some time due to recent revolving door experience. Moreover, I had study visitor status and an entry badge to the European Parliament only for two months but entered the premises of the European Parliament quite often before and after my study visit as an MEP's visitor.

invited to relevant working groups, Finland's EU instrument or EU coordination groups, or have access to closed expert groups, round table discussions, public events or internal meetings amongst lobbyists, where I have observed them taking part in EU lobbying and requested an interview. Observed doing EU lobbying.

- **Information registered in the European Transparency Register either directly or via their umbrella organisation/EU partner**. Publicly claim themselves that they do EU lobbying, directly or via membership.

- **Snowball method.** Other participants recognised as lobbyists during interviews (often as their cooperation partner or as their "nemesis") or after the interview recommended including certain organisations or lobbyists in the study. Others recognise doing EU lobbying.

It is also worth noting that the dispositions of a participant did not always stay the same during my research. During my arrival phase I was already noticing that lobbyists changed their workplaces from one in-house lobbying organisation to another, even sometimes "changing sides" from being a business lobbyist to an NGO lobbyist or vice versa. Also, changes from in-house lobbying to consultant lobbying and vice versa occurred. Moreover, after both national and EU elections, there were some changes from lobbyist to decision-maker or vice versa.

As a result, and as my data gathering extended over both the Finnish parliamentary elections and the European Parliament elections in 2019, some of the in-house lobbyists "disappeared" as they changed their disposition within the field of EU lobbying. Thus, I was also losing access to observing everyday EU lobbying practices through them. Therefore, I had to contact new potential participants to be able to proceed with my plan to enter the field of EU lobbying to shadow the participants in their daily work. Although gaining access through the new participants demanded additional work on my part, these changes helped me to understand the dynamic nature and relationality of dispositions within the field of EU lobbying.

Out of a total of 59 participants (38 in-house lobbyists and 21 secondary interviews) I knew six participants in advance and met and came to know a further 53 during my research. In addition, I would estimate that I personally met 70 or more lobbyists and decision-makers during my fieldwork in Helsinki and Brussels.[51] Thus,

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[51]This estimate was made based on business cards and emails received and on research diary notes relating to informal discussions, which were revised after exiting the field. However, I might be

my previous contacts and knowledge helped me mainly to get started in finding relevant participants and occasions for EU lobbying. Next, I move on to discuss how I gained access and started to understand EU lobbying, especially through interviews during the arrival phase.

4.5.1   Interviews and gaining trust

On arrival I noticed that the lobbyists' attitudes towards my research were genuinely interested and encouraging, especially if I had a recommendation from someone they knew. Thus, the in-house lobbyists whom I contacted or approached mostly assented to my request for an interview. Only on five occasions was my interview request very politely declined, often because of too busy a schedule or because the lobbyists contacted proposed someone else as being a more appropriate participant (on these occasions, contact information was also provided). Only on one occasion was I considered explicitly an untrustworthy researcher (for reasons unknown to me) and my interview request was not accepted for that reason.

Prior to the interviews, I gave the participants three thematic topics that would be discussed: agenda formulation and choosing lobbying strategy, accountability and representation in advocacy work, and lobbying practices and how these practices are perceived.[52] However, the lobbyists I interviewed were extremely good at advocacy. Interviewing them is challenging if one tries to control the situation by asking a strict set of questions in an exact order. Listening to the recorded interviews helped me to reflect on my role as an interviewer. It was a moment of personal growth when I realised that I should listen attentively and be ready to adapt in each interview – and of course be ready to ask more about emerging issues. As such, the interviews often took interesting new turns.

Also, it was not uncommon that during the interviews I also gained firsthand experience of how it feels to be the recipient of lobbying in face-to-face meetings. Only rarely did the interviews not include ten to 20 minutes of talk that I would consider "lobbying talk". This was the part of the interviews where the in-house lobbyists normally presented their agendas or positions on a certain dossier, whether asked to or not, and argued that counter lobbyists had it wrong. I can see the reasoning behind this – why not use every opportunity to deliver a message that was

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underestimating or have overlooked some brief encounters, as networking, especially in Brussels, was non-stop.

[52] See Appendices 1 and 2.

current? For me, it was more interesting to hear and observe *how* the message was delivered in practice. It was also important to reflect upon how it felt to be the recipient of lobbying, when it felt easy to digest and when it felt that the lobbying was excessive or was too aggressive.

I also acknowledge that the first interviews guided subsequent ones. At the beginning I had 30 questions prepared for the semi-structured interviews and I selected the relevant questions *ad hoc* during each interview, according to the direction in which it was going. However, during the interviews in Finland, I was kindly advised that a normal meeting (also an interview) in Brussels lasts between 20 and 30 minutes, one hour if one is lucky. As the interviews in Finland had often lasted 1.5 to 2 hours, I realised that I needed to modify the interview structure and thus excluded some questions. The first interviews had also shown me that there was room for abridgement. I had noticed that some questions opened up new avenues in the interviews and lots of interesting areas, whereas other questions seemed to be irrelevant or gave me nothing to work with.[53]

In the end, the interviews were slightly shorter in Brussels, but not as short as I expected having excluding questions from the interview structure. Normally I was given extra time when I met the lobbyists in person. In the end, the shortest interview was 40 minutes and the longest almost 2.5 hours, the other interviews lasting anywhere between that both in Finland and in Brussels.

Even though I modified my interview structure as I proceeded with the research, I always included a question about terminology (lobbying, advocacy, interest group presentation, and public affairs management) by asking what term the participant preferred to use during the interview and what differences there might be between the terms. I also always asked about the participant's daily work and concrete work tasks – sometimes the participants also listed them on paper or did a visualisation during the interview of how they see their work in practice. Sometimes they also visualised their networks or simply listed them.[54]

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[53] For example, after the first 10 interviews in Finland, I deleted the fourth section of the interview structure, related to the "lobbying register in Finland". At the time of interviewing, the issue was not current for the lobbyists in Finland and the topic also seemed quite irrelevant to those in Brussels.

[54] The visualisations worked best during the interviews in Finland, also because there was often more time available. If offered a pen and paper to visualise in Brussels, people often preferred to "just tell" or provided ready-made visualisations or procedures, often produced by their communications team. On two occasions participants made visualisations but in the end they kept them. Yet, I think the simple exercise with pen and paper during the interviews helped to make the *feel for EU lobbying* in a practical sense visible to me. However, engaging in the visualisation was also a time-consuming activity and thus I felt that it was a less appropriate technique in Brussels than in Finland, as the agreed time for interviews tended to be shorter in Brussels.

Furthermore, every ethnographer has to some extent to reinvent ethnography when finding their own style that is appropriate for the fieldwork at hand. This reinventing also includes how to gain participants' trust. (Behar 2003, 35.) In my research, interviewing worked as a key means of gaining access and trust that later led to shadowing. Sometimes after the interviews I was also explicitly told that what I was studying seemed relevant and I could contact the participants later if I required further clarification.

However, the interviews could also potentially lead to losing access for good. There seemed to be a fine line between letting the in-house lobbyists talk about issues relevant to them and coming across as incompetent or ignorant if I was too passive. I remember especially well one interview, where I was letting the participant lead the interview almost entirely as I was interested in trying a slightly different interview technique – I had already gathered most of the interview data and I wanted to see what would happen if I let the interviewee lead even more. As a result, the participant seemed quite frustrated and the interview was cut short, after my motives for doing the interview and competence as a researcher studying the EU were explicitly questioned. Needless to say, I also lost access to shadowing with this participant.

Moreover, I also realised that there was some sort of word-of-mouth discussion going on among the in-house lobbyists with respect to my research. For example, sometimes when I approached a new participant with an interview request, they commented that they had already heard about my research from their colleagues. Overall, it seemed that gaining a good enough reputation amongst the lobbyists through the interviews was what mattered most in gaining further access and trust within the field of EU lobbying.

4.5.2 Starting to understand transnationality, timing, and hierarchies in EU lobbying

By starting from the EU lobbying practices, it became apparent how the participating in-house lobbyists considered important to engage in EU lobbying both in Member States and in Brussels. Most of the Finnish participants were based in Finland but travelled quite regularly to Brussels. Also, some of the Finnish lobbyists were based in Brussels but kept in close contact with the "headquarters" in Helsinki, via online meetings and communications, as well as by visiting Finland regularly. In addition, organisations based in Brussels emphasised how national members and their contributions were vital to EU lobbying, as EU decision-making does not only take

place in Brussels. Therefore, drawing a line somewhere in the middle between Helsinki and Brussels to separate different levels of EU lobbying started to feel increasingly artificial. Instead, I started to see the transnationality of EU lobbying practices. There are, however, differences in abilities to do EU lobbying transnationally (further discussed in the analytical Chapters 5–8), as well as limitations, especially when it comes to NGOs' economic resources.

Also, I was unable to understand timing in EU lobbying at the beginning of my research. This became apparent in the way I had planned my fieldwork to take place during the runup to the Finnish national elections and the EU elections in spring 2019 to observe how EU lobbying takes place in relation to these elections. However, when conducting my interviews in 2017 and 2018, it became apparent that the in-house lobbyists had already been in discussions with political parties in Member States when they were drafting their European Parliament election priorities. Thus, during the interviews I realised that I was already late – I had planned my research too much around the public momentum in EU politics rather than taking account of the timing in EU lobbying. Advocacy work in relation to elections had mostly already been accomplished when the political campaigning started.

As I entered the field at the beginning of 2019, I also realised that I could not observe the same dossiers that were discussed in my interviews in 2017 and 2018. Often specific EU dossiers were mentioned when they were current, or when the process was almost finished. Thus, most of the dossiers were no longer current by the time I entered the field in spring 2019. Moreover, I tended to be interested in issues that were also being publicly debated, whereas these were old news for the participating lobbyists – they had often already done most of the lobbying before these issues became salient to the general public. Instead, they were more involved in emerging issues and quiet politics. Hence, this dissertation is a snapshot of the evolving process of EU lobbying in Finland and Brussels when the European Green deal was emerging (between 2017 and 2020), as it was shown to me as a researcher.

During the arrival phase I also learnt that my status as a doctoral researcher gave me quite limited access, especially in Brussels. It was also an observation of the differences in the hierarchies in Helsinki and Brussels that I made as soon as I started to contact people in Brussels. If I asked for an interview with a person in too senior a position compared to my status as a doctoral researcher, my request was forwarded to someone more "on my level". Many participants also discussed hierarchies in EU lobbying during the interviews and recounted funny anecdotes about their mistakes when they had requested a meeting with someone not matching their own status. As they explained, this often took place when they were new to EU lobbying or had

recently changed their disposition. During the fieldwork this was even more visible, and to some extent limited my access, for example, when it came to the EU Commission.

In the end, my status as a doctoral researcher mostly limited my access in relation to decision-makers. When it comes to the in-house lobbyists, the participants were both experts and directors (16 experts, 22 directors).[55] Nevertheless, I noticed that the conversations had slightly different tones. The directors talked more about the political and strategic direction of the EU, the future of the EU and global challenges, whereas experts talked more about technical issues and how major political changes would affect some specific legislation or process. However, the directors' and experts' views on competent and incompetent EU lobbying practices were remarkably similar.

On arrival I also started to realise that nationality mattered with respect to gaining trust. Even though I was not aiming for a Finnish-centric view of EU lobbying, most of the participants in my research ended up being Finns – working either in organisations based in Finland or umbrella organisations based in Brussels (27 Finns out of the 38 in-house lobbyists). With fellow Finns, there seemed to be a head start in gaining trust. Despite being "only" a doctoral student, many Finnish lobbyists and decision-makers were still willing to participate or help me with my research practically. Also, sometimes when contacting an organisation in Brussels, I was redirected to a fellow Finn. In many ways during my fieldwork, I came to realise how in Brussels there seemed to be a family-like support network among the Finns, and how I often had more limited access to non-Finnish actors.

In my case, gathering most of the interview data prior to my observations (passive observation and shadowing) had practical benefits. By the end of 2018, I had gathered rich interview data on EU lobbying practices, and had also started to understand how transnationality, timing and hierarchies played out in EU lobbying. Thus, the research data and participants (the lobbyists) influenced the research focus and decisions as to what was ultimately relevant (see, for example, Adler and Pouliot 2011a; 2011b, xiii; Powdermaker 1966). Also, I had in practice gained enough trust to enter the field of EU lobbying, in both Helsinki and Brussels.

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[55] The higher number of directors relates also to the hierarchies and "title game" taking place in relation to EU politics, as discussed further in Chapter 6.

4.6   Entering the field of EU lobbying as an ethnographer: Sensing power and hierarchies within the field of EU lobbying

> Rainy morning in Brussels. First one here, I arrived yesterday and now I am already shadowing an in-house lobbyist. I have arrived early because I have no idea from which side I am supposed to enter this huge European Institution building [Justus Lipsius]. It is just before 10 a.m. and I have a little time to kill as I'm waiting at the gate – I start to observe people around me. From every direction there are people rushing towards different doors to enter with their entry badges, under umbrellas or a bit faster if not. Running shoes, or any shoes that can keep out the water, as the streets are already flooding. Everyone is trying to get their entry badges out in time before they reach the right door for them to enter. Blue badges, white badges [later I learn that the white badges are little "better" as it gives one better access and marks higher status in the hierarchy]. Someone is dropping their entry badge in the middle of a pedestrian crossing in a puddle. I'm thinking: "is this the glamour of Brussels – Rushing in rain somewhere where you are already late and where to enter you need an entry permit?"
>
> Research diary notes, Brussels, autumn 2019

This quotation from my first fieldwork day in Brussels, where I had arrived during the autumn following the European Parliament elections of 2019, shows how I was still observing the bustle around the European Institutions as an outsider. I had visited Brussels several times when interviewing but now I was fully entering the field in Brussels. It felt immediately different from entering the field in Helsinki, where I had already done my fieldwork for three months during the previous spring. Everything seemed faster in Brussels, I was constantly lost (did not know which entrance I was supposed to use, and I needed a map several times a day to navigate wherever I went), and it also took me by surprise how hierarchical the working life in and around European Institutions was. This all started to feel more or less natural during my 5.5 month stay in Brussels.

As also acknowledged by others, the European quarters in Brussels seem to breathe EU lobbying, as interest representation is centred in and around the EU institutions (Mahoney 2008, 1; see also Firat 2019, 89–90 describing Brussels).[56] Indeed, during my fieldwork, after having only been in Brussels for two months, I had encountered interest representatives from arms industry lobbyists to religious groups, and from informal civil rights movements to large established business actors. During the interviews the importance of physical presence in this area was often underlined. It was important to meet the relevant decision-makers in places

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[56] Brussels is also a hub of other transnational practices such as diplomacy (see Kuus 2018, 159).

that were convenient for them during their busy days, and to participate in, as well as arrange, events in and around European Institutions.[57] Also, during my fieldwork I spent most of my time within this area around European Institutions in Brussels, observing the lobbyists engaging with the decision-makers or with each other.[58] After a couple of months, Brussels started to feel like a village – I often bumped into someone I had met earlier during my fieldwork or whom I had interviewed, as well as the Helsinki-based lobbyists and decision-makers whom I had met earlier in Finland (see also Busby 2013 on the Brussels Bubble).

Regarding the Helsinki-based lobbyists, the district of "Eteläranta" in Helsinki is historically synonymous with the interests of trade and business associations (TBs), and "Hakaniemi", also in Helsinki, with those of trade unions and professional association (UAs). Sometimes during the interviews, the names of these locations were used to refer to the general interests of these groups, without mentioning specific organisations. However, as I visited most of the organisations during the interviews, I noticed that the locations of the organisations were more diverse. Also, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were located in different parts of Helsinki, although they often shared an office or were located in the same building as other NGOs. Nonetheless, none of the organisations were located more than five kilometres away from the Finnish Parliament House, half an hour away by public transportation. However, chance meetings with participants occurred less frequently than in Brussels, and often only at relevant events, targeted at decision-makers. Thus, even though Helsinki is a smaller city than Brussels, the village-like feeling around EU issues seemed to be missing.

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[57] Also, some of the participants whose offices were located slightly further away from the European Parliament or from the most relevant DGs stated that it was an ongoing discussion whether or not they should move closer.

[58] Some interviews and observations were conducted slightly further away but still in the Brussels city area. Also, I spent five days observing in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, with the help of the MEPs and their assistants (see Abélès 1993 for detailed description of the Strasbourg site).

Yet, from this note written in my research diary in autumn 2019, it is obvious that entering the right physical place does not necessarily lead to access to observe the intended practices[59]:

> I have some time to kill so I sit down in the cafe [inside the European Parliament main building]. Whilst sipping coffee, I start to observe. After a while, I realise that observing like this feels quite silly. People, some familiar faces, are passing by, I have no idea where they are going or what they are about to do. I can't grasp any practices like this. This café is a great place to bump into people and to have informal chats. But for observing – I feel that I am in the wrong place, even though I am inside the European Parliament building.
>
> Research diary notes, Brussels, autumn 2019

To overcome this difficulty, I followed the in-house lobbyists to shadow them in their work. However, this required me to adapt to their everyday practices, as well as to constantly negotiate access, as outlined next.

4.6.1 Negotiating access day by day, occasion by occasion

I had already negotiated access during the arrival phase, especially during the interviews. At the end of the interviews, I asked how the participants would feel if I shadowed them in their daily work for five to ten days. The reactions varied. Some seemed interested, others were less motivated to extend their participation beyond the interview. A frequent comment was that they would like to see some kind of plan beforehand, with respect to how and why I was doing this.

As a result, I drafted a fieldwork code of conduct[60] to outline why and how I would observe the participants who were open to shadowing. Thirteen participants agreed and with nine of them the observation developed into shadowing, with more than ad hoc access to backstage lobbying practices or facilitating my access to events that required invitation. Prior to shadowing we also agreed on a practical code of conduct, and I proposed an optional feedback session at the end of the shadowing. The feedback sessions worked to ensure that I analysed my notes on shadowing in real time to be able to give summaries to the participants. However, during these

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[59] See also Atkinson's reflections on the difficulties faced in deciding what to observe and where to go to observe within the field (Atkinson 2020, 54).

[60] See Appendix 6.

feedback sessions the discussion focused more generally on how the shadowing had proceeded and I got some valuable feedforward.[61]

However, negotiating access did not stop there – it was still necessary to negotiate access on a daily basis, as one often does during fieldwork:

> "Well, that's it!", the in-house lobbyist that I am shadowing says, stands up and indicates that maybe it's time for me to leave. It's still early, I thought I would stay at the office the whole working day today. "If you don't mind and it is ok for you, I would like to stay a little longer", I say and smile a bit, remain seated. After thinking for few seconds, the person says politely "well okay. But I need to work now" [letting me know that there will be no more chit-chat]. "Yes, of course, I'm just going to sit there", I say and move to sit next to a wall, away from the office table, where we have been discussing on current issues quite extensively. After a while, when it is quiet and the lobbyist is working while I am sitting safely in a corner, I get a feeling of a very tiny victory. I am still here; I did not lose the access – yet.
>
> <div align="right">Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019</div>

Moreover, with each of the participants the shadowing relationship was slightly different – with some, I discussed gender issues, with others the hierarchy in Brussels. In some encounters we joked a lot, and others involved quite profound discussions. I also realised that with each shadowing relationship I had to proceed according to the participant's rhythm and by adapting to what they felt comfortable with physically. For example, some participants ensured that I would see their computer screen even when they were working silently, whilst others moved away from me with their laptops if I tried to position myself so that I could see what they were working on.

Thus, throughout shadowing, I had to proceed carefully to avoid the participant feeling uncomfortable or starting to question my motives (see the discussion on fieldworker as a spy in Mikkonen and Miller forthcoming). At the beginning of the shadowing, it was common for people to fall silent, to try to continue a conversation further away from me, or to lower their voices as I entered the space. The participants also "took time out" from shadowing and went somewhere to discuss "confidential", "personal" or "not relevant to you" issues – however, sometimes they debriefed me afterwards. Often towards the end of the shadowing, after the participants had become used to my presence, I was able to observe confidential

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[61] In retrospect, I also think some of the initial observations that I presented immediately after the shadowing may have come across as intrusive – also because the change from being a passive observer to an analytical researcher was quite sudden and perhaps unexpected from the perspective of the participants.

conversations and interactions. Also, the moments when I observed the impression management of the participants dropping, when they showed their frustration, or cursed or badmouthed some politician or superior, were revealing of the power relations and different kinds of spaces (frontstage/backstage) within the field of EU lobbying.

Unfortunately, in at least one shadowing encounter the participant clearly felt uncomfortable with me following. I was told to sit far away, where I could not really do any shadowing, or the participant suddenly left the premises where I was told to come to do the shadowing, to go to the airport – clearly, I was unable to follow. I continued to play this cat and mouse game for quite some time to see how it would proceed. In retrospect, I should have understood sooner that the participant was not feeling comfortable with the method, and that this was their indirect way of withdrawing from this part of my research.

Normally towards the end, after I had successfully established a shadowing relationship and adapted to the rhythm of the participant, shadowing took place quite freely and spontaneously. I was not told much in advance about the situations, nor did the lobbyists explain the situations to me unless I asked. There was one exception, where a shadowed lobbyist directed my observation by explaining to me what to pay attention to and what was relevant to observe, as well as wanting to revise my fieldwork notes on the spot (which did not happen with others). I decided to show the notes that I had taken when shadowing this participant, as hiding them would have most likely resulted in losing access. After seeing the notes, the participant commented that it was interesting to see how the research was done in practice. Also, I felt that I gained more freedom and trust in that shadowing relationship by being as transparent as possible. This instance was an example of ethical decisions having to be taken suddenly, in the middle of the fieldwork, in order to maintain access. Thus, the participants also needed to find my research methods ethical and in keeping with good standards of practice. If I failed in this, I lost access to the field through them. Therefore, I could not just *write about* research ethics and good standards – I also needed to be trusted during my fieldwork.

Moreover, the lobbyists whom I was shadowing often "vouched for me", enabling me to observe during different instances of backstage lobbying, for example internal meetings or events with other lobbyists. However, the decision to grant or deny access seemed to be determined by the host. Thus, in addition to shadowing, I observed MEPs' lobbying meetings that voluntary Finnish MEPs let me observe. With the approval of all the participants and with a great deal of help from the MEPs' assistants, keeping me posted if there were any last-minute changes in schedules

(often the case with MEPs' timetables in Brussels), I was able to attend these meetings – at the right place, at the right time – to observe. Normally I sought a place in a corner, a little bit away from the action:

> The MEP arrives from a previous occasion, and we all enter the MEP's room. The MEP and the two lobbyists sit down at the MEP's office table. I move the remaining seat in the corner so I can sit diagonally behind the lobbyists. This way I am not observing the meeting from the side, nor do I feel that I am in the middle of the situation. For me, this has become the most natural place to situate myself when I am observing the lobbying meetings at the MEPs' offices. Not quite sure why. I can see the lobbyists only from the side and the face of the MEP directly.

> Observation notes, MEP lobbying meeting, Brussels, autumn 2019

Later, as I reflected upon why I situated myself like this when observing the MEPs' lobbying meetings, I concluded that I tried to bother the lobbyists as little as possible. I knew that these meetings were important for them, and felt privileged to be present without having any actual role in the meeting. However, it seemed that I was also making myself as invisible as possible – sometimes it seemed that everyone forgot my presence after the first five minutes. Thus, sometimes when getting up to leave the meeting, the lobbyists in particular seemed surprised to see me still sitting in the corner behind them.

Of course, when doing fieldwork, observing did not always work out as I had planned in my head. When I was invited to different settings and places to observe, first and foremost I had to be pragmatic and play by the rules of the hosts. It was not always appropriate to take notes in real time. On these occasions, I wrote my notes as soon as possible afterwards. Or sometimes I found myself unintentionally in the middle of the scene:

> One of the lobbyists looks directly at me, as if trying to figure out what is going on in my head. This has now happened several times during this meeting that they are having with an MEP, and I can see why. It is hard to ignore my presence, as I am sitting right next to the MEP. Thus, every time they look at the MEP, they also see me – as I am trying to be invisible by sinking into this leather armchair – and failing miserably as everyone can see that I am taking notes (that I will now stop and write them up later) and sense that I am observing them. There were just no less intrusive spots available to sit in in this lounge.

> Observation notes, MEP lobbying meeting, Brussels, autumn 2019

The quotation above also shows that during my fieldwork I was not observing through some glass window or that the participants were not completely bothered

by my presence. However, rather than bothered, people seemed curious about how I was observing. Thus, the situation outlined above was not the only occasion when I noticed that the lobbyists in particular were observing me while I was observing them.

Kuus states that there are few ethnographical studies about political elites, with more focusing on the people affected by political decisions, such as marginalised groups. Studying the actual IR actors leads to the problem of "studying up", which makes access difficult. (Kuus 2013.) It has also been pointed out that in the field the relationship may change into "studying up" (Czarniawska 2007, 54). This happened to me, especially in Brussels, for two reasons. First, when shadowing the relationship becomes more embodied and, as pointed out, negotiating access becomes a daily activity. As such, I felt that the participants had far more power over me during shadowing than during the interviews – my access depended on them and they could stop it at any point (see the discussion in Czarniawska 2007, 56–57). Thus, the elements of studying up were constantly present during shadowing.

Secondly, to observe EU lobbying practices at occasions hosted by the decision-makers, I needed to be granted access by them. This also relates to the physical access and hierarchies in Brussels. Often the frontstage interactions in EU lobbying take place on the premises of the EU institutions. To gain access to these I had to be approved by the decision-makers. On these occasions, permission was granted directly or indirectly (through their assistants) by decision-makers hierarchically above me. Thus, when I tried to cut corners in Brussels, by trying to skip the social courtesies and go right to the point, I learnt a lot about being humble. Although I had observed how one should behave in order to respect the social norms and hierarchies in Brussels, I failed miserably when trying to negotiate access to the European Commission to observe. Initially, I came across as too demanding and probably lost a potential gateway to access. In the end, I ran out of time for having several discussions and finding a suitable gateway for access before I exited the field. Thus, in the end I was not able to gain access to observe EU lobbying behind closed doors taking place in the European Commission or various DGs. However, I observed both formal and informal EU lobbying practices taking place during the Commission's public events and when the Commissioners or the EU Commission workers participated in various meetings and events organised by the lobbyists. I also observed how closed-door meetings with the Commissioners or with the EU Commission workers were prepared for amongst lobbyists.

4.6.2   A role as a passive observer, and embodiment during the fieldwork

At an early stage of my research, I decided that I would not participate in EU lobbying practices during my fieldwork (cf. Neumann 2023, 41). Thus, I explicitly adopted the role of a passive observer and focused on observing the practices. Also, I was quite comfortable in my position as an observer, without the need to consider my stance or point of view. The participants in my work pointed out a few times that they were surprised by the interest I showed in them, their work, and EU politics, as I was constantly interested to hear more and asking questions. That interest was genuine and most of the days in the field were absolutely fascinating.

Remaining within the role of passive observer is actually quite demanding, and at the beginning of my fieldwork, I was still struggling to adapt to this role. During my first shadowing relationships my passive position cracked – something that was uncomfortable both for me and for the participants (they told me later on or on the spot). It took me some time to adapt to the role of a passive observer rather than being a researcher with an opinion on everything.

When in the role of a passive observer, I was sometimes assumed to belong to the same political family (as decision-makers) or to share the views (of lobbyists) during the fieldwork, as I did not share my personal views on occasions where everyone was assumed to have shared views. As my focus was on practices and as I had adopted a passive role within the fieldwork, I did not find this problematic. Quite the contrary, it was quite refreshing to hear debates that I would perhaps never have witnessed in my active professional researcher role.

However, because of embodiment, I sometimes found ethnographic fieldwork and shadowing exhausting and mentally challenging in ways that I had not anticipated (see also Neumann 2023, 44). Even though I had chosen the strategy of adopting the role of passive observer, I was using myself as a tool in every situation that I observed. Ironically, especially through embodiment, I was also sensing the power relations, gendering, and everyday hierarchies within the field of my research.

During my fieldwork, I made explicit who I was (a researcher, not taking part in the activities but observing). On some occasions when I had not managed to introduce myself yet, I was assumed to be an intern, assistant, or translator (never a researcher). I believe it was mainly because of my passive role and constant note taking during the meetings and events that I observed – something that especially in the Brussels Bubble seemed to indicate that I needed to report to someone higher in the hierarchy. This might also be related to my assumed age (I was often

considered almost ten years younger that I am) and perhaps gender, as a younger woman is not perhaps recognised as a researcher.

Interestingly, it was often other women giving me indirect hints or direct comments as to how I should behave or dress, especially in Brussels. As I had embodied the role of passive observer, I listened to them attentively, and sometimes asked for more information. Nevertheless, I did not oppose what they said (as I sometimes would, if not in the role of a passive observer). I also observed and heard stories about sexist jokes, men openly checking out female figures (especially in the European Parliament), and stories about how someone (woman) was hired because they were young and pretty. One lobbyist that I shadowed also expressed several times how throughout the years she had heard comments stating that she is "too much" for a woman in her position. During a private discussion with a female acquaintance, working in one of the EU institutions, she told me how her male boss had wanted to "take a moment" to admire her dress together with other colleagues in the middle of a workday – after that, she downplayed her feminine way of dressing, so that the focus would stay on work matters. After a while, I also noticed that I started to dress in a very modest way, used very light make-up and started to hide my feminine side. In addition, my role as a passive observer made me fade into the background physically. In every possible way, I was making myself smaller and less visible – a shadow of myself.

Atkinson also talks about how an ethnographer may become displaced and "a poor shadow of oneself", as the condition of social non-being takes place. This kind of loss of identity is part of indebt fieldwork, also because of migrating to a strange place, as it enables one to merge into the social that is being observed. (Atkinson 2020, 64–65; see also Neumann and Neumann 2017, 5–7.) Also, I did not have any status or role within the field that I studied, which may have enforced my feeling of being misplaced.[62] Moreover, because I also kept on moving between different social sites in Helsinki and Brussels, I often felt that my social tuning was not quite right. Sometimes I also found myself under or overdressed for an occasion, as shadowing took me into unexpected situations, especially in Brussels.[63]

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[62] This is another approach to gaining presence through a simultaneous work role (see, for example, Schia 2017, 75; Neumann 2012).

[63] As the fieldwork proceeded, I also became accustomed to carrying quite a big backpack, packed with spare clothes, sometimes with extra shoes, entry badges, my passport to prove my identity if necessary to gain access, and everything needed for observing and potential on-the-spot interviews (laptop, notebook, tape recorder, interview questions and consent forms all printed ready). Also, an umbrella was always indispensable in Brussels. As such, I carried my office on my back during my

During and after my fieldwork I reflected upon how my gender, (assumed) age, and social status (doctoral researcher) affected my research on EU lobbying practices. In the end, I do not believe that my gender and the way I was seen in the field influenced the findings on relational power in EU lobbying. Actually, I became aware not only of how EU lobbying is done in practice but also how gendering takes place in and around European Institutions. Thus, doing research and observing EU lobbying were an intentional "doing", but unintentional doing (gendering) also emerged (see, for example, Gherardi 2009 on intentional and unintentional doing).

However, I believe that my status as a mere doctoral researcher, often considered a student, influenced my access – I could not access the Commission during my fieldwork. Other researchers, however, have managed to do so (see, for example, Mérand 2021). Nevertheless, being considered a mere student also helped me to get people to explain EU lobbying practices to me in their own words. In this way it was also possible to ask quite direct questions about practices without anyone feeling intimidated by me. Sometimes I also played the role of a silly young girl when asking very blunt or direct questions, to make the situation less intrusive. In retrospect, this was not perhaps the best way to proceed if aiming to challenge gendering practices in EU lobbying as well as in and around European Institutions in Brussels. I reflect on this issue as well as on gendered fieldwork roles more widely elsewhere (Mikkonen and Miller forthcoming).

Towards the end of my fieldwork, the role of a passive observer had become more and more burdensome – I started feeling the need to express my opinions as a researcher. I also noticed that during my last observations the role of passive observer started to crack and I could not remain focused on observing. When reflecting on the role of a passive observer in retrospect, I tend to be more critical. It seems that I was using the role to keep a distance from the field. However, because of embodiment, this did not quite work out. In the ethnography literature the usefulness of a fieldwork role is also questioned, with the possibility of being flexible with different kinds of roles (Atkinson 2017). When it comes to my future ethnographic studies, I also see much more potential in being flexible but also reflexive between different fieldwork roles and how they relate to the situatedness of fieldwork.

fieldwork, as I was working, mainly writing, wherever I happened to be and whenever there was a break from observing.

4.7 Exiting the field of EU lobbying and analysing the research data in practice

In January 2020 I participated as an observer in yet another European Commission event held in the Charlemagne building in Brussels. At the same time, I was about to conclude my final agreed shadowing days. In the middle of the event, I realised that I was surprisingly relaxed and hardly taking any notes. The practices taking place around me seemed quite logical and something that I had already observed several times before. Sometimes during interviews, the lobbyists had been unable to communicate the tacit knowledge of EU lobbying practices as it was so obvious to them. Similarly, I realised during that event that I had lost my newness to the field – EU lobbying practices seemed quite logical and common-sensical to me, even to the extent that the analytical distance had become blurred (Neumann 2023, 41; Dunn and Neumann 2016, 83–86). Here I wrote in my research diary that it was time to go, time to exit the field.[64]

As I physically exited the field at the end of February 2020, the encounters with my own field, IR research, made me realise that I was still very much in the mindset of the field of EU lobbying and in the role of a passive observer. The practices and logic of the research field had started to look strange and surprising to me, as I felt I was now looking at them as an outsider – I seemed to have forgotten how to talk and behave as a doctoral researcher. Often, I withdrew into the fieldwork role and started to observe academic situations as a passive observer instead of taking part in them as an active academic.

In addition, I found myself even more confused with the research topic on exiting the field than I had been on entering, as often occurs with ethnographic research (Vrasti 2010). I was particularly overwhelmed wondering what to do with all the research data I had gathered and how to proceed with the analysis after my fieldwork – without realising that I had actually been analysing and writing throughout the entire fieldwork period. To reflect on the research strategies and practices adopted within practice research (Bueger 2014), I next outline how I proceeded to analyse the research data in practice and therein also exited the research field mentally.

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[64] Without knowing it at the time, I exited the field and returned home to Finland just two weeks before the COVID-19 lockdowns started.

4.7.1 Abductive research and conducting the analysis

The abductive research process is evident in my research practices in many ways. Upon arrival in the field, I had already made an initial analysis of my interview data and gained a preliminary understanding of the participants' views on EU lobbying practices. In this way the interviews surely directed my observations when entering the field. However, without gaining access, trust, and a basic understanding of EU lobbying practices through the interviews, I doubt my fieldwork would ever have succeeded. Thus, the interviews were part of my arrival in the field, where my understanding of EU lobbying evolved as I proceeded with the ethnographic observation.

When reflecting on the abductive research process, going mentally back and forth between the abstract theoretical level and empirical observation was not always easy for me. While arriving and interviewing, when I wrote down the first impressions in my research diary after each interview, it was still relatively easy as I found mental space and time to think abstractly. However, when entering the field, I found it quite hard to observe consciously and then shift to abstract thinking. The fieldwork was intensive, fast moving, and required all my attention during the long hours of observing – it was never certain in advance if the day would last just a few hours or continue for 12 hours if there happened to be a networking event in the evening. While revising my fieldnotes, I managed to reflect more from a distance. This, however, happened only when exiting the field – I never managed to be one of those ethnographers who revise all their fieldnotes when in the field (see also Atkinson 2020, 32). Thus, the unrevised observation notes started to accumulate, and I revised the last ones three months after physically leaving the field, as part of my mental exiting process.

An abductive research process and a return to theory were also needed to establish a framework to make sense of the findings. In spring 2020 I already had a lengthy and messy Word document named "key findings". Now returning to the document confirms that all the key issues were indeed outlined there. However, without going back to theory and immersing myself in the practice approach and ethnographic writing, the bridge between my empirical work and the theoretical framework would have remained hazy.

Also, when conducting the research analysis in practice, I should have relied more on Atkinson's advice (2020, 88): stop coding and focus on finding stories that carry the analysis on the everyday. Intuitively, I had done exactly this when writing my first impressions of the interviews and highlighting some observations as relevant during

the fieldwork. This is how I had started to understand transnationality, timing, and trust in EU lobbying, and also when I became aware of the different spaces (frontstage and backstage) in EU lobbying during shadowing.

However, when I had gathered all my data, I felt that somehow I had to do more to make the most of it. Thus, I started coding according to a list of codes that I developed based on both my theoretical framework and what had emerged during my fieldwork. As I reached the end of the coding process, I had to admit that it had mainly been useful for carefully revising the research data once again. Thus, I had reflected on my initial analysis but also kept the research vivid in my mind. In addition, I now had all the research data neatly stored in one place, ATLAS.ti, and I could run co-occurrence analyses that would show, for example, that timing and how to gain relevant information for EU lobbying were often discussed together. This, however, I already knew based on the fieldwork.

Regarding managing the research data and getting the feeling that I had really worked on the data, coding seemed to be working very well for me, albeit mechanistically. However, to understand the everyday of EU lobbying and the relational power within it, I had to refocus on stories and embodied encounters from the field of EU lobbying. Therefore, more so than coding, the analytical framework of zooming in and out helped me to grasp the essential in EU lobbying practices.

4.7.2 Zooming in and out when analysing EU lobbying practices

In this research, I focus on analysing EU lobbying practices in order to understand relational power in transnational EU lobbying. Thus, it is essential to outline the epistemic practices used to analyse such practices (see Nicolini 2012, 219–221). Moreover, the relevant theoretical concepts (habitus, field, capital, doxa) are not always explicitly repeated in the analysis, even though they are implicitly present throughout the analysis (see, for example, Kuus 2015 for a similar kind of writing strategy with respect to data analysis). Thus, in this subchapter I explain how the theoretical concepts and ethnographic approach come together in answering the research questions in Chapters 5 to 8.

It is explicitly recognised that practices only exist to the extent that they are "enacted and re-enacted" (Nicolini 2012, 217–221). As practices linger in the background and in the unspoken of the everyday, they need to be "drawn to the fore" so that they become visible and thus turn into epistemic objects (Nicolini 2009). Moreover, in order to provide a rich and nuanced understanding of practices,

a theoretical base allowing the investigation of the world with eclecticism, a research method allowing us to see practices (such as ethnography), and re-presentation allowing the practices to speak for themselves in the text are needed (Nicolini 2012, 214–219). Moreover, when analysing practices, they should be understood with respect to the time in which they are occurring, and also make epistemological reflections on this temporality visible in the research (Bourdieu 1977, 9; 1990b, 81).

To enact, analyse, and re-present EU lobbying practices in Helsinki and Brussels when the European Green Deal was emerging, I adopted Nicolini's idea of *zooming in* and *zooming out* when conducting analysis. What is essential to this approach is that the level of analysis remains at that of practices, instead of assuming different analytical levels when moving between zooming in and out (Nicolini 2012, 229,240). Schatzki also summarises how generally all practice approaches promote flat ontology in understanding practices even though there are differences in understanding the systems and connections between practices (Schatzki 2016, 7).[65]

The starting points when zooming out lie in understanding the connectedness of practices, as well as in recognising that instances of doings do not take place in a vacuum (Nicolini 2009). Thus, zooming out offers tools to move between practices and seek connections between them without adopting a bird's-eye view of a distant researcher studying practices from "nowhere" (Nicolini 2012, 229, 240).

To re-present the practice through zooming in, it is useful to pay attention to real-time practice, as practices can be treated as an organised set of sayings and doings, as well as bodily movements (Nicolini 2009). When zoomed in on, the focus moves away from exposing actors' value systems to focusing on capacities or competencies for performing practices. The ethnographic method of shadowing is one option for gaining insiders' views on these issues, and thus observing and describing power positions within the field. (Nicolini 2012, 221–222; see also Czarniawska 2007.) There are several aspects that can be emphasised when zooming in – for example, discursive practices, accountability, legitimacy, or the learning of the practice (Nicolini 2009). By following the Bourdieu-inspired understanding of relational power, I focus on the relational resources (capital) and doxa of EU lobbying.

Based on understanding EU lobbying through the Bourdieu-inspired relational practices approach, using the ethnographic toolkit, and by zooming in and out, I ask the following three questions in this study:

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[65] Giddens may be an exception in this, as Schatzki (2016, 7) outlines.

Zooming out, RQ1: How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?

How do in-house lobbyists' habitus relate to each other as well as to consultant lobbyists and decision-makers in EU lobbying? By using the concept of habitus, I outline in-house lobbyists' understandings of EU lobbying practices and their relational disposition in EU lobbying (Chapter 5.2.).

How does EU lobbying relate to EU politics and what are the connections between the EU lobbying practices taking place in Finland and Brussels? Through a transnational approach, I analyse how the field of EU lobbying relates to EU politics and plays out transnationally. Thus, I bring to the fore connections between the lobbying practices taking place in Finland and those in Brussels. Moreover, I analyse how in-house lobbyists perceive the field of EU lobbying (autonomously or as strongly relational with respect to EU politics), to elaborate their views on inter-dependency in EU lobbying and EU politics. (Chapter 5.3.).

In relation to EU politics, how do spaces and timing play out in EU lobbying? By including the aspect of space in my analysis, I bring to the fore the frontstage and backstage practices in EU lobbying. In relation to public and closed-door EU lobbying practices (frontstage) lobbyists' conscious control of habitus is addressed. Through analysing backstage relations, my research also draws attention to the informal practices of compromising, co-operating, and competing in transnational EU lobbying amongst the lobbyists and how these relate to the codes of conduct when interacting with decision-makers. Moreover, by including issues related to transnational spaces, it is possible to make visible further practices of representation (Chapter 6.1.). By including the aspect of time in my analysis, I demonstrate how understanding timing is vital in understanding the rhythm, tempo, and directionality of EU lobbying. In my research, analysing timing in EU lobbying enables me to study how tacit knowledge and informality play out in practice (Chapter 7.1.).

Zooming in, RQ2: What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?

I analyse the relational economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital which, according to Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists, are needed to be able to do transnational EU lobbying. As discussed in the theory chapter, different forms of capital can be obtained before being put to timely use (Bourdieu 1977, 55). Thus, by looking at EU lobbying beyond any specific EU policy dossier or process, I draw attention to how relevant resources for EU lobbying are obtained before influencing

takes place. In my research, this aspect is especially relevant in relation to symbolic capital, trust, and how it is established through long-term engagement.

Thus, I analyse *how economic capital relates to the ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally* (Chapter 5.4.), *how cultural capital relates to access* (Chapter 6.2.), *and how social capital relates to information* (Chapter 7.2). Moreover, I analyse *trust as symbolic capital in EU lobbying, alongside the practices of gaining and maintaining trust* (Chapter 8.1.).

Zooming in and out, RQ3: What constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?

I analyse the doxa of competent EU lobbying and address questions of symbolic power in transnational EU lobbying. Thus, by analysing the *feel for EU lobbying* as well as the moments of incompetent EU lobbying that I observed during my fieldwork, in both frontstage and backstage EU lobbying, I bring to the fore *how the doxa of competent EU lobbying relates to inclusion and exclusion in transnational in-house EU lobbying* (Chapters 8.2. and 8.3).

This also reveals what is excluded from EU lobbying based on incompetence. Thus, rather than trying to define why actors win or lose in EU lobbying, I address the questions of symbolic power in EU lobbying and *how practices constitute the power to do transnational EU lobbying* (Chapter 8.4).

However, to make the analysis accessible to readers, I present it in thematic entities starting from the more general and proceeding towards symbolic power, rather than structuring it on the basis of the research questions.[66] In this way the focus remains on understanding relational power throughout the analysis, such that the relationality within EU lobbying becomes apparent. Moreover, throughout the analytical chapters, I draw attention to some differences, but more so to the similarities, between the in-house EU lobbying of NGO, UA, and TB organisations.

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[66] The structure of the study is outlined further at the end of the preface.

5 RELATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL EU LOBBYING WHEN THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL WAS EMERGING

In this chapter, through Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and economic capital, I first analyse the relational dispositions within EU lobbying, then the relationality that the field of EU lobbying has with EU politics transnationally, and finally how economic capital relates to the ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally. However, I start by bringing the emergence of the European Green Deal and EU lobbying practices to the fore.

One of the first things that caught my attention upon my arrival into the field of EU lobbying was that the in-house lobbyists were very much into politics, both in Helsinki and in Brussels. As a result of keeping up with EU politics, also between elections, the in-house lobbyists had a good understanding of emerging transnational issues. This was also the case with the European Green Deal.

During the process of my research, initially weak, but also mixed, signals about the forthcoming agenda emerged in interviews I carried out in 2017 and 2018. Of course, during this time there was no name for the forthcoming agenda – it was more about lobbyists seeing that environment and climate were likely to emerge more prominently in EU politics. Thus, it was important to keep an eye on what was going on in national and EU politics as well as in society generally. In contrast, there was also a sense that environment and climate had not been sufficiently on the EU's agenda, and environmental NGOs in particular were pessimistic about there being any change in this. At this point, it was also unclear how widely climate and environmental issues were being discussed in different DGs or Member States.

Stronger signals started to appear closer to the European Parliament elections in 2019, the time during which I began my fieldwork. This was because of what was happening both within and beyond Europe. Climate activism had become increasingly prominent, the media were quite active in climate issues, and, sadly, the consequences of climate change, such as devastating forest fires, were also becoming apparent prior to and following the EU election in 2019. In addition, reports on international climate crises were gaining wider publicity – an issue that some of the

in-house lobbyists were pushing forward as there seemed to be suitable momentum, and also due to the forthcoming EU elections.

After the European Elections (summer 2019), when the "greenest ever" EP was elected, rumours about the European Green Deal started to circulate. In July 2019, when Ursula von der Leyen gave her an Opening Statement in the European Parliament Plenary Session as a Candidate for President of the European Commission, enlightened listeners could hear that something big was about to happen: "I will put forward a Green Deal for Europe in my first 100 days in office", she stated (European Commission 2019b).

During the hearings of the Commissioners-designate in the European Parliament in Brussels, which I observed from the back row, a Green Deal was mentioned several times.[67] At the time, there was a great deal of confusion and very little content. What kind of document would it be and what would it include?

When the European Green Deal was published on 11 December 2019, including a roadmap with a list of forthcoming commission initiatives, many lobbyists were prepared. They reacted fast and published their views on this communication[68] from the European Commission, stated to be,

> […] a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use. (European Commission 2019a, 2)

Many lobbyists did indeed have something to say, since the European Green Deal brings together a diverse range of EU policies, and lobbyists were keen to demonstrate their activity and mandate in relation to the issues included in the agenda.

However, the in-house lobbyists' disposition to participate in EU politics, constant monitoring, and accurate reading of EU politics, as well as non-stop engagement and preparation with respect to forthcoming issues are all essential when it comes to transnational EU lobbying practices. Thus, as outlined in these four analytical chapters, taking into account the new agenda was also considered important among EU lobbyists, and adapting to new directions in EU politics had already begun when the European Green Deal was emerging.

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[67] Research diary notes from Commissioners-designate hearings of Sinkevičius, Timmermans and Wojciechowski.

[68] This was evident for example on Twitter on the very same day that the European Green Deal was published.

5.1 Bringing EU lobbying practices to the fore

"Sometimes it feels like everything is up in the air – but there is also a certain logic in it."

Interview, NGO_EU_9

"It's not very.... I mean, it's very complex and technical. But it's not so complicated, ultimately."

Interview, NGO_EU_12

The quotations above evidence the general ambivalence which exists in in-house lobbyists' tacit knowledge of EU lobbying: quite logical and common-sensical, but on the other hand difficult to articulate. During the interviews, most of the participants did not mind talking about "lobbying", using different terms (advocacy, interest representation, or engagement) as synonyms for lobbying or not caring so much about the terminology, especially after I explained that I was interested in everyday practices.[69] It was also mentioned that they often preferred terms other than lobbying to describe their work in written form or when speaking publicly. The main reason for this was that they felt lobbying as a term had negative connotations and a term such as advocacy was thus safer to use.[70]

Also, Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists often perceived lobbying to be part of a larger entity, being the actual doing or part of the actual doing of their everyday practices:

"I suppose I call it [my work] advocacy, but frankly… Advocacy is the art and lobbying is the action. I guess I would make that sort of difference between the two."

Interview, TB_EU_8

Moreover, lobbying was considered to be more specific than advocacy, which was understood as extending to exerting influence over the public and other actors in society. Nevertheless, increasing general knowledge and participating in public debates were also considered important in lobbying, but as not enough – it was more important to engage with the relevant decision-makers to achieve *genuine change* or to

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[69] In a few interviews, the participants explicitly stated that they did not feel comfortable with the term "lobbying" when discussing their work but preferred to talk about advocacy work, interest representation, or engagement. However, their understanding of the practices was similar.

[70] It was also noted that what term they would use depended on the context, as well as the nationality of the audience, as lobbying could be a more loaded term in some languages.

make sure that things were *not getting worse*, by staying in contact with political processes (see also Lahusen 2023, 6–7). Thus, the term lobbying was seen especially as connecting those trying to influence (lobbyists) with decision-makers.

Seeking to influence those who have formal power is something that exists amongst us, and there is evidence of this tendency going back to the forums of Greece and Rome (Zetter 2011, 8), with lobbying being seen as "an expression of vibrant political participation" (Lahusen 2023, 110). However, it was also stated that the word lobbying did not perhaps aptly describe the long-term commitment needed for engagement with decision-makers nowadays, as lobbying needs to be well-planned but also temporally current. In some interviews it was even estimated that half of lobbying time was spent on preparatory work. Even though these issues had been mentioned during the interviews, my fieldwork, where I studied practices in their context (Bourdieu 1977, 2–3, 118), underlined how well-considered and sensitive to timing current EU lobbying is.

In previous research, lobbying has been described as a "watch and learn" profession (Firat 2019, 20). Similarly, the in-house lobbyists described how they had *learnt by doing* or realised that they were lobbying throughout their work. As such, the in-house lobbyists' understanding of EU lobbying had evolved as they gained more experience. Also, lobbyists with extensive experience of lobbying sometimes seemed to find my "outsider" questions on everyday practices quite incomprehensible as their tacit knowledge of ritualised practices was just common sense to them (Bourdieu 1990b, 96–97). Those in-house lobbyists who had started to engage in lobbying relatively recently, or who had changed from national lobbying to EU lobbying, seemed to pay more attention to the practices therein, or to be able to remember when they had been puzzled about the same questions as I was, as I familiarised myself with EU lobbying. Thus, socialisation into EU lobbying often took place through practical experience, that allowed actors to recognise the values of the game in their new disposition and to adjust their practices accordingly (Bourdieu 1993, 74–76).

As the following quotation shows, understanding of the terms could also change slightly during the interviews, when everyday practices were discussed from different viewpoints:

> "Well maybe… Or advocacy work, how should I put it… Lobbying maybe… Now that I'm thinking these terms further, the differences in them, connotations, how they are 'tasting'… I think media work would be something that I would not call lobbying [would be rather part of advocacy]. Maybe… Maybe there is a slight difference in the terms [advocacy and lobbying], in the nuances. Lobbying… I would use that when

describing influencing decision-makers […]. So, my understanding has actually evolved here [laughs], during this interview."

Also, the in-house lobbyists interviewed, as above, often described how the terms felt, tasted or sounded so that they were describing slightly different things with different terms. One lobbyist also described how *every breath they take* is lobbying, underlining how all-encompassing EU lobbying can be. This also underlines the embodiment of the tacit knowledge (Bourdieu 1977, 81, 87) of lobbying practices.

Interestingly, those lobbyists with experience of both national and EU lobbying often referred to how national lobbying is easier than EU lobbying. Across different sectors, it was seen that one must be more professional in EU lobbying, especially that taking place in Brussels. This also resonates with previous findings regarding the professionalisation of EU lobbying (Klüver and Saurugger 2013; Lahusen 2023). There was more competition among lobbyists, with multiple political processes and debates going on simultaneously, and the everyday political pace was faster in Brussels. Also, the importance of following the codes of conduct was emphasised when discussing EU lobbying taking place in Brussels. It was stated that one should behave well, bargain rather than argue (see also Naurin 2007), and speak softly (see, for example, the discussion in Woll 2006, 461–462). Thus, the need to adjust the style of lobbying when moving from national lobbying to EU lobbying was recognised.

In this research, I speak of EU *lobbying* practices. This is to highlight that I focus especially on the practices intended to influence decision-makers in EU politics, following on from the in-house lobbyists' understandings outlined above. However, I understand the term broadly as covering all the preparatory work required for lobbying to take place, as well as the long-term commitment that is needed (see similar approach in Lahusen 2023, 105–110). In this sense, the ability to influence relevant decision-makers can be understood as the objective of struggle in EU lobbying (Bourdieu 1993, 72), but influencing also relates to other aims in lobbying, such as ensuring the survival and reputations of interest group organisations (Berkhout 2013). Also, as the aim is to understand EU lobbying *practices*, I draw attention to the practical sense and bodily involvement in "the feel for EU lobbying", throughout the analysis Chapters 5–8.

5.2 In-house lobbyists' habitus and feeling of being in

"I have the impression that there is a wealth of knowledge that we have. We don't really notice it because we are in it. But we need to share it [with researchers]."

Interview, NGO_EU_13

According to Bourdieu, habitus in the practical sense and bodily involvement are evidenced in the "feel for the game" that demonstrates the encounter between habitus and field (Bourdieu 1977, 87–88; 1990b, 66). Thus, habitus can be understood as the embodied capacity to act. My first impressions of in-house lobbyists' embodied capacity were highly positive. The competence in current political issues demonstrated during interviews was impressive. Also, the generally direct, almost blunt, and sometimes extremely wicked way of discussing EU lobbying practices made me feel that these people knew what they were doing and how to express their views thereon. Moreover, the courteous reception that I received as a researcher studying their professional everyday practices and the positive feeling that I had after my encounters with lobbyists gave me the impression that the lobbyists were socially very competent.

To outline the state of relations (Bourdieu 1993, 73) in EU lobbying, here and in the following subchapters I focus on outlining the in-house lobbyists' sense of their place in current EU lobbying. In general, they were quite open about their work as they felt that there was a place for them in EU politics – which resonates with the understanding of EU lobbying as an integral part of the current political system in the EU (Courty and Michel 2013; Greenwood 2017; Coen, Vannoni, and Katsaitis 2021). They saw themselves as doing important work in representing a certain cause or interest group, to influence better decisions and fair structures in the EU. Also, it was considered a good thing to want to influence common issues, and there was believed to be a risk that there would be worse legislation and decisions without lobbying. Thus, lobbying was seen as supporting democracy when done *the right way* – meaning transparently and *not in a sketchy way*.

As the in-house lobbyists considered their everyday practices in EU lobbying and their role in EU politics to be meaningful, they also took their work seriously. This was demonstrated through their extensive knowledge of processes and practices outlined during the interviews, as well as the long working hours and constant staying on top of EU politics that I observed during my fieldwork. Also, the importance of doing something for a better world (see also Hopgood 2013, 15–16), in accordance

with one's own values, was emphasised – both in everyday actions and in recruiting in-house lobbyists to work in the participating organisations:

> "I very much like doing advocacy for content that you believe in. So, I think that's the added value of the role I can play here. It's really about strategising together with actors from all over Europe. But you do it with your heart in your work."

> Interview, NGO_EU_15

> "We should recruit the kind of people who more or less share our mindset, so they would not have to think what [our] organisation's way of thinking is and what is their own way of thinking. In this work, it is an intolerable situation if you think differently from your own employer."

> Interview, UA_fin_1

However, it was also stated that too much passion or all-or-nothing thinking could be damaging:

> "I have met a few of these during my career – nothing against them – but I have noticed that they have been in the job for only a short time, one year or two, and then exited completely. My estimation of what has happened on these few occasions is that… That they haven't "fitted in" in the advocacy work, in a way. That they have been too strict in their values [...] you kind of need to have a general flexibility and understanding toward what is going on in society. If you are too narrow-minded, it's not good."

> Interview, UA_fin_2

Also, during debriefing conversations while shadowing, NGO in-house lobbyists mentioned that they were proud of their fellow in-house lobbyists working in a professional manner, without coming across as too aggressive or passionate when interacting with decision-makers. Thus, despite some NGO lobbyists, for example, identified themselves as activists rather than lobbyists, it seemed that there were shared elements in the understanding of appropriate representation and socialisation in EU lobbying. This was also considered needed for proper performance in their dispositions (Bourdieu 1993, 73–74).

Moreover, the sense of in-house lobbyists' habitus was reflected especially towards decision-maker' habitus. Despite the shared feeling of belongingness that EU lobbyists felt within EU politics, in-house lobbyists often outlined how lobbyists and decision-makers have different roles in EU lobbying. Generally, it was considered that the decision-makers listen to different kinds of interests and try to

balance them when doing their work, whereas the lobbyists' role was limited to encouraging, persuading or supporting the decision-makers:

> "We are not the ones to decide ultimately. So, I also believe there is a limit to... To a role. I mean, we can suggest, we can inform, we can share our views. But ultimately the political responsibility to make the decisions sits with the other person."

<div align="right">Interview, NGO_EU_13</div>

Thus, it was seen that decision-makers hold the power to decide – although sometimes their competence, especially that of politicians, to make good decisions, was questioned quite bluntly during the interviews and the fieldwork more broadly, when decision-makers were not present. Despite this, it was considered important to remain within the lobbyists' habitus and to recognise its limits when engaging in EU politics. In previous literature, how lobbyists differ from decision-makers has been outlined, especially with respect to norms related to rules and taboos, as well as symbolic codes (Firat 2019, 3–4, 14, 20, 175).

EU lobbying was also described as being quite tiring and burdensome, as one could always do more and be better informed about the current political processes, and sometimes it was described as *fighting against windmills*. I also observed a few lobbying occasions where the situations must have been quite hard for a lobbyist as they were defending something with their own face and name, without anyone else present explicitly supporting them. On the other hand, several in-house lobbyists also expressed that they *felt* that they were appreciated in their jobs by the decision-makers, and this also gave them motivation to carry on (see also Lahusen 2023, 221).

In addition to the sense of belonging and recognition coming from decision-makers, an important source of motivation was that the in-house lobbyists *felt* that they were making a difference by lobbying in EU politics – although it was also pointed out that they did not always know what influence they had or exactly what had caused which outcome. This underlines the issue that EU lobbying is not necessarily visible even to fellow lobbyists as EU processes tended to be longwinded and complicated. Also, as EU lobbying takes place simultaneously in the EU Member States and in Brussels, it is difficult for the lobbyists to evaluate their own influence on the outcomes. It was also emphasised that influencing seldom happens solely on one occasion – or if it happens, one cannot be certain as to which meeting or effort was ultimately decisive.

It also seems that part of the in-house lobbyists' habitus was not to brag about lobbying success but rather to be humble and *fly low*:

"Succeeding is not that I get to say that I, or we, did it. That's a secondary issue. We still need to be humble and adapt to our role as meditators, as spokespersons, for a wider member community."

Interview, TB_fin_2

"A good lobbyist… is it a visible one? That is something that is worth considering as well."

Interview, UA_fin_4

Thus, even though sometimes the altruistic nature of conducting EU lobbying was emphasised, an additional motivating factor seemed to be the ability to stay close to EU politics and the decision-makers with formal power in it, to be able to engage in EU politics quite imperceptibly. Similarly, Lahusen (2023, 205) finds "informal insider knowledge" essential to EU lobbying.

The sense of in-house lobbyists habitus was also reflected towards fellow in-house lobbyists. It was interesting to note how pragmatic in-house lobbyists could be when it came to other in-house lobbying organisations and their mandate to do EU lobbying. For example, during an interview there could first be negative talk about other kinds of in-house lobbying organisations, questioning their mandate, lobbying agenda and competence in EU lobbying. Then, as the interview proceeded, there might be discussion about how they were actually part of the same coalition or co-operated informally on certain issues. In both ways, they were actually recognising fellow in-house lobbyists' participation in EU lobbying through their ability to produce effects there (Bourdieu 2021, 16, 157; see also Lahusen 2023, 221), bringing to the fore the simultaneous competition and mutual dependency between actors with a shared disposition in EU lobbying.

Moreover, as observations confirmed, in-house lobbyists' everyday EU lobbying practices were more harmonised than they claimed due to the normative doxa of what is 'sensible' in EU lobbying (Bourdieu 1977, 80–85; 1990b, 66; 1993, 73–74). Thus, I agree seeing EU lobbying as a social field based on heterogeneity of practices (Lahusen 2023), even though lobbyists' attitudes towards lobbying and professionalism vary across different organisations. There were also differences between in-house lobbyists in their relational ability to conduct competent EU lobbying, as discussed throughout the analysis.

Moreover, when the in-house lobbyists were invited to give presentations as experts, participated in events held by their political parties, or met someone relevant to their work on personal occasions, they often downplayed their own habitus as lobbyists and described how they were not taking part in the occasion in the role of

a lobbyist. Yet, different kinds of present and previous experiences, as well as personal and work-related relations, are merged in the lobbyists' habitus (see also Courty and Michel 2013, 195). This was also explicitly recognised by the lobbyists themselves during the interviews, as they criticised other in-house lobbyists because of their overlapping roles (for example, active in politics), previous experience (recent experience from another lobbying organisation or revolving door experience), or because personal and work-related relations were overlapping. At the same time, the lobbyists were failing to recognise, or preferred not to do so explicitly, that they themselves or someone else in the same organisation had similar overlapping roles.

According to Bourdieu, current habitus is a product of history as well as of past and current practices (Bourdieu 1990, 54). This is why it is important to make visible that during my research the in-house lobbyists moved between organisation types (see also Lahusen 2023, 99, 129, 134, 136), especially before and after EP elections in 2019, or they claimed they could see themselves working in different organisations if they could still do lobbying according to their values:

> "I am changing to the 'other side'" a Helsinki-based TB lobbyist says jokingly, when announcing a forthcoming job change from a TB organisation to an NGO in-house lobbying organisation. The in-house lobbyist whom I am shadowing offers congratulations and moves on to discuss other matters.
>
> Observation notes, shadowing, Helsinki, spring 2019

> "I have gone through various roles, from political assistant to consultant lobbyist and union lobbyist" a Helsinki based UA lobbyists comments as we are about to start the interview.
>
> Research diary note, initial impression after an interview, spring 2018

> "It would be difficult to do lobbying in relation to irrelevant issues, or in issues that I consider to have significant negative impacts […] but in principle I don't have that kind of a mindset that I could only do lobbying in the NGO sector."
>
> Interview, NGO_fin_4

Moreover, beyond differences in the organisations that they represented, there seemed to be overall homogeneity among the EU lobbyists: the vast majority of the EU lobbyists I met during my research were well-educated white Europeans, representing both majority and minority issues (for socio-structural background, see

Lahusen 2023, 222). Lobbyists belonging to minorities seemed to be silently missing from EU lobbying or to have very little representation.

It became apparent that the in-house lobbyists were mostly representatives or *spokespersons* of groups to which they did not belong themselves (Bourdieu 1984, 56–64; Swartz 2013, 118–120). Sometimes as a part of EU lobbying the *true* members, embodying the interest group, were brought into events with the decision-makers. The situation was often that a Brussels-based organisation had arranged an event for decision-makers to which the *true* members of the interest group were also invited. The in-house lobbyists explained that this kind of occasional physical presence rendered their claims more believable and convincing, giving them more credibility as spokespersons of such interest groups. Thus, it seemed that the role of the *true* members was to enforce the in-house lobbyists' mandate for EU lobbying, rather than being those with the habitus for doing the actual everyday lobbying.

Interestingly, the in-house lobbyists also distinguished themselves from ordinary citizens as they considered themselves to be more profoundly engaged in EU politics. As an example, during shadowing it was explained to me that EU election campaigning was for the *common voters* and the in-house lobbyists had already done the majority of the relevant work with respect to party offices and MEP candidates before the general election campaigning had started. From the lobbyists' perspective it became hectic again after the elections, when they knew who had been elected, and when the general population ceased to follow politics as much as they had during the election campaigning.

However, when lobbyists were asked if they considered themselves to be part of an elite, they repeatedly answered "no" (cf. Courty and Michel 2013). The reason for this was that no one really knows them. Thus, if they were to leave their current work as in-house lobbyists, they would also lose their privileged disposition to do EU lobbying, especially their access to information and their privileged habitus to participate in EU politics. It also seemed that this privileged habitus to do EU lobbying was closely connected to the in-house lobbyists' formal position in lobbying organisations. This also became apparent when the in-house lobbyists compared their current access to the access they had in their previous disposition, for example, as a researcher [71] Thus, gaining a relevant status for EU lobbying, and thereby

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[71] On these occasions, it was also stated that the content of the lobbying message could be similar, yet the decision-makers were more willing to hear it when presented by an in-house lobbyist from an organisation with a good reputation. While education and academic background seems to play a role in becoming a lobbyist, especially in Brussels (Lahusen 2023, 223), in conducting everyday EU lobbying practices it becomes less relevant. This aspect is considered further in Chapter 6.

influencing, seemed to be one motivating aspect for working specifically for in-house lobbying organisations.

Overall, EU lobbyists' habitus entails a favoured capacity to do EU lobbying and a feeling of *being in*. Moreover, in-house lobbyists seem to be first in line to hear about and understand EU politics, without being very visibly involved. Also, relational dispositions are changing in EU lobbying as in-house lobbyists change organisations. To better understand dispositions and previous experience in EU lobbying, I next address the tensions, but also co-operation, between in-house and consultant EU lobbying that became visible during my research.

5.2.1   In-house lobbying in relation to consultant EU lobbying

Consultant lobbyists are often seen as the newcomers in lobbying, and tend to be studied in the context of corporate lobbying (Walker and Rea 2014) through a focus on, for example, their role as intermediators and their relations with clients (Tyllström and Murray 2021; Helgesson 2023). Here I analyse the relationship between in-house and consultant EU lobbying, as this aspect emerged both during the interviews and when observing everyday practices.

During the interviews, the in-house lobbyists talked quite negatively about consultant lobbying. The general claim was that consultant lobbyists would not do unpaid work and that the agenda always changed according to the client who was paying. By contrast, the sense of being an in-house lobbyist was framed as long-term interest representation and commitment to the agenda and values of the in-house organisation. It was specifically these accounts which got me interested in reaching out to consultant lobbyists, in both Helsinki and Brussels, to expand upon my understanding of EU lobbying from their perspective.

Indeed, the consultant lobbyists offered quite a different picture of their disposition in EU lobbying. In general, they took the view that everyone should have a right to a lobbyist, similarly to having a right to a lawyer (see also Ylönen, Mannevuo, and Kari 2022), thereby emphasising their sense of belonging in EU lobbying. Also, ethical considerations were not deemed irrelevant in consultant lobbying (see also Helgesson 2023). Quite the contrary, it was considered important that a lobbyist was advocating for something that they believed in. Also, it was explained that it *does not work in practice* if a consultant lobbyist is strongly opposed to what they are lobbying for. Thus, it was seen as good practice to take individual ethical limitations into consideration.

Interestingly, consultant lobbyists also saw in-house lobbying organisations as potential clients rather than rivals, especially with respect to EU lobbying done in Brussels (see also Huwyler 2020). The consultant lobbyists emphasised their professional skills, especially in adjusting their lobbying practices to the EU context, as consultant lobbyists could help their clients to understand the codes of conduct and to gain access in Brussels. Also, on some occasions, when there was a current need but no competent staff available or no resources to hire them permanently, in-house organisations might use consultants for EU lobbying. Consultant lobbyists could help to identify a relevant decision-maker and gain a lobbying meeting with them, to follow relevant policy processes, to obtain informal intel, or to do background research before drafting position papers. These aspects of using consultant lobbying as an additional resource for competent EU lobbying were something that the in-house lobbyists rarely mentioned themselves during the interviews, but which emerged during those with consultant lobbyists and during the fieldwork.[72] Thus, due to their discrete involvement in EU politics, the tendency of in-house lobbying organisations to use the services of consultant lobbying was even more opaque (Lahusen 2002; Huwyler 2020).

During my fieldwork, I also observed consultant lobbyists in this supportive role as they took part in lobbying meetings with MEPs, often with non-Brussels-based clients, including national in-house lobbying organisations. Regarding their representation practices, the impression was often given that they were all representing the same organisation, but when they offered their business cards at the end of the meeting (out of courtesy also to me), it became apparent that one of them had been a consultant lobbyist – often the one talking first, and thus setting the stage for the meeting. When the discussion turned to more technical issues, it was normally the client themselves talking. However, the consultant lobbyists were those making conversation, asking questions, and taking notes during the meetings – demonstrating their competency in the ritualised practices common to EU lobbying meetings in Brussels and taking the lead to guide their clients through them.

During the interviews it was also indicated that the consultant lobbyists were challenging in-house lobbyists' favoured disposition to do EU lobbying, as in-house was no longer the sole channel for EU lobbying. With the help of consultant lobbyists, more diverse discussion and points of view could enter political debates. Simultaneously, for national in-house lobbying organisations there seemed to be an

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[72] Other lobbyists also raised these issues during the fieldwork. Moreover, the information is also available in the EUTR, where consultant lobbyists currently list their clients.

option to hire a consultant lobbyist to gain access to EU lobbying, rather than seeking consensus within an umbrella in-house lobbying organisation (see also Ylönen, Mannevuo, and Kari 2022, 80 for similar practices in Finland).

In addition to the short-term risks of misrepresentation and bearing the expense of hiring a consultant (see also Huwyler 2020), there were considered to be certain disadvantages to such solo adventures regarding transnational in-house lobbying in the long run, as it might undermine their own or their Brussels-based umbrella organisation's mandate. Thus, enforcing the in-house lobbyists' favoured habitus in EU lobbying was seen as more relevant than fast wins with the help of consultant lobbyists that could in the long run increase competition with these "newcomers" to EU lobbying (Bourdieu 1993, 72).

Despite the potential for challenging in-house lobbyists' favoured disposition in EU lobbying (Lahusen 2002), the consultant lobbyists also outlined that their habitus was based on different material and symbolic conditions than in-house lobbyists. Their access to different working groups, expert groups, and formal institutions, such as the EESC, was more limited, as the consultant lobbyists did not have a similar status of long-term interest representation to assist in gaining access. Thus, it was claimed by the consultant lobbyists that they were more reliant on informal networks for gaining information (social capital) than in-house lobbyists. Regarding competent practices in engagement, it was emphasised that managing the timing in consultant lobbying is more challenging than with in-house lobbying, as the client hiring the consultant may do this too late or unwilling to do enough early on (see also Tyllström and Murray 2021). Sometimes national clients also only became active in EU lobbying when the damage was already done and the momentum for EU lobbying was long gone.

Despite these differences and the tension when talking about each other, experiences of in-house lobbying and consultant lobbying were not mutually exclusive. In fact, when asked about the relevant experience of lobbying, in-house lobbyists also mentioned their experiences of consultant lobbying if they had any. Moreover, one Helsinki-based in-house lobbyist jokingly, and quite insightfully, claimed that all self-respecting political assistants would sooner or later become consultant lobbyists for a while – as the in-house lobbyist stating this had been prior to their current position.[73]

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[73]Recent research outlines the revolving door phenomenon in Finland when it comes to consultant lobbying (Ylönen, Mannevuo, and Kari 2022).

To sum up, it is useful to understand consultant lobbying simultaneously as an additional channel for implementing in-house lobbying and challenge in-house lobbyists' favoured disposition in EU lobbying. Yet, it seems that there are more practical limitations to consultant lobbying than to in-house lobbying when it comes to status, access, and timing in EU lobbying. However, in-house lobbying and consultant lobbying experiences are not mutually exclusive with respect to gaining relevant experience of EU lobbying. To outline the relational dispositions in EU lobbying further, I next discuss in-house lobbyists' relations with decision-makers.

5.2.2   In-house lobbyists in relation to decision-makers

Previous research has shown that lobbyists are keen to interact with EU decision-makers in Brussels and beyond (Nothhaft 2017; Busby 2013; Hyvärinen 2009; Rasmussen 2015). During the interviews, as with in-house lobbyists and consultant lobbyists, decision-makers generally considered EU lobbying to be necessary and justified in relation to EU politics. However, rather than underlining the importance of engaging EU lobbyists in EU politics, decision-makers emphasised the usefulness of EU lobbying from their disposition. For example, it was mentioned that EU lobbying works *as an amplifier for a radar* when it comes to hearing about important issues transnationally. In addition, it was considered important *to get your foot in the door* in EU politics, and lobbying could help with this by providing relevant arguments and written formulations. For example, it was explicitly mentioned by one MEP that lobbyists can help in offering relevant justifications for a specific, shared interest related to the European Green Deal and to the initiatives following from it. Thus, engaging with lobbyists and a sense of their habitus was seen to relate to decision-makers' personal ambitious in EU politics (Mahoney 2008, 3–4).

This engagement was not unproblematic, as the decision-makers interviewed were sometimes quite critical of the substantive knowledge and information received through lobbying. It was stated that lobbyists did not necessarily bring anything new to the table, as they seldom provided information that the decision-makers did not already know. Sometimes there was criticism of how other decision-makers trusted and used information gained through lobbying too carelessly. Also, lobbyists were considered to mainly provide *easy words and slogans* in order *to sound knowledgeable* to those decision-makers who lacked either the time or effort to form their own opinions. Therefore, the decision-makers seemed to play down the usefulness of

lobbying more than lobbyists did, by presenting EU lobbying merely as one way of gaining (unverified) information.

Despite sometimes critical comments on each other's competence and motives for engaging in EU politics, I observed that in-house lobbyists and decision-makers worked closely together. This took place when they shared a common vision more broadly, but also more pragmatically when having a specific mutual interest. Also, when asked if the decision-makers could do their work without lobbying, often after a moment's consideration the decision-makers answered that this would be more difficult or would not necessarily improve the quality of legislation. Moreover, the idea of suddenly blocking all lobbying was considered quite unrealistic. Thus, seeing EU lobbying as an integral part of the EU political system was reinforced also by the decision-makers, as discussed particularly in Chapter 7. There were, however, aspects and moments in EU lobbying that were criticised. I shall refer to these when I discuss moments of incompetent lobbying that I observed during my fieldwork (Chapter 8).

Regarding engaging with relevant EU politicians and decision-makers, some in-house lobbyists described how it had initially been exciting and glamourous to meet them. Over time they had started to see the decision-makers *as merely normal people*. Still, there seemed to be a power hierarchy between decision-makers and in-house lobbyists based on their different habitus in EU lobbying: the in-house lobbyists had to respect the hierarchies in EU politics,[74] and adapt to the expectations, processes, and timetables coming from decision-makers and EU politics.

Firat (2019, 101–104, 111) has outlined how lobbyists are missing from formal negotiations in Brussels but exchange mutually benefiting information regarding the negotiations and beyond in private encounters with the decision-makers. Indeed, the decision-makers also seemed to have their own internal processes, that were beyond the reach of the lobbyists, or difficult to influence without a specific request for input, as this might appear to be undue interference. For example, the selection of the rapporteur among the political groups in the European Parliament, as well as the Interinstitutional Negotiations (the trilogues) were considered difficult to influence. However, having good connections with the rapporteur or shadow rapporteur participating in the trilogues, and communicating during the trialogue, was seen as a suitable and discreet way to engage. Also, indicating a forthcoming rapporteur position to a relevant MEP potentially interested in and having similar interests in the matter was considered appropriate practice, by both the MEPs and the lobbyists.

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[74] For example, it was important to know what kind of status and position an in-house lobbyist needs to gain access to different decision-makers in EU politics, as the hierarchical positions needed to match.

In addition, during the interviews it was noted how decision-makers were able to see non-public lobbying more broadly than the in-house lobbyists themselves. This was something which I also observed during my fieldwork – the lobbyists did not generally witness each other's closed-door EU lobbying practices. Only lobbyists with previous experience of different lobbying organisations or decision-makers' dispositions (revolving door experience) had firsthand experience of closed-door EU lobbying practices more broadly. On the other hand, the preparatory work in EU lobbying, taking place before engaging with the relevant decision-makers publicly or through closed-door interaction, was not visible to the decision-makers.

Overall, in-house lobbyists seemed to have quite close and casual relations with the relevant EU decision-makers, as both sought counterparts to support their aims in EU politics. The decision-makers seemed to emphasise, or criticise, the usefulness of EU lobbying rather than questioning EU lobbying as a whole. Thus, the sense of belonging was not only based on in-house lobbyists' *feel* for it but also EU decision-makers were enforcing their ability to conduct EU lobbying. Despite this, there was a hierarchical relationship between decision-makers and lobbyists, as the lobbyists needed to understand their disposition in relation to the decision-makers and to respect the hierarchies inherent in EU politics. In addition, in-house lobbyists and decision-makers see different aspects of EU lobbying, as lobbyists generally did not have access to each other's non-public EU lobbying and decision-makers did not have access to in-house-lobbyists' preparatory work in EU lobbying. These relations and everyday practices between in-house lobbyists and decision-makers are described further in the following analytical chapters, making the mutual dependence between lobbyists and decision-makers more visible.

5.3   EU lobbying relating to EU politics transnationally

"IF the EU falls… It will put an end to us."

Interview, TB_EU_5

The quotation above aptly summarises the fateful coexistence and entanglement of EU lobbying and EU politics that was present throughout my research: without the EU there is no EU lobbying. This implicit rule of relationality to EU politics was a taken for granted law of functioning (Bourdieu 1993, 72) in the everyday of EU lobbying. Thus, even though lobbyists may disagree with the European Institutions with respect to certain political processes and the direction of future agendas, the

existence, laws of functioning, and future of the EU as a whole are not challenged while participating (see also Lahusen 2023, 225–226). As a result, the bare minimum when conducting EU lobbying was to know about formal decision-making in the EU and the roles of the European Institutions in the processes (see also Mahoney 2008, 4–5, 18–21; Woll 2012; Lahusen 2023, 187, 194).

However, how EU lobbying relates to EU politics goes beyond knowing and engaging in formal decision-making. In relation to their everyday practices, in-house lobbyists emphasised the simultaneous informality in EU governance (Christiansen and Piattoni 2003; Kleine 2014; 2017) and the importance of recognising it when taking part in EU lobbying:

> "The two key things to understand are the formal and the informal channels of influence. There's a process which we all as lobbyists follow. We note what's in a commission work programme, we follow the road maps, we read the impact assessments, we respond to the consultations, we react to the proposals, we liaise with the Parliament. All the way through that process, that formal process, we get involved. But at the same time there's a lot of things that can be done informally through what you know and who you know and when you know it, and I think it's this kind of a soft power of networks and intelligence that is very important in Brussels and presumably in other important policy-making cities."
>
> Interview, TB_EU_9

In the context of the institutionalisation of EU lobbying and establishment of the EU interest group system, these issues are found to be relevant at the EU level and in its Member States (see, for example, Mahoney 2008, 26–30; Michel 2013; Bitonti and Harris 2017). This also gives support to the institutional explanations of EU lobbying style.

However, beyond different levels or state boundaries, the in-house lobbyists generally agreed that everyday EU lobbying is something that takes place transnationally, across EU Member States and Brussels, as EU decision-making was seen to be both formally and informally transnational. Thus, having a presence in Brussels is important but doing EU lobbying in the Member States cannot be overlooked either:

"I think that one of the disadvantages of lobbying here [in Brussels] is that it's not the only place in which decisions are taken […] you've got to lobby in Brussels because that's where final decisions are taken. But when it comes to discussions in the Council of Ministers, decisions about what the positions of the individual Member States and in particular in capitals [in EU Member States]. So, you need to have that lobbying also in capitals with the people who are going to be deciding what the position of Finland, or whoever [Member State] it happens to be, is going to be".

Interview, TB_EU_8

These in-house lobbyists' understandings of the relationality and need to engage with EU politics transnationally was demonstrated further through the established practices for organising in-house EU lobbying across Member States and Brussels. These transnational everyday practices of participation are often overlooked in IR research on EU lobbying, even though it is recognised that key elements in EU lobbying include engagement across European Institutions and a multitude of channels (Woll 2012, 201), and a large number of national organisations joining Brussels-based umbrella organisations (Eising, Rasch, and Rozbicka 2017, 943).

During my research, it became apparent that the formal and most visible way to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally was through chaining memberships.[75] If starting from Finland, it was quite common that the participating Helsinki-based in-house organisations had other Finnish organisations as their members, as most commonly EU lobbying was done via a national platform or umbrella organisation. Yet, it was not uncommon for national platforms to be connected to each other through membership or to have some of the same member organisations. Thus, the chains of memberships were horizontally quite overlapping with respect to the in-house lobbying organisations, and, as this was explained to me, could be established more for the purpose of national lobbying or for other purposes[76], in addition to being beneficial in EU lobbying. When then proceeding transnationally, all the participating Helsinki based in-house lobbying organisations were members of one or more European-level organisations or platforms, often based in Brussels. These memberships were explicitly seen as useful in transnational EU lobbying.

The Brussels-based umbrella organisations had members from several EU Member States, sometimes even more than one from the same Member State. On rare occasions, Brussels-based organisations were each other's members – this was, however, less common than in Finland, as most of the participating Brussels-based in-house organisations were themselves umbrella organisations based on

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[75] These memberships are marked in the EUTR and can be found on organisations' web pages.

[76] During the interviews, for example, the services and training provided by the national platforms were considered as an alternative motivation for their members to join.

memberships.[77] In addition, the memberships within a Brussels-based umbrella organisation could go beyond EU countries[78], which indicates that transnationality in EU lobbying is not limited to Member States (see also Büttner et al. 2015, 576). The chains of memberships were vertically quite structured between Brussels-based umbrella organisations and their members beyond Brussels.

However, when analysing the transnational memberships of the in-house lobbying organisations more closely, less promoted and overlapping memberships across interest group types also appeared. For example, a Finnish NGO might have UAs as its members. Also, occasionally a Finnish NGO, UA, or TB was a member of a different category of Brussels-based umbrella organisation. This shows that different types of in-house lobbying organisations were blending also through memberships. Moreover, Finnish in-house organisations often had several European level memberships simultaneously – some of these memberships being more relevant to their everyday work, as the in-house lobbyists themselves explained during the interviews. As a result, the transnational memberships were often horizontally and vertically quite complex, yet were established practice in organising in-house EU lobbying competently.

Moreover, the organisation of EU lobbying transnationally seemed to be hierarchical, but was also based on interdependency (Kauppi 2018, 69–71) when it came to the power to do EU lobbying. As explained during the interviews, the logic of organising in-house EU lobbying transnationally through memberships and having overlapping transnational memberships is foremost a practical and is related to the institutional aspects of EU lobbying. In relation to the EU's decision-making structure, national members and Brussels-based umbrella organisations were seen to have different kinds of access to influence and gaining information in practice.

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[77] However, two of the participating Brussels-based European organisations did not have national membership as they were cause and expert-based organisations.

[78] During the fieldwork I observed how in the Brussels-based umbrella lobbying organisations transnationality went beyond EU Member States as there were national members from non-EU countries. Also, as the UK was in the process of leaving the EU during my fieldwork, it often seemed that the UK lobbying organisations were not withdrawing their membership from the Brussels-based umbrella organisations, at least not at the beginning of 2020. Also, during the interviews, the Finnish in-house lobbyists who had extensive experience in lobbying described how transnational European lobbying had deep roots, and had actually started before Finland officially joined the European Union. Thus, many Finnish in-house lobbying organisations had been members of European umbrella organisations even before Finland joined the EU, and some of the Finnish in-house lobbying organisations had also established their Brussels offices even before Finland joined the EU in 1995, as membership had been seen as a forthcoming changing reality.

This was demonstrated further through the rules regarding the division of labour in gaining access to European Institutions (see also Bouwen 2002, 383; 2004; Eising 2007) which underlined the hierarchical elements in transnational EU lobbying. Most of the in-house lobbyists, both Helsinki- and Brussels-based, agreed that in general, EU lobbying of the EU Commission and European Parliament was best conducted through Brussels-based umbrella organisations. Also, Brussels-based organisations were engaging with the Permanent Representation of Member States to the EU located in Brussels, especially with the Permanent Representation of countries holding the current and near future Presidency in the Council of the European Union.[79] They were considered to have a more suitable profile, access, and mandate in Brussels. For example, the Brussels-based umbrella organisations often had internal hierarchies that matched those of the decision-makers, and the relevant decision-makers already knew them and whom they represented. It was seen as practical to have *one voice* representing many in Brussels:

> "Almost all actors here in Brussels are interested hear what we say, if we have something to say, because it is very practical to have one voice speaking. Often the people in the Commission or the Parliament, they say, 'gosh, we are really happy to have you because if not we would have to go around 28 countries, and possibly even more sectors' and so on."

<div align="right">Interview, TB_EU_7</div>

Nonetheless, national in-house lobbying organisations were considered to have better access to relevant decision-makers in Member States (see also Mahoney 2008, 123–124) of the same nationality. This was especially the case with national ministries and MEPs. Thus, it was generally agreed that national in-house lobbying organisations held a key role in influencing the European Council, as national positions are formulated in the capital cities of EU Member States. It was also recognised that EU lobbying done in the Member States could fail if carried out by someone who did not know the decision-makers, the language, and the local codes of conduct. For example, when it comes to EU lobbying taking place in Finland, it was emphasised how the Eurocrat circles in Finland are quite small (see Heiskala et al. 2022, 125–34 for more information on Finnish Eurocrats), such that it was especially important to behave well, or word would get around. Also, during my

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[79] During my fieldwork I also observed how in cases of shared interests, lobbyists also engaged and exchanged information with non-EU countries' Missions to the European Union located in Brussels.

fieldwork I realised that using one single language that everyone is expected to know seemed more important in Finland than in Brussels.[80]

While transnational engagement beyond Brussels was considered necessary for EU lobbying to be influential, what was considered necessary in everyday engagement was perhaps clearer in Brussels. From the perspective of Brussels-based in-house lobbying organisations, it was regarded as important that national members were active and *did their part* in EU lobbying – meaning that they reached out to relevant decision-makers and did public advocacy in Member States, as well as supporting the Brussels-based umbrella organisations by *giving them what they needed* for EU lobbying taking place in Brussels. Sometimes the Brussels-based in-house lobbyists also mentioned that their members expected them to do more than they were capable of with the resources available to them and without transnational engagement from their members:

> "[…] Support that we need from them [national members], really to be more effective. Because we know that being only present in Brussels and doing the advocacy work here is not really enough, to achieve results."

<div align="right">Interview, NGO_EU_14</div>

Beyond influencing and being effective, there was also transnational interdependency between in-house lobbyists relating to the ability to collect relevant intel to adjust EU lobbying in reaction to timely debates. It was stated that national members and Brussels-based umbrella organisations had insights of different kinds:

> "It's our [umbrella organisation's] job to make the connection between 'yes, the EU – it seems that it's ripe'. And then... from the members we learned that they have positions, they have expertise, they have evidence. When you have those things connected, it is when a successful advocacy project is put together."

<div align="right">Interview, NGO_EU_11</div>

What was also commonly highlighted as important both in Member States and Brussels was that EU lobbying needs to be relevant and current in terms of EU politics and jargon.[81] The in-house lobbyists often discussed how this is quite

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[80] Even though Finland is a bilingual country with Swedish as its second official language, in practice fluency in Finnish was required, or at least made it easier to engage in lobbying in Finland. When compared with Brussels, even though English was generally the common language, it was not uncommon for the language to change several times on one occasion, and everyday work was conducted in a multilingual environment, with the aid of highly competent interpreters.

[81] I also became very familiar with this throughout my fieldwork. If I accidently used the wrong terms and thus demonstrated my incompetence in EU jargon, I was politely but firmly corrected by the

demanding, as formal and informal discussion relating to present EU politics takes place simultaneously across Member States and Brussels, and the conversations can be quite different in tone (see also Ekengren 2002, 71). For example, in relation to emerging climate and environmental issues, the importance of understanding which aspects could be problematic for different Member States was emphasised, as well as the reasons for certain issues within the agenda becoming politicised. As EU politics spreads transnationally to Member States, there is no single language or media for public debate on the EU either (see, for example, Greenwood 2007, 334; Mahoney 2008, 25; Heiskala et al. 2022). Thus, EU lobbyists tried to listen to the different conversations transnationally and to use their transnational networks to understand what direction EU politics were going in general and in relation to some specific issues – without formally having access to EU decision-making. As a result, according to the lobbyists, sometimes the decision-makers complimented them for being very well-informed and having a good understanding of something that could be problematic with respect to a certain issue transnationally.

Also, even though participating in-house lobbyists often demonstrated their competence in understanding EU decision-making processes at the practical level (in Member States, Brussels, or preferably both), it was apparent that engaging in EU lobbying transnationally was beyond anyone's competence, even when focusing on a one specific policy dossier. Overall, it was thought that according the 'motive force' (Bourdieu 2021, 69) - to be successful and influential in EU lobbying - transnational co-operation across Member States and Brussels was needed:

> "I think we've been most successful, if I look back at the last ten years, on those occasions where we've strategised perfectly together and when we've had advocacy both within Brussels and EU Member States level all together. So it was, everyone thought it was worth investing in that advocacy both in Brussels and in different capitals. So, I think that was when we were most successful in convincing the EU institutions to change policy or adopt new policies."

> Interview, NGO_EU_15

To summarise, analysing the law of functioning and taken for granted rules of everyday practices unveils EU lobbying as not an autonomous field of power but rather as strongly relational (heteronomy) with respect to EU politics transnationally. As a result, there are established yet overlooked practices employed in organising in-house EU lobbying transnationally. The formal and most visible practices are

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lobbyists – my impression was that they were helping me to come across as competent in relation to current EU politics.

demonstrated through chaining memberships, to engage in EU lobbying across Member States and Brussels. There are taken for granted rules between Brussels-based umbrella organisations and their national members, regarding the division of labour that emphasised the hierarchical elements when engaging with relevant decision-makers (frontstage EU lobbying). However, there are also transnational interdependencies, as organising in-house lobbying transnationally is required to align EU lobbying with the present realities of EU politics and public debates across the EU. Overall, the field of EU lobbying is transnational across Member States and Brussels, as there is a general understanding that EU lobbying needs to take place transnationally to be competent.

Yet, transnational engagement in EU lobbying did not always proceed as smoothly as anticipated, as there were different kinds of power dynamics involved in everyday EU lobbying, as elaborated throughout the analysis. Amongst them the issue of how the NGO, UA, and TB organisations' economic capital is related to the ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally, as discussed below.

5.4 Economic capital: The ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally

Economic capital refers to capital that is directly and instantly convertible into money (Bourdieu 1986). Economic resources, or more specifically the interest groups' sources of income, are one of the most common ways to study interest groups' resources in EU lobbying (see for example Beyers and Kerremans 2007). Many studies have shown that economic resources relate to power in EU lobbying (Dür and Mateo 2012, 969-987; Klüver 2011, 483-506; Greer, da Fonseca, and Adolph 2008, 403-433; Coen 2007, 333-345), while others have outlined the difficulty of studying economic resources due to incomplete data (see, for example, Beyers and Kerremans 2007). Nowadays researchers also tend to ask about staff size rather than lobbying budgets when aiming to grasp economic resources in EU lobbying via surveys (see the discussion in Crepaz et al. 2022, 24). Here I focus on the perceived overall importance of financial resources and allocated workforce in EU lobbying, as during my research these aspects were emphasised in relation to the ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally.

Regarding the importance of financial resources, currently the trend in EU lobbying in Brussels seems to be towards bigger budgets and more staff – both considered key to guaranteeing suitable quantity and speed in presence – which may

be a disadvantage for NGOs (Lahusen 2023, 70, 208–9). During my fieldwork, the financial resources allocated for EU lobbying were understood as a *given* when one became an in-house lobbyist in a certain organisation.[82] Interestingly, in-house lobbyists in general, like decision-makers, seemed to take it for granted that NGOs had more limited economic resources for EU lobbying than other actors. It was pointed out that NGOs were not expected to provide lobbying events as glamorous as those put on by business actors, as everyone understood that they did not have comparable resources. Yet, both NGOs themselves and other in-house lobbyists considered NGOs to be competent and influential in EU lobbying despite their limited economic resources:

> "The size of the organisation is not the point. But the results. 'Get results or get out', as they say [smiles]. After all, it is our mission [to get results], it's as simple as that."
>
> Interview, NGO_fin_2

> "At the EU level especially, some NGO networks, in relation to their resources – I mean resources measured in money and how much staff they have – they do really good advocacy work."
>
> Interview, UA_fin_3

> An in-house TB lobbyist, while checking on Twitter, points out how NGOs may be limited by their economic resources but how they do good public lobbying and how they have a better profile to do public advocacy – "we could never pull off those kinds of campaigns in the social media".
>
> Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, spring 2020

When it came to the lobbying agenda, however, limited economic resources, especially limited workforce, was mentioned as a reason to focus on more limited issues in EU lobbying than perhaps was desired (see also Lahusen 2023, 70–71). Helsinki and Brussels based NGOs in particular outlined how the lack of economic resources impacted on what issue areas could be included in the lobbying agenda, as there were not enough resources to advocate in all of them. However, UA and TB lobbyists also explained that they did not have the economic resources to do everything but had to be selective in EU lobbying and prioritise more than they sometimes wanted.

In relation to the lobbying agenda, it was explained to me that there was ongoing discussion within organisations about what to exclude if something new was added

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[82] Only some NGO lobbyists mentioned that they could, or were expected to, seek additional funding to maintain or increase the funding for EU lobbying.

to the agenda, as there were not enough resources to do lobbying efficiently if the scope was too broad. In this context, it was also explained that due to limited economic resources there was not enough money to recruit more staff. In addition, limited economic resources were sometimes mentioned as a reason for *ad hoc* lobbying, where EU lobbying was mainly reactive rather than being planned well ahead, as it was not feasible to focus on relevant issues as broadly and early as desired. Thus, if not limiting efficiency, economic resources seemed to relate to the scope (limited presence) of the EU lobbying agenda and played a role in prioritising in EU lobbying.

Based on his empirical study, Lahusen (2023, 141–142) summarises how EU lobbying in Brussels has become a full-time, salaried occupation across different sectors, yet the imbalance between different organisations in staffing is unclear. When analysed through workforce and worktime allocated to EU lobbying in Helsinki and Brussels, there seem to be imbalances in economic resources, not only between different organisations but also transnationally (see also Dür and Mateo 2012).

When it came to the workforce in Brussels-based umbrella organisations, the size of the personnel varied, but not necessarily between different sectors. The biggest Brussels-based NGO, UA, or TB organisations might have a staff of 40 or 50 people, and although not all these staff necessarily worked on EU lobbying, they often had related or supporting roles. By contrast, the smallest organisations, often NGOs, might have only a few people working on EU lobbying. Nevertheless, smaller organisations were very well connected and co-operated in Brussels as well as transnationally.

The imbalance in staffing seemed to be more evident between sectors across Helsinki-based in-house lobbying organisations engaged in EU lobbying. During my research, it became apparent that smaller organisations, especially NGOs, were also very well connected in Helsinki. However, when it comes to the workforce in Helsinki-based NGOs, the same personnel might be hired to do national, EU, and sometimes even municipal lobbying. As a result, the Helsinki-based NGOs often seemed to focus on engaging in EU lobbying taking place in Finland – even though it was openly discussed that, given the EU's transnational decision-making structure, this was perhaps not enough. However, because of the limited workforce, the Helsinki-based NGOs explained that they could not focus more or allocate more of

their working hours to EU issues.[83] None of the participating Finnish NGOs had an office in Brussels at the time of participating, and travelling to Brussels was quite rare – also because of environmental concerns emphasised during the emergence of the European Green Deal. In general, Helsinki-based NGOs had quite a limited presence in Brussels.

However, within Helsinki-based UAs and TBs there was often at least one person, or even an entire department, dedicated to EU or EU and international affairs. More working hours were allocated to EU lobbying and the engagement was also more transnational, as the UAs and TBs took part in EU lobbying both in Helsinki and in Brussels. Further, a need for a physical presence in both Helsinki and Brussels was often emphasised. Thus, having an office in Brussels – which also signals having the resources required for EU lobbying (Bunea 2014) – or travelling to Brussels regularly (almost weekly or at least monthly if something urgent emerged) was considered to be part of competent EU lobbying. However, limited economic resources were also mentioned as a reason for sharing an office with several UAs or TBs in Brussels[84], or as a reason for not being able to establish one.

Regarding transnational participation via Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work, all Helsinki-based in-house organisations considered this to be an integral part of EU lobbying. However, Helsinki-based NGO lobbyists quite often mentioned that following EU issues was time-consuming and participating in Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work was laborious. Their counterparts, Brussels-based umbrella NGOs, also explained that it was difficult to get national member organisations engaged in EU lobbying.

On the contrary, Helsinki-based UA and TB lobbyists seemed to be more integrated into Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work and to see this as an integral part of EU lobbying, seeing this as aiding them greatly in staying informed on current EU issues. If anything, it was argued that other lobbyists and management in their organisations could be more active in EU affairs. Thus, when it came to taking part in Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work, national NGOs often seemed to be following from a distance, whereas UAs and TBs contributed more closely.

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[83] It was also discussed that employment contracts in the NGO sector tend to be project-based and thus of quite short duration. This conflicted with the aim of having a long-term commitment to decision-makers, which was expected in competent EU lobbying.

[84] When this was the case, the Helsinki-based organisations that had a shared local office in Brussels co-operated closely in EU lobbying, yet publicly conducted their EU lobbying as separate organisations.

The differences in economic resources and their allocation with respect to transnational EU lobbying became more apparent during the Brussels-based umbrella organisations' face-to-face meetings. During the time of my research, Brussels-based umbrella NGOs arranged face-to-face meetings quite seldom (between one and four times a year) whereas Brussels-based UA and TB umbrella organisations had several internal face-to-face meetings and working groups' gatherings regularly in Brussels (often once every four to eight weeks). The internal meetings between NGOs were also quite modest compared to the UA and TB meetings, which sometimes resembled the working group meetings at the European Parliament, with expensive simultaneous interpreting and large facilities to host all the participants from national member organisations coming to Brussels.[85]

Yet all organisations had constant communication via email lists and online meetings with members working more closely on specific issues. However, these communication channels lacked the informal networking aspect and sharing of informal information that occurred during internal face-to-face meetings in Brussels (see also Crepaz et al. 2022, 136). Also, during the emergence of the European Green Deal and prior to COVID-19, technical opportunities for online meetings were more limited, with connections often breaking down, which meant online meetings sometimes functioned quite poorly. Overall, it seemed that Helsinki and Brussels based NGOs were more isolated than UAs and TBs in these two locations because of differences in the workforce and worktime allocated to EU lobbying transnationally. As such it seems that UAs and TBs were investing their economic resources in participating transnationally, and thus also quite subtly transforming economic capital into other forms of capital (Bourdieu 2021, 193–194) – cultural and especially social – in EU lobbying, as discussed further below.

Overall, there seemed to be a common understanding that there are other aspects apart from economic resources that are relevant to the field of EU lobbying (Bourdieu 2021, 164–65; Lahusen 2023, 209). However, all the in-house organisations seemed to share a need to be selective and prioritise their presence according to the economic resources they allocated to EU lobbying. Also, limited economic resources made it difficult to conduct well-planned lobbying as widely as was sometimes desired. Regarding the workforce, Helsinki-based NGOs in particular seemed to have quite limited resources allocated to EU lobbying. Helsinki and Brussels based NGOs were also more separated than UAs and TBs in these two

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[85] Also, the internal meetings sometimes took place in locations other than Brussels, for example when arranged in the country where the Presidency in the Council of the European Union was at the time.

locations, with UAs and TBs seemingly having more economic resources to organise their EU lobbying transnationally – which reinforced their ability to convert economic capital into other forms of capital that were effective and signalled belonging within the transnational field of EU lobbying. The analysis below of cultural and economic capital elaborates upon how the ability to do transnational EU lobbying did not rely solely on economic capital, evidencing further aspects relating to limited engagement, beyond the NGO sector.

5.5 Summary of the chapter: The in-house lobbyists' feeling of being in, EU lobbying as a transnational field of power, and economic resources relating to the ability to organise EU lobbying transnationally

The key results of Chapter 5 with respect to the first research question (*How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?*) relate to analysis of in-house lobbyists' dispositions, and EU lobbying in relation to EU politics.

By analysing EU lobbying practices through both Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists' dispositions, I outlined how the in-house lobbyists' habitus entailed a favoured capacity to do EU lobbying. Essential to this was a feeling of *being in* the disposition to do EU lobbying and being first in line to hear about and understand EU politics without being very visibly involved. There was competition, but also co-operation, between in-house and consultant lobbyists doing EU lobbying. Thus, it is useful to understand consultant lobbying simultaneously as an additional channel for implementing in-house lobbying and as challenging in-house lobbyists' favoured disposition in EU lobbying. In-house lobbyists' homogeneous habitus also makes visible how minorities were silently missing yet seemingly unproblematically represented in EU lobbying by lobbyists often belonging to the mainstream population.

There also seemed to be a mutual dependency between lobbyists and decision-makers, as the latter deemed EU lobbying to be useful in EU decision-making. In general, in-house lobbyists had quite close and casual relations with the relevant EU decision-makers, as both were seeking counterparts to support their aims in EU politics. However, there was a hierarchical relationship between decision-makers and lobbyists. Thus, EU lobbyists needed to understand their disposition in relation to the decision-makers and to respect the hierarchies inherent in EU politics. Moreover,

different dispositions in EU lobbying (in-house lobbyists, consultant lobbyists, decision-makers) were relational rather than separating when previous experience of EU lobbying, also gained through a revolving door experience, is taken into account, and changes in dispositions are contemplated in a longer perspective.

Analysing the law of functioning and taken for granted rules with respect to everyday practices unveils EU lobbying as not an autonomous field of power, but rather as closely linked (heteronomy) to EU politics. As a result, there were established, yet often overlooked, practices to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally, beyond Brussels. Firstly, chaining memberships horizontally and transnationally. Secondly, a hierarchical division of labour in engaging in EU lobbying across Member States and Brussels. Thirdly, interdependency in adjusting EU lobbying to the present realities of EU politics transnationally. In the next two chapters, however, I elaborate the understanding of the field of EU lobbying as relational to EU politics yet as a separate transnational field of power. This is achieved through analysing relational spaces (frontstage and backstage) and timing in EU lobbying.

Regarding the second research question (*What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?*), while there are other aspects apart from economic resources considered necessary for effective EU lobbying, all organisations seemed to share a need to be selective and prioritise their presence in EU lobbying due to their economic resources allocated to EU lobbying. Also, limited economic resources made it difficult to conduct well-planned lobbying as widely as desired. Most importantly, economic capital relates to the ability to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally. NGOs' relationally scarce economic resources (workforce and the financial resources allocated for lobbying) relate to more limited transnational practices in EU lobbying when compared to UA and TB lobbyists. As UAs and TBs seemed to have more economic resources to organise their EU lobbying transnationally, their ability to transfer economic capital into other forms of capital relevant to EU lobbying was enforced.

6 SPACES AND CULTURAL CAPITAL: ACCESS TO TRANSNATIONAL EU LOBBYING

In this chapter, through Goffman's framework of relational spaces and Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, I first outline how impression management separates the frontstage and backstage in EU lobbying. Second, I analyse how cultural capital, mainly embodied and institutionalised cultural capital, relates to the ability to gain access to transnational EU lobbying. Throughout this and the following analytical chapters, I draw attention to some differences, but more so to the similarities, between the in-house EU lobbying of NGO, UA, and TB organisations.

6.1   Relational spaces in EU lobbying: Frontstage and backstage

"There is a part that is visible. And there are certainly parts that are less visible."

Interview, NGO_EU_13

When studying relational spaces in EU lobbying, Goffman's (1959) framework of frontstage and backstage is applied to study public and non-public interactions (Naurin 2007a; 2007b; Nothhaft 2017). According to the framework, holding impression management in relation to the audience is essential in the frontstage interaction. Thus, the term backstage actually refers to a space where actors can act more freely, as the audience is not present, and where they can also plan future frontstage interactions. Moreover, the interaction taking place backstage is not necessarily physically hidden – the term is used to refer to the nature of the interaction, and thus to distinguish it from frontstage the interaction frontstage. (Goffman 1959, 112–113, 127–128.)

Research applying Goffman's frontstage/backstage framework to EU lobbying often describes the audience as the general public. In this way public interaction is seen as frontstage and the interaction with decision-makers behind closed doors as backstage (Naurin 2007a; 2007b; Nothhaft 2017, 124). Based on this framing, one of the main conclusions is that lobbyists actually sound better and seek for compromises in backstage interactions with decision-makers, where there is less

publicity and transparency (Naurin 2007b). Moreover, EU lobbying is somewhat inherently opaque, as the core of lobbying is not to do it behind closed doors but to get it done backstage (Nothhaft 2017, 150, 152, 154).[86]

As the analysis below shows, I largely agree with these conclusions that elaborate the understanding about the interaction between lobbyists and decision-makers in EU lobbying. During my fieldwork, I likewise observed how lobbyists often sounded better behind closed doors when they had private interactions with the decision-makers than during public interactions. However, as I also observed EU lobbying practices when decision-makers were not present, I elaborate on how Goffman's framework can be applied in understanding EU lobbying through paying more attention to the practices of adjusting impression management competently across relational spaces, as outlined below.

6.1.1 Impression management: Separating frontstage from backstage in EU lobbying

Similarly to others (Naurin 2007a; 2007b; Nothhaft 2017), during my fieldwork I observed how public rhetoric was often quite blunt and sometimes confrontational, whereas discussions taking place behind closed doors involved more listening and compromising. I also managed to reflect on this observation with an in-house lobbyist during my fieldwork:

> I bump into a Helsinki-based in-house lobbyist whom I know just after a public event where the chairman from the same in-house organisation was speaking. I share my observation – that the chairman sounded quite black and white when talking publicly, a lot more than when I heard him talking on the same issues privately before his public appearance. The lobbyist nods and seems to be weighing up the issue for a few seconds before commenting that it's not an easy task to speak publicly as a chairman of a well-known lobbying organisation. The lobbyist further reflects how it is a constant balancing act between talking to "one's own" and thus being firm on the issues that are important to the members, but at the same time it is good not to go too far in provoking relevant decision-makers unless this is intentional in order to generate further public debate.
>
> Observation notes, passive observing at Europe Forum, Turku, Finland, summer 2019

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[86] Based on comparative studies, it has also been found that in the backstage "quiet politics", when political salience and public interest are low, corporate interest groups seem to dominate (Culpepper 2010).

As in the situation described above, in public EU lobbying taking place in the media, social media, or in public debates, it was considered important to maintain the public impression of an unbending representative of interests. Sometimes it was also mentioned that decision-makers understood this, and how there is a shared understanding that public and private tones in EU lobbying are different. After all, decision-makers, especially politicians, were also seen to adopt different tones publicly and privately (see also Wodak 2015; Busby 2013; Ringel 2019) – as I also observed in my fieldwork.

In addition, in public lobbying the transnational nature of EU lobbying is apparent. It was often mentioned that the media in Brussels, such as the newspaper *Politico*, were mainly produced for Eurocrats and the EU elite. Likewise, the existing research draws attention to the lack of both pan-EU media and commonly shared public debate across the EU Member States (see, for example, Greenwood 2007, 334; Mahoney 2008, 25; Heiskala et al. 2022). Thus, among the lobbyists it was considered that media in the Member States was necessary for putting public political pressure on national decision-makers, MEPs, and to some extent on the national Commissioner part of the College of Commissioners when it comes to EU affairs. However, the Helsinki-based lobbyists often mentioned difficulties in getting national media to show an interest in EU politics, unless concerning something negative or a scandal.

It was also recognised that overly aggressive public lobbying could jeopardise established long-term relations with key decision-makers. Also, I observed that if things were heading in the right direction, according to the lobbyists, public attention was avoided rather than sought. It was considered that the less attention and publicity there was, the more smoothly things normally went (see also Culpepper 2010 on quiet politics). During the interviews it was mentioned that public debates could backfire, as processes could become excessively politicised through publicity – an issue some lobbyists had learnt to avoid through experience. Thus, simultaneously with public debates on climate and sustainability during my research, a great deal of everyday EU lobbying, more or less closely related to climate and sustainability, continued to take place quietly without wider publicity.

During my fieldwork, however, there were at least four occasions when public lobbying in the media or social media was pushed forward by the in-house lobbyists. First, this was done to put political pressure on the decision-makers at the end of the process, especially if the process was uncertain or not heading in the desired direction. It is recognised that at this stage there are often only two publicly visible camps of lobbyists, the proponent and opponents of the proposal (van Schendelen

2013, 175). As EU decision-makers, MEPs are dependent on national popularity and thus follow national media closely, such that exerting pressure through national public debate was seen as a relevant practice in EU lobbying. Second, it might occur at times when there was no direct access to decision-makers for lobbying, or when access was difficult to obtain, for example during the trilogues. Third, when wider public support was needed for agenda setting or to block something from emerging on the agenda, for example during elections. During my research, it was often discussed that the wider public discussion on climate change, which intensified during autumn 2018 and continued during the EP election in spring 2019, created the momentum to advocate for the importance of including climate, and environmental and sustainability issues on the EU agenda more fully. Fourth, it was outlined that being visible in public discussion also opened up opportunities for closed-door lobbying, as the image of a relevant advocate was seen to contribute towards gaining access to closed-door EU lobbying. As climate and sustainability issues were emerging, many in-house lobbying organisations aimed to emphasise publicly their mandate, expertise, and the sector's affectedness in relation to these matters. These examples also demonstrate how time-sensitive public lobbying is, and underline the need to draw further attention to the timespace (Meyer-Sahling and Goetz 2009) of EU lobbying.

In relation to power in quiet politics, superior knowledge and access to the relevant decision-makers are seen as key resources (Culpepper 2010, xv, 4, 177–178). In-house lobbyists also outlined how previous too critical or aggressive public lobbying could make it more difficult to gain closed-door access to decision-makers. There were a few cases when, during the interviews, the lobbyists explained how decision-makers had explicitly told them that their public advocacy was too provocative and critical. The lobbyists also wondered if it had made their access to those decision-makers somewhat more difficult. On the other hand, they saw it as their role to be publicly critical if there was reason for it from their organisation's perspective. In this way it was also recognised that impression management with respect to decision-makers in public and in closed-door EU lobbying practices were related.

I also observed how the lobbyists were more subtle in their impression management with respect to EU lobbying which was taking place behind closed doors than they were in public. For example, they were willing to have critical discussion on their own positions, often also conceding some weaknesses in them or bringing other voices into the conversation. Thus, behind closed doors the

decision-makers and lobbyists could have *open* and *trusting* conversations, as described by the in-house lobbyists.

However, the lobbyists explained that they were maintaining a certain work role as an in-house lobbyist in these closed-door interactions with the decision-makers. They could also adjust this role, depending on what they knew about the decision-maker in advance, to make the interaction as smooth as possible – even more so when their interests were contrary to those of the decision-maker. It was considered their duty as lobbyists, and often also as guests visiting the decision-makers' offices, to behave well so *nothing would stand in the way* of delivering their message (see also Woll 2006, 461–462; Naurin 2007b). Thus, in closed-door lobbying a backstage-like feeling was aimed for, even though the lobbyists controlled the impression they gave consciously or according to what they had learnt.

Furthermore, I was able to observe how the in-house lobbyists modified but yet retained their impression management when changing from quite passionate public lobbying to more toned-down closed-door EU lobbying. Here is one example:

> I notice a familiar lobbyist in a corner, listening quietly while a commissioner-to-be is talking in an event held by a Brussels based think tank. I know that the lobbyist represents a very critical stance on this particular matter – just 30 minutes before I observed how the very same lobbyist was speaking publicly in an event held in the European Parliament and firmly opposing these issues that the commissioner-to-be is now defending. Despite that, the lobbyist remains silent, even during the Q&A, although others pose some critical and provocative questions. Later, during the networking drinks, I see how the lobbyist uses the opportunity to talk to the commissioner-to-be privately, aside from everyone else. They seem to have a very engaging, pleasant and quite long discussion.[87]
>
> Observation notes, passive observation, Brussels, autumn 2019

During my fieldwork I was also able to observe how the impression management, so tactful during closed door EU lobbying, was dropped quite fast when the decision-makers were not around:

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[87] Even though I could not hear, presumably the arguments of the lobbyists were not as incisive as in their public appearance earlier. If they had been, I assume the private discussion would have been quite short.

A lobbyist, so calm just a few minutes ago in a meeting with decision-makers, absolutely loses it. All the frustration comes out on the rainy street, as the meeting was overly long without anything concrete being achieved, and now we are late for the next meeting and there is once again some problem with the public transportation, as we are hurrying to the next meeting.

<div align="right">Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019</div>

After a lobbying meeting in the European Parliament, a lobbyist is laughing and is rolling their eyes on the questions that a MEP was asking during a lobbying meeting – the same questions that were answered very politely when the MEP was present.

<div align="right">Observation notes, passive observation, Brussels, autumn 2019</div>

Moreover, those instances where lobbyists suddenly changed from backstage mood to frontstage impression management were also revealing, as during this occasion that I was able to observe. The impression management was restored quite fast, and the interaction changed from backstage to frontstage again as a decision-maker suddenly entered the physical space:

Quite blunt and direct internal conversation is taking place amongst in-house lobbyists on the umbrella organisation's premises in Brussels, while waiting for a high-profile visitor to arrive. I might be the only one who notices that the recently elected Commissioner who has been invited to join the meeting is already peaking inside the meeting room – his entrance is so subtle that he goes unnoticed. He enters the room, listens to the ongoing conversation for a few seconds and then turns around to exit the room again, as he seems to notice that this is not for his ears. Only now does the chair of the meeting notice the Commissioner, announces a break in the meeting and rushes to welcome the Commissioner. When the meeting continues and the Commissioner is officially welcomed as a visitor, the atmosphere in the room has changed completely. It seems that everyone has straightened their posture a bit and the interaction mode is more formal – the Commissioner first delivers a keynote-like speech and then there is time for a Q & A, where the chair gives the turns. As I observe the interaction, I notice that the earlier atmosphere of talking out of turn and expressing honest opinions has completely vanished.

<div align="right">Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019</div>

Overall, when seen from the in-house lobbyists' disposition, the impression management towards decision-makers holds both in public and closed-door EU lobbying. Thus, both public and closed-door interactions can be understood as frontstage in EU lobbying. In another words, frontstage EU lobbying in my research covers both "inside and outside political arenas" (Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017, 311). In the analysis below, I outline the practices in backstage EU lobbying taking

place among the EU lobbyists and how they relate to frontstage interactions with decision-makers.

6.1.2 Making the backstage adjustment practices among EU lobbyists visible: Compromising, co-operating, and competing transnationally

> "And then, we share again the information back in our confederation to see where do we stand, what have we done, did we already make some impact? Or should we change our strategy? So, it's a bit of a living ongoing process of going out and in and out and in."

<div align="right">Interview, NGO_EU_15</div>

During the research, I had frequent conversations with lobbyists about what was behind the current issues in EU politics. Through these conversations, I started to realise that the lobbyists were not only acutely aware of current EU politics but also of other lobbyists' positions with respect to these issues (see also Lahusen 2023, 113–117). It seemed that practices in EU lobbying could not be fully grasped without understanding the practices that take place between lobbyists when the decision-makers are not present. Thus, as I outline in this chapter, the frontstage and backstage of EU lobbying are two sides of the same coin. This is explored by focusing on backstage practices of the in-house organisations in adjusting their frontstage EU lobbying.

In Chapter 5, I discussed how the practice of talking with one voice, through Brussels-based umbrella organisations, was seen as granting more leverage in transnational EU lobbying. The in-house lobbyists considered that this was also what decision-makers expected in frontstage EU lobbying as it would be confusing to deliver different messages from *the same side*. Thus, reaching a common position within the Brussels-based umbrella organisation was deemed beneficial in adjusting transnational EU lobbying to the decision-makers' expectations, even when this might mean going along with majority decisions or not reaching an optimal position if considered from the perspective of Helsinki-based in-house lobbyists.

However, agreeing to this "one voice" among national members in the backstage was not always easy:

I [*interviewing*]:	"How do you agree on that common position? How does it go?"
TB_EU_5:	"Well, it's a hell of a fight [I start to laugh as the answer is so blunt, the interviewee also grins]. Actually, this is quite a current topic today. I just received an angry letter from the chairperson of a national member organisation, where I was criticised – on behalf of the organisation – for not supporting their specific position […] in nearly every issue we have an internal opposition. However, what is important is that the internal opposition does not remain the same as it could undermine the unity in the long run."

> The interview [with a Brussels-based umbrella organisation] was interrupted twice, as an angry lobbyist from a national member organisation was calling to complain about the common position that was taken.
>
> Research diary note, initial impression after an interview, autumn 2018

Another sensitive issue was how much detail was included in the common positions of the umbrella organisations. It was explained that sometimes, because of disagreeing national members, the common positions had to remain quite general as it was easier to agree without going into too much detail. Moreover, agreeing on details, such as specific terms used, might require quite extensive debate. During my fieldwork, I observed an internal meeting hosted by an umbrella organisation in Brussels, where a heated discussion on a term used in one single sentence in a position paper went on for two hours amongst national members, after which the issue was left to be discussed later.

I also observed national members carrying out internal lobbying on each other and toward the umbrella organisation to get their views included in the common positions – it could take place transnationally prior to the internal meeting online or during the meetings through private discussions. For example, I observed how during a coffee break of an internal meeting one national member aimed to find internal alleys for a specific, controversial view on climate issues in order to bring the issue onto the agenda of the umbrella organisation. After strategically discussing with other national members one by one who might be willing to assist, it became

apparent that there was no wider support, and I never heard the issue mentioned again during my observation.

The internal lobbying was also about actively commenting and providing suitable formations to be included directly in the common positions. Thus, engaging in debates with other national member organisations could promote changes in the initial positions:

> "Compromises need to be made [in order to agree on a common position in an umbrella organisation]. But having said that, it doesn't always need to be toned down like the lowest common denominator. What often happens in these working groups [organised by the Brussels based umbrella organisation for its national members] is that they sort of listen to each other, their perspectives, and they learn. 'Ah, we haven't thought of that', 'Oh, that's how you deal with it, that is really best practice'. So often, let's say the ambition is to end up even [further], through this common and joint thinking process, which then leads to the famous position papers."

> Interview, TB_EU_7

Although common positions were often finally reached within the Brussels-based umbrella organisations, this was not always the case. It was pointed out that some topics could be dropped altogether if members disagreed too much early on – this, of course, required the national members to be active at an early stage. Moreover, by avoiding certain internal discussions altogether, disagreements within the umbrella organisations remained below the surface. Both Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists mentioned that, with time and experience, they had learnt to avoid issues that were internally too sensitive.

Because of these limitations, the national members could aim for more ambitious EU lobbying if the position of the umbrella organisation was not favourable for them. This was not an ideal situation, as it was seen to require a lot more resources from the national organisation than engaging in common everyday transnational EU lobbying as done through a Brussels-based umbrella organisation.[88] Moreover, to ensure a sound footing when participating in umbrella organisations' work, too radical a detachment could undermine the position of a national member organisation in the future.

In addition, it was considered important to keep up a positive and united public image with respect to transnational in-house lobbying, especially towards the decision-makers. Sometimes if there were very controversial internal issues, members or staff would leak them to create public and internal pressure. These

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[88] These were sometimes the occasions when consultant lobbyists were retained.

cracks in public image were, however, considered to undermine the reputation of EU lobbying as a profession, such that internal controversies were preferably kept to the backstage. I also observed internal discussions where it was emphasised that sensitive issues and internal controversies should not be leaked as it was important to keep in mind the bigger picture in EU lobbying – maintaining the ability to influence.

While agreeing common positions and coordinating EU lobbying transnationally took time and effort, experienced lobbyists working both in Helsinki and Brussels based in-house organisations mentioned that they had come to know the positions and arguments of different national members. Thus, when it came to internally less controversial issues, they felt that they could do the everyday lobbying work without needing internal discussions or consultations on everything – in practice this was also deemed necessary in adjusting to the fast pace of EU governance (Ekengren 2002, 89–90, 155). Also, when focusing on the backstage practices of adjusting transnational frontstage EU lobbying, it seemed that Brussels-based in-house umbrella organisations could act as gatekeepers to EU lobbying. They often co-ordinated the transnational adjustment of frontstage EU lobbying and also had better access to decision-makers in Brussels, due to their institutionalised cultural capital (discussed further below).

Moreover, backstage transnational co-operation went beyond formal memberships of umbrella organisations in adjusting frontstage EU lobbying. Especially if the advocated issue was controversial, issue-specific coalitions[89] were considered important to demonstrate frontstage that what was advocated for was agreed upon by many stakeholders (see also Lahusen 2023, 114), as well as Brussels-based umbrella organisations (cf. Mahoney 2008, 178). Forming coalitions also offered practical benefits, as through them the in-house lobbyists had access to expertise and information from other organisations (see also Junk 2020). This was considered useful, especially in the preparatory phase. I also observed how, when delivering the lobbying message, coalition members would complement each other's access to relevant decision-makers.

However, if agreeing on a position within an umbrella organisation was difficult, it was even more difficult and time consuming to reach a common position within a

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[89] As mentioned in Chapter 5.2. briefly, talking about coalitions during the interviews showed how pragmatic EU lobbying was. When discussing memberships or more permanent links, EU lobbying was described as an almost constant battle between opposing sides, where some organisations could be described almost as a nemeses. However, when talk turned to coalitions, the aforementioned rivals could in practice belong to same coalition. This showed how relational and pragmatic co-operation in EU lobbying might be, as it went beyond formal memberships and organisation types.

coalition. The in-house lobbyists also reflected how sometimes working with a common front was easier at the beginning of the process. As the processes moved forward and more details emerged, disagreements might surface and need to be managed. It could also happen that as time passed coalition members became more and more passive, or even changed sides. In relation to past EU lobbying, the lobbyists mentioned that this had been a game changer in the whole process. Thus, adjusting frontstage EU lobbying through issue-specific coalitions also took time and effort backstage, as they were considered necessary to competent EU lobbying.

My fieldwork also made apparent how well-planned the adjustment of impression management with respect to frontstage was in practice. I observed how lobbyists talked among themselves, within the umbrella organisation or coalitions, about who had the right kind of profile and access to deliver something to certain decision-makers. For example, they might avoid it being someone from the coalition who had been publicly too critical, as this might stand in the way of gaining access and getting the message across. Also, it depended on what was needed, information or delivering a message, as to what were considered as appropriate practices to proceed in requesting access to frontstage. Moreover, nationality and ranking mattered as well in the practices of seeking frontstage access, especially in Brussels. These backstage practices made it apparent that the frontstage messenger was not always the same as the one who had drafted the message (see also Lahusen 2023, 118–119), and they might not even work in the same organisation.

Beyond memberships and coalitions, it was considered important to know what fellow UA, TB, or NGO in-house lobbying organisations were doing, to avoid overlapping work on the frontstage. It was considered good practice if there was one UA, TB, or NGO in-house organisation clearly leading the frontstage EU lobbying on a certain issue. Public competition over representation and mandates between similar kinds of organisations were not seen to project a competent image of EU lobbying. For in-house organisations, it also seemed important to find their *niche* in EU lobbying when providing substance knowledge and arguments to decision-makers. Because of the competition over mandates and representation, resembling in-house lobbying organisations were also quite territorial backstage and tended to benchmark what others were doing:

> "If any other organisation even states something about the whole industry [considered to belong to the territory of one specific UA], one can quickly get feedback as they consider the whole matter to be their own – 'Why were you talking about this? This is our thing'."

> Interview, UA_fin_5

"When we were starting lobbying on specific issues, we investigated first what was already being done [by other NGOs]. That was to identify where the gaps were – that others are not already involved in. So that we are not repeating the good work done by other organisations. But genuinely bring something new […] and not doing overlapping work."

<div align="right">Interview, NGO_fin_6</div>

Not knowing what other lobbyists were up to was considered to project an image of incompetence in EU lobbying. Also, in relation to frontstage lobbying, decision-makers mentioned that they expected lobbyists to have considered how their position related to the views of other stakeholders. To keep up with others, meetings and exchanges of information took place even between opposing lobbyists, especially in Brussels. Sometimes these meetings led to further co-operation or to finding some common ground, whereas at others it was confirmed that co-operation was not feasible, "*not with those guys*". Also, it was acknowledged that working co-operatively with other lobbyists was rewarding as they were professionals and there was a sense of community when engaging in EU lobbying together:

"We know each other [in Brussels] quite well. That's much easier... when you know the people, that much easier to work together."

<div align="right">Interview, TB_EU_6</div>

There are also further practices with respect to adjusting frontstage EU lobbying, beyond memberships and coalitions, as cooperation and exchange of information took place with activists, researchers and journalists through different working groups, meetings, and *off the record* conversations. These transnational forms of co-operating were sometimes discussed during the interviews but became far more visible during the fieldwork, as they were organically part of the everyday practices of EU lobbying. Sometimes I noticed that I was quite surprised about the interactions that took place informally, beyond differences in dispositions, age, or hierarchical positions. Only some of these networks were visible frontstage.

To demonstrate competence and to gain frontstage access, lobbyists emphasised the importance of tailoring the lobbying message to fit with current EU jargon. For example, one NGO lobbyist mentioned that it was still relevant to talk about poverty reduction. But as the current key term during the emergence of the European Green Deal was sustainable development, the lobbying agenda needed to be framed through that to be heard in relevant debates. Similarly, one MEP mentioned how all relevant lobbying meetings in late 2019 and early 2020 related more or less to the

European Green Deal and initiatives following from it, as it was a horizontally cross-cutting issue. Thus, the European Green Deal was seen as an entry point for frontstage advocacy, by both lobbyists and decision-makers.

To summarise, the transnational backstage practices between member organisations and Brussels-based umbrella organisations include compromising and internal exclusion of controversial issues, even before embarking on frontstage EU lobbying. With respect to less controversial issues, everyday EU lobbying was conducted quite independently, to adjust to the pace of EU decision-making transnationally. Yet, Brussels-based umbrella organisations seemed to have a gatekeeping role in adjusting frontstage EU lobbying, especially in Brussels. Especially when advocating with respect to controversial issues, issues-specific coalitions were considered necessary to demonstrate wider support on the frontstage. Also, co-operation in adjusting transnational frontstage EU lobbying went beyond formal memberships and coalitions. Moreover, competition for a mandate to advocate on certain issues also took place between in-house lobbying organisations. Thus, similar in-house lobbying organisations were actually quite territorial as to which organisations had a mandate to advocate on a specific issue.

Outlining backstage practices demonstrated how well-prepared but also pragmatic adjusting for frontstage EU lobbying actually was. All in all, making backstage EU lobbying visible shows that EU lobbying practices are much wider than those aspects that are publicly visible or visible to the decision-makers: engagement with and access to both frontstage and backstage relational spaces in transnational in-house EU lobbying is required. Both earlier experience of lobbying and official status within an interest group organisation are discussed next, in relation to access in EU lobbying.

6.2   Cultural capital and access to transnational EU lobbying

Cultural capital can be understood as what one has and knows, and can be further divided into embodied and long-lasting dispositions, objectified cultural goods, and institutionalised cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986; 1993, 177; 2021, 161–62). In this chapter, I analyse how embodied and institutionalised cultural capital, mainly earlier experience of lobbying and official status in interest group organisations, relates to the ability to have transnational access to frontstage and backstage in-house EU lobbying.

6.2.1 Embodied cultural capital: Earlier transnational experiences of EU lobbying

Research on lobbyists' career paths indicates that the capacity to generate access is tied to previous experience (Halpin and Lotric 2023; Lahusen 2023, 210). The analysis below supports these findings but also draws attention to lobbyists' transnational and revolving door experience with respect to embodied cultural capital.

The field of EU lobbying in Brussels is found to be simultaneously inclusive and exclusive when it comes to career paths. It seems that personal backgrounds can vary significantly, and no specific educational background is required when entering the profession. This also seems to relate to the fact that becoming a lobbyist is not necessarily recognised as a career goal, as the profession is quite unknown. Thus, becoming an EU lobbyist is often seen as a coincidence and may be the result of an unconventional career path. Yet, while entering the field is relatively inclusive of university graduates, it is more difficult to find one's footing within the field (Lahusen 2023, 152–154, 174–176).

When both Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists described their previous experience and how they had ended up in their current work positions as experts or directors, they often mentioned having initially been in a junior position[90] and then moving up to more demanding positions within the same organisation or sideways into another organisation. This was the case with NGO, UA, and TB in-house lobbyists. The importance of earlier practical knowledge of frontstage and backstage EU lobbying was also emphasised during the interviews, in relation to the current position they were holding as experts or directors. For example, it was considered that practical knowledge about timing in EU lobbying as well as contacts with relevant decision-makers had accumulated over time (see also Ekengren 2002, 57; Lahusen 2023, 185–188). Hiring a lobbyist with previous experience was also considered relevant when an in-house organisation was renewing its lobbying strategy or starting EU lobbying from scratch – neither of these tasks were "*wished on anyone without previous experience on lobbying*".

Another option for accumulating relevant experience seemed to be revolving door experience, which also worked as a way to enter the lobbying profession. In general, there seems to be a draw to Brussels and EU lobbying as part of a wider interest in working with issues related to EU affairs (Lahusen 2023, 156, 163–164;

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[90] Some NGO lobbyists also outlined how their past or simultaneous experience of activism had led them to work in NGOs and they had then gradually moved into lobbying.

Büttner et al. 2015). Also, revolving door experience is found to be a relevant aspect for recruitment within interest organisations involved in insider lobbying activities in Brussels, which might relate to intentions to improve access (Belli and Bursens 2023). During the interviews in Helsinki, it was sometimes discussed that the cases of revolving door phenomenon were quite blunt and something should be done about them. On the other hand, lobbyists commented that they did not quite understand the public naming and shaming in relation to the revolving door phenomenon – although they did see that some boundaries were needed and should not be crossed.[91] In Brussels the revolving door phenomenon was perceived more as business as usual, and not even talked about in negative terms. Some *cooling off* periods were considered good for decision-makers further up the hierarchy, but on the other hand it was considered pointless for competent people not to be working. Thus, it was recognised that revolving door experience was one way to gain relevant embodied experience of EU lobbying (see also Lahusen 2023, 159). This also underlines how the field of EU lobbying is heteronomy (Bourdieu 2021, 9–10, 107) to EU politics, as the career paths also seemed to cross between these two fields.

Interestingly, in recognising relevant experience, it did not seem to matter if earlier experience of EU lobbying came from one organisation, location, or disposition (in-house lobbyists, consultant lobbyists, decision-makers). Actually, earlier experience of EU lobbying transnationally and through different organisations was seen as leading to a deeper understanding of EU politics. Most of the Helsinki-based UA and TB lobbyists also had experience from Brussels, as they had been working in Brussels at some stage of their careers with the same or different employers. Similarly, TB and UA lobbyists based in Brussels often had transnational experience as they had previously worked in EU lobbying in one Member State. Only NGO in-house lobbyists had relatively little transnational experience. Compared to UA and TB lobbyists, their earlier lobbying experience was more often either linked to a Member State or Brussels.[92] Yet, as NGO lobbyists also changed organisations and sectors within EU lobbying, as well as having revolving-door experience, there were also NGO lobbyists with transnational experience. It was also recognised amongst the NGOs that transnational experience is an asset in EU lobbying, as it helped in the coordination between Member States and Brussels and thus the adjustment of EU lobbying on the backstage.

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[91] For example, being in a key decision-making position and immediately after changing to do lobbying on exactly the same issues.
[92] See also Appendix 3.

All in all, experience beyond organisational or national borders as well as revolving-door experience seemed to be a recognised form of embodied cultural capital among the in-house lobbyists, as it evidenced mental and embodied competence in EU lobbying. Thus, as argued by Lahusen (2023, 154, 159–160, 166, 196), previous practical knowledge of lobbying can be understood as relating to the selection and closure mechanism within the field, especially in gaining access to backstage interaction amongst lobbyists. Also, previous experience from different dispositions (embodied cultural capital) can be converted into economic capital, as the time invested in gaining experience opened up further job opportunities within the field (Bourdieu 1986; 2021, 170–171).

Regarding competence in everyday practices, it seemed that experienced lobbyists had both vision and a key role in adapting lobbying style between the backstage and frontstage in transnational EU lobbying:

> "Maybe 10 or 15 years ago I was more in that mode that I was saying what I was told to say. But with more experience and vision I understand that things don't go forward with just broadcasting your message. But you need to find… just insisting your message does not help, you need to find solutions which can be supported by others. Thus, you also need to be ready to be flexible and adapt, without selling your soul, to find the best solution overall – also for us [the lobbying organisation]."

> Interview, TB_fin_2

In addition to insider process knowledge of EU politics, previous experience of the disposition of a decision-maker was connected with the embodied, practical knowledge of competent practices of frontstage lobbying. Lobbyists with revolving door experience outlined how experiencing various ways of doing lobbying as a decision-maker had made it easier to evaluate what would break the codes of conduct in frontstage EU lobbying. Thus, revolving door experience was considered helpful in understanding better the disposition of a lobbyist and what could cause loss of access to frontstage EU lobbying:

> "One of the things I learned [through revolving door experience], was the sort of lobbyist who I would say to my secretary after a meeting, please if that person rings again, I'm not available, is the one that comes in and says, you've got to do this [demonstrates shouting], otherwise blah blah blah. 'Cause your reaction as a politician or as a government official is to say 'no, I don't. I don't have to listen to you at all'."

> Interview, a Brussels based TB lobbyist with revolving door experience

Regarding substance knowledge and access, there were some differences in what was considered necessary for frontstage EU lobbying in Member States or in

Brussels. It was mentioned that in Finland it was common for a lobbyist to focus more widely on EU issues, whereas in Brussels one needed to be more specifically focused to gain relevant expertise and access to frontstage EU lobbying. This was especially the case when aiming to influence the Commission, as one needed to have strong technical arguments and, if possible, more expertise than the highly competent Commission workers.

Also, Brussels-based in-house lobbyists frequently emphasised how EU lobbying in Brussels was professional and fast, but also oriented towards finding compromises and solutions (see also Woll 2012, 200–203 for summary):

> "Here, [in Brussels] it is more complicated [than in Member States]. You also need to be better focused here, strategically and tactically, and to have wider coalitions."

> Interview, UA_EU_6

> "Big issues are decided here [in Brussels], a great deal of them and at a high speed."

> Interview, NGO_EU_10

> "The culture is, as I said, 'let's compromise, let's try and find bridges between each other'."

> Interview, TB_EU_7

Interestingly, depending on whether or not a lobbyist had transnational experience made a difference as to how the style of everyday practices in EU lobbying was perceived. Those Helsinki and Brussels based in-house lobbyists with transnational experience seemed to think alike in terms of what was essential to EU lobbying. They sometimes expressed the feeling that outsiders did not understand "*the name of the game*" in EU lobbying, in terms of what was relevant and current in EU politics, and how a competent in-house lobbyist needed to talk and act, especially in Brussels. Moreover, it was emphasised that EU lobbying in Brussels was more *civilised* than in Member States. One Finnish lobbyist also described how their experience of Brussels led to self-understanding ("*I realised that I'm actually lobbying*"), and how much more sensible conducting everyday EU lobbying had become in Finland having gained transnational experience from Brussels.

By contrast, Helsinki-based in-house lobbyists without transnational experience described lobbying in Brussels as somehow suspect and sounding like real lobbying, but not in a positive sense. Also, Brussels-based umbrella organisations were

criticised for living too much in the "Brussels Bubble" – that, according to Busby (2013, 204), can be understood as "[…] the peculiarities working in Brussels; a multinational and multilingual space, an intensive environment with a distinct rhythm to life, where people come and go continuously but which feels like a small village where everyone seems to know each other and news travel fast". In addition, Brussels-based lobbyists described how they were occasionally criticised by national member organisations for overlooking some country-specific issue or not taking into account "*the real world out there*".

In relation to backstage EU lobbying, Brussels-based in-house lobbyists explained how one difficulty in their job was getting the national members engaged early enough and obtaining the relevant input from them, as they did not always seem to find the issues on the EU agenda relevant, or became active too late (issues regarding timing are discussed further in Chapter 7). Yet, it seemed that having experience from Brussels led to a stronger feeling of *being in* and knowing who is who in practice,[93] even when currently conducting EU lobbying in a Member State. In this way the embodied cultural capital was unequally distributed amongst the in-house lobbyists across sectors. Experience from Brussels seemed to be a principle constituting distinction within the transnational field of EU lobbying (Bourdieu 2021, 171, 188–89).

Overall, earlier experience of lobbying from different dispositions and on EU lobbying transnationally provided recognised embodied cultural capital. Moreover, how lobbyists perceived EU lobbying practices taking place in Member States and in Brussels seemed to relate to how transnational their earlier experience had been. The in-house lobbyists with transnational experience of everyday EU lobbying seemed to have a stronger feeling of *being in* with respect to the EU lobbying taking place transnationally than did national in-house lobbyists without experience from Brussels.

6.2.2 Institutionalised cultural capital: Statuses and hierarchies in EU lobbying

In lobbying research, access to the political arena is often seen as a "crucial step towards gaining political influence", while not guaranteeing it (Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017). Currently access is understood to cover both the activities of

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[93] See also Lahusen (2002, 162–163, 199) for discussion of the 'Brussels Bubble' in EU lobbying.

lobbyists in seeking access and gatekeepers' (politicians, civil servants and journalists) responding actions (Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017; Halpin and Fraussen 2017; Junk et al. 2022). According to in-house-lobbyists, in addition to embodied cultural capital, institutionalised cultural capital (reputation of an in-house organisation within the field of EU lobbying and suitable hierarchical position) was also considered relevant in EU lobbying with respect to gaining access.

To gain access to frontstage EU lobbying, not only the ability to provide information access goods[94] (Bouwen 2002; 2004) but also the name and reputation of a lobbying organisation is considered relevant (Lahusen 2023, 192, 215; see also Binderkrantz, Christiansen, and Pedersen 2015; van Schendelen 2013, 215, 309–11). During the interviews with in-house lobbyists, the importance of being transparent in in-house EU lobbying was discussed when requesting access to closed-door EU lobbying – how it was important to state clearly what is advocated for and what the represented organisation is. From the decision-makers' perspectives, it was also openly stated that because of their busy schedules, they – or their assistants on their behalf (Busby and Belkacem 2013) – needed to make choices as to which organisations they would meet and when. Therefore, it was not enough to be clear about the issue to be discussed and the decision-maker finding that relevant. It was also relevant to indicate which organisation was requesting access – preferably one that the decision-makers were already familiar with and knew to be relevant in the specific area under consideration. In this way the name of the organisation – or as explained in quite blunt but practical terms, the ending of the email address where the meeting request was sent from – mattered (see also Bourdieu 2021, 159 on name and reputation).

Therefore, the in-house lobbying organisations needed to have a reputation as a suitable and "niche" representative in EU lobbying (see also Junk et al. 2022 on access and affectedness). Against this background, it is understandable that internal quarrels were preferably handled without publicity, and that in-house lobbying organisations were quite territorial backstage. A reputation as a suitable representative could facilitate access to closed-door frontstage EU lobbying, as well as being considered helpful in getting decision-makers to participate in various lobbying events organised by the in-house lobbying organisations. Moreover, according to the lobbyists, the decision-makers were more likely to approach well-known in-house organisations when they needed lobbyist input. Halpin and

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[94] i. Expert Knowledge, ii. Information about the European Encompassing Interests, and iii. Information about the Domestic Encompassing Interest (Bouwen 2004, 340).

Fraussen (2017, 726) describe this level of engagement as "prominence", indicating "the taken-for-grantedness a group enjoys among a given audience (e.g. members of parliament, government officials, or journals)". Thus, working in a *taken for granted* in-house lobbying organisation can be understood as institutionalised cultural capital, as a socially validated and legitimised guarantee of the relevant competence (Bourdieu 2021, 225, 242) needed within EU lobbying.

Cultural capital in its institutionalised form can also constitute the field through titles (Bourdieu 2021, 62, 83, 149). This was quite a relevant aspect in EU lobbying, as a title indicating a suitable hierarchical position facilitated access to frontstage EU lobbying. This was especially relevant in Brussels and, as I also experienced during my fieldwork, sometimes a frustrating element for someone used to a flatter hierarchy:

> As we were walking together on the corridors of the European Parliament today, a Finnish in-house lobbyist made an interesting comment: "It is a title game here in Brussels" – and then explained how it is a bit frustrating how everyone needs to have at least the status of a director to get invitations and access to the actually relevant events. This summarises quite accurately what I have been observing and experiencing for the past five months in Brussels.
>
> Research diary notes, Brussels, spring 2020

As part of competent practices when requesting access, the hierarchical status of a lobbyist needed to match that of a decision-maker, especially in Brussels. As I interviewed and observed lobbyists at both expert and director levels, it became apparent how lobbyists with different hierarchical statuses interacted with decision-makers in corresponding hierarchical positions. Thus, how EU lobbying is heteronomy to EU politics was also demonstrated through the practices of adjusting the hierarchical professional titles to match those in the EU politic.

On the other hand, it was recognised by the decision-makers that not all in-house lobbying organisations necessarily had similar hierarchical statuses to those in politics, even though the title game in EU lobbying was a recognised one. For example, one MEP explained how NGOs were granted access if considered relevant, even if the request did not come from the *matching* hierarchical level, as it was understood that NGOs did not necessarily have internal hierarchies similar to those in EU politics.

It was moreover seen as important to handle details at the expert level, as director-level meetings were considered appropriate for discussing broader issues. For example, one director level in-house lobbyist openly admitted that they did not have

the competence to discuss very detailed issues, with the expert-level lobbyists being far more competent, but they participated in discussions on the future of Europe and what future directions *would be comfortable* for them as an organisation. Thus, there seemed to be a certain flexibility regarding hierarchical positions in in-house EU lobbying, although mastering and respecting the hierarchical codes of conduct was seen as an asset in EU lobbying.

In addition, analysing objectified and material cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986, 19; 2021, 161–62, 194) made it apparent how the symbolic and material come together in EU lobbying. The in-house lobbyists, both in Finland and in Brussels, had different kinds of lobbying materials (such as business cards, one-pagers, and brochures). These were not considered the most important part of the work but nevertheless contributed to a good image.[95] Quite often during the interviews I was given some lobbying material, and the lobbying positions were demonstrated through written documents or visualisations. Thus, different kinds of lobbying materials as objectified cultural capital were being used to support the image of a suitable and relevant representative.

As legitimate symbolic property (Bourdieu 2021, 195), entry badges also granted much-needed physical access to European Institutions. The various kinds of entry badges to the European Institutions in Brussels might indicate the lobbyist's hierarchical status – for example, members of the European Social and Economic Committee had entry badges to the European Union Institutions which made it easy for them to come and go without having to register or go through the sometimes-time-consuming security checks. Remarkably, the in-house lobbyists seemed to forget that access to the European Institutions was not granted to everyone. They could, for example, state that the events held inside the European Parliament were public – and thus fail to recognise that access to them was limited to those with status and thus access to the premises. During my fieldwork I also observed that if one managed to gain access to the buildings of the European Institutions in Brussels, it was easier to be considered a relevant person in EU lobbying. Gaining physical access also aided in gaining and maintaining social capital, as discussed further in the next chapter.

Overall, institutionalised cultural capital relates to the ability to gain access to frontstage EU lobbying. To gain access to closed-door EU lobbying, it was relevant for the in-house lobbying organisation to be perceived as relevant and a suitable representative by the decision-makers. In addition, respecting and complying with

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[95] Even the logo was sometimes renewed so it would better support the desired image.

the hierarchical codes of conduct in EU politics, especially in Brussels, was deemed an asset. Objectified and material cultural capital, such as lobbying materials and entry badges, supported the image of an in-house lobbying organisation as a suitable representative, as well as facilitating in-house lobbyists' physical access to the premises relevant to EU lobbying.

6.3   Summary of the chapter: The ability to gain access to frontstage and backstage EU lobbying

The key results of Chapter 6 with respect to the first research question (*How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?*) relate to the analysis of relational spaces in EU lobbying. Thus, the analysis in this chapter elaborates the understanding of the field of EU lobbying as relational to EU politics yet as a separate field of power, by making visible the transnational backstage practices in EU lobbying.

As in earlier research, the analysis in this chapter shows that the lobbyists often sounded better behind closed doors when they had private interactions with the decision-makers than during public interactions. However, the analysis further demonstrates that when observed from the in-house lobbyists' disposition, the impression management of the EU lobbyists holds up in both public and closed-door EU lobbying, when the decision-makers are present. Thus, the main audience in both public and closed-door EU lobbying is actually present and future decision-makers. Therefore, in contrast to earlier research applying Goffman's framework to EU lobbying, both public and closed-door interactions are herein understood as part of frontstage EU lobbying.

The analysis moreover shows how backstage practices in in-house EU lobbying included compromising and internal exclusion of controversial issues, even before entering into the frontstage of public and closed-door EU lobbying. Also, transnational co-operation between lobbyists took place within Brussels-based umbrella organisations but also through coalitions and more informal interactions. Competition over having a mandate to advocate on certain issues was present between resembling in-house lobbying organisations.

All in all, making visible the backstage in EU lobbying shows that EU lobbying practices are much broader than those which are visible publicly or to decision-makers. Outlining backstage practices demonstrates how well-prepared but also pragmatic EU lobbying actually is. The analysis above has underlined how backstage

practices relate to frontstage EU lobbying, such that they should be understood with respect to one another – also to elaborate how the frontstage, soft-spoken, compromise-oriented EU lobbying style relates to the more aggressive and competitive backstage practices. Overall, analysing the relational spaces in EU lobbying demonstrates that EU lobbying practices cannot be understood solely as the basis of EU politics. This aspect is further discussed in the next chapter in relation to timing in EU lobbying.

Regarding the second research question (*What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?*), cultural capital relates to the ability to gain access to frontstage and backstage EU lobbying. When it comes to embodied cultural capital, earlier experience of different dispositions and of EU lobbying transnationally gave recognised cultural capital in EU lobbying. The in-house lobbyists with transnational experience of EU lobbying seemed to have a stronger feeling of *being in* than national in-house lobbyists without experience of Brussels.

The analysis shows that institutionalised cultural capital relates to the ability to gain access to frontstage EU lobbying. Respecting and complying with the hierarchical codes of conduct in EU politics, especially in Brussels, was deemed an asset. Most important, however, was currently having the status of being an in-house lobbyist in an in-house lobbying organisation recognised as relevant and suitable to be granted access to frontstage EU lobbying. Thus, the territorial practices that in-house lobbying organisations might have towards similar organisations backstage actually relate to the institutionalised cultural capital required for frontstage access. In addition, objectified and material cultural capital, such as lobbying materials and entry badges, supported the image of a suitable representative, as well as facilitating physical access to the premises relevant for EU lobbying. All in all, cultural capital was relevant in gaining access to both the frontstage and backstage of transnational in-house EU lobbying.

7 TIMING AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: INFORMATION IN TRANSNATIONAL EU LOBBYING

In this chapter, I first analyse timing in EU lobbying, by bringing to the fore practices related to in-house lobbyists' understandings of competent timing in EU lobbying in relation to EU politics. Second, I analyse how social capital relates to competent timing and to the ability to obtain timely information with respect to in-house EU lobbying transnationally. As in the preceding analytical chapters, I draw attention to some differences but more so to the similarities between the in-house EU lobbying of NGO, UA, and TB organisations.

7.1 Timing in EU lobbying: Staying one step ahead of the momentum in EU politics

I [*interviewing*]:	And how do you know the right time [to do EU lobbying]?
TB_EU_9:	"Again, through knowledge and proximity and contacts. It's our job as a European association to be informed at the right time."

Previous studies have drawn attention to the importance of European timing and calendars in the everyday practices of politicians and bureaucrats in Brussels and in Member States (Ekengren 2002; Goetz and Meyer-Sahling 2009; Goetz 2009; Tholoniat 2009; Hyvärinen and Raunio 2014; Busby 2014, 149–162) and how acquiring knowledge from interest groups intertwines with the decision-makers' practices (Hyvärinen 2009; Busby 2014, 162–164; Beyers, De Bruycker, and Baller 2015; Binderkrantz et al. 2022; Bunea 2017). However, timing in everyday EU lobbying, from lobbyists' perspectives, has not been explored in previous research, although, for example, Lahusen (2023, 204–206, 197) has outlined the importance of insider knowledge in EU lobbying and how part of lobbyists' competence is to understand, or if possible even anticipate, political realities.

As throughout my research I was studying EU lobbying practices on the move, I started to realise how difficult it was to separate beginnings and endings with respect to EU lobbying. I should have already realised this during the interviews, when the in-house lobbyists were somewhat amused when I asked when lobbying had started and ended in relation to certain dossiers. I was told that there was no general rule for this, that it was difficult to make fixed schedules in EU lobbying as what becomes present depends on EU politics and *no fight is ever over*. In addition, it was underlined that not every instance of EU lobbying exists for the purpose of influencing – a great deal of time and effort is also invested in collecting information and establishing relationships. Thus, competent EU lobbying seemed to flow more on the basis of ongoing working relations (see also Lahusen 2023, 112).

This similar flow of continuity is felt within European governance regarding micro temporalities, as the European present is seen as a decisional present (Ekengren 2002, 88–89). During the interviews, the importance of the right timing in EU lobbying was often emphasised in relation to these EU decisional presents that were described as political momentums. The right timing was described as *just before* the political momentums. Thus, a lobbyist *needs to strike* when relevant decision-makers are starting to think about an emerging issue. However, relevant processes sometimes started rather suddenly or somewhat under the radar of the in-house lobbyists. In these cases, the lobbyists acknowledged that EU lobbying had been more difficult as they had been late to engage (see also van Schendelen 2013, 167–69).

Furthermore, it was explained that being late in EU lobbying raised concerns about the lobbyist's competence when it comes to understanding formal and informal EU decision-making processes. It was acknowledged that late lobbying frustrates the decision-makers and fellow lobbyists, especially if something is forcefully and publicly pushed forward but simply too late. Also, the lobbyists with revolving door experience explained how late lobbying gave the impression that, overall, the lobbyists had not done their homework. Thus, being late in EU lobbying was taken to be an indication of incompetence in general.

However, it was also explained that in practice it takes time to know the right timing in EU lobbying. Thus, even though it was generally agreed that competent EU lobbying takes place when something is emerging and becoming topical for decision-makers, it was considered difficult to know when this actually occurred in practice. Because of the fast pace of European governance and the short time available for considering ideas (Ekengren 2002, 89–90, 97), the momentum for EU lobbying could be quite short and quickly bypassed. During my fieldwork, I observed

how in-house lobbyists aimed to stay one step ahead of the formal processes and public information – and if they were not successful in this, they felt that something had gone wrong. Therefore, I was left with the feeling that tacit knowledge and experience are also required to time EU lobbying right.

It took me a while to put all these pieces together and to understand how timing within the field of EU lobbying relates to timing in EU politics but is not identical to it – EU lobbying seems to be conducted, or at least planned, slightly in advance of the relevant political momentum or common moments of decisions. This also resonates with decision-makers' similar need to predict EU politics (Ekengren 2002, 93). Thus, to ensure the right timing in EU lobbying it is essential to stay one step ahead of what is emerging in EU politics (also Lahusen 2023, 197). Next, I discuss how the practices of gaining timely information and establishing non-stop engagement are essential to timing EU lobbying in a competent way.

7.1.1   Gaining timely formal and informal information

During my research, trying to stay one step ahead of EU politics was apparent in the constant speculation amongst lobbyists as to which issues were likely to emerge. Thus, part of timing EU lobbying right was to be aware of what was emerging in EU politics, through seeking formal and informal information.

To obtain formal information, keeping up with political processes was perhaps the most straightforward yet time-consuming element, as it required constant keeping up with EU politics without being directly involved in the processes. To some extent timetables in EU lobbying were taken as given and as coming from the EU decision-making processes and calendars, as well as the routines and common moments of decisions they created (Ekengren 2002, 75–80, 95, 109–119; European Parliament 2023; Busby 2014, 196–204, 254–255). Thus, knowing these and being prepared in time was essential:

> "I mean the right timing... Once you are aware of some of the key processes and when the decisions are been made, and what particular bodies are deciding what in what stage – then it is not so difficult to identify where you want to be present doing our advocacy work and with what people."

> Interview, NGO_EU_14

However, especially in relation to the European Commission's agenda setting role (Tholoniat 2009), it was also outlined that it is part of EU lobbying to know early on

if *there's something cooking* by obtaining informal information transnationally, both in Member States and in Brussels (see also Lahusen 2023, 106). Thus, timing EU lobbying right is also about getting informal signals from the decision-makers and other lobbyists. This was not always considered easy in practice, as not everyone shared the informal information they had. When succeeding in gaining informal information, one could *pick up intelligence at an early stage.*

This was also considered relevant because EU dossiers tended to start with a rumour (see also van Schendelen 2013, 167), before anything official was published:

> "Hmmm… Usually rumours first and then it gets online. I guess rumours from our contacts in the Commission. They have the best information of course because they're always the ones who launch stuff. Also, sometimes other NGOs – Yeah, they'll have their own conversations with their own contacts, and they might tell us sometimes. And then of course eventually it will be online but usually anything that we're working on we would know about it before it goes online, I mean if it's important to us."

Interview, NGO_EU_16

My experience from the field also confirmed that lobbyists did indeed obtain relevant and current informal information through the various leaks and rumours constantly circulating within the field of EU lobbying. Also, gossiping[96] with lobbyists confirmed that they had access to the most recent informal information regarding EU affairs, that was beyond my reach as a doctoral researcher.[97]

This was certainly the case with the European Green Deal. I learnt that leaked versions of the European Green Deal were circulating amongst the in-house lobbyists in Brussels when the Commissioners-designate had been approved after the hearings in Autumn 2019, a few weeks before the actual document was published in December. Rumours about the content had already been circulating as the staff in the DGs had not changed since the elections and had continued their preparatory work, including engaging with the lobbyists. Based on the most recent leaked version, I observed how the in-house lobbyists aimed to conduct well-timed and competent lobbying both before and after the agenda was published. This included

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[96] Particularly in Brussels, gossiping also seemed to be related to social life. Thus, not all gossiping was useful or informative, but rather a means of connecting socially.

[97] During the fieldwork it was often casually indicated by the lobbyists where the political processes were going and who the relevant decision-makers were in the process, especially as it was apparent that I rarely had the most recent information. Thus, during my fieldwork I was quite up to date on what was current and emerging in EU politics. After exiting the field, I noticed how it became a lot harder to keep up with EU politics as I did not have the privilege of gaining informal information through the lobbyists.

seeking access to closed-door frontstage lobbying especially via Brussels-based umbrella organisations. Also, there was more public pressure and statements on the issues that were seen as problematic in the forthcoming agenda - yet, the agenda as a whole was not questioned in these outputs. Simultaneously, backstage discussions were far more critical towards the existence of the agenda ("*Green deal is fatal*", "*it will complicate our life*", "*no game-changer*", or that important issues were "*watered down*" in the agenda).

Also, based on the earlier leaks, lobbyists were ready to express their expertise, engagement, and affectedness in relation to the issues included in the European Green Deal on the very same day the agenda was published. This was especially visible on Twitter during and after the opening statement by Ursula von der Leyen in the extraordinary EP plenary sitting in Brussels, the debate on the European Green Deal. This underlines the importance of gaining informal information prior to the public political momentum in order to time frontstage EU lobbying practices competently and in relation to what is emerging in EU politics.

Managing to pick up on intel and informal information at an early stage was considered part of being competent with respect to timing in EU lobbying – it allowed for the lobbyists transnationally to have the feel for decision-makers' presents (Ekengren 2002, 79, 83). Picking up on informal intel was essential to becoming involved as early as possible (see also Lahusen 2023, 112; Bouwen 2002). The issues tended to become more fixed with time and as they moved up through the hierarchy:

> "We also obviously talk to the Commission a lot, talk to people around town [Brussels] as well so that we pick up what is going on at as early a stage as we can, 'cos one of the things about lobbying which, I've always said and as I said I've done it for many, many years in my life... If you are trying to change the mind of the Commission when they're almost going to adopt a new proposal, it's too late. You should actually be there trying to talk to the desk officer, who is thinking about an issue, while he's still thinking about it 'cos once it goes up the ladder of the hierarchy of the Commission, his boss will have signed off something, and his boss will have signed off something until it gets to the director general and then it goes to the college of commissioners. By the time it gets to the college of commissioners, you've had a whole lot of guys saying this is the way it should be, and then trying to tell them, 'hmmm… actually hang on, you should be doing it that way', it gets really, really difficult."
>
> Interview, TB_EU_8

In relation to the European Green Deal, I observed how it was quite difficult to gain access to Commissioner Timmermans or to his Cabinet just before the agenda

was adopted, even for established Brussels-based umbrella organisations. Thus, access to expressing final concerns via a closed-door meeting was also sought via other relevant Commissions, or by aiming to engage with Timmermans' cabinet members during different events informally. Also, sending open letters to express final concerns was seen as a secondary option, especially if something that was considered important was absent from the leaked version of the agenda. Yet, the impact of the letters, sent just before the agenda was finalised, was doubted. It was instead emphasised that competent lobbying takes place gradually earlier on.

Overall, only knowing the EU decision-making processes and formal points of influence is not enough to stay one step ahead in EU politics. Obtaining informal information in also necessary to competent timing in EU lobbying. However, in order to become involved as early as possible, existing established relationships with decision-makers were also seen as an asset, as discussed next.

7.1.2   Establishing non-stop engagement

During my research, trying to stay one step ahead of EU politics was also evidenced in the constant speculation amongst lobbyists as to who might be elected or appointed to relevant decision-making positions in the near future. This relates to how in EU lobbying the aim is to establish relationships with relevant decision-makers prior to influencing.

As was often explained during the interviews, part of EU lobbying is to know *who is who* and to establish networks with the present, but also potential future, decision-makers. For example, one Helsinki-based in-house lobbyist described how it is part of the job to *keep an eye on the rising stars* in politics – after all, politicians obtaining relevant positions in EU affairs had usually had quite a long political career nationally (cf. Kauppi 2013, 10–11 on political novices in the European Parliament). As such, there were often already working relationships or at least acquaintances with the key decision-makers before they actually obtained relevant positions in relation to EU politic, in Member States, or at the EU level.

It was also noted that establishing and maintaining relationships with relevant decision-makers takes time, an aspect that underlines the long-term engagement aspect of lobbying work. Therefore, lobbyists were also thinking about the relevant connections with decision-makers in the longer run, both in Member states and in Brussels. Co-operation beyond party politics or political groups took place in an attempt to predict who could be in the relevant positions for the next parliamentary

term. It was also stated that the national elections are always at most four years away in Finland, with EP elections at most five years away (see also Kovats 2009) – thus, it was smart to maintain good working relationships with the opposition politicians as well as with potential future MEP candidates.

Moreover, in-house lobbyists seemed to be reading power relations within national and EU politics surprisingly accurately and early on.[98] Also, the ability to establish long-term relationships with present and future decision-makers was seen to indicate that the lobbyists *are good at what they are doing*. This also underlines how EU lobbying relates to power relations in national politics (cf. Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017, 460) and how competent timing in EU lobbying is connected with the simultaneous presents of national politics and public debates across Member States and Brussels (cf. Ekengren 2002, 84). Part of being competent in EU lobbying is navigating through the different transnational political presents in the long run.

There was also considered to be relevant momentum for establishing relationships with future decision-makers during the runup to the Finnish national elections and the EU elections in the spring of 2019. It was considered important to establish good relationships with potential MEPs and potential ministers prior to the election results – after the results, there was more competition for access, which establishing relationships earlier could help in overcoming. Thus, promising politicians were invited to various election events and panels organised by the in-house lobbyists in Helsinki, and candidates were quite keen to participate as part of their campaign work.

However, it was also emphasised that some of the key people relevant to EU affairs remained the same before and after the elections. For example, the staff working in the national ministries and European Commission did not change according to the election cycles (see also Hartlapp, Metz, and Rauh 2014), even though national elections and political stirrings may cause changes in the Commissioners. In relation to the European Green Deal, it was mentioned that many of the messages "*find their way through*", both based on earlier advocacy work done over the years and through established DG staff networks that had been

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[98] For example, Finnish in-house lobbyists speculated quite accurately which Finnish MEP candidates had realistic chances of being elected in the EU elections in 2019. First and foremost, these candidates with a realistic chance were invited to participate in various events and panel discussions during their EP election campaigning. Also in the spring of 2019, quite soon after the results of the Finnish national elections were announced, I heard through the in-house lobbyists that I shadowed in Finland rumours that the Finnish Government would nominate Jutta Urpilainen as a candidate for EU Commissioner. This demonstrated how accurately the in-house lobbyists were reading the near future outcomes in politics, as they also seemed to be familiar with the political power relations inside the Member States.

preparing relevant documents for the new Commissioners already for months, before knowing exactly who the top leaders would be. Moreover, EU legislation and decision-making processes are long,[99] yet once initiated the majority of the proposals will be adopted (see also Woll 2012, 205), which makes the duration as well as the pace of the processes difficult to predict. Therefore, it was seen as relevant to stay engaged all the time but to push forward only when there was clear momentum to be proactive or a request from the decision-makers to provide input.

The decision-makers also approached those lobbyists with whom they had established good working relationships by requesting direct comment or a contribution to present issues. Thus, the lobbyists also had to be ready to seize the opportunity for EU lobbying when appearing, as a request for input, resulting from non-stop engagement, could come with a tight schedule:

> A lobbyist that I am shadowing explains that there is a bit of a situation, as a decision-maker has asked for a confidential comment on a document by today, and the day is already full. Thus, we spend the next half hour in silence in one of the EP's busy cafeteria, before rushing into the next meeting. On the way there, the lobbyist explains, seemingly relieved at being able to deliver what the decision-maker had requested despite the tight schedule, that these things happen every now and then without a heads-up – "it is part of this job".
>
> Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, spring 2020

Thus, it seemed to be common knowledge that EU lobbying needed align with decision-makers' schedules.[100] Lobbyists seemed to be very understanding of decision-makers', especially politicians', even busier schedules and inhuman timetables, especially in Brussels.[101] As sudden changes in EU politics, but also more widely in society, took place constantly (see also Ekengren 2002, 91), this also made it difficult to control the workflow in EU lobbying. Thus, a fast tempo, changing schedules, and general unpredictability were constantly present within the field of EU lobbying, especially in Brussels.

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[99] When asked, the lobbyists estimated that one process could take from eight to ten years but that "*it all depends*".

[100] As a practical issue, the yearly calendar of the European Parliament often determined when was a good time to arrange events in Brussels or to request meetings with the MEPs.

[101] For example, it seemed to be widely accepted that decision-makers were often late to arrive at agreed occasions or that a lobbying meeting could be cut from 30 minutes to 20 or 15, because something more urgent had come up. This was sometimes commented on, in the spirit of *once again* it happened, but the lobbyists did not seem to be too bothered about it, or at least did not let it show when this happened during frontstage interactions.

Yet, when it comes to the emergence of the European Green Deal, it was seen by the in-house lobbyists as a response to a broader and longer political shift rather than as a sudden change. While the publication of the agenda in December 2019 was a publicly "a new start", as Ursula von der Leyen had framed it, during the interviews at the end of 2019 and at the beginning of 2020 the revolutionary dimension of the European Green Deal came under doubt. Rather, as lobbyists had had ongoing engagement during the emergence of the European Green Deal, it was seen as a reaction to changed transnational realities, manifesting both as the visible global consequences of climate change and climate demonstrations across Europe and the greenest ever results in the European elections. Also, the lobbyists knew to expect a new political agenda and package of policy initiatives from the new European Commission. Thus, adapting to the new direction of EU politics had started already when the European Green Deal was emerging.

Overall, while adjusting to the "fatalistic time" of European decisional presents (Ekengren 2002, 95) and how this dictated the competent momentums of EU lobbying on specific issues was taken for granted, part of the *feel for EU lobbying* was to see and actively seek transnational non-stop engagement in the longer term. Moreover, in EU lobbying it is important to establish engagement and good working relationships with the relevant decision-makers prior to influencing, as the momentums and needs for lobbying inputs often appear suddenly and informally. This also makes it difficult to define when engagement with relevant decision-makers in transnational everyday EU lobbying has actually started, underlining in-house EU lobbying as a continuum rather than a process with a start and a finish.

7.2 Social capital and information in transnational EU lobbying

Social capital is about who one knows (Bourdieu 1993, 32) and is made up of social obligations as well as connections (Bourdieu 1986). It can be taken to cover both connections to numerous individuals and a connection to a few people with extensive relevant social or other capital (Bourdieu 1986). In previous research, it has been pointed out that relevant information is ineffective without the ability to network and establish stable contacts within EU lobbying in Brussels (Lahusen 2023, 282). In this chapter, I outline how social capital relates to the information needed for competency with respect to timing in transnational EU lobbying. More specifically, I analyse the ability to obtain relevant information from frontstage and backstage in transnational EU lobbying.

7.2.1 Social capital in relation to the decision-makers and the ability to obtain information

Several research studies have highlighted the importance of social networks and connections with decision-makers (see, for example, Coen 2007, 335; also Coen and Richardson 2009, 152; Coen 2002; Woll 2012; Mahoney 2008, 167), as well as the importance of taking into account contacts as a professional asset in EU lobbying (Lahusen 2023, 197–198). Having observed during my fieldwork how in-house lobbyists engaged with decision-makers in practice, I realised how important physical presence and informal practices were for influencing but also for gaining timely information.

Throughout my research, it became apparent that EU lobbying was mainly aimed at like-minded and indecisive decision-makers. Thus, in-house lobbyists actively sought suitable allies among the decision-makers. This aligns with previous research on alliances between political parties and interest groups (Wessels 2004, 210–215; Greenwood 2007, 336; Beyers, De Bruycker, and Baller 2015).

However, in practice EU lobbying was more pragmatic, also due to pre-set decision-making responsibilities between European Institutions that limit target-selection in EU lobbying (Mahoney 2008, 123). If they occupied relevant positions, it was also considered important to meet the opposing decision-makers – in a civilised way, without high expectations:

> Observing lobbyists preparing together for a lobbying meeting on the premises of the European Parliament. The MEP they are about to meet is known to hold opposing opinions but also has a relevant formal position in the current decision-making process. The lobbying meeting is prepared with caution, nothing indicates any kind of disrespect towards the MEP.
>
> As I am not present in the meeting, after the meeting the lobbyists comment how they were all very polite and how the MEP is actually quite OK when met personally, even though publicly quite strict and often opposing them.
>
> Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019

Thus, care was taken to maintain good working relations and to also keep the channels of influence open with those decision-makers who were not necessarily considered to be *on the same side* but were thought to be relevant.

Yet, during my research I observed how interactions with like-minded decision-makers seemed to go beyond meeting and delivering the lobbying message. With like-minded decision-makers it was more about working together towards shared

goals and exchanging relevant information when working in the same direction. It was also emphasised that lobbying alliances work better if they go beyond lobbyists and include decision-makers. Also, to get to know the right timing and the right decision-makers – including those with some sort of informal role or power in the process – obtaining information from the frontstage was considered essential.

It was therefore considered a success in lobbying if some decision-maker, especially one in a relevant position in the current political process, adopted an issue as *their own* – similarly Lahusen (2023, 200) highlights the importance for lobbyists of being accepted into the same "family" as decision-makers. Working towards this goal, the in-house lobbyists also encouraged the decision-makers they considered suitable, especially politicians, to be active with respect to relevant issues and dossiers by keeping them informed well in advance. Thus, the information between the in-house lobbyists and the decision-makers seemed to flow in both directions, if they had established a good working relationship – or even a "family-tie"- between them. In this way the social capital between in-house lobbyists and decision-makers was based on mutual recognition and enforcement (Bourdieu 1986; 1993, 33).

While informal up-to-date insider knowledge is vital to competent EU lobbying (Lahusen 2023, 203, 205), it became clear that the main reason for decision-makers to share information with lobbyists was to help them be useful (see also Mahoney 2008, 207). It was often mentioned that decision-makers welcomed *lobbying input* to advance their agendas. This became apparent during my research, as decision-makers were also active in seeking information from lobbyists, or I observed how decision-makers tried to encourage lobbyists to be more active in present issues – often those of relevance to them. Thus, the decision-makers extended the EU's decision-making community (Ekengren 2002, 160) to cover also those lobbyists who they considered should share the political momentum and be active. Through these practices of exchanging present information lobbyists were given "membership in a group" (Bourdieu 1986, 286). Simultaneously, these relations do not only enforce the decision-makers' abilities in EU politics but also lobbyists' ability to conduct EU lobbying (Firat 2019).

Towards the end of my fieldwork, I was also able to observe a few occasions where decision-makers leaked information to trusted lobbyists. This was mostly to draw attention to forthcoming processes ("*by the way, have you heard about this?"),* to share the content of some confidential conversation ("*this information is only for you*", "*you did not hear this from me, but…*"), or to indicate whom to lobby and when ("*they will most likely choose this person as a rapporteur*", "*such and such a meeting/occasion is taking place soon, you should try to meet these key people before that*"). This occurred during both

agreed lobbying meetings and more informal rendezvous. Interestingly, during my fieldwork it also became visible that relevant decision-makers were more willing to trust information to an in-house lobbyist than to me as a researcher.[102] Also, it may have been apparent that I was not anyone relevant when it came to counter gifting (Bourdieu 1990a, 23), as I did not have the relevant status or social networks to be able to exchange relevant and up-to-date information.

Moreover, during my fieldwork I observed how those leaking information were not necessarily the ones being influenced, although often in a lobbying meeting both took place – exerting influence and sharing information. On the other hand, the practice of leaking information was not always intentional – sometimes decision-makers seemed to assume that the lobbyists knew the information already or that some part of it was common knowledge. Thus, it was not uncommon during a lobbying meeting for a lobbyist to casually ask something in relation to a current process and for the decision-maker to end up sharing important, up-to-date, and often informal information. When I discussed this with the lobbyists after the meeting, they sometimes stated that gaining that information had been perhaps the most useful part of the meeting, as it was just the right time to obtain it, and they had not so far managed to obtain it elsewhere.

To summarise, not every moment of frontstage interaction with decision-makers is necessarily with respect to exerting influence. Social contacts and establishing long-term engagement with decision-makers also related to the ability to obtain the up-to-date information required for competent timing in EU lobbying. The networks with like-minded decision-makers were especially important with respect to gaining but also exchanging informal information during frontstage interactions. Thus, understanding how obtaining up-to-date information relates to social networks with decision-makers brings to the fore the informality and importance of having a physical presence near relevant decision-makers in EU lobbying. Next, I turn to

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[102]For example, a few times I asked for some up-to-date information from a decision-maker during an interview or when meeting them informally but failed to obtain it. However, only shortly after I heard the information from an in-house lobbyist, who told me that they had heard the same information from the very same decision-maker. The information was entrusted to them and as they received it early, they were able to use it in their EU lobbying. If it had been entrusted to me, I would not have used it for any purpose – as at the time of writing this, the information is already outdated and my main interest in requesting the information was to see if I could indeed obtain it. Yet, there was no reason to entrust the information to me either, as it would not have been useful from the decision-maker's perspective. Thus, it seemed that for an in-house lobbyist, who would use the obtained information to achieve goals they shared with the decision-maker, it was easier to gain current information than for a researcher like me who was not going to do anything with it – or whose motives in asking for it were not clear or trusted.

discussing how the information was then exchanged backstage amongst the lobbyists, and the importance of social networks among lobbyists transnationally.

7.2.2 Social capital in relation to other lobbyists and the ability to obtain information transnationally on the backstage

In addition to social networks with decision-makers, good networks amongst EU lobbyists were related to the ability to obtain relevant information, both from Member States and from Brussels (see also Lahusen 2023, 106, 199–200 on social capital in Brussels). This quotation summarises how it is considered important in EU lobbying to have a transnational flow of information amongst the in-house lobbyists:

> "I'm monitoring very closely what happens within the EU institutions. Our members do the same at national level. What are the trends of EU politics or trends of Member State politics in the specific areas we decided to work on. And, based on that there's a very rapid flow of intelligence within our groups […] certain documents we have leaked, versions of something we hear, information that might be something that comes up over the coming months. […] We also link a lot with a lot of other alliances in Brussels, that work on topics that interlink. […] We try to make the most of our network that we've established here to get as much information as possible. Once we have that, we come up with very concrete messages that we could use in those specific processes to influence them."
>
> <div align="right">Interview, NGO_EU_15</div>

Often during my fieldwork, I was quite impressed with how well-informed in-house lobbyists were due to these established and reinforced networks of information exchange. Interestingly, lobbyists with revolving door experience mentioned during the interviews that when working as a decision-maker, they had not realised how much information lobbyists gain and share amongst themselves, and how far-reaching the lobbyists' networks were for gaining information. Also, lobbyists who had recently moved to Brussels mentioned that the information amongst the in-house lobbyists moved even faster and more fluently than in Member States – the positions might be different yet information was shared. This underlines how networks and connections in EU lobbying were socially owned capital generated through relationships to exchange information (Bourdieu 1993, 32; 1986; Skeggs 1997, 15), with fellow lobbyists as well as decision-makers.

In-house lobbyists with different hierarchical positions and with revolving-door experience had different networks amongst the decision-makers and thus could

obtain slightly different kinds of information from the frontstage. Thus, lobbyists shared information quite openly within their organisation and with the members in the same umbrella organisation. However, it was important to know how to obscure the source of information, especially if something confidential was leaked. Also, if something was entrusted only to a certain lobbyist, they kept the information to themselves yet used it in their own practice.

Regarding the transnational flow of information, quite often the Helsinki-based lobbyists that I shadowed received leaked information not directly from decision-makers but from their fellow lobbyists in the same umbrella organisation. The exchange of information was transnational between lobbying organisations, or *a two-way street* between them and their members, as one interviewee, a Brussels-based umbrella organisation's lobbyist, described it. Moreover, as national and Brussels-based lobbyists have different kinds of networks amongst decision-makers and other lobbyists, it was considered mutually beneficial to exchange information about ongoing and forthcoming political processes. This exchange of information took place at regular internal meetings, in more informal encounters, and via emails or other daily communication. Thus, participating in the umbrella organisation's work was not only beneficial in influencing the common positions but also in gaining access to the information that different lobbyists had collected, through their contacts in shared Member States and Brussels. Yet, there seemed to be exclusion mechanisms when it came to sharing information backstage (discussed further in Chapter 8), based on which lobbyists were in practice recognised as having membership in the group (Bourdieu 1986).

Moreover, those in-house lobbyists who engaged with relevant decision-makers on the frontstage also obtained insider knowledge on different decision-makers and what they found relevant in EU politics at the personal level (see also Lahusen 2023, 205). This also shows that not all the information exchanged amongst lobbyists related to a certain process, as it was also relevant to know everything possible about the decision-makers prior to the meeting. This is another element that indicates how frontstage EU lobbying entails lengthy preparation backstage:

> "You do a lot of analysis also, of course, for the people you want to convince, to be able to tailor the message to the recipient of the message."

> Interview, NGO_EU_15

Thus, sharing information backstage was also related to the ability to adjust the lobbying messages and style of delivery to suit each decision-maker according to the

background information in the lobbyists' possession. This ability was also seen to relate to competence in EU lobbying:

> "The trick about good lobbying or good advocacy is understanding what your interlocutor finds important, 'cause if you start boring them with all those stuff that they don't want to hear, you haven't got a chance of getting them to understand your point of view."

> Interview, TB_EU_8

On the backstage, coalitions were not mentioned only as important sources of information, but it was also stated that it was useful to connect with those lobbyists with different networks with decision-makers. Thus, when an unfavourable decision-maker was in a relevant position, in-house lobbyists contemplated strategically who might be the best messenger to send frontstage (see also Lahusen 2023, 199, 201), as lobbyists recognised that social capital, needed to exchange information with decision-makers, was collectively owned (Bourdieu 1986). It was also recognised that in some files or in relation to different DGs, networks to gain relevant information were uneven when compared with different in-house lobbyists. Based on the intel that the in-house lobbyists had and shared amongst themselves, it was considered how in practice the lobbying message was delivered to each decision-maker.

Some lobbyists also reflected on the practice of adjusting the lobbying message to suit decision-makers when preparing for closed-door lobbying meetings. They seemed to wonder if the adjusting might go too far – wondering which arguments were still justified for use in accordance with the more general values underlying the message. Also, a position paper could be tailored or updated prior to a meeting. On the other hand, some lobbyists did not recognise the practice of adjusting during the interviews, but rather stated that their lobbying message was the same for everyone, because *the facts do not change*.

In the lobbying meetings that I observed, however, the smoothest meetings were those where the lobbyists openly stated that they had considered the issues from the decision-maker's perspective (decision-makers also expected this to some extent, as was explained during the interviews and fieldwork) or asked how much background information the decision-makers wanted, and adjusted the information provided accordingly. Also, the decision-makers were normally those who set the tone in these meetings and the lobbyists adjusted accordingly by listening – if not, there was risk of appearing incompetent in EU lobbying, as discussed in the next chapter. Thus, some sort of adjustment of lobbying style seemed to take place even prior to the frontstage interaction based on information obtained, but this also occurred during

lobbying meetings. This underlined how within the broader consensus-seeking, soft-spoken EU lobbying style (Woll 2012), where institutional arrangements frame the styles of argumentations (Mahoney 2008, 81–109), there were still more nuanced practices to adjusting the EU lobbying style for each decision-maker. This was done based on the information gathered on them, to conduct competent EU lobbying and to be effective within the field.

All in all, information gained from the frontstage travelled fast and smoothly between the in-house lobbyists backstage. The exchange of information between lobbyists, even when not sharing a lobbying position, was mutually beneficial, as they might have different sources of information, depending on their hierarchical position and networks with decision-makers. In addition, not all the information exchanged related to specific processes, but more to practices of aiming to know everything possible about the decision-makers prior to the meetings. Also, the adjusting of the lobbying message seemed to take place both prior to the frontstage closed-door EU lobbying, based on the information shared backstage, and on the spot during the interaction, based on the embodied competence in EU lobbying that the in-house lobbyists had.

7.2.3   Nationalities and informal networks in gaining relevant information

Regarding nationalities in relation to EU lobbying, it is a highly multinational profession, with the majority of, but not all, lobbyists holding European citizenship (Lahusen 2023, 86–87). Yet during my fieldwork, discussion of stereotypical characteristics was quite widespread, even though Brussels is often considered a European melting pot. It seemed that, in addition to knowing the codes of conduct in frontstage EU lobbying, playing with national roles was common in EU lobbying:

I [*interviewing*]:	One thing... This is... This is a little bit off topic but one thing that I've started to wonder is... Does nationality play a role in Brussels?
TB_EU_6:	I should respond no. Of course, should respond no. But yes, it does. I agree on this.

"For example in Brussels – despite who or what the organisation is representing, nationality always plays a role."

Interview, UA_fin_4

Bourdieu discusses how economic or cultural capital may not be enough to gain access to some selective circles – social capital causing the "club effect" may also be needed (Bourdieu 1999, 128–129). In general, national networks were considered to be this type of social capital with the "club effect" to facilitate access on some occasions or even to go against the hierarchical system in Brussels. For example, it was recognised that sometimes nationality might play a role when delivering the lobbying message frontstage, as a lobbyist of the same nationality as the decision-maker might have easier access. Moreover, it was seen that decision-makers' nationality played a role in how hierarchical and formal the frontstage interaction had to be.

Several times during the interviews it was emphasised that it was easy to network among people from the same Member State in Brussels. It was also pointed out that there were a limited numbers of people interested in EU affairs from each Member State. At least among Finns, the relationships between Eurocrats seemed to be long-lasting and based on former acquaintance. In this way it seemed that there was networking and the "club effect" amongst fellow Finns, based both on longstanding relationships and a shared rare interest in EU affairs.

Moreover, it was considered that different nationalities had unofficial networks and connections in Brussels, for example, through children going to the same schools or through common hobbies. I also observed that there were traditional and national events bringing people of the same nationality together. The aim of participating in these events was to connect socially, as many people came to Brussels to work and had limited social circles beyond this. However, participating in these occasions also helped in acquiring and expanding networks in Brussels, which was seen as relevant for competent EU lobbying.

Sometimes it was also emphasised that there should be a certain kind of patriotic feeling intrinsic to EU lobbying, via doing lobbying that benefits one's own country, regardless of the hiring organisation. Thus, it was considered that through *a common national message* it was possible to achieve better results. Yet, other views emphasised that agreeing on a common position based on being of the same nationality in EU lobbying was absurd, as different national organisations did not even agree on national politics. Moreover, the shared national interest seemed to be more a myth than a reality; sometimes in EU lobbying the national conflicts were the most visible

ones.[103] Thus, politicised national debates and conflicts did not seem to be disappearing from the EU arena, but were being debated transnationally.

Although nationality could be used to back up some argument or position in EU lobbying, relying solely on national networks was not considered to be enough. Regarding the relevant position and lobbying coalitions, there were important issues other than nationality to be taken into account. For example, it was stated that being able to understand the concerns and political situations transnationally and being able to place one's own interest within the EU framework was more relevant to competent EU lobbying style than finding a common position within the same nationality. Thus, it was seen as relevant to aim to provide *common solutions* or *European solutions* in EU lobbying (see also Woll 2012; Mahoney 2008, 87–88). Towards this aim, I observed both UA and TB in-house lobbyists in Brussels participating in breakfast meetings or more informal conversation forums where they exchanged information on the present political situation in different Member States with national lobbyists.

In addition, the importance of networking in Brussels was discussed more widely in the interviews. For example, when discussing how information moves around, informal networks and encounters were considered relevant as part of everyday practices, as someone might briefly mention something essential during a chance encounter – something that I also often observed during my fieldwork. Thus, it is essential to have different networks in professional EU lobbying (see also Lahusen 2023, 198). Moreover, the difficulty of distinguishing between formal and informal interactions in EU lobbying was often pondered – after working on certain topics, not only did faces become familiar but friendships were also established. All in all, networking was considered an integral part of EU working life for someone arriving in Brussels:

> "Traditionally part of the culture in Brussels is… There are networking cocktail events, constantly. Especially when one is arriving in the city and wants to establish a network, then there is no choice but to participate."

> Interview, UA_fin_5

Moreover, as there was always someone coming or going and people were constantly changing positions, especially in Brussels, ongoing "social work"

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[103] This became especially apparent with respect to issues related to the "Finnish view" of forest issues. The Finns seemed to oppose each other much more than others – to the extent that it was pointed out by non-Finnish interviewees as an example, probably because I was a Finnish person doing the interviewing.

(Bourdieu 1993, 33; 1999, 127–129) to establish and maintain networks was considered an essential yet quite time-consuming part of EU lobbying. Following my fieldwork, I agree with an observation, made by numerous in-house lobbyists, that at some level a lobbyist needs to be a people person. This becomes even more visible when discussing how symbolic capital, trust, is based on social capital in EU lobbying.

Overall, it seems that nationality matters with respect to informal engagements and obtaining relevant information for EU lobbying. Nationalities were also considered to play a role when delivering the lobbying message frontstage, through facilitating access and possibly levelling hierarchical differences in Brussels. However, when discussing a common national lobbying position, the in-house lobbyists did not even seem to agree about whether it was possible to reach one. In addition, the importance of providing *European solutions* as part of an EU lobbying style was emphasised in relation to EU lobbying positions. All in all, networking beyond nationalities and accumulating social capital was considered essential to competent EU lobbying.

7.3   Summary of the chapter: The ability to obtain relevant and current information transnationally in EU lobbying

The key results of Chapter 7 in relation to the first research question (*How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?*) relate to the analysis related to timing in EU lobbying.

By bringing to the fore the importance of competent timing in EU lobbying, the analysis in this chapter further elaborates the understanding of the field of EU lobbying as relational to EU politics yet as a separate field of power. Timing within the field of EU lobbying relates to timing in EU politics but is not identical to it – EU lobbying seems to be conducted, or at least planned, slightly in advance of the momentums in EU politics. Also, it is acknowledged that timing EU lobbying right is demanding in practice, but is one of the elements demonstrating competence in in-house EU lobbying.

With respect to competent timing in EU lobbying, gaining timely information and establishing non-stop engagement with decision-makers transnationally are important practices. In addition, in-house lobbyists considered EU lobbying as a continuum rather than a process with a start and finish. What was relevant in EU

lobbying was to establish engagement and good working relationships with the relevant decision-makers prior to influencing.

Regarding the second research question (*What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?*), the analysis shows how social capital relates to the ability to obtain but also exchange relevant and up-to-date information from frontstage and backstage. This is needed for competent timing and for tailoring of lobbying style in transnational EU lobbying.

Regarding frontstage and social capital, the analysis shows that EU lobbying is mainly targeted at like-minded and indecisive decision-makers. However, being pragmatic showed in EU lobbying. If in relevant positions, in-house lobbyists also engaged with opposing decision-makers and tried to establish good working relations with them. Yet, the networks with like-minded decision-makers were essential in exchanging informal information during frontstage interaction, as the decision-makers also aimed to co-operate with lobbyists, who were considered useful in achieving common goals.

The analysis further shows how not every moment of interaction with the decision-makers was necessarily for influencing. Social contacts with decision-makers were established not only to influence but also to gain information. Thus, establishing long-term engagement with decision-makers also related to the ability to obtain up-to-date information from the frontstage, which was often difficult to obtain otherwise, but was necessary for competent timing in EU lobbying. All in all, understanding how obtaining current information relates to social networks with decision-makers brings to the fore the informality and importance of physical presence in EU lobbying in practice.

Regarding backstage interactions and social capital, having good networks amongst EU lobbyists transnationally helped with gaining relevant information, both from Member States and from Brussels. The information gained frontstage travelled fast and smoothly amongst well-connected in-house lobbyists. Relevant information also travelled transnationally, especially between Brussels-based umbrella organisations and their national members. The exchange of information between lobbyists, even if not sharing a common position, was considered mutually beneficial as the lobbyists might have different sources of information, depending on their hierarchical position and their networks with decision-makers.

Furthermore, sharing information amongst lobbyists also related to the practices of preparing frontstage EU lobbying well, including tailoring the lobbying messages to specific decision-makers, as well as choosing the right messenger for frontstage EU lobbying. The practice of tailoring a lobbying message was not explicitly

recognised by all the in-house lobbyists. According to my fieldwork observations, however, the practice of tailoring a lobbying style and message took place both prior to frontstage closed-door EU lobbying, based on the information obtained backstage, and on the spot during frontstage interactions, by adapting to the tone of the meeting set by the decision-makers.

In addition, nationalities played a role in informal engagement when it came to obtaining relevant information and delivering the lobbying message frontstage. However, regarding lobbying positions, the ability to provide *European solutions* was emphasised. All in all, networking beyond nationalities and gaining social capital was considered essential in transnational EU working life, of which EU lobbying was seen to be a part.

Regarding the third research question (*What constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?*) I already touched on issues such as the homogeneity of the in-house lobbyists (Chapter 5), how in-house lobbyists tended to overlook or forgot their privileged access to frontstage closed-door EU lobbying (Chapter 6), and here, in this chapter, how sharing relevant information related to social capital. In the next chapter, I discuss further how all these aspects, but especially social capital, relate to inclusion and exclusion in transnational in-house EU lobbying.

8 SYMBOLIC CAPITAL, DOXA AND SYMBOLIC POWER: INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN TRANSNATIONAL IN-HOUSE EU LOBBYING

In Chapter 4.7 I described how it was time for me to end my fieldwork when EU lobbying practices had started to seem logical. The different expectations of people in different dispositions (in-house lobbyists, consultant lobbyists, or decision-makers), the field of EU lobbying relating to EU politics transnationally, the field-specific practices related to different spaces and timing, as well as the economic, cultural, and social capital needed for organising EU lobbying transnationally, accessing frontstage and backstage EU lobbying, and obtaining timely information for competent EU lobbying had started to seem natural. Thus, "the feel for EU lobbying" in transnational in-house EU lobbying addressed further in this chapter, had come to make sense to me.

In this chapter, I enter the most critical part of my research, to unravel the symbolic power in transnational EU lobbying. Thus, through Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic capital, doxa, and symbolic power, I first analyse how trust is considered to be the symbolic capital for in-house EU lobbying. Second, I outline the doxa of competent EU lobbying by summarising the key findings on competence discussed throughout these analytical chapters (Chapters 5–7). Third, I bring to the fore moments of incompetent EU lobbying, as the moments of going against what is the "feel for EU lobbying" reaffirmed the doxa of competent EU lobbying. Fourth, I unravel symbolic power in transnational in-house EU lobbying by addressing the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. In contrast to the preceding analytical chapters, the key findings of this chapter are presented in the concluding chapter (Chapter 9), as I mainly focus on answering the third research question herein.

8.1 Trust as symbolic capital in EU lobbying

> "[…] And I think that the most important thing is trust. If you are a trusted person, if you are a serious person, it's good. If you are untrusted, you start lying or using false data, you're out of the game and it's a village here in Brussels."

> Interview, TB_EU_7

As discussed in the theory chapter, symbolic capital can be any form of capital that is recognised as legitimate and valued within the field at the moment of study, and thus offers the best material and symbolic guarantees (Bourdieu 1977, 181–183; 1990a, 113; Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013; Guzzini 2012, 81). In other words, symbolic capital can be understood as the amount of prestige or honour one enjoys, as having a reputation for competence and being of good repute within the field studied (Bourdieu 1990a, 22, 93; 2021, 158).

When revising the interviews with the in-house lobbyists conducted between 2017 and 2018, I noted that the majority of the interviewees talked about trust at some point during the interview. During the interviews conducted between 2019 and 2020, I started to ask more about trust and what role the participants considered it to play in EU lobbying. Trust was quite often mentioned when discussing competent and incompetent EU lobbying, the codes of conduct in EU lobbying, how information moves and is made public, relations to formal and informal networks, and who was believed to be influential. This indicated that trust was recognised as a legitimate concern and existed in the practices in EU lobbying (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013).

During the fieldwork, I observed how trust played out in everyday practices of EU lobbying, and reflected on how gaining the participants' trust was needed in order to gain access to the field of EU lobbying as a researcher (Chapters 4.5 and 4.6). All in all, it became apparent that economic and cultural capital, but especially social capital, related to the ability to gain trust, and that being trusted then reinforced social capital in EU lobbying, as discussed below.

8.1.1 Gaining trust in EU lobbying

It has been stated that "credibility, reputation, and trust must be established in order to be listened to and have an impact in these discussions" relevant in EU lobbying (Lahusen 2023, 161). In previous chapters, I have outlined how credibility and reputation relate to economic, cultural, and social capital. Here I discuss how above

all trust, based on social capital, is legitimised as symbolic capital within the transnational field of EU lobbying, when studied from the in-house lobbyists' perspective.

When comparing lobbying styles in the US and EU, it has been outlined that money plays a different role due to the different practices involved. In the US, part of the lobbying style is to provide funding for political campaigning, whereas in the EU the European Commission seems to support and provide funding for the interest groups (Woll 2012, 199–200). During my research, the in-house lobbyists explicitly mentioned how in EU lobbying trust could not be bought with money – what was needed was long-term commitment and competence. Nevertheless, in transnational EU lobbying physical proximity to the relevant decision-makers was considered an important element – thus economic capital was needed to organise EU lobbying with respect to having physical, transnational engagement. For example, it was mentioned that gaining trust was not possible over the phone or via email, as "*it's about looking into the eye of your counterpart*". It was also mentioned that it would be difficult to do EU lobbying without maintaining a physical presence in Brussels, or near the decision-makers in the Member States, as EU lobbying "*remains a people business*" (see also Lahusen 2023, 169, 217). Thus, for practical reasons, but also due to the practices of gaining and maintaining trust, it is understandable that in-house lobbying organisations based in Helsinki and Brussels were located so close to the relevant decision-making institutions (as discussed in Chapter 4.6.). Therefore, to have the economic resources to organise EU lobbying transnationally seemed to relate to gaining the trust of the relevant decision-makers through transferring economic capital to cultural and social capital. This in turn reinforced belonging and the ability to have effect in EU lobbying.

Accumulation of symbolic capital takes time – yet within some fields, symbolic capital can be transmitted through heredity or granted based on title, indicating collectively owned symbolic capital (Bourdieu 2021, 17, 83, 110, 158). During interviews, it was mentioned that in EU lobbying trust or mistrust existed depending on the institution that the in-house lobbyists represented. For example, Green MEPs tended to trust the NGOs, EPP MEPs the TBs, and S&D MEPs the UAs (see also Beyers, De Bruycker, and Baller 2015). However, as discussed above in relation to spaces and timing, social networks with the decision-makers, interaction backstage, and informal networks were more pragmatic and overlapping in EU lobbying. Thus, gaining trust was also more nuanced in everyday EU lobbying. Creditable status as an in-house lobbyist in an interest organisation with a good reputation (cultural capital) might facilitate inheriting trust in EU lobbying. But most importantly, it

allows access to frontstage and backstage EU lobbying in order to gain relevant social contacts (see also Lahusen 2023, 160–161).

Above all, gaining trust was considered to be more closely linked to the ability to establish long-term partnerships and to uncover pragmatic mutual interests with the decision-makers – thus, becoming a member of the same mutually recognised *family* or *club* (Bourdieu 1986). It was explained that because of the long-term engagement, the decision-makers might often know experienced lobbyists personally and consider them competent in EU lobbying – sometimes also through previous history as colleagues if the lobbyist had revolving door experience or if the decision-maker had previously worked for the in-house lobbying organisation.

Also, non-stop engagement by following a whole EU process through and timing EU lobbying right in relation to each stage was seen as supporting efforts to gain trust as this demonstrated competence in practices (Bourdieu 2021, 74). Conversely, opposing something strongly at the last minute was seen as undermining trust, as it would demonstrate that it was unclear to a lobbyist how EU legislation is done in practice and what competent timing is in EU lobbying. In addition, being of the same nationality or having common acquaintances could facilitate the gaining of trust. It was also mentioned that trust might be gained based on far more informal connections and personal preferences. In conclusion, it seems that gaining trust is based on social capital. Yet, there seems to be a hierarchical relationship between different capitals regarding gaining trust with respect to EU lobbying. To be in the position to gain social capital and trust within the transnational field of EU lobbying, economic capital (to have the belonging and ability to effect in EU lobbying) and cultural capital (to have access to frontstage and backstage to EU lobbying) are also needed.

Regarding how trust was recognised to exist in the practices of EU lobbying, it was acknowledged that it often needed to be gained prior to influencing. Where there was momentum for influencing, trust was seen to facilitate access to decision-makers, as they could be approached informally and casually, face-to-face or online, without necessarily going through the formality of requesting an official meeting, which could be more difficult to fit into their busy schedules when there was a time sensitive need to approach them. In addition, it was considered that enjoying the trust of decision-makers made it more likely that they would be inclined to listen and give the lobbying message their attention. Once trust was gained with a decision-maker, the lobbyists described how the relationship might evolve from instances of lobbying to an established relationship. In such a relationship, both parties were aware of each other's interests, and it was thereby possible to work together

whenever relevant issues emerged, on the initiative of one or the other. In this way trust as a symbolic capital also related to the recognition of existence and belonging within the field, as given by decision-makers (Bourdieu 2021, 16, 119).

Also, it was outlined that after gaining trust, the decision-makers were more likely to include the lobbyists in official processes to be given a hearing as relevant stakeholders, and also to reach out to them more often informally. During my research, the lobbyists explained several times how they had received some vital piece of information from a decision-maker who trusted them or how a decision-maker had consulted them on something *off-the-record*. As outlined in Chapter 7, during my fieldwork I also observed decision-makers leaking information to the lobbyists who they found useful and, as the lobbyists stated, who they trusted.

Moreover, I observed that lobbying messages and arguments travelled quite fast when a decision-maker trusted the content and thus adopted the arguments as their own. For example, a decision-maker might, intentionally or unintentionally, repeat almost word-for-word a lobbying message that I had just observed being delivered to them shortly before, without any time to check the content of the information – even though during the interviews the decision-makers might criticise the content of lobbying and state that it required revision (see Chapter 5.2.2.). Moreover, in-house lobbyists also explained how sometimes they were contacted by the decision-makers who trusted them to get relevant substance knowledge and arguments prior to a public appearance. Actually, if a decision-maker repeated a lobbying message publicly on television, radio, in an interview, or during any kind of public appearance, it was considered a demonstration of trust gained and successful EU lobbying.

Overall, it was considered that once trust was gained there was quite a lot of freedom, but also power, involved in co-operating with the decision-makers. For example, it was explained that if a decision-maker trusted that a lobbyist had a well-justified position or proposal that aligned with their thinking and values, there might be so much trust created that the decision-maker would let the lobbyist write a policy or ask for advice on what they should write. This was considered to happen at least with MEPs.

To summarise, it was recognised that there was some level of pre-existing trust where there were assumed shared views and positions – thus, in EU lobbying status as an in-house lobbyist might facilitate the gaining of trust. However, gaining the trust of decision-makers was more pragmatic and nuanced and related foremost to social capital. Ultimately, it was not considered very relevant through what kinds of social contacts the trust was gained. What was more important was the ability to establish confidential relationships with the decision-makers, as it was acknowledged

that trust often needed to be gained before aiming to influence. Trust already gained seemed to facilitate access to frontstage EU lobbying, making decision-makers more inclined to listen to the lobbying message. Also, being trusted might change the relationship with the decision-makers from instances of lobbying to a mutually beneficial relationship wherein the decision-makers might include the trusted lobbyists more in formal processes, consult them informally, and adopt their lobbying messages as their own. Thus, gaining the trust of decision-makers was considered to provide both freedom and power in EU lobbying. Given the importance of trust, the lobbyists also aimed to maintain the trust gained and feared losing it, as discussed below.

8.1.2   Aiming to maintain and avoid the loss of trust

The fragile nature of maintaining symbolic capital (Bourdieu 2021, 17, 83, 91, 94. 1990a, 93) has been recognised in previous literature in relation to trust in EU lobbying (Coen and Richardson 2009, 158; van Schendelen 2013, 215–16). Here I elaborate on the current understanding, by outlining what kind of practices in-house lobbyists were enforcing and avoiding in aiming to maintain trust.

Regarding maintaining the trust once gained, it was first and foremost considered important to provide arguments that the decision-makers found useful and could adopt as their own, without fear of repeating old or false facts:

> "Ultimately it is about having messages which make sense, which are honest, 'cos the worst think you can do is try and tell people something which is blatantly untrue."

> Interview, TB_EU_8

In relation to substance knowledge and maintaining trust, lobbyists sometimes stated that they did not point out errors or false facts in decision-makers' documents if these were not too crucial. This was because they did not want to destroy the trusted decision-maker's credibility or paint them in a bad light. Gaining a short-term victory or proving a point were seen as less relevant than maintaining a good relationship and trust, and thus keeping the lobbying channel open (Bourdieu 2021, 17, 83, 91, 94). Also, it was mentioned that decision-makers would surely remember if someone tried to sabotage their career, such that it might be more difficult to establish a good working relationship in the future.

On some occasions, lobbyists also described situations where they thought there was mutual understanding and trust with key decision-makers and based on that they

had been quite confident about the direction in which the process was heading or even about the outcome. Then, however, it had turned out that this was not the case. As a result, they felt betrayed and found it difficult to have respect for the decision-maker involved. However, they often had to continue to work with the same decision-makers. Thus, it seemed that losing decision-makers' trust as a lobbyist was more dramatic than vice versa in EU lobbying. This also underlines how it is necessary to renew and maintain trust as symbolic capital instead of expecting once established trust to remain intact – an aspect that was considered to be a time-consuming aspect of EU lobbying.

The importance of trust was also apparent in the way the in-house lobbyists talked about other lobbyists in anonymous interviews, trying to undermine their trustworthiness in EU lobbying – yet, this highlighted recognition of their existing and belonging within a field (Bourdieu 2021, 16, 119) and simultaneously reconfirmed how trust was perceived and recognised as legitimate symbolic capital in EU lobbying. For example, to undermine other lobbyists' trustworthiness, it was stated that it was not clear whom the other in-house lobbyists actually represented or were accountable to, that it was unclear how others' lobbying positions were formulated in practice, that other lobbyists had broken the code of conduct in frontstage EU lobbying by acting in an incompetent way, that how they obtained leaked frontstage information was unethical, and, most commonly, that others' facts in their lobbying positions were incorrect. However, it seemed that advocating with questionable facts, or any of the other issues mentioned above, was not actually the problem – the problem was potentially losing trust once gained.[104]

Thus, the important aspect in EU lobbying was that "*no one can catch you lying*". For example, if a decision-maker was called out for using incorrect data received from a trusted lobbyist, it would not only be damaging to the decision-maker but also to the lobbyist. As a result, the trust gained would have been undermined, as the reputation of the lobbyist suffered and future access to the frontstage might also be jeopardised. Thus, lobbyists admitted that they avoided practices that might potentially cause them to lose trusted access. As was often mentioned, circles were small, both in Helsinki and in Brussels, and no one wanted to gain the reputation of being untrustworthy in transnational EU lobbying. As one lobbyist summarised, "*one can lose trust only once*".

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[104] Moreover, as EU lobbying is very much value-driven, the issue of whose facts are correct was constantly present during my research.

Furthermore, enjoying the trust of decision-makers was considered important to backstage interactions, both among coalitions and in transnational networks. Whereas position papers were negotiated intensively backstage, those in-house lobbyists considered trusted and competent with respect to frontstage EU lobbying practices often proceeded quite independently when delivering their lobbying message – this underlines how trust as a symbolic capital worked to structure the hierarchical principles of the field (Bourdieu 2021, 74, 91, 141), both frontstage and backstage. Thus, losing the trust of decision-makers might also change the lobbyists' relational dispositions with respect to the backstage.

Overall, to maintain trust it was essential to remain useful to the decision-makers, by providing relevant lobbying input and by generally avoiding practices that would undermine trust once gained. It was recognised that losing trust with the decision-makers might undermine the ability to participate in frontstage EU lobbying in the future. In addition, losing the trust of decision-makers might undermine the lobbyist's relational backstage position. Regarding prospects for future co-operation, it seemed that for a lobbyist losing trust in the eyes of the decision-makers was more dramatic than the other way around.

8.2   Summarising the doxa: "Feel for competent EU lobbying"

"It's highly rewarding because you can really achieve things here [in Brussels]… When you are a good professional. As you say, a competent person. So, I think that can be very satisfying."

Interview, TB_EU_7

As discussed in the theory chapter, Bourdieu's concept of doxa refers to the relationship established between a habitus and the field. Thus, it can be defined as the knowledge taken for granted inside a specific field at a certain time. It is also linked to what is considered to be sensible and coherent according to with the common sense within the field. (Bourdieu 1990, 68–69.)

In general, the in-house lobbyists considered that EU lobbying could be done with different styles and that it was important to "*find one's own way as a lobbyist*". In practice research it has also been outlined that there may be differences in how individual actors express the same practice (Nicolini 2012, 4–5). Also, it is good to note that the practice approach has been criticised from the perspective that any action can be seen as part of a practice (see, for example, Barnes 2001, 32). It is also

acknowledged that a particular doing may belong to more than one practice (Schatzki 2002, 87).

However, practices as social phenomena are also normative; the actors socialised to them find them quite natural, obvious, and acceptable (Nicolini 2012, 3, 84; Schatzki 2002, 80, 87). This was also evident in my research, as those in particular with extensive experience in lobbying often emphasised that the work was based on common sense.

Based on the analysis presented above (Chapters 5–7), I summarise the doxa in in-house EU lobbying as a *feel for competent EU lobbying*. This includes knowing one's place as an in-house lobbyist in relation to decision-makers and having non-stop engagement with the relevant decision-makers, understanding present realities in EU politics transnationally and how other lobbyists relate to these, having access and being competent in the required impression management in frontstage EU lobbying, and having the ability to obtain timely formal and informal information from decision-makers and fellow lobbyists in order to time EU lobbying right.

Moreover, being competent in public and closed-door frontstage EU lobbying is not enough when it comes to in-house EU lobbying. It is also important to be able to co-operate, co-ordinate, and compete with other lobbyists in the backstage of EU lobbying, as one lobbyist or even one lobbying organisation cannot do everything without allies in transnational EU lobbying. Thus, it is essential to be able to establish coalitions and networks with other lobbyists. On the other hand, it is necessary to know what others are doing in EU lobbying to avoid poorly co-ordinated lobbying or public competition between organisations of a similar kind, as this could undermine the mandate and image as a suitable representative in frontstage EU lobbying. Furthermore, transnational networks amongst lobbyists are needed to be able to exchange information and to prepare for frontstage interactions with decision-makers.

During my research, the in-house lobbyists emphasised that in competent EU lobbying it is important to be aware of the substance knowledge and to be focused on it. They also emphasised substance competence as an asset when they compared themselves with consultant lobbyists,[105] even though they had often also changed from one issue area and lobbying organisation to another during their careers. However, the analysis of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital (Chapters 5–8) demonstrates that the power to do EU lobbying does not rely solely on

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[105] Interestingly, the consultant lobbyists emphasised how "*substance can always be learnt*" and how the most important asset in EU lobbying was process knowledge.

substance competence. By making visible the material and symbolic relational resources recognised by the in-house lobbyists and how these relate to the practices considered to be a part of competent in-house EU lobbying, the analysis shows that sufficient economic resources are needed to be able to organise EU lobbying transnationally. Moreover, experience of different dispositions transnationally, relevant current positions in recognised organisations, and a suitable place in the hierarchy (cultural capital), as well as the ability to obtain relevant and timely information frontstage and backstage through established networks with decision-makers and fellow lobbyists to time well-prepared EU lobbying right (social capital), are needed for competent EU lobbying. Most importantly, being able to gain and maintain trust (symbolic capital) is essential to competent EU lobbying in order to participate in frontstage EU lobbying in the future. In addition, losing the trust of decision-makers may also undermine the lobbyist's relational position backstage.

Thus, the *feel for EU lobbying* is not about winning or losing one game; it is about being trusted and thus being able to do transnational EU lobbying over the years ahead. Therefore, it is useful to understand power in EU lobbying relationally and more broadly than solely as being influential in a certain policy outcome or seeking influence in absolute terms:

I [*Interviewing*]:	"What is meant by being influential?"
NGO_EU_12:	"Well yeah, that's a good question! Influencing in that sense that how important is the case at hand in general. Meaning, how important it is to win it. But on the other hand, how realistic it is to win it and when. What are the opposing players, what is the government in general. And how we picture the next decision-makers. So, these kinds of issues one need to take into account. So… Maybe thinking about influencing is a bit misleading overall. Because it makes one think about easy wins being what is aimed for. But what is actually needed is thinking more broadly."

Moreover, competent EU lobbying is not necessarily publicly visible, but is more about helping decision-makers quietly. In this way initiatives to increase transparency were also considered to have limitations as there is always a part of EU lobbying that is informal and not public:

TB_EU_7:	"[…] but I, I think too much transparency kills transparency."
I[*interviewing*]:	"How come?"
TB_EU_7:	"Because what will happen… The human being needs sometimes some time to be able to close the door and talk to one or three or ten other people without being filmed on the internet. We are like that and it is, it goes the same whether you are in a married couple or whether you are in a meeting room. Not everything is at all times public. And I think it kills creativity because people will just talk empty phrases, and then go out of the room and meet, I don't know, on the toilet to be able to discuss."

Reviewing my research diary shows that I was quite sceptical about the "*too much transparency kills transparency*" argument immediately after this interview in early spring 2019. However, after observing public and closed-door EU lobbying practices during my fieldwork, as well as understanding how trust plays out in EU lobbying, I began to understand the argument in the context of the in-house lobbyists' feel for competent EU lobbying.

The quotation above also underlines the interpersonal nature of EU lobbying, how it remains a people business. On the other hand, the lobbyists themselves were quite critical towards the impartiality and opaque aspects of EU lobbying, such as the personal relationships and exclusiveness of EU lobbying, even though they recognised that they were generally the ones included within this:

"Uhmmm... It is pretty much down to... I would say, personal interaction. I think so... Sometimes it is quite a lot... To... It could boil down a lot to that, in fact, this 'Brussels Bubble', which can be good or not be so good, as well... Sometimes. Because then there is this lack of objectivity and impartiality."

Interview, UA_EU_7

"For sure, this system is based on personal relationships as much as on transparency. I think we should certainly increase transparency in order to reduce the importance of individual relationships – after all, it's an unbalanced setup. Regarding some files, we [TBs] have good interpersonal relationships, while in other files the NGOs have better relationships [with the decision-makers] and so on. So personally, I think increasing transparency would improve the [EU lobbying] conditions for all. When it comes to some specific issue, we [TBs] might have a head start compared to others but more transparency would improve the situation in general."

Interview, TB_EU_11

Thus, in-house lobbyists both recognised that there were aspects of EU lobbying that caused exclusion and considered their own inclusion – or prominence (Halpin and Fraussen 2017, 727–728) – in relation to others in EU lobbying. Moreover, knowing competent EU lobbying is not that easy in practice, not even when sharing the doxa, as the analysis below shows.

8.3   Moments of incompetent EU lobbying

As acknowledged in practice research, often the normative nature of practices and the tacit knowledge included within them are implicit when actors act accordingly (see, for example, Adler and Pouliot 2011b). However, it is in those moments when actors go against practices that such practices become visible, as their actions appear inappropriate or unprofessional (see, for example, Nicolini 2012, 48, 56, 63, 83–85). In this way practices limit what is considered competent from the actors themselves and from related actors (Barnes 2001, 28–30).

The feel for competent EU lobbying, as outlined in the previous chapter, seems quite obvious and commonsensical. However, the ways in which practical sense and bodily involvement played out in practice were more complicated. Those moments when someone broke the doxa of competent EU lobbying were especially revealing and helped me to more fully understand the practices of frontstage and backstage EU lobbying. Moreover, it became apparent that the decision-makers shared the doxa of competent EU lobbying and expected lobbyists to act accordingly. Thus, moments of incompetent lobbying, both frontstage and backstage, related to exclusion from EU lobbying, as I outline below.

8.3.1   Lobbyists not giving the feeling of being in or interfering too much

> I am participating in a seminar when shadowing an in-house lobbyist in Brussels. During the Q&A, a lobbyist who states that he is new in Brussels, tells how everything that was said in the event by the decision-makers is wrong and how the people in Brussels in general just don't get it. Then he goes on for several minutes, until the moderator indicates that it is time to move on. I don't think anyone was listening to or being open to his monologue, not after the very critical beginning. I think this is not the way to do EU lobbying in Brussels.
>
> Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019

The incident described above was revealing, because the lobbyist whom I was shadowing was quite blasé about the incident when I commented on it afterwards. While shrugging their shoulders, the lobbyist commented that one witnesses these occasions now and then in Brussels – the new lobbyists in town either learn how to behave or leave. Thus, they explicitly recognised the need to adjust to a soft-spoken, compromise-seeking lobbying style (Woll 2012, 210) as part of competent EU lobbying.

Interestingly, during fieldwork I learnt that decision-makers would have far less patience if lobbyists appeared incompetent for their habitus as they were expected to behave according to the feeling of *being in*:

> A lobbying meeting in the EP, that started on good terms, as the MEP seemed to be sympathetic towards the lobbyists, has now turned icy. The MEP is openly annoyed, while commenting that the lobbyists do not seem to know where the process is going and who is the right person to meet – not the MEP that the lobbyists are now meeting. Also, the MEP thought that they wanted to discuss a different dossier according to their requests for a meeting. The atmosphere is not the greatest during the rest of the meeting, even though the lobbyists keep trying, and the meeting ends short.

> Observation notes, passive observation, Brussels, autumn 2019

During informal discussions, decision-makers complained about how lobbyists' positions were sometimes unrealistic, in that they were not connected to the current agenda in EU politics, and thus failed to take into account the realities of the political situation and other lobbyists' positions. It was also pointed out that incompetent or not useful lobbying occurred when the substance knowledge was not focused upon and issues were explained too generally, as the messages were not tailored to the listener. It would also have been seen as a weakness if there were no coalitions or wider support behind the arguments, and if the solutions proposed were not broad European solutions but too narrowly explained through self-interest or national interest. In all these occasions described above, the lobbyists appeared incompetent as they did not seem to give the impression of *being in*. Moreover, the decision-makers seemed to expect that the compromising, cooperation, and competition should take place backstage rather than on the frontstage of EU lobbying.

Lobbyists might conversely appear to be too aggressive or interfering. Often it was a matter of not knowing one's disposition as a lobbyist in relation to the decision-makers. This was the case when national lobbyists, and occasionally also Brussels-based lobbyists, were not familiar with the tacit rules of EU lobbying in Brussels, or did not respect them:

This story of a Finnish lobbyist speaking up in an event in Brussels held for the decision-makers and where some lobbyists were granted access but were assumed to be silently following the debate, has now come up in several interviews and conversations, perhaps also because I am a Finn. Both lobbyists and decision-makers have mentioned it as an example of a lobbyist not knowing their place in Brussels.

Research diary notes, autumn 2019

In these moments, when a lobbyist did not seem to know their place, attempts at gendering practices could also emerge, especially if the decision-maker holding the power was a woman:

During a lobbying meeting, a male non-Brussels based in-house lobbyist rolls up his sleeves, leans forward, and hits the table with his fists, while giving his counterarguments in a quite blunt "take it or leave it" way. The female MEP hosting the lobbying meeting comments afterwards how old-fashioned and counterproductive that kind of gendering behaviour was – she was neither impressed nor intimidated but rather annoyed that someone would behave that way in her office.

Observation notes, passive observation, Brussels, autumn 2019

Several interviewees also confirmed that this kind of (masculine) aggressive, intimidating or threatening behaviour broke the norms of good behaviour in Brussels – at least when addressed towards a woman in higher up in the hierarchy.

Moreover, physical presence was not always needed to indicate that some lines had been crossed in the lobbyists' interferences. The decision-makers also heard rumours that made them feel that the lobbyists were interfering too much:

During an election campaigning event in Helsinki, a MEP candidate whom I know from previous encounters pulls me aside. Seemingly troubled, the MEP candidate tells how there is a rumour that a well-known Helsinki-based in-house lobbying organisation is sending text messages to its individual members telling them who not to vote for in the upcoming EP elections – the MEP candidate being one of the candidates that are indicated to be against their cause in the text messages. Completely unacceptable interference in political campaigning from a lobbying organisation, sums up the MEP candidate. It should not become this personal, the MEP adds.

Research diary notes, spring 2019

Even though during the EP election campaigning the MEP candidate and the Helsinki-based lobbying organisation had been at each other's throats publicly, the MEP seemed surprised that it should go this far. It was obvious that such interference was working against gaining trust with this decision-maker. Also, as

mentioned by lobbyists, the decision-makers tended to remember if lobbyists had tried to sabotage their careers.

Moreover, during the interviews with in-house lobbyists it was a commonly shared opinion that threatening or pressuring was not part of competent EU lobbying. However, the decision-makers shared examples of these occasions, as did lobbyists with revolving door experience. These issues were something that the decision-makers took quite seriously, as they considered it to be in-house lobbyists acting beyond their power. Sometimes fellow lobbyists also commented on how, in their view, public lobbying had gone too far. They might state that something had been tasteless or too aggressive, thus bringing the whole lobbying industry into bad light. Also, it seemed to break the doxa of competent EU lobbying, of being engaged but not very visibly involved.

8.3.2   EU lobbying going under or over on the frontstage

During the interviews, the in-house lobbyists explained that EU lobbying needs to be clear but not too intense – thus, EU lobbying should not go under or over. As an example of EU lobbying going under, the decision-makers explained with amusement how they had participated in a lobbying event without ever even knowing who exactly had arranged it and what its purpose had been. I heard stories about people attending various cocktail parties, theatre performances, or, in Finland, ice-hockey matches without any lobbyists ever approaching the decision-makers, in spite of having made the effort to invite them there. Also, sometimes various items of food or fruit baskets were sent, especially to politicians or their assistants – and sometimes the sender remained unknown, while at other times the items were refused as this practice was considered questionable in the first place.

Often on these occasions of EU lobbying going under the whole lobbying message remained a blur, and if intended to build long-term relations and trust, the decision-makers often did not know who was behind such attempts. Also, one MEP summarised how *inutile lobbying events were a modern method of torture*, as the decision-makers considered them a waste of time and moreover preferred to spend their free time with their loved ones.

As explained in Chapters 5–7, EU lobbying aimed to be well co-ordinated among in-house organisations and coalitions and, according to my observations, it often was. It was not considered wise to overwhelm the decision-makers with too many lobbying occasions delivering the same message as EU lobbying could also be

excessive. This was the case when the decision-makers started to get frustrated about hearing the same issue over and over again and being contacted by the same lobbyists too often. The decision-makers felt that lobbyists should understand their busy schedules and only request access if it had been long enough since the previous interaction or if something new had emerged. The exception to this was the trusted lobbyists, with whom keeping contact could be quite informal and continuous.

I also had chats with MEPs' assistants bothered by lobbyists repeatedly requesting meetings despite having nothing new to say. Even though these lobbyists were considered relevant to meet, the frequency for asking for meetings seemed to be over the top. Sometimes MEPs delegated these meetings to their assistants. After one such meeting with a consultant lobbyist, an MEP's assistant commented that at least they could now bill their client and show that they had tried to exert influence, even though nothing new was said during the meeting. Thus, at the same time, lobbying could go over by being too frequent, but also simultaneously under as nothing new was delivered.

Sometimes during interviews lobbyists reflected on occasions where they had lost the connection with the decision-makers and perhaps also future access or even their trust. Often their lobbying message was not tailored well enough for the decision-maker, or they had failed to adapt to the frontstage closed-door interaction on the spot – for example, they had realised only later that the decision-makers may have felt that the lobbying had been too aggressive. To avoid this, it was considered good practice to have two or three, rather than one, lobbyists present, so they could jointly balance the impression management in the closed-door lobbying meetings as well as reflect on the meetings afterwards.

I also observed an occasion which showed that face-to-face EU lobbying is a delicate business and what it feels like when the lobbying goes over:

> A lobbyist who has held a monologue almost throughout the entire 20-minute lobbying meeting, exits the MEP's office in the European Parliament in Brussels. The feeling in the room has been incredibly uncomfortable for at least the past 10 minutes – to me it seems obvious that the MEP was not listening toward the end of the meeting as the lobbyist was forcefully pushing the message without asking any questions, and I think both the MEP and I just wanted the meeting to be over. The MEP looks at me, shares a tired look, and sighs when the lobbyist is no longer within earshot: 'it can be also like this – not the smartest use of time, I say'. After a while the MEP continues: 'Well, at least I have met them now – don't need to do it again'.

> Observation notes, passive observation, Brussels, autumn 2019

Moreover, after hearing stories about lobbyists encroaching on the decision-makers' personal time with attempts at informal lobbying, for example by approaching them in the middle of a private dinner or by following them on Brussels streets even when told explicitly not to, I started to sympathise with those decision-makers who gave some lobbyists little or no access.[106]

These examples demonstrate some general elements of incompetent frontstage EU lobbying, which the participating lobbyists also discussed during their interviews. Although the lobbyists generally recognised that these were moments of incompetent EU lobbying, observations during the fieldwork made it apparent that in practice it is quite difficult and demanding to do competent frontstage EU lobbying. However, exclusion from EU lobbying also occurred backstage among the in-house lobbyists, as outlined below.

8.3.3   Exclusion taking place backstage

As discussed in Chapter 6, in-house lobbyists and decision-makers perceived different aspects of EU lobbying. The main audience of EU lobbying, the decision-makers, saw only part of EU lobbying (frontstage public and non-public EU lobbying). Thus, the interactions among lobbyists (backstage of EU lobbying) are not visible to the decision-makers. During my fieldwork, it became apparent that backstage practices could also be related to exclusion from EU lobbying.

In previous research, EU lobbying has been considered fairly inclusive, as it is open to people with different educational and professional backgrounds, but exclusive, as it is difficult to gain access initially (Lahusen 2023, 154). Observing backstage practices made apparent how it getting in might not be enough to stay in, as competition not only between similar kinds of organisations but also within in-house lobbying organisations might be savage, and could be related to exclusion from EU lobbying:

> "Sometimes your own dogs bite the hardest" comments an in-house lobbyist whom I am shadowing when we are discussing the internal controversies and interpersonal relations within the organisation.
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> Observation notes, shadowing, Brussels, autumn 2019

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[106] However, the decision-makers varied in this, and politicians in particular were more used to being recognised and approached in public places.

If wishing to remain within the EU lobbying profession, gaining trust is seen as benefiting not only the lobbying organisation's effect within the field, but also as supporting future career opportunities in EU lobbying (Lahusen 2023, 193). During informal conversations, the lobbyists addressed internal issues within their organisations, such as competition and hierarchical issues. For example, some expert-level lobbyists explained how their superiors generally did not include them in frontstage EU lobbying, as well as not sharing information obtained. This excluded the more novice lobbyists from gaining social capital and information directly from decision-makers, and in the longer run undermined their ability to gain trust. Moreover, some experts working in a national member organisation commented how, due to scarce economic resources, they were excluded from participating in the umbrella organisation's meetings taking place in Brussels. Such exclusions were considered as undermining the lobbyist's ability to establish relevant networks and obtain information for competent frontstage EU lobbying, as the transnational information did not always travel within an organisation. Thus, exclusion from frontstage EU lobbying and from transnational information took place backstage, as the experienced and hierarchically superior in-house lobbyists, who had gained social capital and perhaps trust as asymbolic capital, seemed to act as gatekeepers to frontstage EU lobbying.

Moreover, there also seemed to be an ongoing conversation transnationally among the national members and umbrella organisations as to who could be trusted and who was competent at EU lobbying – thus, who were in practice the real members of the *family* or *club* (Bourdieu 1986; 1999, 128–129) backstage. For example, during an interview with a Helsinki-based in-house lobbyist it was mentioned that "*you can't just share information with everyone*", when discussing co-operation within an umbrella organisation with fellow national members. Thus, it was explained that co-operation was more constant with some. Also, when viewed from Brussels-based umbrella organisations' perspectives, it seemed that there were differences between the national members with respect to their ability to contribute meaningfully to shared EU lobbying. It was explained that some national lobbyists seemed to have a better understanding of EU lobbying (often the ones having gained earlier experience from Brussels) and were more capable of contributing to an umbrella organisation's work – often this view was based on previous knowing and thus on social capital. Thus, social capital and gained trust seemed to constitute the power relations backstage, and how included the national members were in the umbrella organisation's work on EU lobbying in practice.

Also, during shadowing I observed how lobbyists working in an umbrella organisation were annoyed with their colleagues if they appeared incompetent in being aware of an earlier conversation and what was decided about the transnational co-ordination but rushing into action. There were, for example, comments about how "*that is not how you get people on board*". Thus, lobbyists also needed to invest some time and effort in backstage diplomacy among fellow lobbyists, to be considered competent and to have the chance to be included in future common transnational in-house EU lobbying.

Moreover, the exclusion of issues from EU lobbying also took place backstage, as the in-house lobbyists seemed to act as gatekeepers to what was considered sufficiently relevant to be included in lobbying positions. NGO lobbyists in particular recognised and reflected upon this aspect, as sometimes they wanted to use more radical terms and include various voices in the debates. However, it was emphasised by in-house lobbyists from all sectors that in order to deliver substance knowledge efficiently, it was important to relate it to the ongoing political process using current EU jargon. Thus, the in-house lobbyists felt that they sometimes had to edit messages extensively before they were ready for frontstage. What was interesting was that this adaptation to EU politics and the exclusion of nuances already took place backstage amongst the in-house lobbyists without these issues emerging or being debated frontstage. Thus, it seemed that the in-house lobbyists acted as gatekeepers with respect to what was presented to the decision-makers as competing possibilities.

Earlier studies discuss how lobbying is still quite a male dominated profession (Junk, Romeijn, and Rasmussen 2021). In my research, the division was not so dramatic, as the majority of the in-house lobbyists participating identified as women.[107] During my fieldwork, I observed gendering practices within the field of EU lobbying in both Helsinki and Brussels, although these practices were challenged more often in Helsinki. With female participants, both in Helsinki and in Brussels, I also had informal discussions about them being expected to take care of basic "caretaking practices" (Bourdieu 2001, 97–98) at the office, even though male colleagues in a similar position were never expected to. Thus, the women sometimes felt that they had been cast into a gendered role rather than being able to use their full competence as lobbyists.

There were, however, differences in how gender issues emerged in Helsinki and Brussels and beyond the internal issues of an organisation. The Brussels-based

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[107] 20 of the 38 in-house lobbyists.

lobbyists, both male and female, talked much more about gendering issues in Brussels in relation to lobbying work (for example, how there seemed to be different expectations for women and men). Moreover, doing EU lobbying in Brussels was seen to entail putting family life second and career first. Thus, some lobbyists openly stated that they had pursued a career in Brussels only at a later age as they had no illusions about how difficult it would be to combine everyday life with small children with the changing schedules and hectic work pace in Brussels or regularly travelling to Brussels. These issues were mentioned by both female and male in-house lobbyists. However, as women fade away from EU lobbying labour markets in Brussels as they approach the age of 40 (Lahusen 2023, 84–85), it might be that only women have to eventually choose between a career in EU lobbying and family life.

Despite these aspects, gender did not seem to be an excluding factor in everyday EU lobbying. Rather, hierarchical status, as discussed in Chapter 6, seemed to be a far stronger dividing element than gender in EU lobbying – yet, men seem to dominate the senior positions in EU lobbying, at least in Brussels (Lahusen 2023, 84–85). It is, however, worth drawing attention to other aspects that seemed to constitute exclusion more than gender: the participating in-house lobbyists were quite a homogeneous group of often well-educated white European men and women. Therefore, the image of EU lobbying inclusively accepting new entrants and fundamentally being open to people with different backgrounds (Lahusen 2023, 86, 154) seems to be only partly true. Overall, it seemed that minorities were silently missing yet unproblematically represented by majority lobbyists in EU lobbying.

It is also important to unravel the symbolic power in transnational in-house EU lobbying by reflecting upon who decides what is considered competent and incompetent in EU lobbying in practice, and how this relates to inclusion and exclusion in EU lobbying. I turn to these issues next to complete the analysis of relational power in transnational EU lobbying during the emergence of the European Green Deal.

8.4   Unveiling symbolic power: Inclusion and exclusion in transnational in-house EU lobbying

The analysis in this chapter of moments of incompetent EU lobbying brings to the fore how the doxa of competent EU lobbying is also normative. As noted above, incompetence in tacit knowledge and frontstage/backstage practices was linked to exclusion from EU lobbying. Moreover, exclusion of actors, practices and ideas took place both frontstage and backstage with respect to transnational in-house EU lobbying.

As outlined in the theory chapter, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power allows me to critically address the aspects of inclusion and exclusion at the empirical level, as symbolic power draws attention to what distinguishes between those included and those excluded (Bourdieu 1990b, 108; see also Kuus 2015), as well as to enabling and constraining structures, both material and symbolic (Kuus 2015; Adler-Nissen 2012a; Kauppi 2005).

Thus, Bourdieu understands symbolic power as an invisible power that works through the participation of those who do not want to know that they are facing it and those who are themselves exercising it (Bourdieu and Thompson 1991, 164, 170). Therefore, symbolic power is a relational view on power that works because actors submit to it and believe in it (Bourdieu and Thompson 1991, 168–170; Bourdieu 1991, 192).

Symbolic power also relates to symbolic capital, or in this study to trust, as holders of large amounts of symbolic capital are relationally in a stronger position to define what is relevant within the field (Bourdieu 1989). Thus, a relational approach to power and resources can make visible the powerful agents acting as gatekeepers for exclusion within the field, and more broadly the boundaries of a field (Bigo 2011, 239–240).

Throughout the analysis, I have made visible those practices which constitute the power to do EU lobbying rather than trying to define why lobbyists win or lose on specific issues. As my study shows, the in-house lobbyists considered practices and tactic knowledge in EU lobbying relevant, and knowing the right and acceptable way of doing EU lobbying was *natura*l and *obvious* to experienced in-house lobbyists. However, the doxa of competent EU lobbying is also shared by the decision-makers, as the analysis of the moments of incompetent EU lobbying demonstrates. Moreover, the doxa of competent EU lobbying is also exclusive in both frontstage and backstage practices as the analysis in this chapter makes visible. Therefore, both

the decision-makers and those in-house lobbyists who are considered competent acted as gatekeepers to EU lobbying.

Thus, symbolic power to do frontstage EU lobbying comes from EU lobbyists' and decision-makers' mutual recognition as competent, rather than from interest groups' members or from the causes represented. Also, the chains of memberships and co-operation between in-house lobbyists are messy, overlapping, and extensive. This makes it difficult to track the chains of representation – which do not even seem to be relevant in current EU lobbying in order to be recognised as competent.

When the dominating actors within a field hold the power to exclude new entrants, there is a higher probability of forming a closed system (Bourdieu 2021, 11). Currently competent in-house lobbyists seem to have gatekeeping power when it comes to backstage practices. Keeping their internal debates invisible also limits what is brought to frontstage debates. There is a tendency to keep possible competing actors and interests away from frontstage EU lobbying. Also, when fewer actors are considered competent in EU lobbying, there is less competition between lobbyists.

However, among the competent lobbyists, this exclusion was neither questioned nor problematised. Rather, one's own relational disposition as an in-house lobbyist was highlighted by the dichotomous framing of competent and incompetent actors in EU lobbying – often when discussing in-house lobbyists from different sectors or consultant lobbyists, even when co-operating with them informally and backstage. This also gives internal recognition for competent lobbyists acting as gatekeepers in EU lobbying.

In her study, Firat (2019), by studying diplomatic and lobbying practices side by side during Turkey's Europeanisation, outlines how despite the limited progress made, participation reaffirmed lobbyists' expertise and thus enforces recognition of status and power. Thus, the symbiotic relationship did not only enforce the decision-makers' abilities but also lobbyists' power to do lobbying. Similarly, the analysis provides an understanding of how conducting EU lobbying during the emergence of the European Green Deal was not only about the forthcoming agenda and what kind of possibilities the emerging agenda was fostering for EU lobbying. It was also about reaffirming the doxa of competent EU lobbying and in-house lobbyists' symbolic power to engage therein.

Thus, the outcomes of the EU lobbying conducted did not seem to determine whether the in-house lobbyists would be involved the next time. Actually, despite the outcomes, previous experience of EU lobbying was seen to afford the cultural and social capital to do EU lobbying. What is important is that one has gained and

maintained trust and demonstrates competence in both frontstage and backstage EU lobbying practices according to the current doxa during the process. Thus, even though issues on the agenda change, the unwritten rules and the *feel for EU lobbying* remain the same.

Moreover, even though times and dossiers change, the same in-house lobbyists, or at least the same in-house lobbying organisations, have a voice in EU politics because of their continuous involvement. Thus, it seems that competent EU lobbying has not only become a megaphone to ensure certain interests are heard more loudly, but also a way to listen to EU lobbying or parts of it exclusively (see also Halpin and Fraussen 2017, 730), without considering its representativeness or what interests are excluded from it. Also, when frontstage EU lobbying is left to the few, who are considered experienced and competent in EU lobbying, there is a danger that EU lobbying will become more and more exclusive, as relevant capital for it accumulates among these few (see also Lahusen 2023, 193–195).

However, the problem was not the competence of the current in-house lobbyists in transnational EU lobbying, but rather how interests lacking competent EU lobbying may not even enter the debates as EU lobbying seems to be the institutionalised means of being heard in EU decision-making, and other ways of listening may not be sufficiently enforced. Therefore, incompetence in EU lobbying practices may lead to exclusion and thus relevant substance knowledge may not reach decision-makers or be available early enough. Hence, understanding the field of EU lobbying as a separate transnational field of power and its boundaries (inclusion within it and exclusion from it) is vital to understanding relational power in transnational EU lobbying.

9 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to understand relational power in transnational EU lobbying. Through a Bourdieu-inspired relational practice approach, everyday EU lobbying practices were understood from in-house lobbyists' disposition, by analysing i) how do in-house lobbyists' habitus and transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying? ii) what material and symbolic resources give power to do in-house EU lobbying? and, lastly, iii) what constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?

The main conclusion of this research is that practices in EU lobbying constitute the power to do EU lobbying: not only does the content of the lobbying matter, but also how, when, and by whom EU lobbying is done. Thus, the *feel for EU lobbying* is not about winning or losing one game; it is about being able to do transnational EU lobbying over the long-term. Also, competent EU lobbying is not necessarily visible but involves quite imperceptibly helping the decision-makers. Furthermore, this study offers an understanding of how the emergence of the European Green Deal was not only about the forthcoming agenda and what kind of possibilities the agenda fostered for EU lobbying. It was also about reaffirming the doxa of competent EU lobbying and in-house lobbyists' symbolic power to engage in EU lobbying.

In this concluding chapter, I first present the main findings on the three proposed research questions based on the analytical chapters (5–8) and reflect the findings upon previous literature on EU lobbying. Second, I revisit the contributions to reflect upon how this research furthers understanding of transnationality, lobbying style, and relational power in EU lobbying research. Finally, I outline some potential avenues for future research on EU lobbying and beyond.

9.1 How do in-house lobbyists' habitus and the transnationality of EU lobbying relate to the power to do EU lobbying?

The key results in relation to the first research question relate to the analysis of in-house lobbyists' disposition and EU lobbying in relation to EU politics.

Regarding in-house lobbyists' disposition, it seems that the in-house lobbyists' habitus is tied to a certain favoured sense of their place in current EU lobbying. Essential to EU lobbyists' habitus is the feeling of being in a disposition to do EU lobbying, including all the preparatory work and long-term commitment required for competent EU lobbying (see a similar approach in Lahusen 2023, 105–110), to be able to engage in EU politics quite imperceptibly. Moreover, it is useful to understand consultant lobbying simultaneously as an additional channel to implement in-house lobbying and challenge in-house lobbyists' favoured disposition in EU lobbying. My study shows that there is competition but also co-operation amongst in-house and consultant lobbyists in EU lobbying.

In-house lobbyists also have quite close and casual relationships with relevant EU decision-makers, as both seek long-term and pragmatic cooperation. There also seems to be a mutual dependency between lobbyists and decision-makers, as the latter consider EU lobbying to be useful with respect to EU decision-making. This finding supports previous research emphasising the close contact and resource-dependency between EU lobbying and EU politics (Greenwood 2007, 340; 2017; Eising 2007; Bouwen 2002; 2004; Michel 2013). However, there is also a hierarchical relationship between decision-makers and lobbyists, as the decision-makers still hold the power to make the decisions and decide who is granted access to be heard. Thus, regarding the power to do EU lobbying and everyday practices, the in-house lobbyists need to understand their current disposition in relation to the decision-makers and to respect the hierarchies in EU politics (see similar findings in Firat 2019).

In addition, relational dispositions are also changing in EU lobbying, as in-house lobbyists change organisations and experience of in-house lobbying and consultant lobbying is not mutually exclusive. Also, revolving door experience is considered to be relevant previous experience in lobbying, which helps with understanding competent EU lobbying practices from the decision-maker's perspective. Thus, in-house lobbyists' current habitus often includes previous experience of different lobbying organisations and revolving door experience. Overall, the different dispositions in EU lobbying relate to one another more than they cause separation, when previous experience of EU lobbying is taken into account and changes in

dispositions are contemplated over the longer term. Thus, the findings support previous research, that highlights the professionalisation of EU lobbying across different sectors and how EU lobbying nowadays demands specialised skills (Klüver and Saurugger 2013; Firat 2019; Lahusen 2023).

Regarding transnationality and the power to do EU lobbying, there is a fateful, and perhaps even self-evident, coexistence between the EU and EU lobbying – if the EU falls, it is the end of EU lobbying. Thus, the field of EU lobbying does not seem to be an autonomous field of power but rather is strongly relational (heteronomy) to EU politics. As EU decision-making is formally and informally transnational, competent EU lobbying also takes place transnationally, in both Member States and Brussels. As a result, there are established yet overlooked transnational everyday practices in in-house EU lobbying. In-house EU lobbying is organised transnationally through chaining memberships, a hierarchical division of labour with respect to engaging in EU lobbying across Member States and Brussels, and interdependency in adjusting EU lobbying to the present realities of EU politics transnationally. Transnational memberships and informal networks are considered necessary for competent in-house EU lobbying, both in the Member States and in Brussels. Thus, participating in Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work and engaging with national member organisations is seen to be mutually important, and a requirement of competent EU lobbying. Also, national member organisations gain access to EU lobbying indirectly via EU-level umbrella organisations. Yet, in-house lobbyists' transnational understandings of the field of EU lobbying are largely overlooked in current IR research on EU lobbying.

Furthermore, the transnational field of EU lobbying is a quite weakly autonomous yet different field from EU politics, as my analysis of spaces and timing in transnational EU lobbying indicates. Regarding relational spaces, in-house lobbyists and decision-makers see different aspects of EU lobbying, as lobbyists do not generally have access to others' non-public EU lobbying and decision-makers do not have access to in-house-lobbyists' preparatory work prior to public lobbying or lobbying behind closed doors. When it comes to EU lobbying that is visible to decision-makers, impression management by EU lobbyists holds up in both public and closed-door EU lobbying, when the decision-makers are present. Thus, both can be understood as aspects of frontstage EU lobbying (cf. Naurin 2007a; 2007b; Nothhaft 2017).

In addition, backstage interactions amongst lobbyists are not visible to decision-makers. The backstage practices in in-house EU lobbying include compromising and the internal exclusion of controversial issues, even before entering into the frontstage

of public and closed-door EU lobbying. The more aggressive and competitive practices, but also coordination and cooperation, taking place between lobbyists are largely overlooked in the current research on a soft-spoken, consensus-seeking EU lobbying style (for example, Mahoney 2008; Woll 2012; Coen 1998; 1999). Outlining backstage practices demonstrates how well-prepared but also pragmatic adjusting frontstage EU lobbying style actually is. Also, Brussels-based umbrella organisations seem to have gained a gatekeeping role in adjusting frontstage EU lobbying, especially in Brussels, as they carry out everyday EU lobbying practices with respect to less controversial issues quite independently, to adjust to the fast pace and informality of EU decision-making. Moreover, competition over having a mandate to advocate on certain issues often takes place between similar in-house lobbying organisations already backstage. Making visible the backstage in EU lobbying shows that EU lobbying practices are broader than those aspects that are publicly visible or visible to decision-makers. Analysis of relational spaces further underlines how backstage practices relate to frontstage EU lobbying and thus how these should be understood together when addressing the power to do EU lobbying.

Regarding timing in EU lobbying, it seems that understanding political timing is relevant but not enough when it comes to timing transnational EU lobbying competently. Timing within the field of EU lobbying relates to timing in EU politics but is not identical with the decisional presents (Ekengren 2002, 88–89) – EU lobbying seems to be conducted, or at least planned, slightly in advance (see similar findings in Lahusen 2023, 204–206, 197). Thus, the key issue is to stay one step ahead of what will take place in EU politics next, and to establish ongoing working relations with EU decision-makers and fellow lobbyists transnationally. Also, it is acknowledged that timing EU lobbying right is demanding in practice, but is one of the elements demonstrating competence in in-house EU lobbying.

Therefore, in-house lobbyists consider EU lobbying to be a continuum rather than a process with a start and a finish. Competent timing in EU lobbying depends upon keeping up with EU politics by gaining timely formal and informal information, establishing a long-term and transnational engagement with the decision-makers to have good working relationships prior to exerting influence, and being ready to provide lobbying input when there was a clear momentum to be proactive or a request from the decision-makers. These ongoing frontstage and backstage everyday practices with respect to adjusting the timing of EU lobbying to fit the "fatalistic time" of European decisional presents (Ekengren 2002, 95) have been largely overlooked in current research. Rather, timing is implicitly addressed through behavioural framing on influencing through case studies or by studying

focusing events (Coen 2007; Woll 2007; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2008; Crepaz et al. 2022), that overlook the long-term engagement and backstage practices used to time EU lobbying competently.

Also, regarding the European Green Deal and the power to do EU lobbying, this agenda created a timely entry point for frontstage access. This showed in the practices of adjusting the lobbying message to what was current in EU politics when seeking access. Also, in-house lobbying organisations emphasise publicly their mandate, expertise, and the sector's affectedness in relation to the emerging agenda. Yet, a great deal of everyday EU lobbying, related to climate, environment, and sustainability more or less closely, continued to take place quietly and without wider publicity. All in all, the European Green Deal was seen as the product of a transnational and wider political shift rather than as a political shift in and of itself. As in-house lobbyists had established an ongoing engagement, simultaneous timely competent lobbying based on gaining information and adapting to the new direction of EU politics took place during the emergence of the European Green Deal (see Michel 2013 for similar results regarding the process of co-production of EU lobbying).

Overall, analysing relational spaces and timing provides a more nuanced understanding of how EU lobbying is both relationally linked to EU politics yet a separate transnational field of power. Even though this study illustrates how EU lobbying needs to adapt to what is current in EU politics and to be organised transnationally across Member States and Brussels to be considered relevant, analysing the relational spaces and timing in EU lobbying has demonstrated that EU lobbying practices cannot be understood as the sole basis of EU politics.

9.2   What material and symbolic resources give the power to do in-house EU lobbying?

In this research, I zoom into relational resources to answer the question of what gives the power to do in-house EU lobbying. More specifically, I analyse how economic, cultural, and social capital relate to the ability to do EU lobbying and gain symbolic capital (trust) therein.

Through analysing relational resources, this study shows how the power to do transnational in-house lobbying calls for economic resources to organise in-house EU lobbying transnationally. NGOs' relatively scarce economic resources (workforce and the financial resources allocated for lobbying) relate to more limited

transnational practices in EU lobbying when compared to UA and TB lobbyists. However, all organisations seem to have in common the need to be selective and to prioritise in EU lobbying because of the economic resources allocated to the work. Thus, in line with Crepaz et al. (2022, 147), whose findings show how limited lobbying resources hinder interest representation, my findings indicate that limited economic resources hinder transnational practices in in-house EU lobbying. Also, while it is clear that the ability to do transnational EU lobbying does not rely solely on economic capital, economic capital can be transformed into the cultural and social capital required for competent EU lobbying.

Yet, when turning to analysing relational power and what gives the power to do EU lobbying, it is indeed important to recognise resources other than the economic. The findings of this study show how previous experience from different dispositions, relevant current positions in recognised organisations, and a suitable place in the hierarchy (cultural capital), as well as the ability to gain access to informal information through networks to prepare EU lobbying in advance and to time it right (social capital) are also needed. Most importantly, being able to gain and maintain trust (symbolic capital) is essential to competent EU lobbying.

This study confirms previous findings around how the name and reputation of a lobbying organisation is relevant in gaining access to decision-makers (Lahusen 2023, 192, 215; see also Binderkrantz, Christiansen, and Pedersen 2015; van Schendelen 2013, 215, 309–11). Yet, the findings of this research demonstrate that in everyday EU lobbying cultural capital relates more broadly to gaining access to both the frontstage and backstage of transnational EU lobbying. Regarding embodied cultural capital, earlier experience of different dispositions (also Lahusen 2023) and of EU lobbying transnationally offers the recognised cultural capital to access backstage EU lobbying. Also, in-house lobbyists with transnational experience from the field seem to have a stronger feeling of *being in* than national in-house lobbyists without experience of Brussels. In addition, having a current status as an in-house lobbyist in an organisation recognised as relevant and suitably representative, as well as respecting and mastering the hierarchical codes of conduct in EU lobbying, give the recognised institutionalised cultural capital to gain access to frontstage EU lobbying. Moreover, objectified and material cultural capital, such as lobbying materials and entry badges, then support a good image as being a suitable representative in frontstage EU lobbying.

Similarly to extensive previous research (see, for example, Coen 2007, 335; also Coen and Richardson 2009, 152; Coen 2002; Woll 2012; Mahoney 2008, 167), the findings of this study highlight the importance of social network and connections

with decision-makers. Analysing social capital makes visible how social contacts with decision-makers are not established only to exert influence but also to gain information. When it comes to frontstage practices, the analysis shows that EU lobbying is mainly targeted towards like-minded and indecisive decision-makers. However, EU lobbying is more pragmatic than this in practice. If in relevant positions, in-house lobbyists also engage with opposing decision-makers and try to establish good working relations with them. However, the networks with like-minded decision-makers help in gaining informal information during frontstage interactions, as the decision-makers also aim to co-operate with lobbyists considered useful to them in achieving common goals. This inclusion within the EU's decision-making community does not enforce only decision-makers' ability in EU politics but also lobbyists' ability to conduct EU lobbying (see also Firat 2019; Michel 2013). All in all, the findings show how establishing long-term engagement with decision-makers relates to the ability to obtain current information frontstage, which may otherwise be difficult to obtain, but is essential with respect to competent timing in EU lobbying.

Moreover, by making visible how social capital also relates to backstage practices, this study demonstrates how information gained frontstage travels fast and transnationally amongst well-connected in-house lobbyists. The exchange of information between lobbyists, even if they do not share a lobbying position, is considered mutually beneficial as the lobbyists may have different sources of information, depending on their hierarchical positions and their connections to decision-makers and fellow lobbyists. Furthermore, sharing information among lobbyists relates to the practices of preparing and adjusting frontstage EU lobbying style, such as tailoring the lobbying messages for specific decision-makers, as well as choosing the right messenger for frontstage EU lobbying. Thus, having good networks amongst EU lobbyists transnationally helps with gaining relevant information, across both Member States and Brussels. In addition, nationality plays a role in informal engagement when it comes to obtaining relevant information and delivering the lobbying message frontstage. Sometimes being of a common nationality can facilitate access and help to overcome hierarchical barriers in EU lobbying. However, regarding the lobbying positions, shared national interest seems to be more of a rhetorical way to build an argument, as the ability to provide *European solutions* is emphasised.

All in all, social capital relates to the ability to obtain relevant and current information both frontstage and backstage. This is necessary for timing and tailoring transnational EU lobbying competently. Understanding how obtaining current

information relates to social networks with decision-makers brings to the fore the informality and importance of physical presence in EU lobbying. Also, networking beyond nationalities and accumulating social capital is considered essential to transnational EU lobbying work life.

Most importantly, the study demonstrates how trust, based on social capital, is legitimised as symbolic capital within the transnational field of EU lobbying when studied from the in-house lobbyists' perspectives. It was also mentioned that money could not buy trust in EU lobbying – what was needed for this was long-term commitment and physical presence. The importance of trust is also visible in the ways in-house lobbyists were discussed in anonymous interviews with other lobbyists, by trying to undermine their trust in EU lobbying. Also, the issues discussed through economic, cultural, and social capital relate to practices of gaining and maintaining trust or demonstrating having a trusted position in EU lobbying. Trust as symbolic capital relates to the recognition, from decision-makers and fellow lobbyists, of existing and belonging within the field of EU lobbying.

Thus, it is important to establish and maintain confidential relationships with the decision-makers, as trust often needs to be gained prior to influencing. It was recognised that there could be some level of pre-existing trust because of assumed shared views and positions – thus, in EU lobbying status as an in-house lobbyist can facilitate gaining trust. However, gaining the trust of the decision-makers is more pragmatic and nuanced and relates foremost to social capital.

Furthermore, trust already gained seemed to facilitate access to frontstage EU lobbying and meant decision-makers were more willing to listen to the lobbying message. Also, being trusted might change the relationship with the decision-makers from instances of lobbying to a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, decision-makers may include trusted lobbyists in formal processes, consult them informally, and adopt their lobbying messages as their own. To maintain trust, it was essential to remain useful to the decision-makers, by providing relevant lobbying input and generally avoiding practices that would undermine the trust gained.

Therefore, gaining the trust of decision-makers provides both freedom and power in EU lobbying. It is also recognised that losing the trust of the decision-makers might undermine the ability to participate in frontstage EU lobbying in the future. Regarding the prospects for future co-operation, it seems that for a lobbyist losing trust in the eyes of decision-makers is more dramatic than the other way around. Moreover, losing the trust of decision-makers can also undermine the lobbyist's relational position backstage. Therefore, trust as symbolic capital structures the hierarchical principles of the field of EU lobbying both frontstage and

backstage. These more nuanced findings around how everyday practices related to trust further previous research which has addressed trust mainly as a cultural element or through comparative studies on lobbying style (for example, Woll 2006, 460–461; Coen 1998; 1999).

Overall, EU lobbying is seen to be very much based on trust and it is difficult to do competent EU lobbying without it. Having trust is seen as an ability to be at the top of the game in EU lobbying and to have access to the most essential issues in EU lobbying. In this way trust creates a lobbying channel through which to be heard and to exert influence, without being visibly involved.

9.3   What constitutes a "feel for EU lobbying" and exclusion in transnational EU lobbying?

The key results in relation to the third research question are that EU lobbying has quite an established role in relation to EU politics and that the *feel for EU lobbying* is not about winning or losing one game but about being able to do transnational EU lobbying across the long-term.

Thus, the doxa of competent EU lobbying shows that EU lobbying is about the feel of non-stop engagement with relevant decision-makers, understanding current realities in the EU transnationally, staying one step ahead of EU politics transnationally, and being trusted to be competent with respect to both front and backstage EU lobbying. Furthermore, the power to do EU lobbying does not relate solely to competence in relation to substance – or as Lahusen summarises it (2023, 282), information is ineffective in EU lobbying without the ability to establish stable contacts through networking. Thus, being able to gain trust is somewhat in the nature of EU lobbying. In this way initiatives to increase transparency are seen as having limitations, as there is always a part of lobbying that is informal and not public. Also, the in-house lobbyists recognise these exclusionary elements of current EU lobbying.

Interestingly, the decision-makers also share an understanding of the doxa of competent EU lobbying and expect the lobbyists to act accordingly. As demonstrated in this research, moments of what is considered incompetent lobbying frontstage (not giving a feeling of *being in*, interfering too much, lobbying going under or over) are revealing regarding the practices of exclusion and the boundaries of the field of EU lobbying.

However, exclusion from frontstage EU lobbying and from transnational information also takes place backstage, as experienced and hierarchically superior in-house lobbyists seem to act as gatekeepers to frontstage EU lobbying. Also, there seem to be differences between the national member organisations when it comes to how integrated they are into Brussels-based umbrella organisations' work and EU lobbying. In addition, it seems that the lobbyists also need to invest time and effort in backstage diplomacy with their fellow lobbyists to be considered competent in transnational in-house EU lobbying and to be trusted with confidential information. Interestingly, it also seems that the in-house lobbyists acted as gatekeepers with respect to what are presented as competing possibilities to the decision-makers. Thus, the more aggressive lobbying styles (for example, the practice of *killing the proposal*) found within US lobbying (Woll 2012; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2008) may not be absent from EU lobbying, but rather taking place backstage to some extent.

Moreover, in-house lobbyists' homogeneous habitus also makes visible how minorities are silently missing yet unproblematically represented in EU lobbying by lobbyists often belonging to the mainstream population. Thus, the moments of incompetent lobbying both frontstage and backstage related to exclusion from EU lobbying. Currently competent in-house lobbyists therefore seem to have a gatekeeping role in addition to the decision-makers acting as gatekeepers in frontstage EU lobbying – this gatekeeping role of fellow lobbyists is overlooked in the current literature on access (for example, Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017; Halpin and Fraussen 2017; Junk et al. 2022).

The analysis also shows that the symbolic power within EU lobbying comes from EU lobbyists' and decision-makers' mutual recognition of what are considered competent EU lobbying practices. Furthermore, the emergence of a European Green Deal was about what kind of possibilities for EU lobbying the emerging agenda was fostering – but also about reaffirming the doxa of competent EU lobbying and in-house lobbyists' symbolic power to engage in EU lobbying. Thus, the outcomes of the EU lobbying conducted do not seem to determine whether the in-house lobbyists would be involved the next time, as previous experience of EU lobbying, whether successful or not, is seen to afford cultural capital to do EU lobbying (see also Firat 2019).

However, the most important asset is the ability to gain and maintain trust and to demonstrate competence in frontstage and backstage EU lobbying practices according to the current doxa during the process. Thus, even though issues on the agenda change, the unwritten rules and the *feel for EU lobbying* remain. Also, even

though times and dossiers change, the same in-house lobbyists or at least the same in-house lobbying organisations, retain a voice in EU politics because of their symbolic power to be involved, which is granted and maintained by EU decision-makers and fellow lobbyists. However, the problem is not the competence of current in-house lobbyists in transnational EU lobbying but rather how interests lacking competent EU lobbying support may not even enter into the debates, as EU lobbying seems to be the institutionalised way to be heard in EU decision-making, with other ways to gain a hearing maybe not being considered.

Overall, the research outlines how practices in EU lobbying constitute the power to do EU lobbying: not only does the content of the lobbying matter, but also how, when, and by whom EU lobbying is done. Thus, being useful by providing substance knowledge is not enough in transnational EU lobbying, although in-house lobbyists tend to emphasise their role as experts providing information to decision-makers.

To summarise the key findings and conclusions, I present here the table of my analytical framework, familiar from the introductory chapter, adding to it the main findings from each analytical chapter and outlining the relationality between these findings:
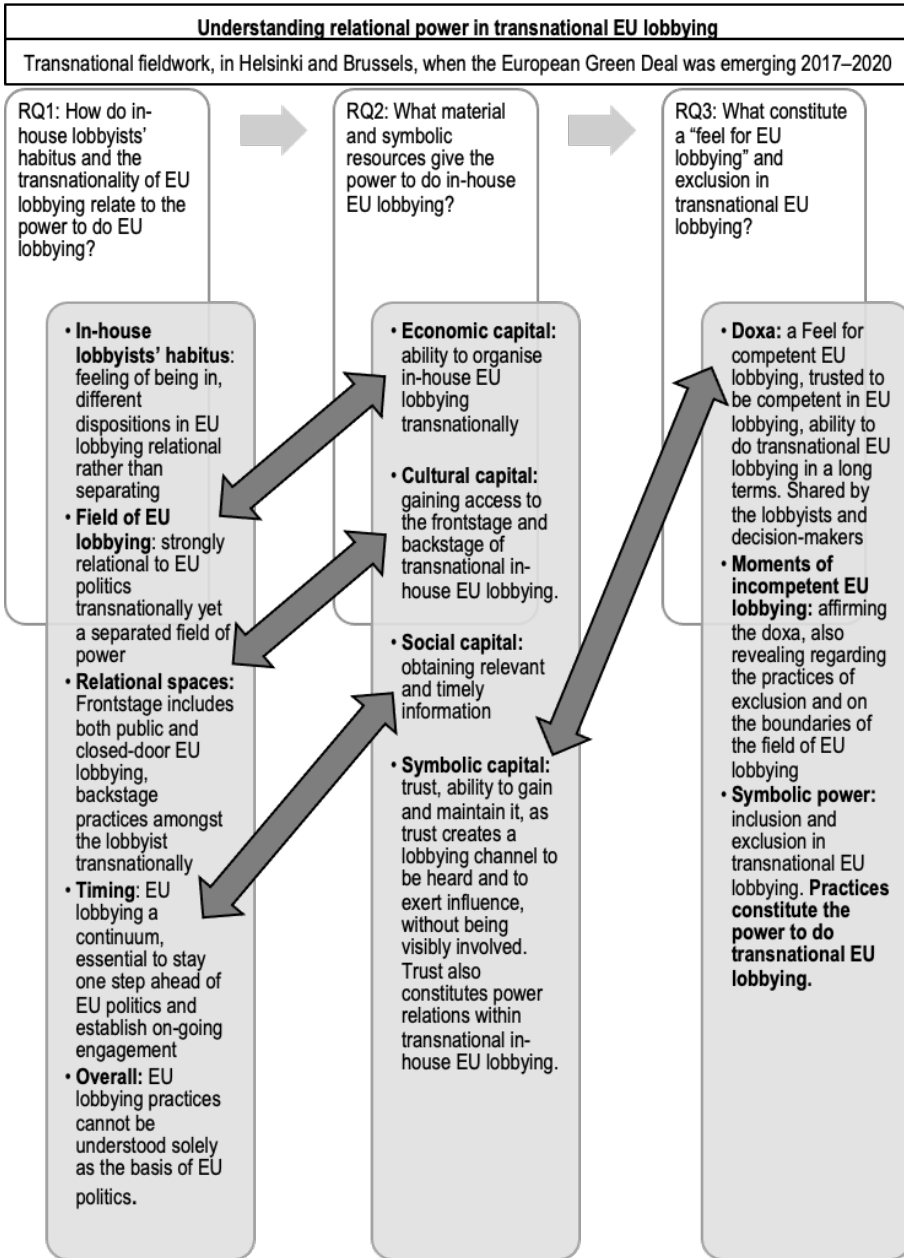
Figure 2. Summary of the key findings and conclusions

9.4 Furthering understanding of transnationality, lobbying style and relational power in EU lobbying research

The findings of this study shed new light on everyday EU lobbying and how adopting a Bourdieu-inspired practice approach makes it possible to study EU lobbying in relational terms. In this way it is also possible to take the in-house EU lobbyists' disposition in EU lobbying as a starting point, as opposed to decision-makers' views of EU lobbying, when studying everyday practices. Through making visible how practices constitute the power to do EU lobbying, the understanding of transnationality, lobbying style, and relational power in EU lobbying becomes wider than is currently the case in IR research on EU lobbying (for example, Mahoney 2008; Lahusen 2023; Woll 2012; 2007).

Firstly, the findings unravel the transnationality of EU lobbying practices. Currently enforced way to frame EU lobbying as an EU-level system that is fairly independent from member states has fostered important development in comparative studies (Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017, 460), yet segmentation within comparative analysis may raise theoretical barriers within lobbying research (Lowery, Poppelaars, and Berkhout 2008). While national lobbying is mentioned as one lobbying route (Mahoney 2008, 139), there is a failure to see how established transnational cooperation in in-house EU lobbying is, and how the field of EU lobbying is transnationally relational to EU politics, despite being a separate field of power. Also, when studying the professionalisation of EU lobbying, studies tend to focus on those practices taking place in Brussels (Lahusen 2023; Michel 2013), thereby overlooking the transnationality of EU affairs (Büttner et al. 2015).

The empirical findings of this study show how everyday in-house EU lobbying relates transnationally, across Member States and Brussels. To gain a deeper understanding of power relations in EU lobbying, this needs to be conceptualised separately from EU politics. This was made possible by considering it from the in-house lobbyists' disposition, by adopting a Bourdieu-inspired practices approach beyond the four current ways of framing EU lobbying (interest groups, European governance, comparative studies, and behavioural definitions), and by fostering theoretically informed and contextualised empirical transnational research perspectives (Kauppi 2018, 66–67; 2013, 6; Favell and Guiraudon 2009). Through this framing, it is possible to make empirically visible how the social field of EU lobbying relates to EU politics transnationally, but also how national member organisations and Brussels-based umbrella organisations relate transnationally.

Also, this study demonstrates how multi-sited fieldwork can be conducted and how transnational ethnographic research can enhance understanding of the everyday in International Relations. The study shows how ethnographic fieldwork in IR research is possible despite the difficulties of "studying up" and gaining access – actually, ethnographic research opens up further possibilities to study the exclusiveness of access in International Relations. Thus, methodologically, this research opens up interesting new avenues for ethnographic research within IR research and beyond.[108] Overall, this study contributes to current EU lobbying research via qualitative, practice research and an ethnographic approach that enables to address transnationality.

This leads to the second point relating to EU lobbying style. Currently studies on lobbying style focus on the practices visible to decision-makers (Mahoney 2008; Woll 2012; Hanegraaff, Poletti, and Beyers 2017). The empirical findings of this study show how EU lobbying cannot be fully understood from the perspective of the formal EU decision-making institutions, as making visible the backstage practices in EU lobbying demonstrates. Also, the interaction with decision-makers (frontstage) relates to interactions amongst the lobbyists (backstage). This study elaborates what should be taken into account when studying EU lobbying style: studying the practices of *modifying* or *killing a policy proposal* (Mahoney 2008, 208) or providing *common solutions* or *European solutions* in EU lobbying (see also Woll 2012) should also consider backstage practices, which is not the case at the moment. In this way the understanding of what the soft-spoken, consensus-seeking EU lobbying style actually covers could be elaborated – in fact maybe the soft-spoken EU lobbying is possible because of extensive and exclusive backstage practices amongst EU lobbyists.

Moreover, by making visible how impression management is dropped only when the audience (the decision-makers) is not present and how the actual backstage of EU lobbying takes place amongst the lobbyists, I elaborate how Goffman's (1959) framework of frontstage and backstage can be applied in understanding relational spaces in EU lobbying (cf. Naurin 2007a; 2007b; Nothhaft 2017). Thus, my research contributes to building a methodological approach that sheds light especially on backstage lobbying, locating it with respect to EU lobbying according to how the in-house lobbyists see it. To look into the internal dynamics between lobbyists is not a

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[108] Also, the Appendixes, such as fieldwork codes of conduct, included in this thesis, provide practical tools for researchers interested in ethnography and shadowing research.

new perspective in interest group research, but is perhaps somewhat overlooked in current political research on lobbying (see also Vehka 2023).

The framing also allows me to address timing in EU lobbying style, which is still, surprisingly, an understudied aspect (Toshkov et al. 2013). The contribution that this research makes in relation to timing in EU lobbying is to make visible the long-term engagement and continuity integral to in-house EU lobbying. Compared to earlier research focusing on power in EU lobbying, EU lobbying is often framed through formal legislation processes and by looking at who wins and who loses in these. Thus, this study makes visible how lobbyists' practical understandings of timing in EU lobbying is different from the previous academic way of framing timing in EU lobbying (cf. for example, Crepaz et al. 2022; Junk et al. 2022; Crepaz, Hanegraaff, and Junk 2023). Based on this research, the understanding of timing becomes more explicit and broader, as continuity in EU lobbying is addressed. Thus, the study demonstrates the potential of a practice approach in studying EU lobbying style and timing.

Thirdly, the findings elaborate empirical IR research on relational power in EU lobbying, which has remained limited (Woll 2007; Bocse 2021), by turning to analyse relational power resources beyond studying power as an outcome, or influencing in EU lobbying. Thus, it is possible to bring to the fore the hidden factors and practical knowledge in EU lobbying, as influencing is not the only aim, and nor is it independent from other aims in lobbying (Berkhout 2013). Instead it relates, as my study shows, to the ability to engage in transnational EU lobbying in the long-term beyond winning or losing one game. Thus, even during the emergence of a new political agenda, such as the European Green Deal, there seems to be a degree of fixity and reproduction of practices, according to what is considered competent in EU lobbying both by lobbyists and decision-makers.

This study furthers the understanding of relational interdependencies and power relations in EU lobbying both socially and transnationally (Kauppi 2018, 69): there is strong mutual dependency between lobbyists and decision-makers frontstage, but also interdependency between in-house lobbyists backstage to conduct competent EU lobbying transnationally. Moreover, relational resources and symbolic capital (trust) relate to symbolic power and mechanisms of exclusion in EU lobbying. As the findings of my research indicate that both the decision-makers and those in-house lobbyists who are considered competent act as gatekeepers in EU lobbying, there is a possibility that with further professionalisation EU lobbying could develop towards a closed system that excludes new entrants and competing possibilities. Studying further the practices between lobbyists before entering the frontstage arena

could expand upon the understanding of lobbyists' gatekeeping role in EU lobbying, as studies on access and gatekeeping tend to focus on frontstage practices and decision-makers (for example, Binderkrantz and Pedersen 2017; Halpin and Fraussen 2017; Junk et al. 2022). Thus, perhaps instead of focusing on positive pluralist or pessimistic elitist tendencies in EU lobbying, it is worth shifting towards studying the inclusion and exclusion mechanisms within everyday EU lobbying, as it has become an established and professional way to engage in EU politics (Klüver and Saurugger 2013; Lahusen 2023). Through this shift, the power to do and practices of representation in EU lobbying could be addressed further.

Regarding practical contributions, the research makes EU lobbying practices more visible and comprehensible to citizens, decision-makers, researchers, and the lobbyists themselves. During my research, I was often asked by the lobbyists to compare different kinds of lobbying organisations and to explain how they could do better work when compared to each other. Yet, the findings of this study challenge the whole idea of dividing lobbyists into categories based on lobbying organisation. Rather, I show how dispositions in EU lobbying are more dynamic and that power is relational between similar kinds of actors. Despite this, I think my research provides a new perspective for reflecting upon EU lobbying and one's own abilities with respect to it. As to the practical implications for decision-makers, I would encourage them to be critical towards representation and power in EU lobbying. It is worth considering where messages come from and if some points of view or actors are excluded from debates. Moreover, I urge the enforcement of other means of listening in EU politics, over and above the current established and professionalised practices of EU lobbying.

It is also important to highlight that practices exist in time and space. As many of the lobbyists interviewed had extensive experience of lobbying, sometimes over 20 years, they also highlighted how EU lobbying has changed over time and become increasingly focused and professional. Thus, *time has passed* on some practices and practices continue to evolve with time. Interestingly, in the pre-Covid era it was often emphasised that face-to-face encounters and talking directly with someone were essential to lobbying. Even though emails and communicating by phone were mentioned, there seemed to be something essential in face-to-face meetings. As my research data was gathered pre-COVID-19 in the period 2017–2020, I can make no assumptions about how lobbying practices changed during COVID-19 or possibly thereafter. That perspective is beyond the scope of this study. Luckily, other researchers have shed more light on EU lobbying during COVID-19 (Crepaz et al. 2022; Junk et al. 2020). Also, the study was conducted when the *feel of the time* was

based around *the emergence of the European Green Deal.* Thus, sustainability, climate change, and environment were at the centre of EU debates. In 2023, for example, security is a more dominant debate. Also, gaining access as a researcher could have been more difficult, as the discussion on influence from third countries and spies in Brussels has intensified.

In addition, the logical relationships, drawn by a researcher, are different from the practical relationships constantly practised, cultivated, and maintained. The one-dimensional outline by the researcher can be compared with the map of a landscape, whereas the practical relationships are the actual landscape including every little path and characteristic. (Bourdieu 1977, 37–40.) Therefore, one limitation of my research is that it may provide a static image of EU lobbying – I recognise that the reality is richer than a written description of the experience therein. I also acknowledge that it is impossible to capture everything about transnational EU lobbying between these covers, as the written form of academic research always overlooks some aspects and experiences. Thus, there is a risk that I have generalised transnational practices excessively (see also Kuus 2018), even though by making relationality and especially the moments of incompetent EU lobbying visible my aim has been to overcome this tendency.

Moreover, the written form also overlooks my shared experiences with the participants. As some of the quotations included in this work perhaps transmit, in-house lobbyists tended to have a witty sense of humour and a very approachable attitude towards their work, which made it a truly enjoyable experience to observe the everyday practices of EU lobbying. It also made my fieldwork somewhat lighter, as the political debates and the issues on the EU agenda could be quite serious and gloomy. Therefore, I hope the participants feel that they were listened to and that I have managed to capture the feel for transnational EU lobbying and the relational power within it, even though not everything and everyone's personal experience is perhaps included.

As a final remark, I seem to have an inner motivation or drive to practice research and ethnography: to twist my own thinking while learning new things. Certainly, conducting this research has enhanced my understanding not only of EU lobbying but also of practice research, ethnography, and research practices. Personally, the greatest transformative learning experiences have come from adopting a research approach that made it possible to see things in EU lobbying differently – and to never unsee them again. At some level, I hope I have been able to do the same – if not to twist the readers' thinking, maybe at least to strain it a little.

9.5   For future research

Finalising a doctoral dissertation is an emotional process, as it marks the end of a long research journey, focusing on a specific topic. However, the avenues that I see this research opening up for further research on EU lobbying and beyond are inspiring.

In this study I have touched upon the topic of timing in EU lobbying and shown how it relates to social capital and gaining relevant information for EU lobbying early enough. I believe studying timing further could open up new insights with respect to understanding how EU lobbying proceeds and adapts to EU politics as processes advance. Also, further research concerning the relational spaces in EU lobbying, and the practices taking place behind closed doors as well as amongst lobbyists (similar to Hopgood 2013), could provide increased understanding of how public and non-public EU lobbying relate to each other. Furthermore, accountability and responsibility in transnational EU lobbying remains an understudied topic. In my view, a practice theory approach could be a useful framework to widen the understanding of how interest groups' organisational practices of member involvement relate to the ability to act as transmission belts and bring diverse stakeholders' voices to bear in EU decision-making (see for example Albareda 2018; Halpin 2006). In addition, trust in EU lobbying could be studied further through IR's 'emotional turn', through a Bourdieu-inspired relational trust approach (Frederiksen 2014) or through a rationalist, constructivist, or psychological approach (see, for example, Haukkala, Wetering, and Vuorelma 2018).

In this study, I have only briefly addressed the issue of how minorities were silently missing yet unproblematically represented in EU lobbying. Inclusivity and intersectionality in EU lobbying are still understudied. It also seems that in the case of in-house lobbying organisations, the norm is not only to recruit those who share the values of the organisation but also those who have previous experience of EU lobbying, who have a suitable educational background (Lahusen 2023), are European, and preferably white (men). These are, however, issues that would require further research. Thus, gender in EU lobbying is something worthy of further study (see also Junk, Romeijn and Rasmussen 2021; Antonucci 2021) – but intersectionality would most likely open up far more avenues to studying inclusion and exclusion in EU lobbying. Also, studying further the gatekeeping practices between the experienced and hierarchically superior in-house lobbyists and novice lobbyists, between lobbyists transnationally, and in relation to the exclusion of

minority lobbyists, could open interesting new avenues for understanding representation in EU lobbying.

Another potentially fruitful avenue for further research would be to take a more in depth look into the substance knowledge provided by the lobbyists, for example, through outlining the different value assumptions in lobbying positions. This would be justified as the in-house lobbyists tend to emphasise their role as experts providing information to the decision-makers. Thus, aspects of knowledge-based decision-making could open up further avenues to study EU lobbying in IR research. Moreover, this study also provides in-depth empirically obtained knowledge, which could inform surveys. For example, surveys could test the prevalence of transnational practices in larger N samples.

With respect to topics a bit further beyond this research, *zooming out* from EU lobbying and looking at how it relates to other practices, such as diplomacy or corruption, would be beneficial in EU lobbying and practice research to supplement existing research (for example, Firat 2019; Goldberg 2018). Such research could clarify further what EU lobbying is and what its boundaries are.

By embracing reflexive and embedded fieldwork, this study demonstrates how gaining understanding and writing as a researcher take place throughout the fieldwork – on arriving in, entering, and exiting the field. There are many ways to develop these aspects in ethnographic research further in IR by embracing its interdisciplinary roots and by making visible how the ways of knowing and embodiment play a role. For example, multi-sited and embodied ethnography opens up avenues to study lobbying practices across national and local contexts. One interesting avenue is to conduct not only multi-sited but also multi-bodied ethnography, by having several ethnographers simultaneously in the field. This kind of methodological approach could further enhance the understanding of the researcher as a tool, and embodiment in ethnography – something that I am also interested in developing in the future.

APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Informed consent in written form

I_____ voluntary agree to participate in this research interview, conducted by Doctoral Researcher Salla Mikkonen for her doctoral thesis and other research.

I have been given sufficient information about the research. I have been given the opportunity to ask about the research and participation in the interview.

I have been informed that participation to the interview and answering the questions is voluntary. I have the right not to answer any question, and to stop the interview at any time or for any reason.

I am aware that the interview is audio recorded. In the study, the interviews are used in a transcribed, anonymous text form or anonymous visualisations. An individual person cannot be re-identified. The study's supervisors will validate the data and the interviewees' identities to ensure the responsible conduct of research. Participants' personal data will not be shared to outsiders at any time.

After the research has been completed, it is possible to share the interview data in anonymous form according to the Open Access -principles by the University of Tampere for further research, teaching and study purposes.

Time and place_____

Signature_____

Interviewer's signature_____

APPENDIX 2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions _in-house lobbyists_ 1h

Note from the author: this is an outline of the themes and interview questions for the participants. However, as outlined in Chapter 3.5.1., in each interview different aspects were emphasised according to the participant.

To start with:

- Could you please outline (shortly) your experience on advocacy work / lobbying?
- Understanding on the terminology: lobbying, advocacy work, interest group representation, public affair management... What term do you prefer to use when you (yourself) talk about your work? What differences do you consider between the terms?

I.Agenda formulation and choosing the lobbying strategy

1. What is the core of your organisation's advocacy / lobbying agenda? What other issues keep you busy at the moment – what issues do you follow in the EU now?
2. How did you decide on the described advocacy / lobbying agenda or theme?
3. Does the chosen lobbying agenda base on some bigger strategical choice or selection?
4. When considering your member organisations / umbrella organisations that you belong into: Are there differences between what is advocated at the EU level and what the member advocate at the national level?
5. Are you keeping an eye on some emerging topics that you know that will be important (in the near future)? Or, have you excluded some issues or topics from you lobbying agenda – and why so?

II.Accountability and representation in advocacy work

6. Who are you representing in the EU? (your organisation)
7. How have you gained the mandate represent them (this group / party / interest group)?

8. For what and to whom do you feel accountable to in your work?

III. Lobbying / advocacy practices and how these practices are seen
9. Pen & paper: Could you please list, or describe in other ways, how do you advocate / do lobbying? What are your work tasks when it comes to advocacy / lobbying?
10. Pen & paper: The relevant actors and networks in you work. With whom do you keep in contact? Toward whom do you advocate? Where do you get relevant information?
11. Who do you lobby?
12. (Relevant lobbying events): when and in what occasions do you lobby? How do you time lobbying? What processes are relevant?
13. What kind of lobbying practices are good? What kind of lobbying practices are bad? What lobbyist cannot or should not do?
14. What makes the difference between competent / qualified and incompetent / unqualified lobbyists?
15. What are the challenges in lobbying / advocacy work – what makes the work difficult? What do you consider as positive or good things in lobbying?

To end with:
- Was the content of the interview as you expected?
- Should I have asked something else? Or not to ask something?
- Who else should I interview?
- How would you like to receive information about the research in the future? (E-mail, Twitter, else?)

APPENDIX 3 Participants and interviews

MAIN INTERVIEWS, IN-HOUSE LOBBYISTS

	Code	When interviewed in between November 2017 - February 2020	Duration of the intervie, minutes	Position (Expert level or Director level)	Experience with the current employer	Experience on advocacy/lobbying in total, national and/or EU level
NGO= non-governmental organisation						
1	**NGO_fin_1**	Autumn 2017	130	Expert	2	8
2	**NGO_fin_2**	Spring 2018	62	Director	8	8
3	**NGO_fin_3**	Autumn 2017	114	Expert	1,5	1,5
4	**NGO_fin_4**	Autumn 2017	115	Expert	8	8
5	**NGO_fin_5**	Autumn 2017	150	Director	1	8
6	**NGO_fin_6**	Spring 2018	131	Expert	5	5
7	**NGO_fin_7**	Spring 2018	77	Director	7	12
8	**NGO_fin_8**	Spring 2018	60	Expert	4	4
9	**NGO_EU_9**	Spring2019	51	Expert	3	9
10	**NGO_EU_10**	Spring2019	65	Expert	10	10
11	**NGO_EU_11**	Autumn 2018	90	Director	10	18
12	**NGO_EU_12**	Autumn 2018	61	Expert	3	3
13	**NGO_EU_13**	Autumn 2018	80	Expert	5	8
14	**NGO_EU_14**	Autumn 2018	60	Expert	2	6
15	**NGO_EU_15**	Autumn 2019	65	Expert	8	10
16	**NGO_EU_16**	Spring 2020	56	Expert	6	7
17	**NGO_EU_17**	Spring 2020	75	Expert	1	4
				average	**5**	**8**
UA = Trade unions and professional associations						
18	**UA_fin_1**	Autumn 2017	122	Director	27	27

19	UA_fin_2	Spring 2018	123	Director	20	20
20	UA_fin_3	Spring 2018	118	Director	12	16
21	UA_fin_4	Spring 2018	77	Director	8	18
22	UA_fin_5	Spring 2018	63	Director	18	24
23	UA_fin_10	Spring 2018	95	Director	2	15
24	UA_EU_6	Autumn 2018	67	Director	1,5	10
25	UA_EU_7	Autumn 2018	82	Expert	5	5
26	UA_EU_8	Autumn 2019	117	Director	1	10
27	UA_EU_9	Autumn 2019	133	Director	1	20
				average	11	18
TB = Trade and business associations						
28	TB_fin_1	Spring 2018	85	Director	2	2
29	TB_fin_2	Spring 2018	51	Director	20	20
30	TB_fin_3	Spring 2018	67	Director	6	10
31	TB_fin_4	Spring 2018	88	Director	10	10
32	TB_EU_5	Autumn 2018	124	Director	11	20
33	TB_EU_6	Spring 2019	71	Director	22	30
34	TB_EU_7	Spring 2019	40	Director	15	20
35	TB_EU_8	Spring 2019	107	Director	4	4
36	TB_EU_9	Spring 2019	60	Director	11	18
37	TB_EU_10	Autumn 2019	80	Expert	5	6
38	TB_EU_11	Autumn 2019	73	Expert	4,5	5
		minutes, total	3285	average	10	13
		hours, total	55	Experts 16, Directors 22		

Note from the author concerning the pseudonyms:

"NGO" stands for non-governmental organisations, "TB" for trade and business associations and "UA" for trade unions and professional associations, to indicate in which kind of in-house lobbying organisation the lobbyist was working at the time of participating. Regarding other than in-house lobbyists, "MEP" stands for Member of the European Parliament, "DM" for Finnish politicians, political assistants, Finnish government or DG workers, "PC" for consultant lobbyists and "Activist" for activists. Moreover, the abbreviation "Fin" means that the participant was mainly based in Helsinki and "EU" that the participant was mainly based in Brussels – although this kind of distinction was difficult to make in relation to some of the participants as they operated transnationally.

		Background interviews, recorded (between 30 min - 120 mins)	
1	Activist_fin_1	Does advocacy but not working in any organisation at the time of the interview	Also doing advocacy
2	Activist_fin_2		
3	DM_fin_1	Politicians, political (ex) assistants, officials. Both in Finland and in Brussels	Receiving lobbying or experience from receiving lobbying
4	DM_fin_2		
5	DM_fin_3		
6	DM_fin_4		
7	DM_fin_5		
8	DM_EU_7		
9	DM_EU_8		
10	Mep_fin_1	Finnish MEPs, in between 2017–2020 (Interview request sent to 12 MEPs in total, 4 Meps declined or not responded the interview request)	Receiving lobbying (in addition to the interviews, 4 MEPs' lobbying meetings and events observed, in total 27 occasions)
11	Mep_Fin_2		
12	Mep_fin_3		
13	Mep_fin_4		
14	Mep_fin_5		
15	Mep_Fin_6		
16	Mep_Fin_7		
17	Mep_Fin_8		
18	PC_fin_1	Consultant lobbyists, meaning not in-house lobbyists	Also doing lobbying
19	PC_fin_2		
20	PC_EU_3		
21	PC_EU_4		
		Background meetings, not recorded	
1	DM_fin_9	2 meetings, 2-3 participants	Receiving lobbying
2	DM_EU_10	1 meeting, 2 participants	
3	DM_EU_11	1 meeting, 1 participants	
4	NGO_EU_18	1 meeting, 1 participants	Also doing lobbying
5	PC_EU_6	1 meeting, 1 participants	

In addition, several more spontaneous meetings, discussions and observations with different actors both in Finland and in Brussels (noted in the Research Diary, between 2017-2020)

APPENDIX 4 Shadowing and observation data

Participant	Shadowed or observed	Shadowing, days, Finland	Shadowing in hours, Finland	Shadowing, days, Brussels	Shadowing in hours, Brussels	Observation, days, Finland	Observation, hours, Finland	Observation, days, Brussels	Observation, hours, Brussels
NGO= non-governmental organisation									
1	Shadowed	5	14	1	5				
2	Shadowed	5	51						
3	Shadowed			10	58				
4	Observed, internal meetings (own or others)							3	15
5	Observed, internal meetings (own or others)							1	8
	In total NGOs	**10**	**65**	**11**	**63**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**23**
UA = Trade unions and professional associations									
6	Shadowed	7	33	1	5				
7	Observed, in closed-doors and public events					2	4		
8	Shadowed			3	20				
9	Shadowed			4	22				
	In total UAs	**7**	**33**	**8**	**47**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**0**
TB = Trade and business associations									
10	Observed, internal meetings (own or others)					1	2		
11	Shadowed	5	32						
12	Shadowed			8	38				
13	Shadowed			5	33				
	In total TBs	**5**	**32**	**13**	**71**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**
	In total (NGOs, UAs and TBs	**22**	**130**	**32**	**181**	**3**	**6**	**4**	**23**
13 participants (34 %) of the total 38 in-house lobbyist participants took part in the observations, 9 shadowed									

APPENDIX 5 RESEARCH DATA, SUMMARY

Interviews (recorded)	Participants
In-house lobbyists (2017–2020)	38
Background interviews (2017–2020)	21
Total	**59**

Shadowing and observation: in-house lobbyists	Participants
Shadowing, both in Helsinki and Brussels	9
Other kind of access to conduct observing through the in-house lobbyists, in Helsinki and Brussels	4
Total	**13**

Observing MEPs' lobbying meetings	Meetings /hours
MEPs' lobbying meetings and events, 4 MEPs granting access	27 meetings / 15 hours

Fieldwork duration, Shadowing and passive observing during the fieldwork	Hours	Days	pages (notes)
Shadowing and passive observations between November 2017 and February 2020 * **	530	99	697
Estimation of other observing (events, election panels, seminars etc.) between November 2017 and February 2020 * **	230	76	150

* The most intensive fieldwork in Helsinki took place between March 2019–August 2019, 5 months

** The most intensive fieldwork in Brussels took place between September 2019–February 2020, 5.5 months

Research Diary notes	pages	
	2017–2022	930

APPENDIX 6 FIELDWORK, CODE OF CONDUCT

Codes of conduct in my research

In this letter I, **Doctoral Researcher Salla Mikkonen from Tampere University**, outline the codes of conduct for for my research, especially for observation data collection.

    Participation in my research is voluntary. If wished, the observing can be paused during certain meetings or other activities. If wished by the participant(s), the observing can be stopped at any stage.

    Participation is anonymous. All potential participants and organisations linked to the observation remain anonymous throughout the research work. Participants' personal data will not be shared to outsiders at any time.

    Participation is confidecial. As my research focuses on advocacy / lobbying practices in Finland and in Brussels, the main focus in the observation is on practices. This includes that no specific contents discussed during the observation will be filtering outside the ocassions.

    I participate as an observer. In my research, I use different methods of ethnographic research to participate as an observer (not as an actor) in various different occasions. I fully understant that I am invited as a guest to different occasions and will respect the rules outlined by the host, suitable in different occasions.

    Please find attached to this letter a summary of my research plan, further explaining my research interests. My Doctoral Thesis (monograph), is receiving funding from the *Maj and Tor Nessling Foundation* and from *The Foundation for Economic Education.*

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