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## REFERENCES

Coen, David; Katsaitis, Alexander & Vannoni, Matia, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021, 240 p., ISBN-13: 9780199589753. Hardback: £75.00

- 1 The salience of major corporations and industry groups in European politics is manifested in an ever-increasing number of governmental affairs offices in Brussels. But the influence wielded by the business sector in European policy and politics remains an important puzzle. Undoubtedly, the European Union (EU) has developed into a complex arena for public policy-making, with several layers, access points, and potential veto players. *Business Lobbying in the European Union* aims to make sense of the manifold relationships between business and the EU.
- 2 The book assesses business lobbying in Brussels using the theoretical lenses of two disciplines: political science and business management studies. Whereas political science is used to shed light on the specific role of the EU multi-governance system in shaping business activity, business management studies help us to understand the companies' coping strategies when it comes to European integration and their influence in day-to-day policy-making. Both the demand and the supply side of EU business lobbying are thus examined in the book. Such a comprehensive analysis of institutional contexts, resource dependencies, and organizational characteristics is particularly welcome. For more than 20 years, European interest politics has resulted in a large number of theories and methodological approaches, making it sometimes difficult to draw a full picture of the dynamics and mechanisms of EU business

lobbying. Coen, Katsaitis, and Vannoni clarify the multidimensional relationships between firms and European institutions without oversimplifying them.

- 3 More specifically, Coen, Katsaitis, and Vannoni examine business and government relations in the EU multi-governance system across the macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis, and this forms the basis for the structure of the three parts of the book. At the macro-level, the authors adopt a historical perspective and address how the creation of the single market and the strengthening of the EU institutions (the Commission and the European Parliament in particular) has affected business lobbying activities. At the meso-level, they examine business mobilization across the different policy fields (e.g., finance, environment, culture) and stages (e.g., agenda-setting, policy implementation). Interestingly, the meso-level analysis takes into account the informal stages of the EU public policy processes (i.e., the trilogues), providing insights into the EU's inter-institutional dynamics.
- 4 It is in the micro-level analysis, however, that this volume offers a novel view on EU business lobbying by examining how business groups manage governmental affairs. In particular, the book assesses the strategic choices that firms make in order to access and influence EU policy-making through, for instance, investment in human capital. Findings reveal, *inter alia*, that the strategic management of government affairs in companies varies across country of origin, company size, and industry, thereby showing that business is far from being a monolithic actor.
- 5 The three-level analysis used in this book enables the reader to consider the changing nature of relations between firms and EU institutions. This offers new insights into one of the most persistent questions regarding EU business lobbying: whether elite pluralism or neo-corporatism best characterizes the business-government relationship. Engaging in this academic debate, Coen, Katsaitis, and Vannoni incorporate interest politics paradigms and provide a nuanced answer based on the different levels of analysis.
- 6 The methodology employed by the authors is an additional strength of this volume. The analysis is underpinned by advanced statistical analyses assessing a large population of 12,000 interest groups, surveys of business and decision-makers spanning more than 30 years, sequence analyses on managers' career paths, and elite interviews. Furthermore, each chapter consists of in-depth case studies that reveal practical implications, while highlighting the intrinsic complexity of business-government relations.
- 7 Theoretically and empirically, the book confirms the central role of information. Interactions between EU institutions and business are conceived as an exchange of reliable, timely, and policy-relevant information as a prerequisite for access to the EU decision-making process. Significantly, information explains why the "revolving-door" phenomenon – that is, government officials moving to the private sector and vice-versa – is less common in the EU than in the US. Most managers of EU companies stay in their position and develop their network with EU officials. They do so by gaining substantial expertise on how the EU multi-governance system works. To point out this neat separation between the private and public sector, the authors suggest the concept of "sliding door". Studies on lobbying tend to analyse the EU and US separately, and here the book lays the foundation for future fruitful comparisons.
- 8 That said, this volume does not say much on the way in which business groups convey the information needed by EU institutions to design, adopt, and evaluate policies. In addition to analysis of the companies' hiring strategies, further attention could be paid

to the range of strategies used by business group representatives, from picking up the phone and setting up informal meetings to using mass media or social media. Lobbying is inherently interactive, and the practices employed are also a key determinant of the exchange process that forms the business-government relationship.

- 9 Nevertheless, *Business lobbying in the EU* is a rewarding read for students of business and politics as well as academics. The authors take stock of the existing scholarship that comes from different strands of research, as evidenced by the extensive bibliography. The concepts examined in the book are well defined and the methods used are explained in detail. Several questions are left open, leading the way for future research. By drawing attention to the intricacies of EU business-government relations, the book is also well suited for policy practitioners aiming to regulate lobbying.

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## AUTHORS

### ELISE ANTOINE

King's College London, UK  
elise.antoine@kcl.ac.uk