

LOBBY PLANET

# BRUSSELS

The Corporate Europe Observatory  
guide to the murky world of EU lobbying

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Corporate Europe Observatory is a research and campaign group working to expose and challenge the disproportionate influence that corporations and their lobbyists exert over EU policy-making. We finance our work with the help of donations from individual supporters as well as with grants from a number of trusts and foundations.

We receive no EU funding, other public funding or corporate funding. For more information about our finances, please visit [corporateeurope.org/about-ceo](http://corporateeurope.org/about-ceo).

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**With special thanks to:** Vicky Cann, Theresa Crysman, Olivier Hoedeman, Sarah Reader, Erik Wesselius, and the entire Corporate Europe Observatory team.

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JUNE 2017

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# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Welcome to our Lobby Planet guide, which takes you on a tour of Brussels' EU quarter to explain the many – and often shady – methods of corporate lobbying. From Volkswagen's Dieselgate affair to Monsanto's glyphosate controversy, it usually takes scandals to bring to light how big business lobbies try to shape EU policies in their interests, evade regulation, and control the terms of the debate.

But while they cultivate cosy relationships with public officials, the public remains in the dark about what happens at the cocktail parties and hotel dinners, off-the-record meetings and private briefings between lobbyists and EU decision makers.

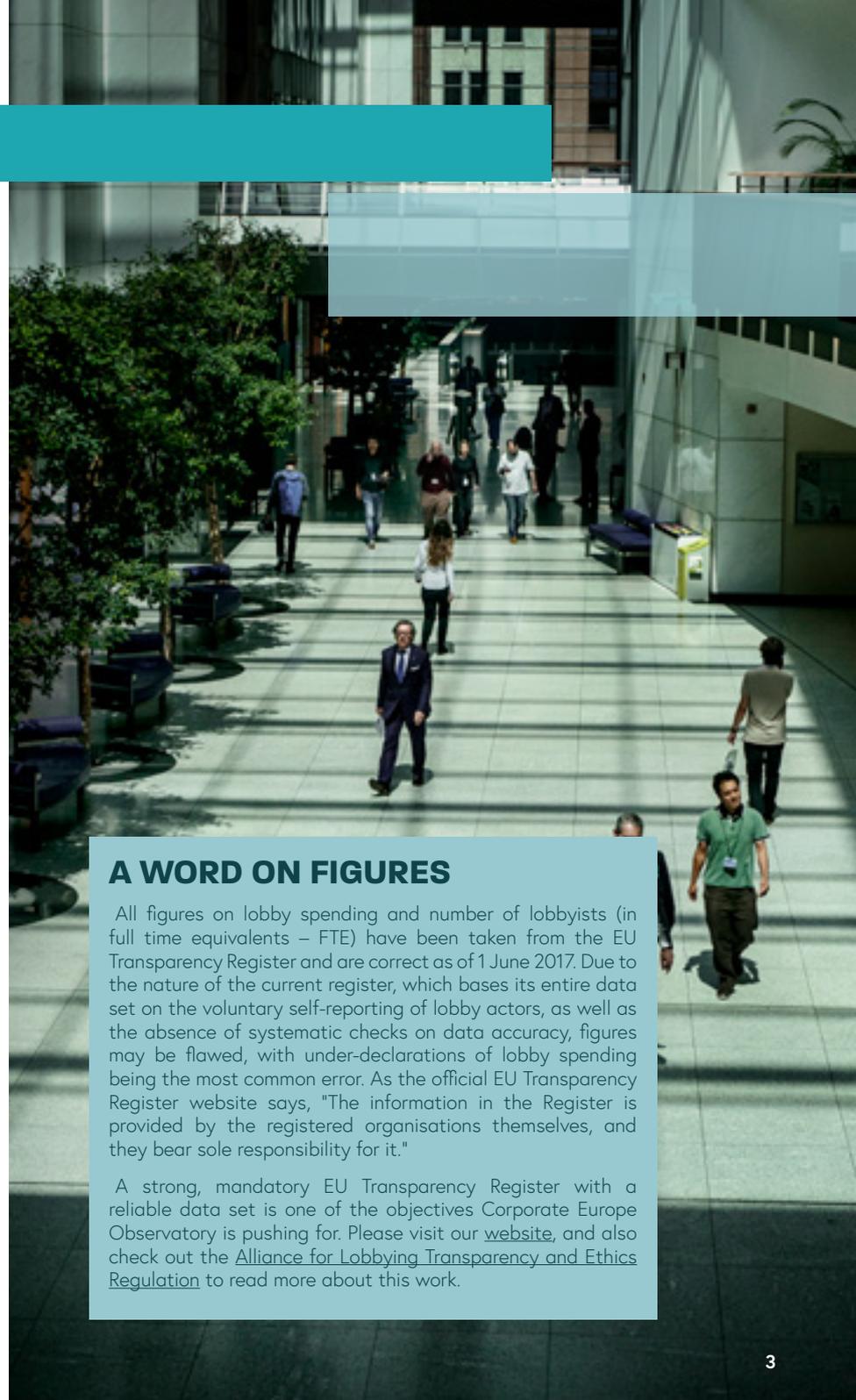
However it is us, the more than 510 million people across the EU, who have to live with the results of that lobbying: whether it means being forced to breathe highly polluted air caused by dirty vehicle emissions, or to see children play in parks covered with the potentially carcinogenic pesticide glyphosate.

It is high time to lift the lid on the hidden world of corporate lobbyists in Brussels. Come along and join us on this tour!

More than 25,000 lobbyists are estimated to be working in Brussels. This Lobby Planet guide introduces you to the often outrageously opaque world of corporate lobbying, street by street. We trace the invisible lines of political power that criss cross the city to give you an idea of how lobbyists work, introduce you to the big players, show where they meet, and what issues they focus on.

A brief thematic section then outlines seven industries, which have been fighting some of the most controversial and expensive lobbying battles in the past years. We also provide you with a handy jargon-busting dictionary, to guide you through the jungle of EU acronyms and policy terms and make it easier to understand what the EU's political and economic elites are actually talking about! And last but not least, we suggest several ways to take a stand and help to counter the excessive influence of big corporations in the EU.

Finally it is over to you, as we offer ideas on how you can help balance the forces in the fight for democracy, accountability, and the public interest. We hope this Lobby Planet guide will inform, inspire, and motivate you to get involved!



## A WORD ON FIGURES

All figures on lobby spending and number of lobbyists (in full time equivalents – FTE) have been taken from the EU Transparency Register and are correct as of 1 June 2017. Due to the nature of the current register, which bases its entire data set on the voluntary self-reporting of lobby actors, as well as the absence of systematic checks on data accuracy, figures may be flawed, with under-declarations of lobby spending being the most common error. As the official EU Transparency Register website says, "The information in the Register is provided by the registered organisations themselves, and they bear sole responsibility for it."

A strong, mandatory EU Transparency Register with a reliable data set is one of the objectives Corporate Europe Observatory is pushing for. Please visit our [website](#), and also check out the [Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation](#) to read more about this work.

# LOBBYING THE EU IN BRUSSELS – AN OVERVIEW

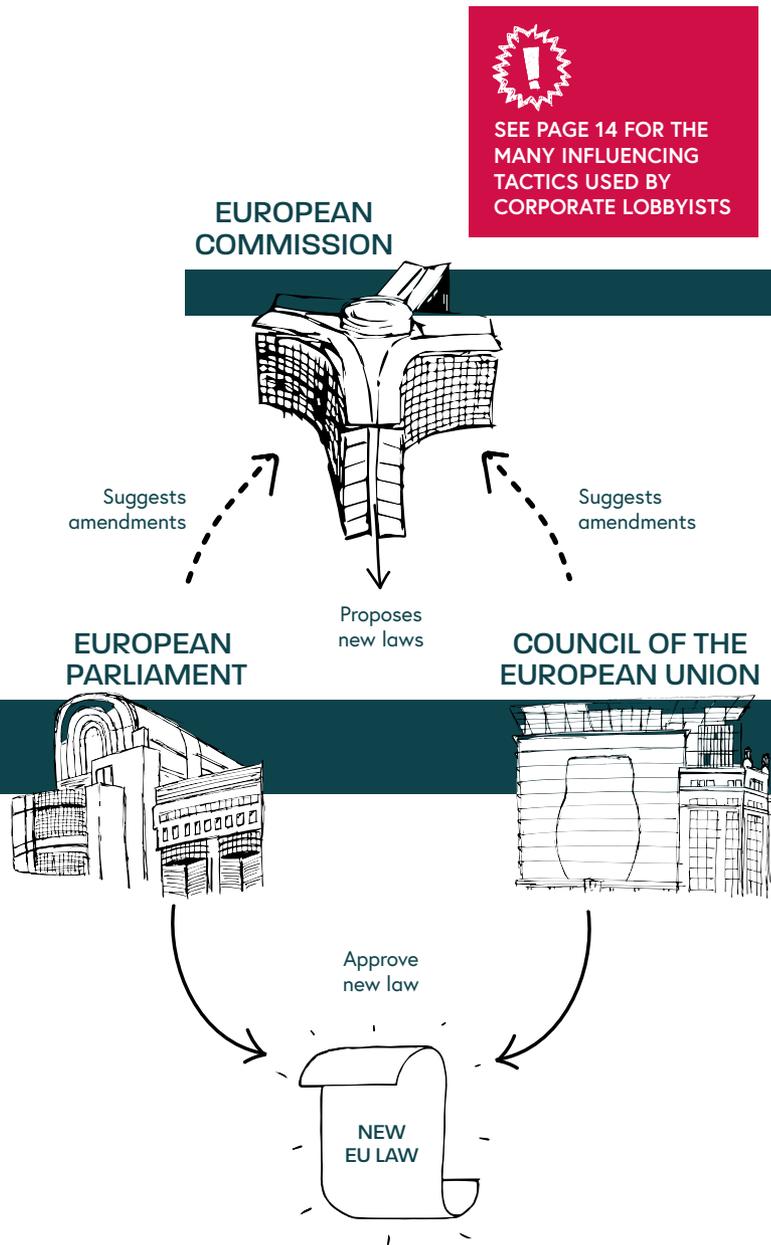
It is estimated that there are over 25,000 lobbyists working in the European quarter, most of whom in the service of corporations and their lobby groups. And their efforts to influence the regulations and laws that affect a union of more than 510 million people do not come cheaply. Conservative estimates suggest that over €1.5 billion is spent every year on lobbying targets like the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, and Brussels offices of national governments.

Lobbying is usually defined as any action attempting to directly or indirectly influence a policy-making process in favour of particular interest groups. This can include many different forms of communication and campaigns that aim to win over decision makers for supporting or derailing a particular policy.

But there is a vital distinction between lobbying by paid professionals and political activism of engaged citizens. Simply put, money matters. It offers the ability to lobby steadily over time, at all stages of the decision making process. Employing lobbyists that can follow a dossier throughout the legislative process – which can take up to five or even ten years – can be a pricey affair. The most senior 'barons of the bubble' receive salaries even higher than those of the European Commissioners.



# HOW ARE EU LAWS MADE?



## HOW ARE EU LAWS MADE?

EU law-making is complex, as legislative procedures vary depending on policy area. Most new laws or reforms are proposed by the European Commission and amended and ultimately approved by European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. This most common procedure sees the Commission's proposal, the Parliament's amendments and the Council's position negotiated into a (compromise) agreement by representatives of all three institutions during so-called "trialogue" meetings. These three-way talks on draft laws have often been criticised for their lack of transparency.

**The European Commission:** The Commission is the executive body of the EU, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the Union. There are currently 28 members of the Commission, one per member state.

**Council of the European Union:** The Council brings together the governments of the EU's currently 28 member states and is one of the most impenetrable institutions of the EU: a veritable 'black box' for outsiders.

**European Parliament:** The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the European Union. Its 751 members represents the second largest democratic electorate in the world. Since 1979, EU citizens have elected the European Parliament every five years."

## CORPORATE CAPTURE

When these institutions that were set up to act in the public interest – for example by curbing climate change, defending workers' rights, or regulating chemicals – instead prioritise the interests of powerful industries, we speak of the 'corporate capture' of EU policy-making. The long-term goal of many industry lobbies is to sideline citizens' interests in favour of corporate agendas, and their lobby efforts exploit varying channels of influence with the same purpose in mind."

# MEET THE LOBBYISTS

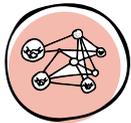
There are quite a few types of lobby actors, with corporations, different industry lobby groups, NGOs and trade unions, professional lobby consultancies, law firms and think tanks being the biggest.

Especially those actors lobbying on behalf of corporate interests and industries tend to specialise on a particular stage or level in their 'persuasion services'. Let's take a closer look at the corporate lobby actors together.



## CORPORATIONS

The main and most obvious players are the large corporations themselves, whose offices in Brussels employ in-house lobbyists who work directly to promote their interests. Companies with lobby offices in Brussels include big names and global brands like Google, Shell, Volkswagen, and Philip Morris.



## INDUSTRY LOBBY GROUPS

### TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

Industry federations and trade associations bring together companies operating in a specific sector. Almost every industry imaginable has a lobby office in Brussels that represents the interests of the companies in its particular sector, from the Danish Transport and Logistics Association and the Association of European Candle Makers to some of the biggest and most powerful lobbyists in town like CEFIC (European Chemical Industry Council) or the Association for Financial Markets in Europe. These trade associations direct and coordinate EU lobbying activities for their members, who are often major companies or national federations of a given industry.

Especially the European Commission, as the initiator of EU legislation, is very important to these actors. The earlier their lobbying becomes manifest in a policy, the easier their work becomes. Setting out an industry's priorities to officials at the nascent

stage of a law means their voice gets heard before Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), NGOs, or citizens have even seen a first draft. Such early intervention also reduces the risk of the public or the media becoming all too aware of the influence which industry federations and trade associations have already had on a draft policy. They therefore frequently work behind closed doors and far from the public eye, attempting to co-write rules and regulations.

## CROSS-SECTORAL LOBBY GROUPS

Cross-sectoral lobby groups, in which big business bands together across sectors – are the most powerful lobby actors in terms of political impact and access to the highest-ranking decision makers. The two most potent of these are the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), composed of the heads of around 50 of the largest transnational corporations in Europe, as well as BusinessEurope, the continent's main umbrella organisation for employers. Both organisations are such frequent visitors to the Commission's Berlaymont headquarter, they may as well be charged rent!

Every year, in fact, BusinessEurope holds a day-long lobbying event in the Berlaymont building, where prominent Commissioners mingle with the CEOs of some of the biggest transnational corporations. The ERT has also exerted much influence over the EU's long-term strategy since the early 1980s, helping, for example, to shape the form of the single market.

The CEOs of Vodafone, Heineken, Nestlé, and Siemens are all members of this exclusive club and their 'free expertise' is actively sought by the Commission and provided all too willingly. Both ERT and BusinessEurope have been central drivers of the EU's austerity agenda and neoliberal reform mantra, as well as the shape of corporate-friendly trade deals, particularly over the last ten years.



## NGOS AND TRADE UNIONS

Civil society groups and trade unions have gradually expanded their presence in the EU quarter in the last decades. Nevertheless, they continue to be greatly outnumbered and outspent by industry lobbies. LobbyFacts.eu research (January 2017) shows that corporations and their lobby groups have 60 per cent more lobbyists with access passes to the European Parliament than civil society (3000 as opposed to 1900 accredited lobbyists). The imbalance in spending power is also enormous, particularly on issues like financial regulation. A Corporate Europe Observatory study in 2014 found that the financial sector spends over 120 million euro on EU lobbying per year, 30 times more than NGOs and trade unions combined.

Bigger numbers of lobbyists and more money doesn't mean big business always wins, but it clearly gives business lobbies a strong advantage and often results in excessive industry influence on many policies.



## LOBBY CONSULTANCIES

A host of professional consultancies offer their influencing services, and the vast majority of corporations take them up on their offer. Employing public relations and policy experts with specialist lobbying knowledge, these consultancies are the mercenaries of the lobby world, selling strategic lobbying advice and services to the highest bidder.

From image-laundering to greenwashing, astroturfing, and creating front groups for big corporations (see our jargon-busting section on p.140 for more on these terms), lobby consultancies are known for their ability to manipulate public debate or get face-to-face meetings with the most influential decision makers in the EU institutions. Among the biggest consultancies in town are Burson Marsteller, Fleishman-Hillard, and Hill & Knowlton.



## LAW FIRMS

Very few law firms are currently registered in the EU Transparency Register, but walking through the EU quarter in Brussels, the number of international and especially US law companies is striking.

Many provide EU lobbying services as well as more traditional legal advice and representation, but very little is known about their lobbying activities. Either they do not sign up to the transparency register at all, or simply claim that, as a law firm they must respect client confidentiality, enabling them to keep lobbying under the radar.



## THINK TANKS

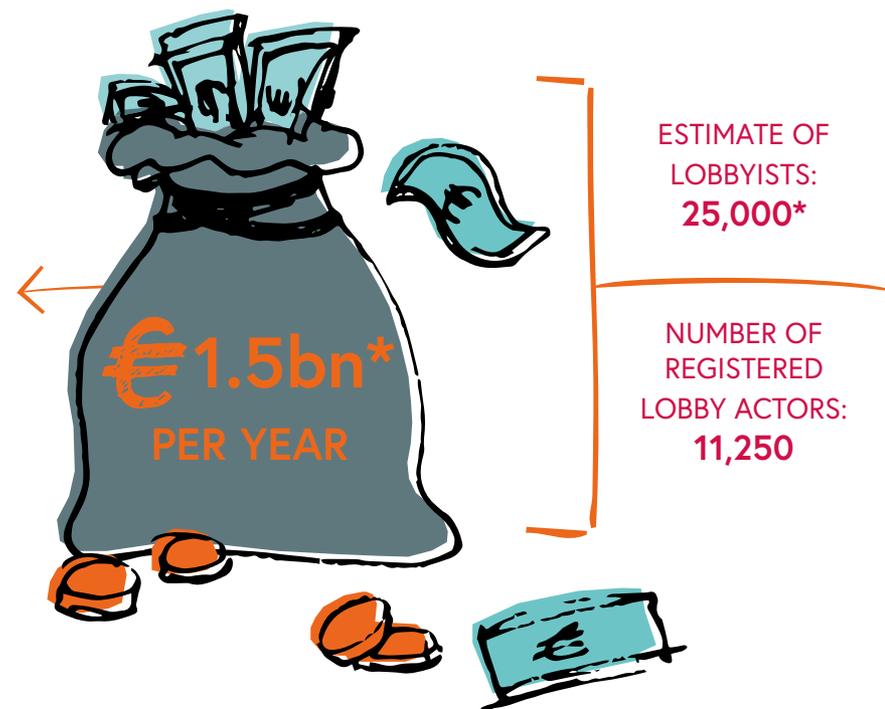
Think tanks have also become influential Brussels bubble players. Some provide a convenient and seemingly 'independent' channel to assist their corporate sponsors with their lobbying, which makes the 'think tank' label vulnerable to abuse. Offering a veneer of objectivity and openness to debate, it can function as a neat cover for corporate interests.

Think tanks can also play an important role in the ideological construction of political agendas that serve their corporate backers, e.g. the lowering of corporate tax rates, or cuts on social spending. They also give members and followers the opportunity to network on many levels, including informal encounters between lobbyists and Commission officials.

# LOBBYING THE EU IN BRUSSELS

## BIGGEST EU LOBBY SPENDERS

1	European Chemical Industry Council	€12,100,000€
2	EUROCHAMBRES (Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry)	€7,600,000€
3	Fleishman-Hillard	€6,750,000 – €6,999,999
4	Insurance Europe	€6,750,000 – €6,999,999
5	FTI Consulting Belgium	€6,000,000 – €6,249,999
6	General Electric Company	€5,500,000 – €5,749,999
7	European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations	€5,528,906
8	Interel European Affairs	€4,750,000 – €4,999,999
9	EUROCITIES	€4,750,000 – €4,999,999
10	Association for Financial Markets in Europe	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
11	Burson-Marsteller	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
12	ExxonMobil Petroleum & Chemical	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
13	Shell Companies	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
14	Google	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
15	Microsoft Corporation	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
16	Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau e.V.	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
17	BUSINESSEUROPE	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
18	European Banking Federation	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
19	Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V.	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
20	Bertelsmann Stiftung	€3,750,000 – €3,999,999



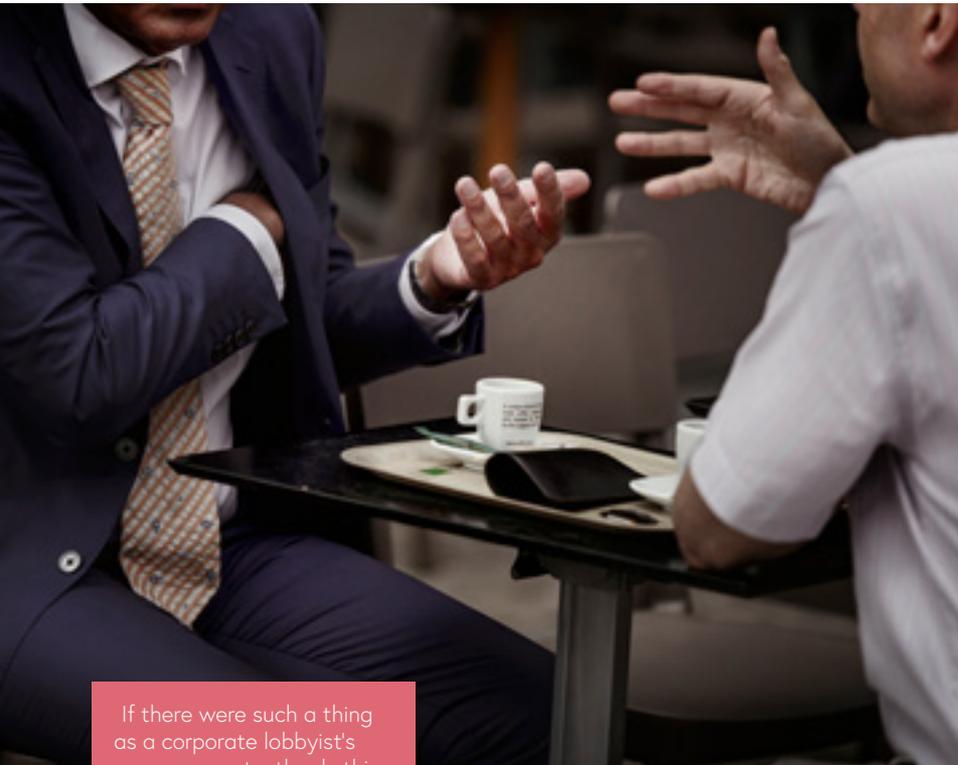
All figures as declared in the EU Transparency Register on 1 June 2017. The ranking has been adjusted to exclude actors without access passes for the European Parliament, without meetings with the European Commission, and where gross mis-declarations of spending and/or staff figures seemed highly likely.

\*Conservative estimates of the number of lobbyists (full time) and the amount spent by lobby actors on EU lobbying each year made by Transparency International EU (<https://transparency.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Lobby-Meetings-European-Commission.pdf>).

# CORPORATE LOBBY TACTICS

Although the corporate lobby scene in Brussels is a very complex, nebulous world, researchers and pro-transparency organisations have started to cut through the veil of secrecy to reveal how these lobbies go about their daily business.

For 20 years, Corporate Europe Observatory has been keeping tabs on corporate lobbyists, followed their official and exposed their – often shady - unofficial tactics. We have compiled a slightly tongue-in-cheek list of these strategies below.



If there were such a thing as a corporate lobbyist's no-nonsense textbook, this sinister list would be it!



## TACTIC 1: REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT

**Repeat your message via as many channels as possible to build credibility and create the illusion of a general consensus on the issue.**

**Lobby directly:** Make sure to present your policy input, ideas and wishes to Members of the European Parliament as well as EU staff and officials in meetings, consultations and correspondence. In-house lobbying aside, also join forces and resources in industry lobby associations and pay huge sums to specialised lobby consultancies and law firms which also represent your interests and thereby boost your influencing prowess.

**Get legitimacy via a think tank:** Channel your message through a well-established think tank to give it legitimacy. Many of the numerous Brussels think tanks depend on corporate funding and offer business sponsors a range of services in return. Some will even give you a prominent role in panel discussions on issues of

your choice, others publish customised reports in return for cash. Exploit those ideological biases of the Brussels bubble!

**Hide your profit motives:** Want to disguise your lobbying activities? Worried that policy makers might spot your profit motives if you put forward your own arguments? Then set up a front group to argue your case for you – or even better, persuade an NGO to campaign on your behalf.

**Co-opt science for your cause:** Do everything to protect your products against legal restrictions or bans. You can initiate and monitor public-private research projects to generate favourable study data, fund scientists to echo your messages as third party voices and hire product defence companies to cast doubt on unfavourable, independent study findings.



## TACTIC 2: THROW MONEY AT IT

**Butter them up:** Money plays a central role in many lobbying activities, and certain Members of the European Parliament may open up to your agenda over a lavish breakfast, dinner or cocktail party, during an all-expenses paid trip (to overseas offices, factories, energy plants ...) or after receiving a gift.

**Outspend your opponents:** In many lobby battles, profit-centred corporate interests are pitted against the public interest. But you usually have much more money to spend on lobbying and influencing public opinion than your opponents. So do it! Increase your spending further around important lobby battles to help cement opinions of the public and policy-makers in your favour.



### TACTIC 3: BLUR THE LINES

**Be an expert:** The Commission has over 1,000 advisory groups to provide it with topical expertise on new policies to make up for the lack of topical in-house know-how. Many of these groups are dominated by industry representatives. Make sure you, too, are on such an expert group, since that gives you privileged access to the policy-making process: after all, these advisory groups often put forward the first draft proposals for new EU laws and policies. Shaping policies from the get go? Check!

**Lend a hand:** Life as a Member of the European Parliament is hard. So lend a hand and provide concrete policy inputs in the form of amendments to draft legislation. Perhaps get a law firm to write these for you so they look as professional as possible and allow Members to pass them off as their own.

**Nurture your relationships:** Get the time and attention of Members of the European Parliament (and their assistants) and nurture informal relations by setting up your own MEP-industry forum. Such 'neutral' cross-party groups help build relationships with MEPs and establish your presence in the European Parliament.

**Get your foot in the door - literally:** Whether a promotional exhibition or an informative networking evening, use official EU institution buildings to organise your event. Your targeted invitees will almost feel like it's an internal affair.

**Headhunt ex-EU officials and MEPs:** Commission officials, MEPs and MEP advisers are all in demand – put in your bid to hire them and exploit their contacts and insider knowledge to boost your influencing power. This 'revolving door' swings both ways, with EU institutions also hiring 'policy experts' who have had careers in the very same corporate sectors they are then tasked to help regulate.

**Case study:** By 2017, more than one out of every three ex-Commissioners who left the European Commission in 2014 had gone through the revolving door into private sector jobs, which in many cases involved lobbying. The biggest revolving door scandal to date broke when former European Commission President José Manuel Barroso joined investment bank Goldman Sachs, which had been at the heart of the 2008 financial crisis and still lobbies against stricter regulation of the financial industry. If Goldman Sachs can do it, you can do it!



### TACTIC 4: DELAY AND DISTRACT

**Bury unwanted measures in process:** To stop a new piece of legislation you can always try to delay or weaken the proposals. Argue that more study data or evidence is needed, advocate for setting up a special task force, or propose a voluntary business code of conduct instead of the new policy.

**Scaremonger about job losses:** Warn the Commission and MEPs that the policy proposal that are not in your favour will cause job losses or affect EU competitiveness on the world market. Threaten to move your production plants out of Europe because of rising costs. You can always pay a consultancy or a think tank to come up with some numbers to back your arguments – although hard evidence is not always required.

**Distract:** Try to focus the political debate on a side issue in order to sneak in the main items on your agenda.

**Greenwash it:** Dismiss any concerns around your agenda via your public relations departments. They can aggressively vilify critics for you, present your goals in the best light possible and greenwash your reputation so your company or client will finally be seen as the considerate, empowering innovator that you really are.



*Ensure secrecy: Heavily redacted document released by the European Commission on its contact with tobacco industry lobbyists around trade negotiations.*

## PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF LOBBYING?

There has been some progress towards greater public scrutiny and official oversight of EU lobbying activities since a voluntary lobby register was introduced, since a voluntary register was introduced: the EU Transparency Register. Many lobby actors have signed up, providing information on how much they spend on lobbying activities, how many staff they employ, and on which policy areas they work.

At the same time, genuine transparency remains a distant dream. As a voluntary tool that is not subject to thorough, systematic data checks, the register contains many incomplete and unreliable entries, reflecting how little a priority lobby transparency still is in the EU institutions. For this reason, Corporate Europe Observatory together with German NGO LobbyControl has created [LobbyFacts.eu](http://LobbyFacts.eu), a website that helps to cut through the junk data and better search, filter and rank the more reliable information in the register.

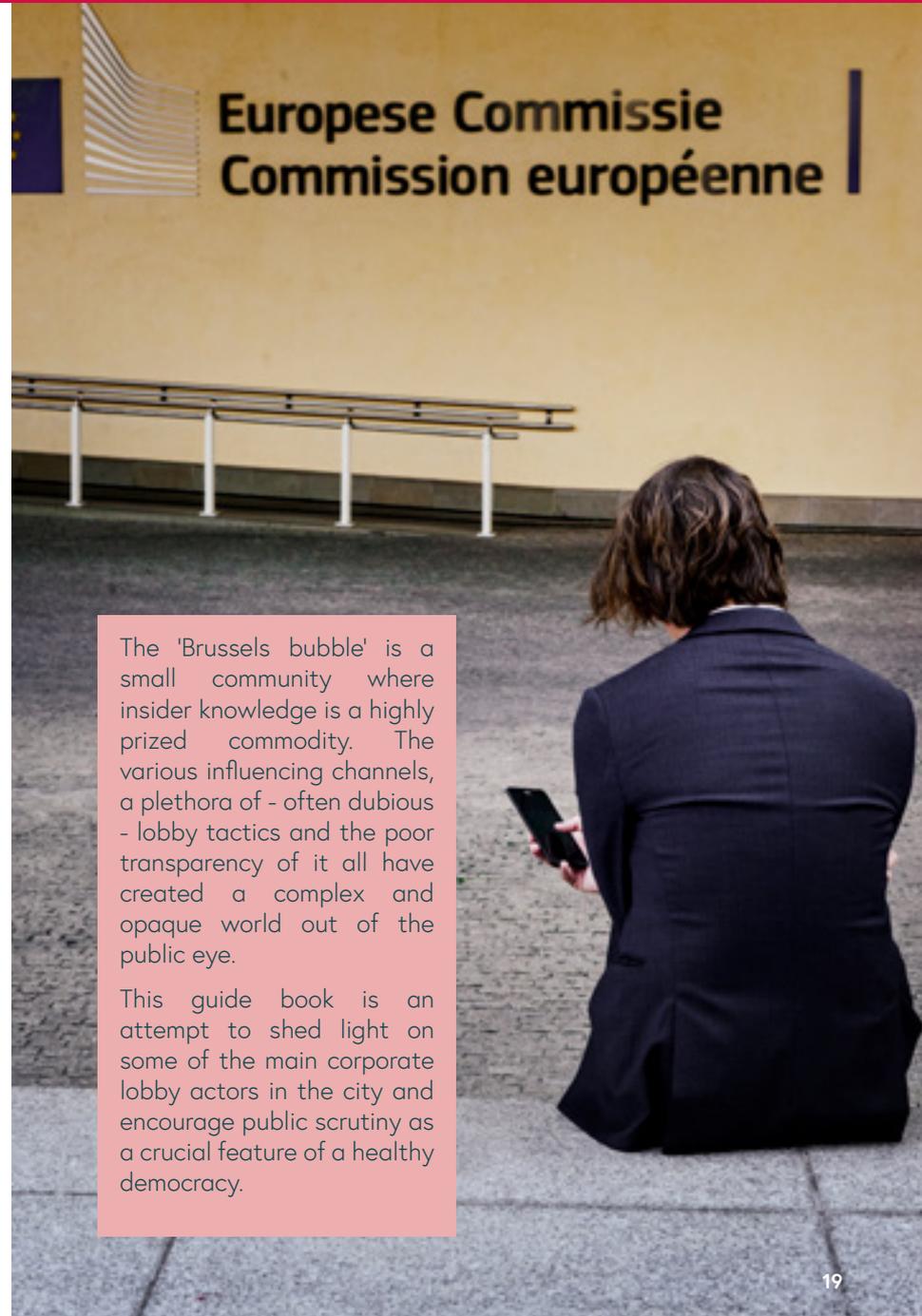
As we go to press, the EU institutions are due to start negotiating the creation of a new lobby register, but the prospect of a truly mandatory, legally-binding tool remains a long way off. Despite much pressure from civil society, the Commission seems content with tweaks rather than advancing the fundamental reforms needed for real transparency.

Another measure that so far falls short is the new set of rules on lobby meetings at the Commission, which was introduced in 2014. Commissioners, their cabinets, and the Directors-General of the Commission's policy departments now have to publish the dates, locations, names of organisations and topics of discussion whenever they meet lobbyists.

Welcome as this is, the rules cover less than 300 people, which leaves the remaining 30,000 officials free to meet and greet as many lobbyists as they wish, with little fear of scrutiny. It is especially problematic that so-called desk officers are not covered by the rules, because they are often the ones who compose initial policy drafts.

The EU Transparency Register - a start, but still a tool with very many flaws.

Info on lobby meetings at the Commission - available for too few officials.



The 'Brussels bubble' is a small community where insider knowledge is a highly prized commodity. The various influencing channels, a plethora of - often dubious - lobby tactics and the poor transparency of it all have created a complex and opaque world out of the public eye.

This guide book is an attempt to shed light on some of the main corporate lobby actors in the city and encourage public scrutiny as a crucial feature of a healthy democracy.

# GEOGRAPHIC GUIDE

BEYOND THE EU QUARTER

ON AND AROUND THE PETITE CEINTURE

AROUND SQUARE DE MEEÛS

ALONG RUE DE LA LOI

AROUND ROND-POINT SCHUMAN

FROM PARC LÉOPOLD TO PLACE DU LUXEMBOURG AND AROUND

## THE EU QUARTER, AN URBAN-PLANNING CATASTROPHE

In the city that gave the world the term Brusselization, locals have witnessed some of the 20th century's most haphazard and destructive urban development. Whole communities in different parts of Brussels were decimated in the 1960s and 1970s as city authorities, in collaboration with developers, made way for five-lane motorways, high-rise office blocks and large-scale development projects.

Across the Quartier Leopold, a formerly prestigious mid-19th century residential area for well-heeled Bruxellois, corporate lobby offices, institutional buildings and office spaces have replaced many of the old town houses, overshadowing what is left of the original neighbourhood.

With no long-term planning, the EU institutions and the Belgian state facilitated this decline of the area into a mostly soulless administrative district, which has brought with it all the resulting mobility, housing and environmental problems the area suffers from today. Within the roughly four square kilometres between the Avenue des Arts and Parc du Cinquantenaire, change, destruction, and reconstruction is constant.

The speculative construction boom that brought the first big office buildings in the 1960s drove out many locals as thousands of officials, national diplomats, politicians, and lobbyists set up shop in the millions of square metres of office space that once were homes. After the working day ends, the majority of these streets are deserted and the area turns into a ghost town.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

The easiest way to get to the EU quarter is by taking the metro and getting off at Schuman. National and international trains also run through the district, stopping at Brussels-Schuman and Brussels-Luxembourg stations.

Whatever you do, avoid driving. Traffic on the urban motorways of Rue de la Loi and Rue Belliard tends to be congested at the best of times, with air pollution levels to match.

# AROUND ROND-POINT SCHUMAN

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. Kreab
2. Finsbury International Policy & Regulatory Advisors (FIPRA)
3. Weber Shandwick
4. Gplus

## PUBLIC INSTITUTION

5. The European Commission
6. Europa Building (Council)
7. Justus Lipsius building (Council)
8. European External Action Service (EEAS)
9. Directorate-General for Trade (DG Trade)
10. Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship & SMEs (DG GROW)
11. UK Representation to the EU
12. Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE)

## CORPORATION

13. General Electric (GE)
14. Yahoo!
15. BP
16. Facebook
17. Vattenfall
18. Volkswagen
19. Dow Chemical
20. E.ON
21. Shell
22. Daimler

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

23. European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum (EPFSF)
24. Aquafed
25. European Smoking Tobacco Association (ESTA)
26. International Emissions Trading Association (IETA)
27. European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (FEFAC)
28. BusinessEurope
29. European Services Forum (ESF)
30. Trans-Atlantic Business Council (TABC)
31. European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA)
32. FoodDrinkEurope

## VENUE

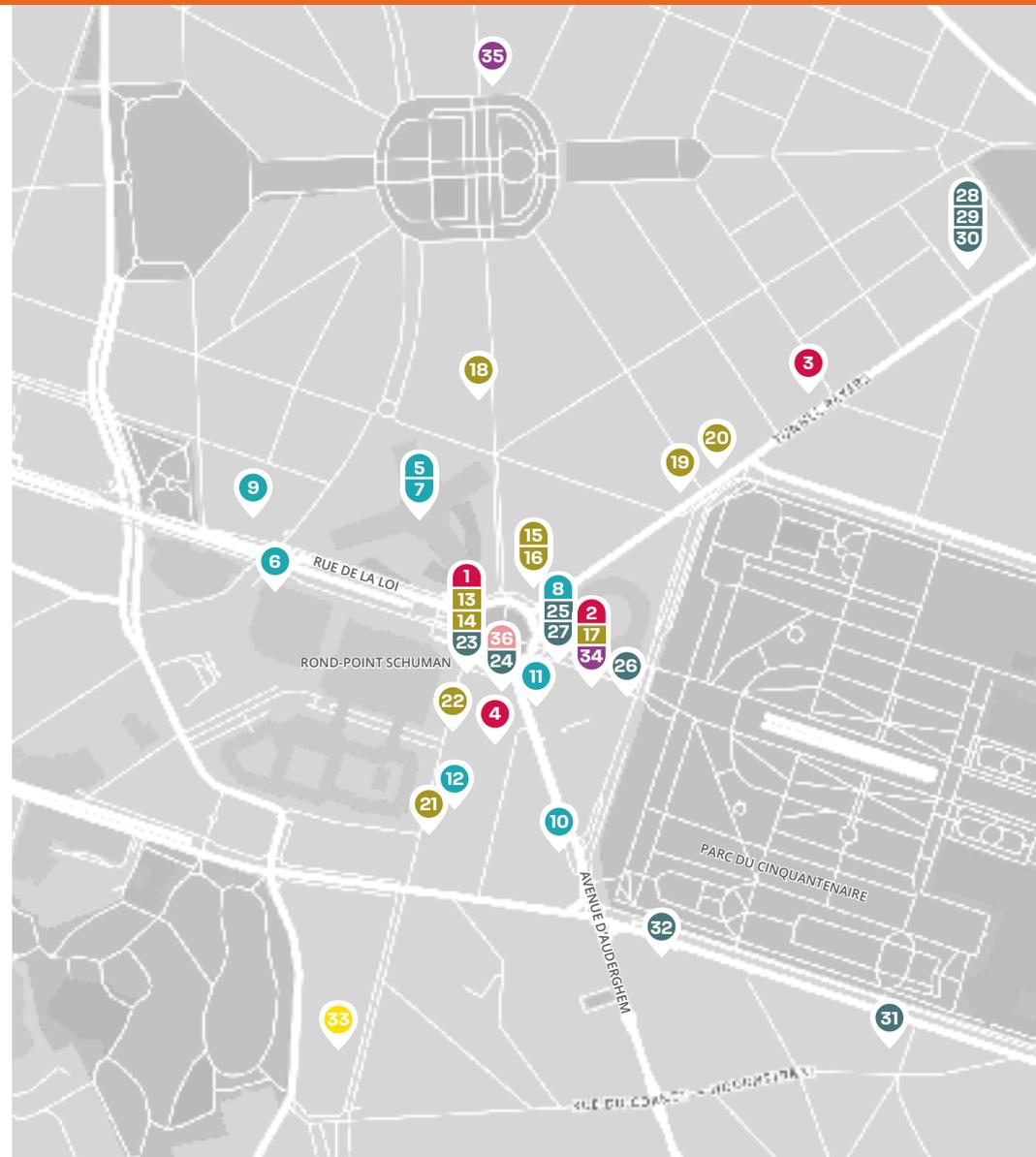
33. Albert Borschette Centre

## THINK TANK

34. European Risk Forum (ERF)
35. European Policy Information Center (EPICENTER)

## OTHER

36. City of London Corporation



## THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Berlaymont building, Rue de la Loi 200**

**Type: Public institution**

The Berlaymont is the iconic 13-story cross-shaped building that serves as the headquarters of the Commission. Over 2,000 of the Commission's roughly 21,000 Brussels-based staff are based in the building. The Commission is the executive body of the EU responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the Union.

There are currently 28 members of the Commission, one per member state. The sitting Commission took office in 2014 under the presidency of former Luxembourg Prime Minister, Jean-Claude Juncker. At the time, Corporate Europe Observatory raised serious concerns over the appointment of several Commissioners with potential conflicts of interest that make them unsuitable for their portfolios.

The number one target for lobbyists operating in the city, Commissioners and Directors-General (department heads) have been required to publish their lobby meetings since late 2014. However, the rules would need to be far stricter and more extensive to give us a full picture of lobbying at the Commission: details on thousands of meetings with lobbyists that happen below top-level are not disclosed.

Inside the Berlaymont are the offices of the President, Commissioners and their cabinets (immediate appointed teams). The rest of the staff are split into departments called directorates-general and are spread mostly throughout the European quarter. The office of the President and the meeting room of 28 Commissioners is on the top floor, where the weekly meetings of the Commissioners take place on Wednesday mornings. Before the construction of this building in the 1960s, this was the site of a monastery and girls school, run by the Dames de Berlaymont, a 300 year old religious order.



## EUROPA BUILDING (COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION)

**Rue de la Loi 155**

**Type: Public institution**

This building is the main seat of the Council of the European Union (and also houses the similar-sounding European Council). The giant 'space egg' nested inside this building is where EU summits (also known as European Council meetings), multilateral summits, and ministerial meetings take place.

The national delegations and the President of the European Council also have their offices in Europa. Along with member state Prime Ministers or Presidents, the President of the Council, the President of the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also take part in the meetings of the European Council. The European Parliament's President is allowed in to make a speech but then has to leave when the formal talks begin.

## JUSTUS LIPSIIUS BUILDING (COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION)

**Rue de la Loi 175**

**Type: Public institution**

This sprawling mess of a building used to be the headquarters of the Council of the European Union until the official HQ moved next door to the new Europa building. Built in the 1990s, the Justus Lipsius has 24 km of corridors and capacity for over 2,500 staff, a veritable town under one roof. Most departments of the Council's General Secretariat remain in the Justus Lipsius.

The building is used for lower level meetings of the Council and its preparatory bodies, for example trilogues (see jargon section on page 142 ). It also houses a press centre. The Council brings together the governments of the EU's member states and is one of the most impenetrable institutions of the EU: a veritable 'black box' for outsiders.

## LOBBYING IN THE COUNCIL 'BLACK BOX'

Decision-making at the Council is incredibly opaque for lobby watchers. It is the only major institution that does not participate in the transparency register, despite member state officials and ministers being key targets for corporate lobbyists.

This lack of transparency has become more alarming in recent years, as the Council's power has increased. Member states turning to intergovernmental approaches to solve policy problems exacerbates the issue.

On top of this, big business is increasingly turning to lobbying of national representations to get what they did not achieve at the Commission or Parliament, and governments are becoming more 'assertive' in promoting the interests of 'their' corporations. The growing problem of excessive corporate power at the national level, especially in capitals like London, Paris, and Berlin has negative knock-on impacts on decision-making here in Brussels.

A 2016 civil society study by ALTER-EU on lobbying at national representations or "perm reps" (permanent representations) of member states in Brussels provided a first-ever look at the relationship between lobbyists and national diplomats in the EU bubble. Just four permanent representations out of the 17 contacted disclosed details of their lobbying interactions — Poland, Romania, Ireland and the Netherlands. The overall picture was one of corporate dominance, and one can understand why: national government offices are an ideal target for big business lobbyists as they play an important role in EU decision-making but remain largely, and conveniently, under the radar.

## 'COMITOLOGY': DECISION-MAKING IN THE DARK

Comitology refers to a set of procedures involving committees of experts that, among other things, decide on detailed implementing measures for EU legislation. A key aspect of the EU's democratic deficit, it's a complicated, non-transparent, technocratic system in which proposals aren't published, and votes are secret.

The Commission is currently considering a reform of this system with the purported aim of making it more democratic and open. From a distance, the proposed reforms seem positive, but as always in Brussels, the devil is in the detail. Rather than focusing on transparency, the Commission seems hell-bent on ensuring national governments take their share of any blame and controversy on issues like GMOs and pesticides. Currently, such contentious decisions are often passed onto the Commission by the member state governments.

Full transparency around the positions that governments take in comitology working groups would be a great way to increase accountability (and decrease the risk of corporate capture), but this does not appear to be on the cards. The current comitology model is unacceptable in an era where citizens demand possibilities for active engagement in decision-making. Real reform to fulfil these expectations is sorely needed.



### GENERAL ELECTRIC (GE)

**Rond-Point Schuman 2-4**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 8.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €5.5m - €5.75m (2015)**

US corporate giant and big lobby spender General Electric (GE) has vast energy interests and has been a permanent fixture at successive annual UN climate negotiations. Former CEO Jack Welch sits on Trump's business advisory council. GE has also built quite an electrifying lobby operation for itself in Brussels, with over 60 meetings with the Commission's top officials since the end of 2014.

The company was involved in the original push for trade secrets legislation, ostensibly to safeguard European companies from corporate spying. But the way 'trade secrets' is defined is so broad that it makes public scrutiny of corporate activities much more difficult, opening the door for companies to sue anybody who they think violates what they deem to be 'secrets'.



## KREAB

**Rond-Point Schuman 2**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 30 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €3.5m - €3.75m (2016)**

Swedish lobbying and strategic corporate communications consultancy Kreab is one of the biggest in town, with clients from Google to Goldman Sachs, Citibank to Vodafone. Controversial client tobacco company Swedish Match was a central player in the 2012 Dalligate scandal (see European Smoking Tobacco Association on page 30). Kreab has recruited former MEPs and senior officials in order to boost its insider knowledge and access to decision-makers on policy areas like banking, trade, competition, and tech.



## YAHOO!

**Rond-Point Schuman 2-4 - TECH tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 1 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2016)**

Like its tech giant brothers, the US digital company Yahoo! lobbies on issues such as the Digital Single Market, data protection law, and copyright. It has also conducted part of its Brussels lobbying through a body known as the European Privacy Association (EPA – see page 27) which, given that in 2013 its backers included Google, Microsoft and Facebook, would seem to be less about protecting citizen privacy online and rather more concerned with advancing their interests. Styling itself as a 'think tank', the EPA has chosen a minimal form of transparency to match its misleading name.



## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY FINANCIAL SERVICES FORUM (EPFSF)

**Rond-Point Schuman 2-4**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2016)**

The European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum is composed of MEPs and representatives of the European financial sector, including major banks like Barclays, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, JP Morgan, Lloyds Banking Group and Royal Bank of Scotland. Its events are heavily dominated by the financial industry whose actions played a systemic role in triggering the financial crisis. EPFSF offer training sessions where representatives from major banks 'train' MEP assistants on the implications of banking sector reform proposals.



## CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

**Rond-Point Schuman 6 - FINANCE tour**

**Type: Other**

**Declared lobbyists: 8 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2015)**

The City of London Corporation, while technically a public authority, uses its considerable clout to lobby on behalf of banks and investment funds operating in the UK, focusing primarily on issues such as hedge fund regulation. It has been able to count on powerful allies such as ex-Commissioner Jonathan Hill, who from 2014-16, headed the Commission's financial services department despite his background as a lobbyist. The Corporation called his appointment a "strong statement... that a successful financial services sector remains a priority for Europe and the single market".



## AQUAFED

**Rond-Point Schuman 6**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 0.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €50,000 - 100,000 (2015)**

AquaFed, the International Federation of Private Water Operators, is an international lobby group that represents more than 400 companies worldwide including transnationals like Suez and Veolia. Its 'liaison office' in Brussels is responsible for pushing water privatisation in EU policies, both inside Europe and in developing countries (via EU trade and aid policies). This is despite the fact that even organisations as neoliberal as the World Bank no longer recommend water privatisation.



## EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS)

**Rond-Point Schuman 9A - ARMS tour**

**Type: Public institution**

The European External Action Service (EEAS) was established following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 as an EU Department of Foreign Affairs and Diplomacy. It falls under the authority of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (currently Federica Mogherini). With the development of the common foreign policy and the military integration that goes with it, a worrying trend of corporate-fuelled militarism has taken shape. The well represented arms industry aims its firepower at the EU institutions via a wide network of clubs, associations, organisations, government departments, and other official and unofficial channels.



## EUROPEAN SMOKING TOBACCO ASSOCIATION (ESTA)

**Rond-Point Schuman 9 - TOBACCO tour**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €500,000 - €600,000 (2016)**

The European Smoking Tobacco Association represents the interests of the European manufacturers, distributors and importers of all kinds of tobacco. Its lobby operation in Brussels seeks to ensure guaranteed access to EU decision-makers; despite the provisions of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Article 5.3 that demands policy-makers restrict contacts with tobacco lobbyists to the minimum.

This followed decades of tobacco lobbying which undermined public health goals. Contacts with the tobacco industry were the source of a major controversy following revelations of heavy lobbying pressure during the revision of the EU's tobacco products directive and came to a head with the Dalli gate scandal. This brought about the forced resignation in 2012 of the then-Health Commissioner, John Dalli, over concerns about his links to tobacco lobbyists.

## BP

**Rond-Point Schuman 11 - POLLUTERS tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 5.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.75m - €3m (2016)**

BP (formerly known as British Petroleum) is one of the largest oil and gas transnationals on the planet. A major polluter, the environmental cost of BP's operations was brutally clear after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico: a US court ruled the company's conduct "reckless".

BP has a long tradition of cosy relations with the European Commission. Ex-BP CEO Peter Sutherland was a former Commissioner, and served as an adviser to Commission President Barroso while at the company. Their lobbyists meet regularly with top Climate and Energy officials, and were the most frequent lobby visitors to Commissioners Miguel Arias Cañete (Climate Action) and Maroš Šefčovič (Energy Union) during their first year in office.

Oil lobbyists for companies like BP, Statoil, and Shell have been instrumental in pushing for an EU climate policy focussed on emissions trading, at the expense of ambitious renewable energy and energy efficiency measures. All three companies have put investments in gas at the centre of their strategy, and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS – see jargon section page 141) potentially rewards this focus (also see Gas box, page 77).

BP and Shell played an important role in the creation of the scheme in the first place and have lobbied since its creation to keep it as a carbon welfare system for polluters with loopholes that facilitate their drive for profit at the expense of the planet. Meanwhile, one of the most climate change-hit places on earth and one of world's most at risk nations to rising sea levels – the Maldives – has offices in the same building.

## FACEBOOK

**Rond-Point Schuman 11**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2016)**

With over 1.5 billion active users, Facebook is the most popular social networking site in the world. Because of the large volume of personal data that users submit to the service, Facebook has come under scrutiny for its privacy policies. Its lobbying focus in Brussels targets EU data protection measures. Facebook has joined other tech giants in corporate alliances. It has connected up with other tech giants in corporate alliances such as the European Internet Foundation (EIF) – made up of MEPs and representatives of online businesses – to push for EU 'competitiveness' in the digital sector. It was a key player in the 2013 lobby battle over the overhaul of the EU data protection regime, pushing hard to weaken data protection rules.



## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR TRADE (DG TRADE)

**Charlemagne Building Rue de la Loi 170 - TRADE tour**

**TYPE: Public institution**

DG TRADE is the department of the European Commission responsible for negotiating EU trade agreements with the rest of the world. But its approach puts some of the biggest global companies in the driving seat, from the proposed EU-US TTIP agreement to the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA).

From the beginning, DG TRADE officials discuss and develop negotiating strategies with corporate lobby groups such as BusinessEurope (see page 40) enabling the giants in finance, technology, pharmaceuticals, tobacco, and telecoms to drive EU trade policy. A 2012 email from DG TRADE sent to the European pesticide lobby group ECPA (see page 121) shows how active the soliciting of corporate input was in creating TTIP: "A substantial contribution from your side, ideally sponsored by your US partner, would be vital to start identifying opportunities of closer cooperation and increased compatibility." A few weeks later ECPA and its US counterpart CropLife America responded with their joint demands.

Meanwhile groups such as trade unions and NGOs were frozen out of these negotiations. Commission officials have held hundreds of meetings with lobbyists to discuss TTIP – yet in the early stages of the negotiations, only around one in ten was with public interest groups.

When criticised for the secrecy of the corporate-friendly negotiations, in 2015 DG TRADE consulted the public over Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS – see jargon section on page 141) in TTIP. When a record-breaking number of responses came back, 97% of which either voiced opposition to, or concerns about, investment protection, the Commission responded by rebranding ISDS as Investment Court System, which has broadly the same problems as what it is supposed to replace.

DG TRADE is a big revolving door employer, regularly recruiting staff from the corporate world of international law and lobbying firms. In 2015, Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström appointed Jan Eric Frydman as Special Adviser despite Frydman's ongoing work for Swedish corporate law firm Ekenberg & Andersson.

DG TRADE's proximity to the corporate sector is reflected in the rise of provisions in trade deals that shamelessly emulate the priorities of major corporations at the expense of people and the environment. ISDS and the 'regulatory cooperation' mechanism (see jargon section on page 142) are two good examples of this.



## VATTENFALL

**Rue de la Loi 223 - POLLUTERS tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €900,000 - €1m (2015)**

This Swedish government-owned coal and nuclear giant is one of Europe's biggest electricity providers, unafraid to flex its muscles against environmental rules that affect its profit margins. Vattenfall is known for its mastery of spin on climate change, portraying itself as a green champion while lobbying to continue to pollute as usual.

The company is one of the most famous users of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS, see page 141), which enables companies to use private tribunals to sue governments if they deem their profits or investment potentials could be hit by new laws or changes in policy. In other words, companies are given powers to contest – and potentially reverse – government decisions.

Vattenfall has already sued the German state twice: once when the city of Hamburg dared to tackle water pollution from a coal plant and, the second time, over the German government's decision to phase out nuclear energy following the Fukushima nuclear disaster. The first case was settled in the spring of 2011. The second case is still pending as this guide goes to print.

In 2016, over 4000 'Ende Gelände' climate protesters from all over Europe successfully blockaded the site of an opencast Vattenfall mine in Eastern Germany to pressure its decommissioning as part of a coal phaseout. Since 2001 Vattenfall has operated five opencast mines in the region and had plans to open another five.



## EUROPEAN FEED MANUFACTURERS' FEDERATION (FEFAC)

**Rue de la Loi 223 - AGRI tour**

**Type: Trade Association**

**Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €200,000 - €300,000 (2016)**

FEFAC represents the European animal feed and factory farming industry as a confederation of national associations. Enjoying high-level access to commission officials, FEFAC is a major proponent of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and is eager for the EU to loosen up its rules on the technology. Through TTIP, this industry has been pushing its agenda to abandon the EU zero-tolerance policy towards unauthorised GMOs contaminating food and seeds that are shipped to the EU. After years of battling, they have already obtained a threshold for 'acceptable' contamination of animal feed.

## FINSBURY INTERNATIONAL POLICY & REGULATORY ADVISORS (FIPRA)

Rue de la Loi 227

Type: PR / lobby consultancy

Declared lobbyists: 32.5 FTE

Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2016)

British lobby consultancy FIPRA has an extensive global network of lobbyists including several ex-politicians. FIPRA maintains a well-oiled revolving door operation, with former Irish Europe Minister Lucinda Creighton, ex-Director General for Health and Consumer Protection at the Commission, Robert Madelin, and former MEP and British government minister John Bowis all on board. Its Brussels clients include controversial companies such as Uber.

## EUROPEAN RISK FORUM (ERF)

Rue de la Loi 227

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE

Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2015)

The ERF is a think tank funded by CEFIC (European chemicals industry lobby, see page 122), PlasticsEurope, BASF, Bayer, Dow, Syngenta, and Philip Morris among others. From tobacco to hormone disrupting chemicals, it goes to battle to ensure that corporations are free to make a profit free of pesky regulations.

It is part of a wider industry effort to undermine the EU's precautionary principle (see jargon section, page 140), which states that given the possibility that a policy may cause harm, and if there is still no scientific consensus on the issue, the policy should not be pursued.

The ERF has a long history in fighting off regulation: it was originally set up by the European Policy Centre, which helped British American Tobacco and big pharma to persuade policy-makers of the importance of business-friendly impact assessment models as a way to help block regulation (see jargon section, page 140). In the early days it fought against bans on smoking in public places.

Currently deeply engaged in the lobby battle on Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (see page 123), in 2016 the ERF covered the cost for a visit by seven scientists to Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis to echo the industry's position on the dossier, and to press the case for weak rules and lower public health protection.

## INTERNATIONAL EMISSIONS TRADING ASSOCIATION (IETA)

Rue de la Loi 235 - POLLUTERS tour

Type: Trade Association

Declared lobbyists: 1 FTE

Lobby spend: €100,000 - €200,000 (2014)

IETA is the main lobbyist for a global market in greenhouse gases which allows companies and countries to trade the right to pollute (see 'emissions trading' in the jargon section on page 141). IETA's members include big energy (BP, Shell, Vattenfall) and banks (BNP Paribas, Bank of America Merrill Lynch) among others.

IETA is a lobbying powerhouse at UN climate change talks, often with the largest accredited non-governmental delegation present, bringing almost 500 members to the crucial but disastrous COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009. Five years later at COP20 they held a misleading event inside the negotiations entitled "Why Divest From Fossil Fuels when a Future With Low Emission Fossil Energy Use is Already a Reality". The panel which included the World Coal Association and Shell claimed that with the (failing) carbon capture and storage technology there was no need to move away from fossil fuels. The public backlash saw more than 60,000 people call on the UNFCCC to kick big polluters out of climate policy.

IETA has the ear of policy-makers despite the fact that their proposed solution to climate change isn't working. Emissions trading has not substantially reduced emissions in the EU, but has seen some of the dirtiest industry players handed lucrative free permits to pollute at taxpayers' expense. It also undermines other climate and emissions control policies and is susceptible to fraud and gaming.



## VOLKSWAGEN

Rue Archimede 26 - POLLUTERS tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 15.5 FTE

Lobby spend: €2.8m (2015)

Location, location, location! Europe's biggest car maker Volkswagen is right up close to Brussels' number one lobby target, with its office directly opposite the Berlaymont. Certainly Volkswagen and the rest of the car industry has had a disastrously close relationship with the European Commission, as the Dieselpgate scandal attests (see Dieselpgate box on the next page).

The car industry has long used its close ties to policy-makers to oppose strong regulation on vehicle emissions. In 2012, Germany's Commissioner Günther Oettinger wrote to Volkswagen CEO Martin Winterkorn, reassuring him that proposed EU regulations to cut vehicle CO2 emissions would not harm the automobile giant.

In 2015 VW had successfully demanded that the Commission scrap high-speed tests for cars that are designed to be driven fast. VW hired former German government spin doctor Thomas Steg in 2016 to repair its reputation in the wake of the Dieselpgate emissions scandal.

Dieselpgate (see more below) was one of the biggest corporate controversies in recent memory, and VW was in eye of the storm when it was caught cheating on vehicle emissions tests.

Volkswagen is a leading producer of fast cars, owning not only the Seat and Skoda brands, but also Audi, Porsche, and Lamborghini. It is by far the biggest auto sector lobbyist in town with its 15.5 FTE declared lobbyists crossing the road 46 times to meet the top-level Commission staff in 2015 and 2016.

## DIESELGATE: CAR INDUSTRY IN THE DRIVING SEAT

The Dieselpgate scandal erupted in September 2015, when the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a notice of violation of the Clean Air Act to automaker Volkswagen after it was found that the company had intentionally programmed diesel engines to cheat emissions tests. The programming caused the vehicles' nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide (NOx) output to meet US standards during regulatory testing, while they continued to emit up to 40 times more NOx out on the road.

Each year, nitrogen dioxide alone is estimated to kill prematurely about 75,000 people in Europe yet many manufacturers in the car industry have been using this programming trick in millions of cars worldwide. Not just Volkswagen but Fiat, Renault, Mercedes, and Opel, have been accused of disregarding EU air pollution laws; many in the industry are now under investigation.

As the inquiries into Dieselpgate deepen, the European Commission and several EU member states have been criticised for turning a blind eye. The European Parliament's Committee of inquiry presented several recommendations for curbing car industry influence over emissions regulations.

Dieselpgate lifted the lid on a culture of industry self-regulation and light-touch rulemaking. In this EU officials have been complicit, for example via the so-called 'Better Regulation' agenda (see jargon section on page 140) which focuses on cutting regulation for the sake of 'competitiveness', which focuses on cutting regulation for the sake of 'competitiveness'. This put the car industry in the driving seat, enabling its lobbyists to delay and water down the EU's vehicle emissions testing schemes

The scandal was the result of a culture of corporate-driven deregulation, and the proximity between decision-makers and lobbyists is reflected in car industry-dominance of advisory groups, with three quarters of advisors in some of these groups in the pay of the car manufacturers. These groups helped shape the very regulations that were supposed to govern the sector: this is the root of the Dieselpgate affair.



## EUROPEAN POLICY INFORMATION CENTER (EPICENTER)

**Square Ambiorix 10**

**Type: Think tank**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: No figure declared.**

The European Policy Information Center (EPICENTER) was launched in 2014 by six hardline anti-regulation think tanks: Civismo (Spain), the Institut Economique Molinari (France), the Institute of Economic Affairs (UK), the Lithuanian Free Market Institute, Timbro (Sweden) and Istituto Bruno Leoni (Italy).

The Thatcherite Institute of Economics Affairs is also the initiator of the Nanny State Index, an anti-regulation "league table of the best places in the European Union to eat, drink, smoke and vape". The Institut Economique Molinari is known for denying climate change and speaking against the precautionary principle (see jargon section, page 140). EPICENTER's funding is unclear from its website and its entry in the Register.



## DOW CHEMICAL

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 52**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 5.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2m - €2.25m (2016)**

US transnational Dow makes chemical, plastic, and agricultural products for food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and construction. Greenpeace have criticised Dow (current owner of chemical company Union Carbide) for not taking responsibility for one of the worst gas leaks in history, which killed thousands of people at a chemical plant in Bhopal, India in 1984.

At the EU level, Dow's team of lobbyists focus on influencing policy-makers over climate action, chemicals, trade, pesticides, and biotechnology. In March 2017, Dow's Brussels lobbyists were celebrating their success after receiving the EU's approval for a gigantic merger between it and DuPont. DuPont has been under fire for the decades-long cover up of the health dangers of one its benchmark products, the non-stick coating Teflon. A merger of the two mega-firms will create the world's largest chemical company.



## E.ON

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 60**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 6.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000 (2016)**

E.ON energy suppliers serve over 33 million electricity customers in over 30 countries. A notorious lobbying powerhouse in Brussels, E.ON is also a member of numerous trade associations like Eurogas, Foratom, International Association of Oil & Gas Producers, International Emissions Trading Association, European Energy Forum and the European Roundtable of Industrialists, many heavy hitters in the lobby fight against effective climate action. Unsurprisingly, then, E.ON is one of the companies with most contact with Climate and Energy Commissioner Cañete's office.



## WEBER SHANDWICK

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 100**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 15 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.25m - €2.5m (2015)**

A global PR firm with offices in 78 countries, Weber Shandwick Brussels' clients include Microsoft, Shell, Nestlé, and Bayer on topics such as data protection, energy, food policy, and chemicals regulation. One of its biggest clients is the Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP), a body that includes big oil and dirty energy companies such as BP, Statoil, and GE Power. ZEP promotes Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS, see jargon section page 140) – an unproven technique which companies advocate to avoid the need to shift away from burning fossil fuels – and is the advisory body to the European Commission on the technology. ZEP's lobby offensive includes close links with friendly MEPs, events in the European Parliament, and debates with Commission and industry representatives as regular speakers.

## BUSINESSEUROPE

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 168**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 30 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €4m - €4.25m (2016)**

BusinessEurope is the most significant corporate lobby group in the EU, its policy papers routinely ending up as eerily similar-sounding EU official negotiating positions and directives. This behemoth of the Brussels lobby scene is dominated by the interests of major transnational corporations.

It represents 40 national business organisations, as well as companies like British American Tobacco, BMW, BP, ExxonMobil, Facebook, Microsoft, Pfizer, Philip Morris, Shell, and Total. BusinessEurope lobbyists can expect regular meetings and exclusive briefings on Commission policy.

BusinessEurope flexes its lobby muscles in everything from watering down chemicals regulation, to making the EU's Emission Trading System work to subsidise industry, to designing an EU trade strategy (including many features of TTIP) to suit major global companies.

Indeed, the association has had a major influence on numerous EU directives and regulations for decades, key examples being the EU's austerity-driven 'Economic Governance' reforms developed in the aftermath of the 2008 crash, and the so-called 'Better Regulation' agenda (see jargon section, page 140) that allows business to demand EU regulations be reviewed or removed, no matter if they protect the environment, health, or workers.

An important date in the lobby calendar is an annual Autumn pow-wow at the Berlaymont where Commissioners and BusinessEurope bigwigs meet for exchanges on strategy and the overall direction of the EU. The total annual lobby spend of the 26 organisations that attended the 2016 event amounted to at least €31,789,000. Moreover, these organisations had already held a staggering 588 lobby meetings with top Commission officials between December 2014 and late 2016.



## EUROPEAN SERVICES FORUM (ESF)

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 168**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 1 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €200,000 - 300,000 (2016)**

Big-gun lobby group the European Services Forum (ESF) coordinates the efforts of members like Deutsche Bank, IBM, and Microsoft to promote the general interests of transnational corporations who deal in services. Service sectors include things like big finance, big data, healthcare, education, and communications.

The Commission helped initiate the setting up of ESF in 1999, creating a services-industry feedback loop that helps to justify the EU's own agenda for the liberalisation and privatisation of services. The ESF thus has a major interest in all ongoing trade negotiations such as TTIP and CETA.

Before the TTIP negotiations were launched, ESF's Managing Director Pascal Kerneis announced that "industry will oppose any deal in which investment protection is traded off against public policy objectives, including human and labour rights". ESF receives regular detailed and exclusive briefings on the EU's trade talks from lead negotiators, and when it comes to TTIP's proposed liberalisation of services, and investor protection (see ISDS, page 141), the Commission's negotiation agenda looks like a copy of ESF's.

This shared agenda holds many potential dangers: further liberalisation of services markets could limit access to affordable essential services such as healthcare, and prevent much-needed regulation of the financial sector. ESF's push for investor protection in TTIP could see more costly corporate lawsuits challenging laws to protect the environment and public health, thus undermining democracy.

## TRANS-ATLANTIC BUSINESS COUNCIL (TABC)

**Avenue de Cortenbergh 168**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 4 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2016)**

From the very beginning of transatlantic regulatory cooperation in the 1990s, the EU and the US have been hell-bent on including big business in decision making. For that reason, the Commission and the US Department of Commerce helped to set up the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue (TABD), an extremely influential club of chief executives from some of the biggest companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

In 2013 it became the Trans-Atlantic Business Council (TABC) when it merged with another transatlantic business lobby group, the European American Business Council. TABC is of the most active lobby groups on TTIP, ranking second in the period between January 2012 and February 2014 for external meetings with DG TRADE (see 32). A key priority for TABC is putting 'regulatory cooperation' (see jargon section, page 142) – and thus business interests – at the heart of any TTIP deal. But as a threat to democratic principles and our right to regulate in the public interest, regulatory cooperation is increasingly controversial.

## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMES (DG GROW)

**Avenue d'Auderghem 45**

**Type: Public institution**

DG GROW is an extremely powerful Commission department and a fierce pro-industry bulwark that regularly seeks out advice from several corporate-dominated advisory groups. It works on areas such as the EU's internal market, financial sector regulation, and industrial policy.

When diesel cars made in the EU were found to contain cheat devices the Commission was shown to have attempted to delay enforcement of EU emissions standards for diesel cars in a bid to help industry save money (see Dieselgate box on page 37). Antonio Tajani, now President of the European Parliament, was the responsible Commissioner at this time.

While new rules on real driving emissions were being drafted, the car industry was able to develop a strategy based on information gathered via informal contacts between its lobbyists and officials from DG GROW. Remarkably, DG GROW leads on many EU policies that one would normally assume the Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENVI) should lead on. In relation to Dieselgate, DG GROW repeatedly overruled DG ENVI when it complained about excessive NOx emissions from cars.

## UK REPRESENTATION TO THE EU

**Avenue d'Auderghem 10**

**Type: Public institution**

The result of the UK's Brexit referendum in June 2016 caused consternation in Brussels (see Brexit box on page 44). The looming Brexit has rocked the EU lobbying scene, as big business – most notably London's powerful financial sector – gears up to ensure it gets a Brexit deal that does not hurt its activities and profits. Uncertainty over what will happen in the negotiations has meant a bonanza for lobbyists and consultants, who are being asked to come up with contingency plans for clients. A reshaping of the London and Brussels corporate lobbying landscapes is underway...

## RAKING IN THE BREXIT MONEY

Much about the UK referendum about whether or not to leave the EU was very troubling. The debate in the run up to the vote, held in June 2016, was dominated by anti-migration rhetoric, pro-single market statements from big business, and disinformation from both sides about the consequences of Brexit. Entirely missing in the mainstream media were alternative views about the costs and benefits of EU membership, and discussions about how a progressive and democratic form of European cooperation could be created.

Now the UK has voted to leave and the terms of Brexit have yet to be agreed, but it is clear that the complex negotiations are a bonanza for business lobbyists. Corporate interests are jostling to retain the best possible access to the EU market. The City of London has been actively lobbying for passporting rights to maintain easy access to EU financial markets.

The UK's Department for Exiting the EU holds very regular roundtables with business. Bankers have held twice as many lobby meetings with them as any other sector; and management consultancies with a roster of corporate clients have been giving pro bono advice to the newly created department. There are concerns from unions and NGOs that rightwing politicians and big business lobbyists will use Brexit as an opportunity to gut regulations protecting the environmental, public health, and workers' rights.

To get ready for the fight ahead, business interests have been snapping up former UK Government Ministers and MPs for their access and influence. Francis Maude, a former Trade and Investment Minister, has joined international law firm Covington & Burling to advise on Brexit; former Foreign Secretary William Hague has joined Citibank; and George Osborne, former Finance Minister has joined BlackRock's investment institute. These are just the most high-profile of many other revolving door moves in post-Brexit UK. Meanwhile, former Commission head José Manuel Barroso told the Financial Times in 2016 when he took on new roles as Chair of, and adviser to, Goldman Sachs International, that he will do what he can to "mitigate the negative effects" of Brexit.

Lobby firms in London and Brussels are jumping on the Brexit lobby gravy train with many, including Portland, Teneo, Hill & Knowlton, and Fleishman-Hillard, setting up Brexit 'transitional' teams, or advertising Brexit expertise. Meanwhile, Brussels bubble watchers report that non-British lobbyists are likely to see more business coming their way as the UK inches towards the door marked 'EU exit'.

What is clear is that, whether or not big business supported Brexit, it has the resources and lobby muscle, and the open ear of politicians in London and Brussels, to demand its favoured outcome in the new political reality.



## FOODDRINKEUROPE

Avenue des Nerviens 9-31 - AGRI tour

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE

Lobby spend: €200,000 - €300,000 (2016)

FoodDrinkEurope is the most powerful food industry lobby group on the Brussels scene, bringing together 26 national food federations, 25 EU sector associations, and 19 major food and drink companies from Coca Cola to Nestlé, Danone to Kellogg's. The lobby expenses of its member organisations combined add up to at least €5.2 million. It has been heavily involved in pushing the EU-US TTIP talks.

A lobby group with bite, the food industry spent approximately €1 billion on a successful long-running campaign against a proposal for a mandatory EU-wide 'traffic light' food labelling system (with red for the unhealthiest foods and green for the healthiest), despite this being recommended by most health experts and consumer groups.

It has used 'Better Regulation' (see jargon section, page 140) in an attempt to shoot down rules controlling misleading nutritional and health claims on packaging; these are intended to avoid cases such as children's cereals containing 30 per cent sugar marketed as 'healthy' and 'low in fat'.





## EUROPEAN AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (ACEA)

**Avenue des Nerviens 85**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 10 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2m - €2.25m (2016)**

ACEA is the European car industry's Brussels lobby. And yes, all the big brands implicated in the notorious Dieselgate emissions-cheating scandal are represented here. ACEA is a high-octane and prolific lobbyist at the Berlaymont: its lobbyists had 52 meetings with Commissioners and top Commission officials during 2015 and 2016 and many more with mid-level officials. It hasn't just lobbied hard to avoid responsibility for Dieselgate; its outsized influence may have been one of the reasons for the failure to regulate the industry in the first place (see Dieselgate box, page 37).

A leaked lobbying document from ACEA obtained by Corporate Europe Observatory in 2016 revealed a sophisticated, behind-the-scenes strategy aimed at weakening new vehicle emissions tests that involved informal meetings with the Commission to get insider information. Meanwhile ACEA's Head of Emissions and Fuels policy, Paul Greening, even told the European Parliament's Dieselgate inquiry that he thought the spirit of EU law on emissions was that cars only had to meet the regulations in the laboratories and not in the real world!

Car industry lobbyists are also ever present in the Commission's advisory groups (see box on page 48), which can draft important legislation. Crucially, ACEA and its members were heavily represented on the panel that designed – and massively delayed – the new on-the-road driving emissions test for cars.



## GPLUS

**Rue Breydel 42**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 13.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.5m - €2.75m (2016)**

Founded in 2000 by former Commission spokesperson Peter Guilford, GPLUS offers lobbying and communications support to clients that have included Gazprom, the Motion Pictures Association, and the governments of Russia, Israel, Thailand, and Turkey. Gplus are notorious for their work as spin doctors for Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin, pushing their priorities on gas politics, conflict in the Ukraine, and EU sanctions.

A specialist in the art of the revolving door, in 2015 GPLUS announced that former Vice-President of the European Parliament, German Liberal Silvana Koch-Mehrin was working as a Senior Policy Adviser for the company. This raised eyebrows as Koch-Mehrin's role in Parliament had a focus on trade with Russia and Canada.

## ADVISORY GROUPS: PUTTING THE FOX IN CHARGE OF THE HEN HOUSE

From climate policy to banking regulation, military research to tackling tax dodging, hundreds of advisory groups with tens of thousands of members have been set up by the Commission to advise it on policy. With an ability to shape the early stages of EU legislation, these groups – officially called 'expert groups' – have a long history of being dominated by industry, and have often been criticised for a lack of transparency, and conflicts of interest.

While in 2016 new rules were brought in to tackle some of these problems, big business remains in a comfortable position when it comes to shaping EU legislation. Across the approximately 800 expert groups, an estimated 70 per cent of the non-government members of the groups represent corporate interests, for some groups made up exclusively of business representatives. Our research shows that despite a new policy for publishing declarations of interest, less than half of the experts on these panels that were investigated can be considered free of conflicts of interest.

Expert groups raise fundamental questions about whether the very industries trying to weaken and avoid regulations should be involved in drafting regulations. Tobacco lobbyists are not allowed to be involved in creating public health policy thanks to a World Health Organisation decision (Article 5.3 – see jargon section, page 140) that recognises how damaging this is to the public interest.

Should tax dodgers and their advisors craft tax policy? Should the car industry shape emissions regulation? Should big polluters be involved in climate policy? (For examples of undue industry involvement in the shaping of regulation, also see the Dieselgate box on page 37 and the box on 'The eight wise bankers' on page 111). The Commission is sorely lacking internal expertise, but it needs to think long and hard about where it looks externally and what role to give clear vested interests when the public interest is at stake.



### ALBERT BORSCHETTE CENTRE

**Rue Froissart 36 - TRADE tour**

**Type: Venue**

Albert Borschette was a Luxembourgish diplomat and writer who served as a Commissioner from 1970 until 1976. This brutalist building named in his honour is a conference centre and meeting space for the Commission, and where many of its advisory groups gather.



### SHELL

**Rue Froissart 95 - POLLUTERS tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 11 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €4.5m - €4.75m (2016)**

A giant transnational oil and gas company, Shell is a regular at high-level Commission meetings on climate and energy policy, and was the fourth most frequent corporate visitor of Commissioners Cañete and Šefčovič during their first two years in office.

Shell is notorious for controversy, notably over its operations in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria where Shell has been accused of fuelling both conflict in the territory and human rights abuses of local Ogoni activists. Shell has also refused responsibility to clean up after oil spills, not to mention its involvement in a recent massive corruption scandal in the country.

The company has also been involved in tar sands exploitation in Canada, controversial because it has the highest carbon footprint of all fossil fuels, with the mining impacting indigenous communities and lands.

Shell has a long history of greenwashing, making misleading claims about its actions to tackle climate change, while also working to undermine EU renewable energy targets. In 2015 it put out to tender a commission for a promo film aimed at young people. The winning video featured two young pink and blue-haired vegan millennials espousing the benefits of natural gas as a solution to climate change, in the lead-up to the UN climate summit in Paris.

According to leaked email correspondence, Shell stipulated to the video-makers: "You should NOT mention on your storyboard Arctic Oil". Shell's determination to appear as part of the climate solution is however very much at odds with the fact that the company's own future energy projections allege that we can continue to burn fossil fuels indefinitely.



## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (DG SANTE)

**Rue Froissart 101**

**Type: Public institution**

DG SANTE is the department of the European Commission responsible for laws on food safety, consumer rights, and public health protection. It tackles many controversial topics such as the risk assessment and approval of GMOs, an issue on which the biotech industry has lobbied heavily. It hopes to exclude a new generation of genetic engineering techniques from European regulations, holding regular meetings with, and presentations to, DG SANTE officials and the Commissioner in charge.

Another controversial lobbying battle has been waged over Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (see EDC box, page 123). EDCs can interfere with human hormonal systems and are found in many everyday items, from pesticides and plastics, to cosmetics, computers, and construction materials. Yet the Commission's shocking lack of action on EDCs resulted from heavy industry lobbying, which prevented strict restrictions. DG SANTE had many meetings with the pharmaceutical industry – often behind closed doors, since lobby encounters with lower level officials aren't recorded.



## DAIMLER

**Rue Froissart 133**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 7.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.5m - €2.75m (2016)**

Daimler is a German automotive transnational that owns or has shares in many vehicle brands such as Mercedes-Benz. Implicated in the Dieselgate scandal (see Dieselgate box on page 37), Daimler is a key player in the car lobby which is closely involved in all legislative proposals that might affect its business. Together with BMW and Porsche, Daimler launched a lobbying offensive that succeeded in watering down and delaying the EU mandatory targets for CO2 emissions from cars. It maintains extremely close links to the German government (former Merkel advisor Eckart von Klaeden became a lobbyist at Daimler in 2013) which can frequently be relied upon to churn out industry positions in Brussels and crush policies it doesn't like. Daimler is also a major donor to several German political parties.



# FROM PARC LÉOPOLD TO PLACE DU LUXEMBOURG AND AROUND

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. Schuttelaar & Partners
2. European Public Policy Advisers (EPPA)
3. Cabinet DN
4. EUTOP
5. Hill & Knowlton (H&K)
6. International Business Machines (IBM)

## PUBLIC INSTITUTION

7. European Parliament
8. Bavarian Representation

## CORPORATION

9. Google
10. Huawei Technologies
11. Unilever
12. RWE
13. British American Tobacco (BAT)
14. Philip Morris
15. Microsoft
16. Bank of New York Mellon (BNY Mellon)

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

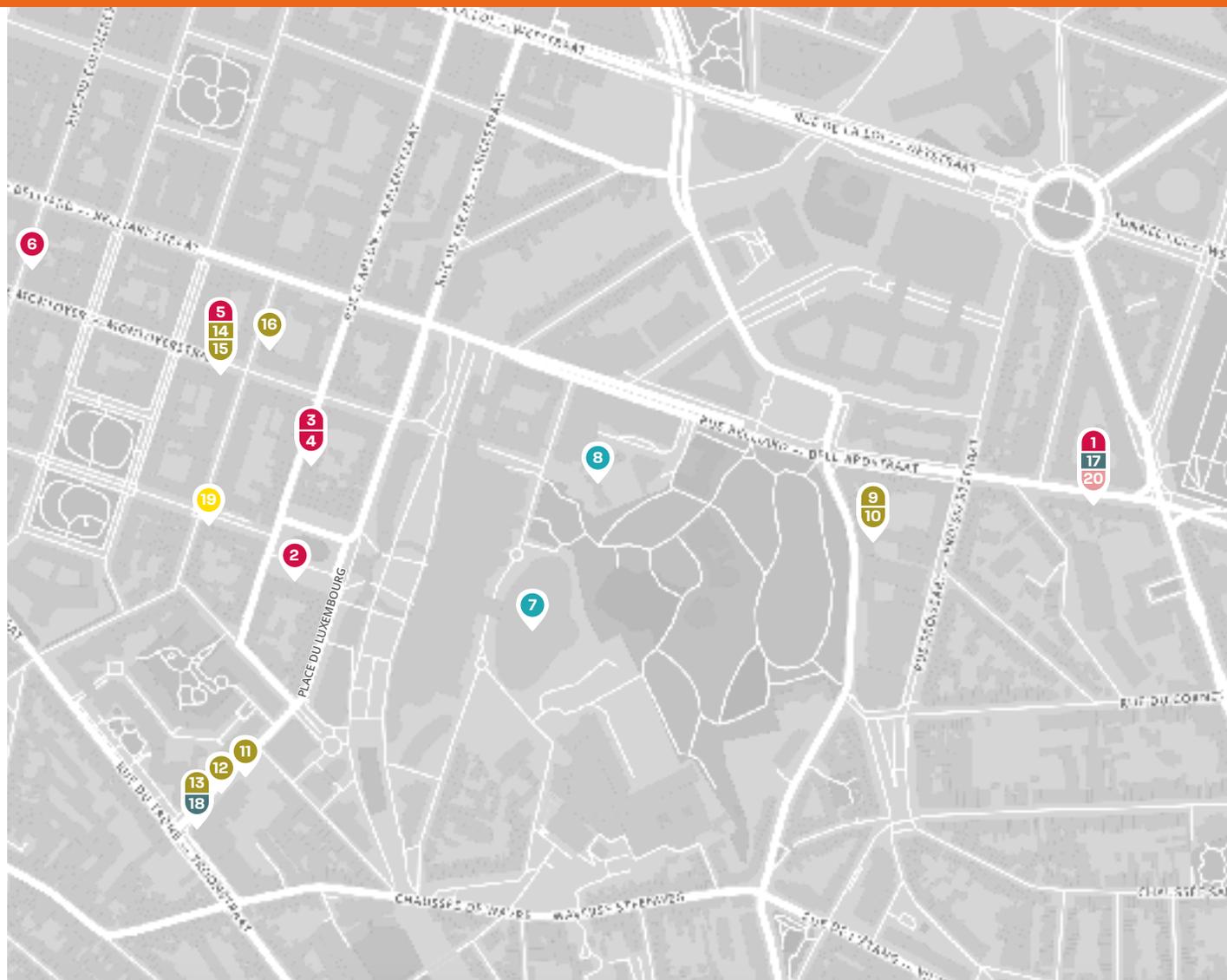
17. European Association of Dairy Trade (EUCOLAIT)
18. European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)

## VENUE

19. Maison du Luxembourg restaurant

## OTHER

20. New Breeding Techniques (NBT) Platform



Moving from the Schuman area over towards the other centre of the EU quarter, we arrive at Parc Léopold. Now a migratory route for various specimens of EU officials and lobbyists, the park grounds are home to several remarkable buildings. The Solvay Library for example, with its magnificent lecture hall, once played host to Albert Einstein and Marie Curie. Now it is often rented out for plush corporate receptions.

At the top of the park lies the postmodern mirror ball complex of buildings housing the European Parliament, most of them erected during the 1990s and 2000s. The Paul Henri Spaak building houses the Parliament's horseshoe-shaped debating chamber and the offices of its President. Its local nickname is 'le Caprice des Dieux' (named after of a brand of cheese shaped like the building) and it is recognisable by its glass dome. While most of the Parliament's work takes place at its Brussels site, it is legally bound to keep Strasbourg as its official home and to make monthly trips to the French city to hold its week-long plenary sessions.

On the street that runs between the Parliament's two main buildings, rue Wiertz, you will find a monument to corporate lobbying in the shape of a small tree planted by the Society of European Affairs Professionals (SEAP). Alongside is a memorial stone celebrating the role of lobbying in policy-making in the European Union. SEAP is one of the lobby groups that represent public relations and lobby consultancies active in Brussels. Back in 2005 when Estonian Commissioner Siim Kallas launched his initiative for 'opening the black box' and increasing transparency around lobbying, SEAP reacted angrily and insisted that any rules for lobbyists should be voluntary.



On the west side of the Parliament complex lies Place du Luxembourg ('Plux' for those in the know), one of the main meeting places for MEPs and lobbyists and an important location for the 'social' side of lobbying. Surrounded by bars and restaurants, the centre of the square has a statue of English coal magnate John Cockerill bearing the schmalzy inscription "father of the workers". The interconnected and complex nature of lobbying in Brussels means that influencing happens beyond the confines of office buildings and can often be more effective over a beer. Indeed, 'Pluxing' – afterwork drinks on Thursdays in this square – has become a veritable institution for lobbyists and their targets.

The enhanced powers won by the Parliament during the 2000s, especially via the Treaty of Lisbon, mean the area has become increasingly desirable as a place for lobby firms to set up an office. By now, 'Plux' vies with Place Schuman for the title of 'centre' of the EU quarter. Construction of new office space has been on the rise in this part of town with several large lobby consultancy firms moving offices from the area around the Commission headquarters to be closer to the European Parliament. Near Square de Meeûs and Place du Luxembourg are two important streets where more and more lobby consultancy firms and regional government offices have moved to recently: Rue du Luxembourg and Rue Montoyer.



## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (EP)

Rue Wiertz 43

Type: Public institution

The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the European Union, elected every five years since 1979 and composed of 751 members, who represent the largest transnational democratic electorate in the world. The two largest groups are currently the European People's Party (EPP) and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D). Their numerical strength mean these are the most important for lobbyists to target on most dossiers.

Although they do not have the right to propose laws (legislative initiative), their legislative power to change the European Commission's proposals for laws means that MEPs are nonetheless crucial for industry when pushing its agenda. The amount of lobbying targeting MEPs has increased sharply in the last decade - many lobbyists favourite method for influencing policy proposals is the submission of pre-written amendment texts to MEPs.

The number of amendments on a report is therefore one of the ways to detect intense lobbying around a European Parliament decision. If the number is very high, it often means that different MEPs have submitted identical amendments, some of which are often written by lobbyists. Incredibly, when the Parliament was reviewing the EU's agricultural policy (CAP), the number of amendments reached over 8000! New rules for hedge funds after the financial crisis also generated many amendments written by industry lobbyists. In 2013, Belgian liberal MEP Louis Michel was found to have proposed more than 200 amendments to EU data-protection legislation that turned out to have been produced by industry representatives. Michel claimed he knew nothing of it and blamed the incident on an assistant, who was promptly sacked.

Another controversy is the conflicts of interest raised by second jobs for MEPs, with around 250 EU lawmakers remunerated for outside work in addition to the salary they receive as parliamentarians. Side jobs as lawyers, board directors, or consultants are especially problematic. The public-private revolving doors (see the Revolving Doors box on page 74 as well as the jargon section on page 142) also spin with a vengeance at the Parliament. There have been numerous cases of MEPs and their advisers taking their expertise and contact books to corporate boards and lobby firms after they have left office.

MEP-industry groups and forums are another way for lobbyists to wield influence. These are platforms that connect MEPs and 'interested stakeholders' (predominantly industry representatives) to meet and discuss specific issues. While official intergroups are subject to specific (limited) transparency and ethics rules, the informal groups and forums are only expected to sign up to the transparency register.



## GOOGLE

Chaussée d'Etterbeek 180 - TECH tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 8.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €4.25m - €4.5m (2015)

You probably don't need to Google this corporation. A global giant of a tech company specialising in internet-related services, online advertising, search, and cloud computing, Google's lofty long-game is nothing less than "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful".

The company is not known for its humility. Google is relatively new to the Brussels lobby scene, part of a recent wave of Silicon Valley 'tech-bros' settling in around the EU quarter. They have gone all-out, boosting spending, poaching EU insiders, and pressing serious Eurocrat-flesh with more high-level lobbying meetings with the Commission since 2014 than any other company. Technology companies now vie with big energy groups as well as large banks as the biggest spenders when it comes to lobbying.

In the last five years, Google's declared EU lobby spend increased by 700 per cent. Unsurprisingly, data-protection rules top its agenda, with the tech sector eager to carry on invading our privacy and then secretly storing the data to eventually sell it on. Key to Google's EU lobbying priorities are three Commission antitrust (ie unfair monopoly) cases it is fighting: its AdSense advertising business, its shopping service, and whether its Android operating system gives preferential treatment to Google products. The company faces fines of up to ten per cent of its global turnover for each case if found guilty of breaching antitrust rules.

## HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES

Chaussée d'Etterbeek 180 - TECH tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 7.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €2.8 million (2015)

Relative newcomers to Brussels, Chinese tech behemoth Huawei is the largest telecommunications equipment manufacturer in the world. In terms of individual corporations, Huawei is among the big lobby spenders in Brussels and has complemented this over the last few years with several revolving door hires. In 2013 Huawei hired Serge Abou, former EU ambassador to China as an adviser. Mirroring the 'soft power' lobbying strategy of Google, the company is a regular organiser of cocktail party gatherings and social events in the bubble.

## BAVARIAN REPRESENTATION

Rue Wiertz 77

Type: Public institution

Nestled between the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions building stands a château built in 1903 to house an Anti-Rabies and Bacteriological Institute. Nowadays, the plaque by the gate tell us this is the 'Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the European Union'.

Nicknamed "Schloss Neuwahnstein" in a word-play reference to its palatial enormity (ask a German for the full explanation of the pun), this impressive complex is a regular venue for lobbying receptions and cocktails with Bavarian beer, pretzels, and sausages. Every two years, the representation and the Bavarian Industry Association jointly host the Brussels version of Munich's October festival at the nearby Place Jourdan, which is packed with 1,700 lobbyists and political celebrities and yes, they are dressed in traditional dirndl-dresses and leather pants!

Bavaria, Germany's biggest and richest state, was one of the first of the EU's regions to have a permanent representation in Brussels. Now there are about 250 offices dotted in and around the EU quarter representing municipalities, cities, and regions from all over the continent. Most are small affairs far from the scale of Bavaria, which employs more people (30) than some national representations in order to represent the region and defend its industries, for instance BMW (Bayerische Motoren Werke – Bavarian Motor Works) which regularly hosts classical concerts on the representation's premises.

## NEW BREEDING TECHNIQUES (NBT) PLATFORM

Rue Belliard 199

Type: Other

Declared lobbyists: 0.5 FTE

Lobby spend: €50,000 - €100,000 (2015)

EU rules restricting the cultivation and use of GMOs have long been a thorn in the biotech industry's side. Their lobbyists are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to twist the interpretation of these rules – including the very definition of a GMO – aiming to exclude new genetic engineering techniques from their scope.

To further its cause, the industry has cultivated a dedicated, EU-level lobbying vehicle – the New Breeding Techniques Platform – on a mission to get as many of the new GM techniques as possible excluded from EU regulations. The New Breeding Techniques Platform says that it is "a coalition of SMEs, large industry and prominent academic and research institutes, which strives to bring clarity to the European debate on New Breeding Techniques". Run by lobby and PR firm Schuttelaar & Partners (see page 60), the platform lists Swiss agribusiness big beast Syngenta among its members.





## SCHUTTELAAR & PARTNERS

Rue Belliard 199

Type: PR / lobby consultancy

Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE

Lobby spend: €100,000 - €200,000 (2015)

"The world around us is beautiful," gushes Schuttelaar & Partners' website. But this Dutch lobbying and PR firm's speciality is rather more nefarious than its platitude "that the world is fragile and that much still needs to be done to lay the foundations for our future" would suggest. In recent years, Schuttelaar has chaired the NBT Platform (see previous entry) and coordinated its lobby activities to ensure new GMOs would escape regulation. Schuttelaar has experience working for biotech industry actors (Syngenta, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, and biotech lobby association EuropaBio) and has not shied away from running highly damaging industry campaigns in the past: its first triumph came when it tricked decision-makers into allowing Monsanto's genetically modified soy to flood the European market.



## EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF DAIRY TRADE (EUCOLAIT)

Rue Belliard 199

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 3 FTE

Lobby spend: €100,000 - €200,000 (2015)

Ordinary European dairy farmers worry about potential threats from the proposed EU-US trade deal TTIP, from production relocated out of the EU, to unfair competition created by the lowering of standards, to harmful products trickling onto supermarket shelves denting consumer confidence in dairy. But Eucolait, the lobby group of international dairy traders, does not represent these views. It has a different take on TTIP, welcoming the attack on European standards. In 2013 it said a number of "sanitary and technical barriers to trade need to be addressed.... Ideally, the TTIP would result in a mutual recognition of the two food safety systems as equivalent or comparable."



## EUROPEAN PUBLIC POLICY ADVISERS (EPPA)

Place du Luxembourg 2-3

Type: PR / lobby consultancy

Declared lobbyists: 15 FTE

Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000 (2016)

Ever feel like you need to manage the "quadruple helix for innovation and competitiveness"? Well look no further: according to EPPA, it can help you do just that! EPPA lobbies for mega clients such as Japan Tobacco International, as well as chemical industry giants like Bayer and Sumitomo. It has particularly focused on TTIP with the launch of an EU Trade Negotiation Tracker to give clients the latest insider news on the secret negotiations.



## MAISON DU LUXEMBOURG RESTAURANT

Rue du Luxembourg 37

Type: Venue

Just as companies swarm to Luxembourg to dodge tax, lobbyists flock to eateries like the Maison du Luxembourg to evade prying ears and relax in a haven of nibbles, news and gossip. This restaurant is a top location for lobbyists seeking to wine and dine with policy-makers over a "power lunch" and symbolises the social side of lobbying.

Lunches are a crucial element of the influencing game in Brussels, as consultants seek to get officials out of their offices to feed them their priorities over fancy food and drinks. Moreover, a conversation in a restaurant or bar can often be just as useful as a formal meeting within the buildings of the institutions. The added advantage? Such meetings can be more easily omitted from the official register of Commission meetings.



## CABINET DN

Rue d'Arlon 25

Type: PR / lobby consultancy

Declared lobbyists: 30 FTE

Lobby spend: €3.25m - €3.5m (2015)

This lobby consultancy claims it helps "shape EU policies across the board". Revolving door moves (see the Revolving Doors box on page 74, as well as the jargon section on page 142) include former Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and ex-EU ambassador in Washington DC John Bruton, and John Purvis, who joined Cabinet DN after leaving the European Parliament in 2009. Purvis chairs Financial Future, a lobby vehicle for the finance industry, for which Cabinet DN undertakes the secretariat functions, earning them over €100,000 per year. Cabinet DN client roster includes major companies such as Viacom, Starbucks, Accenture, Microsoft, and Facebook.



## EUTOP

**Rue d'Arlon 15 - TOBACCO tour**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 11.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.25m - €2.5m (2016)**

EUTOP is a Berlin-based lobby agency, and one among several to have lobbied DG FISMA (see page 104), despite at the time not appearing in the transparency register (it only registered in December 2016). This underlines why the ban on meeting unregistered lobbyists needs to be broadened to cover all Commission officials, and why replacing the current voluntary register with a proper, legally-binding register is vital. EUTOP clients include British American Tobacco and Airbus.



## UNILEVER

**Rue d'Idalie 9-13**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2016)**

Welcome to the world's largest producer of spreadable food! Unilever's influence spreads easily across the various layers of the Brussels policy-making sandwich, lobbying over regulations that affect its household name brands such as Lynx, Dove, Flora, Knorr, Lipton, Magnum, and Surf. Unilever pushes its business priorities on large-scale agriculture via various industry lobby groups (such as CEFIC, see page 122) where collective economic weight enables substantial influence. Unilever also operates through FoodDrinkEurope (see page 45), known for its efforts to squash consumer-friendly labels on foods and drinks and its pro-TTIP lobbying. In fact, during TTIP's preparation phase, agribusiness lobbyists had more contact with the Commission than those from the pharmaceutical, chemical, financial and car industries put together.

Unilever also lobbies via the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI – see page 120), co-founded by tobacco giant Philip Morris to bring scientists from industry together with those from regulatory bodies. These useful alliances can aid the influencing of laws affecting industry interests.



## RWE

**Rue d'Idalie 9-11 - POLLUTERS tour**

**Type: Utilities company**

**Declared lobbyists: 5.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2,000,000 (2016)**

RWE is notorious for claiming to be green while lobbying to keep its dirty coal-and oil-fired power plants open. This German utilities company has over 20 million electricity and 10 million gas customers in Europe and its power stations and opencast mines make up Europe's biggest source of carbon dioxide.

In summer 2015 over 1000 climate activists from across Europe descended on one of RWE's opencast lignite mines. Coal is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change and lignite is particularly dirty. Under the banner Ende Gelände – "here and no further" – the activists brought the site's 220m-long diggers to a halt.

In the same year, MEP Birgit Collin-Langen resigned from a second job on an RWE advisory committee due to possible conflicts of interest with her membership of the European Parliament's Environment and Public Health Committee.



## EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES AND ASSOCIATIONS (EFPIA)

**Rue du Trône 108**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 15.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €5,528,906 (2016)**

EFPIA is the pharmaceutical industry's main EU lobby group with a roster of big pharma names as members such as GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, Eli Lilly, Astra Zeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Novartis, and Sanofi. EFPIA enjoys a great number of meetings with the European Commission.

A vivid example of its clout is the multi-billion euro Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), a joint venture between the Commission and EFPIA launched in 2008. Ostensibly aimed at speeding up the development of better, safer medicines and boosting innovation, an investigation by Der Spiegel and De Standdaard in 2015 concluded that the billions already invested by the EU in the IMI have simply been a giant financial shot in big pharma's arm rather than a boost for medical research.

Meanwhile the sector's intentions and motivations go largely unquestioned by policy-makers. The pharmaceutical industry lobbying goal is to ease the drug development pathway, from research and development of a medicine through to clinical trials and market approval, in order to help its business model. This model threatens affordability of and access to medicine for the public, research of 'unprofitable' health problems, safety, and the transparency of clinical trials data.

## BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO (BAT)

Rue du Trône 108 - TOBACCO tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 2.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €2.25m - €2.5m (2015)

One of the world's five largest tobacco companies, British American Tobacco's (BAT) brands include Lucky Strike, Kent, Pall Mall, Benson & Hedges, and Rothmans. It aggressively lobbied against the EU's Tobacco Products directive in 2012-13, publishing its own impact assessment which focused only on economic losses, exaggerating job cuts and overlooking health spending benefits. In 2015 the BBC revealed that BAT may have paid bribes to government officials in African countries in a bid to undermine the UN's global anti-smoking treaty.

The company has played a long-term lobby game in Brussels. The 'Better Regulation' agenda (see jargon section, page 140) is a dream come true for big tobacco, promoting impact assessments on business to delay anti-smoking laws. For decades, BAT has promoted these kinds of assessments to ensure that the 'impact' on their bottom line was put at the heart of policy decisions, and because they were confident they could influence the process to make it more difficult to introduce rules that hurt their profits. This was also part of a plan to overcome the use of the 'precautionary principle' in law-making which places harm reduction at its core, and would obviously see tight restrictions or even bans on aspects of tobacco use, to reduce the harm to public health.

BAT is also active on EU trade policy. In 2015, the Commission was implicated in a cover-up after refusing to divulge details of talks between its officials and the tobacco industry during TTIP negotiations. Commission staff met and communicated with lobbyists from British American Tobacco and Philip Morris. However, the papers – the result of an access to documents request – revealed little else. Almost all the content, including the names of officials and tobacco lobbyists involved, the issues discussed, the dates some encounters took place, and even page numbers had been blacked out!

Article 5.3 (see jargon section on page 140) of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (to which the EU is a signatory) requires next to no contacts between tobacco lobbyists and lawmakers and full transparency when contacts do occur.

The company is member of a slew of lobby groups, chambers of commerce, think tanks, industry networks and front groups, including the American Chamber of Commerce, British Chamber of Commerce, BusinessEurope, European Policy Centre, European Risk Forum, European Smoking Tobacco Association, and the European Smokeless Tobacco Council.

## PHILIP MORRIS

Rue Montoyer 51 - TOBACCO tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 2.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €900,000 - €1m (2015)

Philip Morris International (PMI) is a US tobacco company whose products include Marlboro. Tobacco is the single greatest cause of preventable death globally, and the sale of tobacco is increasingly subject to government restrictions. A substantial lobby operation in Brussels is thus crucial for Philip Morris as it fights to protect its deadly business model.

And the company is not afraid to stoop low to stub out threats to its profits: in 2010 Philip Morris sued for compensation against Uruguay over anti-smoking legislation that it said threatened its "cigarette trademarks and investments in the country" (see more on investor-state dispute settlement arbitration on page 141). Philip Morris also launched a legal challenge in 2011 when Australia legislated that tobacco could only be sold in plain packaging.

In Brussels, PMI was at the centre of a revolving door scandal when it was revealed that former top-Commission official Michel Petite was lobbying on tobacco via his new role at global law firm Clifford Chance, whose clients included PMI. Petite was at the same time heading the Commission's ethics advisory body, vetting revolving door cases. After intense pressure from NGOs, MEPs and the Ombudsman, Petite was quietly replaced.

In 2013, leaked internal PMI documents outlined the company's comprehensive lobbying strategy to influence the revision of the EU's Tobacco Products Directive (TPD), a law that strengthened the rules on how tobacco products are manufactured, produced and marketed in the EU. The documents showed that PMI had met with more than 233 MEPs, despite the fact that UN rules state very clearly that contacts with tobacco lobbyists should be limited to a minimum. They also revealed PMI's use of controversial 'third-party' lobby tactics whereby the tobacco industry got trade unionists and corner-shop owners to echo their lobby demands.

In 2015 the Commission was accused of a cover-up after censoring details of talks between its officials and the tobacco industry during TTIP negotiations (see British American Tobacco for more details).





## MICROSOFT

**Rue Montoyer 51 - TECH tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 8.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €4.25m - €4.5m (2015/2016)**

US software monopolist Microsoft was accused by the Commission for abusing its dominant position in the market. The company has been among the top spenders on lobbying in Brussels for the past decade. Tech giants such as Microsoft also enjoy easy and regular access to top officials in charge of regulating Europe's digital economy.

Astroturfing (see page 140), where companies hide behind a benign name or coalition to further their influence as a lobbying strategy, is among the lobby tactics used by the tech sector. For example, the European Privacy Association (EPA, see page 75) – a name that would easily lead one to think it's an organisation in favour of strong privacy laws – was forced to admit in 2013 that Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo were among its corporate backers.



## HILL & KNOWLTON (H&K)

**Rue Montoyer 51 - TOBACCO tour**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 13.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €3m - €3.25m (2015)**

The Brussels branch of this global public relations company is one of the EU bubble's biggest consultancies. Founded in the US in the 1920s, H&K's early clients included big tobacco, where they masterminded the strategy for counteracting scientific evidence which linked cigarette smoking to lung cancer.

The global company has also been criticised for whitewashing the reputations of governments accused of human rights violations in the past, including Indonesia, Turkey, and Uganda. In Brussels, H&K has promoted Russian gas company Gazprom's offshoot Nord Stream and French agrofuels multinational Avril. H&K also facilitated the work of the Trade Secrets & Innovation Coalition (TSIC), an industry lobby pushing a 2015-16 EU directive to protect "trade secrets", but which uses definitions so large and exceptions so weak that it seriously endangers the work of investigative journalists and whistleblowers, as well as limiting corporate accountability and the transparency of corporate data used for regulation.



## BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON (BNY MELLON)

**Rue Montoyer 46**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 1.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000 (2016)**

This global asset management and securities services corporation formed just before the 2008 financial crisis, is a result of the merger of The Bank of New York (the oldest banking corporation in the US) and Mellon Financial Corporation. Key policy areas of interest to BNY Mellon's team of lobbyists are financial services, taxation, trade and the internal market.

In 2010, former Commissioner Charlie McCreevy, who had been responsible for (de)regulating derivatives markets, joined the derivatives trading unit of BNY Mellon. This was despite McCreevy stating the year before that "what we do not need is to become captive of those with the biggest lobby budgets or the most persuasive lobbyists". As it was just over a year since he had left office Commission approval was neither sought nor required. McCreevy, along with nine other directors, left BNY Mellon in October 2012 but there's no way of knowing what kind of insider know-how gained in his public policy role he brought to this major bank.



## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES (IBM)

**Rue Montoyer 10**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 5.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.75m - €2m (2016)**

IBM makes computer hardware and software, as well as offering services in areas ranging from mainframe computers to nanotechnology. A big proponent of TTIP, IBM enjoys regular access to EU negotiators and policy-makers dealing with the digital economy and single market portfolios.

In 2015 and 2016, IBM is in the top ten corporations with the most meetings with Commissioners and other top Commission officials. No less influential on the other side of the ocean, CEO of IBM Ginni Rometty sits on US President Donald Trump's business advisory council.

# AROUND SQUARE DE MEEÛS

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. Burson-Marsteller
2. Fleishman-Hillard
3. Hogan Lovells
4. Red Flag

## PUBLIC INSTITUTION

5. Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

## CORPORATION

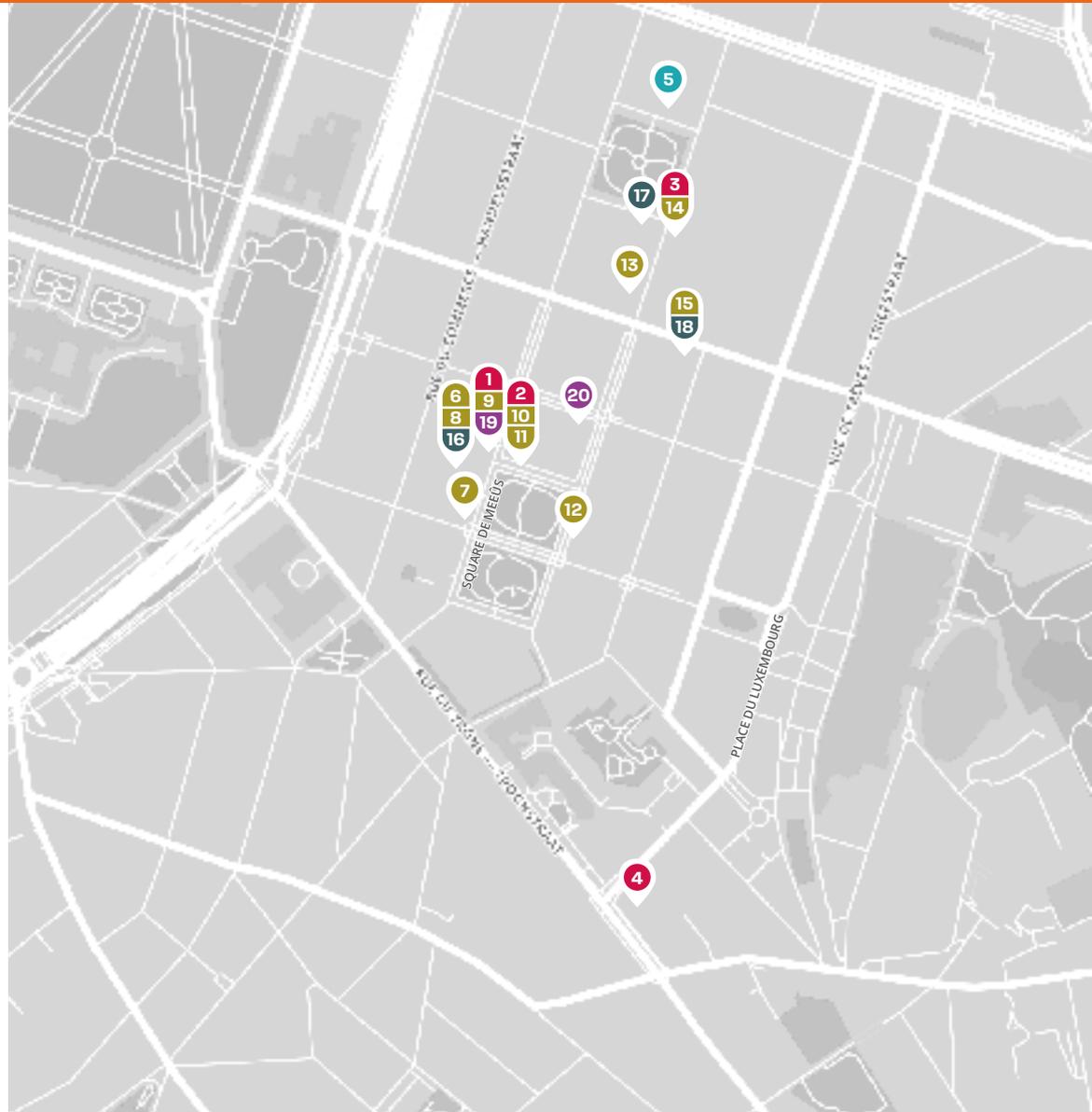
6. Goldman Sachs
7. Bayer
8. Bank of America
9. Merrill Lynch
10. GlaxoSmithKline
11. GasNaturally
12. BlackRock
13. HSBC
14. Barclays
15. Apple
16. BASF

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

16. International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA)
17. Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
18. German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA)

## THINK TANK

19. European Privacy Association (EPA)
20. Friends of Europe





Surrounded mainly by massive glass-fronted office blocks, but with some impressive stone façades remaining, this square owes its name to 19th-century banker Ferdinand de Meeüs. Several buildings have been refurbished as more and more lobby firms move into the area, turning it into a true lobby hotspot just a stone's throw from the European Parliament. Property prices are surging as a result.

## BAYER

**Square de Meeüs 40**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 12.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1,948,000 (2016)**

At the time of writing Bayer is engaged in a \$66 billion attempted takeover of US GMO giant Monsanto. This German chemical and pharmaceutical company has a long history of controversy that looks set to continue. From its belle époque promotion of heroin as a cough treatment for children, to more recent pushes for lax GMO and pesticides regulation in Europe, Bayer cannot seem to resist getting its paws on even the hottest of political potatoes.

A dominant player in the neonicotinoid pesticide market, Bayer came out all guns blazing against reports on the potential harmful effects of its products on bee populations. Neonicotinoid pesticides are absorbed into a plant as it grows and can seep into nectar and pollen where it is thought to harm and kill pollinating insects.

Along with other pesticides companies, Bayer and trade association the European Crop Protection Association (see page 121) lobbied fiercely against EU action on 'neonics'. Similarly, the industry went to war on a looming ban on hormone (endocrine) disrupting chemicals (EDCs, see page 123), present in everyday products, that interact with the hormonal systems in the body, and are suspected of having severe health and environmental impacts.

Their methods employed on EDCs have included scaremongering, delay-tactics, discrediting evidence, and using the TTIP negotiations as leverage to stop the EU taking action to restrict EDCs.

## BANK OF AMERICA MERRILL LYNCH

**Square de Meeüs 38/40**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: 1.25m - €1.5m (2016)**

Bank of America Merrill Lynch is the corporate and investment banking division of Bank of America. Within a few months of leaving her job as Digital Agenda Commissioner, Neelie Kroes became a paid adviser to Bank of America Merrill Lynch, and after 18 months, she took up other roles at data firm Salesforce and tax-dodging taxi-hailing company Uber (see Revolving Doors, page 74).

These moves by ex-Commissioner Kroes exemplify why the Commission's ban on moving into a related private sector job within 18 months of leaving public office is not sufficient. Kroes was quoted in the Wall Street Journal when she was first appointed to the Commission in 2004, saying she "promised to never engage in business activities once her five-year commission term ends".

## INTERNATIONAL SWAPS AND DERIVATIVES ASSOCIATION (ISDA)

38/40 Square de Meeûs

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 5 FTE

Lobby spend: €2.5m - €2.75m (2015)

ISDA is a trade association for participants in the financial market for over-the-counter derivatives. In finance, derivatives are just a bet that something will be worth more or less at some point in the future, and a swap refers to an exchange of one financial instrument for another. As you might expect, ISDA lobbies heavily on financial sector policy and its members are large financial corporations, including Deutsche Bank, Barclays, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan, and Morgan Stanley.

When reform of derivatives regulation came on the EU agenda following the food and financial crises in the late 2000s, it looked like something might be done to tackle the scandalous speculation in agricultural commodities, which can literally starve people by ensuring food price volatility. Many of ISDA's big bank members are infamous for their involvement in food speculation, so ISDA made sure it was able to dominate the 'derivatives expert group' set up to examine the issue by the Commission. For its part, the Commission sidelined those affected by such speculation such as farmers and consumers.

A regular 'expert' voice advising the Commission on various policy areas related to taxation, ISDA has been recently active in drumming up opposition to EU proposals for a financial transaction tax.

## GOLDMAN SACHS

Square de Meeûs 38/40 - FINANCE tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE

Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2016)

Goldman Sachs is the T-Rex of global investment banking and financial services with a ferocious reputation for major controversy. To name just one, ahead of the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis Goldman Sachs profited from the collapse in mortgage bonds by short-selling subprime mortgage-backed securities and "betting" on a collapse in the market. The company was then rescued as part of a massive taxpayer-funded US government bailout.

How does the bank get away with it? Goldman is deeply embedded in the global political and economic elite, although its involvement in a large number of lobby initiatives and groups means that its power often remains invisible. For a long time, Goldman Sachs refused to join the Brussels lobby register and only signed up in November 2014. Their first entry, however, clearly lowballed its lobby spending despite it being a power-player with the kind of access to the institutions that other companies only dream of.

Politicians who currently work or have previously worked for Goldman include European Central Bank President Mario Draghi; current Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney; Italy's former prime minister Mario Monti; current Commissioner Carlos Moedas, and former Commission President Romano Prodi. More recently, José Manuel Barroso, who led the Commission from 2004-14, came under intense pressure after his appointment, in July 2016, as non-executive chairman at Goldman Sachs International.

The move catapulted the EU's revolving door problem (see page 74) into the headlines. Corporate Europe Observatory believes that there should be an extension of the mandatory cooling-off period from 18 months to, at least, 5 years for former Commission Presidents (and at least 3 years for Commissioners) regarding direct and indirect lobbying activities, as well as other roles which could represent a conflict of interest.



## REVOLVING DOORS: INSIDE BUSINESS

Major companies actively recruit from among the ranks of EU officials to bolster their firms' prestige, vital contacts, powerful influence, and insider know-how, crucial for successful lobbying. And in recent years a number of Commissioners, MEPs, and top officials have left their EU jobs and started working for the corporate sector. This is known as the revolving door phenomenon, rendering Brussels even more business-dominated and remote from citizens' concerns and the public interest.

Former Commission President (2004-2014) José Manuel Barroso is now chairman of Goldman Sachs International, while former European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes went on to roles at Uber, Salesforce and Bank of America Merrill Lynch. Former Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Sharon Bowles, took up a position with the London Stock Exchange in 2014.

Corporate Europe Observatory works alongside other civil society groups to demand new rules and a change of culture to block the revolving door. This would involve revising the Commission's Code of Conduct to include a three year cooling-off period for Commissioners taking lobby jobs (or any other job which provokes the risk of a conflict of interest) and a revamped Commission ethics committee.

The European Parliament would similarly need to clean up its own house with changes to the rules governing MEPs. We're also seeking changes to the EU's Staff Regulations to better regulate the revolving door to include a two year cooling-off period for officials.

## GLAXOSMITHKLINE

**Square de Meeûs 37**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 4.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2016)**

Big pharma enjoys a powerful role in the formation of EU health policy, for instance through the highly problematic public private partnership, the IMI (Innovative Medicines Initiative). This multi-billion payout of public money prescribed to Big Pharma has had pharma industry lobby group EFPIA (see page 63) members like GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, and Bayer in the driving seat on regulation and agenda-setting on issues that affect the health of millions of people.

## BURSON-MARSTELLER

**Square de Meeûs 37**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 28 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €4.5m - €4.75m (2016)**

Part of a network of 30 offices around Europe, Burson-Marsteller's European HQ in Brussels specialises in Europe-wide political campaigns, corporate and crisis communications, and lobbying the EU institutions on policies ranging from the environment, food and healthcare to energy and transport.

Burson-Marsteller is one of the biggest PR and lobbying firms in the world and without doubt one of the most powerful forces working for corporate interests in town. Globally, it has a long history of dealing with some controversial clients, from working for the Argentinian junta after the disappearance of 35,000 civilians, to buffing up the image of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and the Saudi royal family, to the Brussels branch conducting a 2011 smear campaign on behalf of Ukraine's then-ruling party against jailed opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko.

The company also has a history of working with the anti-environmental movement and setting up corporate front groups. In 1993, for instance, it helped Philip Morris by launching an astroturf (fake grassroots, see jargon section on page 140) coalition called the National Smokers Alliance, "defending smokers' rights".

Clearly an expert at astroturfing, it also set up the 'Alliance for Consumer Fire Safety in Europe' (ACFSE), not as it appeared made up of citizens demanding fire safety, but in fact a front group for the bromine industry promoting the continued use of toxic bromine flame retardants. In the mid-2000s, Burson-Marsteller was forced to step up transparency following criticism of its role in establishing another front group, the Bromine Science and Environment Forum, which also turned out to be a mouthpiece for the bromine industry.

## EUROPEAN PRIVACY ASSOCIATION (EPA)

**Square de Meeûs 37 - TECH tour**

**Type: Think tank**

**Declared lobbyists: 1.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €10,000 - €25,000 (2014)**

Founded in 2009 this friendly-sounding group's stated goal is "to enhance data protection and Internet freedom as fundamental principles of democracy". In 2013, however, it was forced to reveal its backers included Microsoft, Google, and Yahoo. While it describes itself as an independent think tank EPA works to promote industry-friendly legislation, promoting the very opposite of what the public understands by privacy and Internet freedom.



## **GASNATURALLY**

**Square de Meeûs 35 - POLLUTERS tour**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 1.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €350,000 (2016)**

GasNaturally is a super trade association made up of six European and international gas lobby groups: International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP), Eurogas, European Gas Research Group (GERG), Gas Infrastructure Europe (GIE), International Gas Union (IGU), Marcogaz. Its members deal in aspects of the exploration, research, storage, retail sale, and distribution of natural gas. Eurogas, for example, represents 43 companies and associations from 24 countries all working in the European gas sector.

The association's lobbying strategy is to position natural gas, a fossil fuel, as a key 'transition fuel' and solution for climate change – it includes highly polluting shale gas (extracted by fracking) as well as conventional gas in this vision (see box on the following page). The group organises a 'fun' annual Gas Week which includes a cocktail party for MEP assistants with an energy and climate-themed quiz and prizes... Yay fossil fuels!



## **BLACKROCK**

**Square de Meeûs 35**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.25m - €1.5m (2016)**

Its name rings few bells outside financial circles, but with over \$5 trillion in assets, BlackRock is the biggest investor in the world and, as of 2013, the single biggest shareholder in global corporations such as JPMorgan Chase, ExxonMobil, Shell, Apple, McDonald's, and Nestlé.

Its reach extends to sovereign debt, commodities, property speculation, and beyond. BlackRock is a member of the 'Group of Thirty' or G30 which meets regularly with the European Central Bank (ECB). This exclusive club of the heads of big financial corporations and central bankers advocates deregulation or self-regulation of the financial sector instead of strong international rules. ECB President Mario Draghi himself is a member; following a complaint by Corporate Europe Observatory, in 2017 the European Ombudsman opened an inquiry to investigate the proximity between the bank and the G30.

In an astonishing revolving door hiring in early 2017, BlackRock made former UK Finance Minister George Osborne an adviser, earning more than £200,000 a year for the part-time gig. BlackRock's connections are at the highest level with CEO Larry Fink joining US President Donald Trump's business advisory council, where he is trying to steer Trump 'back on track' over globalisation and trade.

## **GAS: HOT AIR OR CLIMATE-FRIENDLY FOSSIL FUEL?**

Together with the Commission, the oil and gas industry is engaged in an extensive campaign to promote gas as a 'climate friendly' or 'low-carbon' fossil fuel that was originally sold as a 'bridge' to a renewable future, but is now being marketed as a long-term permanent 'partner' to renewable energy.

This is justified on the basis that gas has a smaller carbon footprint than coal, but ignores the fact that gas remains responsible for massive greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, the methane released in the production and use of natural gas is much more damaging for the climate than CO<sub>2</sub> – more than 100 times more harmful over a 12 year period.

On top of this, the growing push for gas means that this dirty fuel is hampering the development of clean, renewable energy. The rush for gas is another false solution from big polluters, whose interests are to pursue business as usual. While weak in terms of commitments, the 2015 COP 21 Paris climate summit agreement does call for global temperatures to be kept "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C", which means leaving at least 80 per cent of fossil fuel reserves in the ground.

While the EU styles itself a champion of this deal, it is driving more gas exploitation and encouraging massive investment in corporate-backed gas infrastructure such as the Southern Gas Corridor, a.k.a the Euro-Caspian mega-pipeline that is set to pipe gas from Azerbaijan to Europe.

Fossil fuel advocates are pushing for more gas infrastructure to lock the EU into long-term dependency, a disaster for the climate but ensuring profits for oil and gas companies and preventing the much-needed renewable energy transition.



## **FLEISHMAN-HILLARD**

**Square de Meeûs 35**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 24 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €6.75m - €7m (2016)**

"The Power of True" is the slogan of choice for Fleishman-Hillard, one of the biggest PR companies in the world and the biggest declared spender of all lobby consultancies in Brussels. Fleishman have worked with a broad range of clients that include major transnationals like Monsanto, Aviva, HSBC, and ExxonMobil.

Monsanto hired Fleishman-Hillard having realised that it, and its GMOs, had an image problem. Fossil fuels lobby group GasNaturally also hired Fleishman-Hillard to spread the idea of natural gas (including fracked gas) as a green 'transition' fuel ahead of the COP21 climate summit in Paris.

But Fleishman-Hillard's anti-climate reputation goes a lot further back. When Chris Davies, who as an MEP sat for 15 years on the Parliament's Environment Committee, and who was well-known for his cooperation with the energy industry, set up an environmental political consultancy, he also became an adviser to Fleishman-Hillard.

Undermining initiatives to boost citizen involvement in shaping policy is also included in Fleishman's skill set. In 2012 Fleishman-Hillard Brussels announced that it could offer businesses help in hijacking the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI), a process that allows petitions with one million signatures from across seven different member states to be considered for possible EU legislation.

Fleishman-Hillard said that its: "team of seasoned public affairs and online communication professionals can help you monitor emerging ECIs, assess their potential impact, and support you in launching your own ECI... We are well-placed to assist your organisation in rolling out pan-European grassroots campaigns."



## HSBC

**Square de Meeûs 23**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2016)**

The HSBC banking and financial services company is the world's fourth largest bank. In 2015 the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists showed how HSBC profited from doing business with tax evaders.

The scandal known as Swiss Leaks, rolled on as HSBC began an intimidation campaign against media seeking to report on the controversy. Tellingly, the day the scandal broke, HSBC tax expert John Everett was at the European Commission – not to answer questions on the bank's illegal activities but to give advice to policy makers as a member of a newly formed expert group.

Corporate Europe Observatory has conducted research into how the British banking sector, hedge funds, insurance companies, and their lobby groups command massive resources and enjoy easy access to decision-makers in EU institutions.

Collectively, the industry has emerged victorious from many lobbying battles in Brussels, with key victories on banking regulation, hedge fund regulation, and complicated financial products such as derivatives, often at the cost of regulation in the public interest. HSBC lobbyists are regular visitors to the European Commission either for lobby meetings or to participate in advisory groups on issues that affect its business.



## FRIENDS OF EUROPE

**Rue de la Science 4 - ARMS tour**

**Type: Think tank**

**Declared lobbyists: 20.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.75m - €3m (2016)**

Think tank Friends of Europe is known for its flashy events and glossy publications, often sponsored by corporations. Its members include powerful individuals from chemicals companies such as Dow and BASF; oil giants like Shell, Chevron, and ExxonMobil; big tech firms such as Google, Facebook; and many more from the worlds of pharmaceutical, car, finance, defence and agribusiness.

Membership of Friends of Europe gets you exclusive access to dinner debates with top EU officials and other high-level gatherings. Influential personalities pepper the top ranks of this think tank. Presiding over the Board of Trustees is Belgian blue-blood Viscount Etienne Davignon, twice former Commissioner who helped to found the European Round Table of Industrialists (see page 115).

An ex-European Parliament President, seven current or former commissioners, and a handful of ex-MEPs, and former Prime Ministers all also sit on the Board of Trustees.



## BARCLAYS

**Rue de la Science 14**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1,257,307 (2016)**

An infamous banking and financial services company, Barclays can trace its history back to 17th century London. Today it is a powerful global corporation, having made several acquisitions over the last decade including the post-collapse US operations of Lehman Brothers in 2008.

The bank hired PR agency Fleishman-Hillard in 2010 to lobby on its behalf in Brussels, manage its public image in the wake of several scandals, and to try to head off moves towards an EU financial transaction tax. Since then it has been giving the Commission advice on regulating financial markets as part of an expert group on tax. This is despite evidence of financial misconduct, including promoting tax avoidance schemes.

Barclays also lobbies via a number of organisations like the Association of Financial Markets, the British Bankers Association, the International Swaps and Derivatives Association, and the Investment Association.





## CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY (CBI)

**Rue de la Science 14b**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 11.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €900,000 - €1m (2016)**

Described by the Financial Times as "Britain's biggest business lobby group", the Confederation of British Industry has around 1,500 direct and 188,500 indirect member companies and includes 140 trade associations. Members come from diverse sectors: agriculture, construction, financial services, IT, transport, and tourism. CBI has claimed that proposals for an EU-US TTIP agreement would bring "significant benefits" to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and "opportunities to export" while separately admitting that "the case for the benefits of TTIP [on SMEs] remains hypothetical."



## APPLE

**Rue de la Science 23 - TECH tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2015-16)**

Despite Apple's status as the world's largest IT company, the maker of the iPhone, iPad, and Mac computer has retained a distinctly low profile on the Brussels lobbying scene. In an illustrative revolving doors case, Apple poached senior DG Competition official and EU insider Per Hellström in 2014 to work on government and regulatory affairs, competition law and policy in Europe. Copyright, telecoms, data protection, and TTIP are all of interest to the company's team of Brussels lobbyists.

The company also lobbies via several associations such as AmCham EU, the European Internet Forum, and The Lisbon Council. Several recent cases of bad PR regarding the labour practices of Apple's contractors were compounded when, in August 2016, the European Commission ordered Apple to pay €13 billion plus interest in dodged taxes to the Irish Government.



## HOGAN LOVELLS

**Rue de la Science 23 - TRADE tour**

**Type: Law firm**

**Declared lobbyists: Undeclared**

**Lobby spend: Undeclared**

With around 2,500 lawyers working in more than 40 offices around the world, Hogan Lovells is a transnational law firm specialised in "government regulatory, litigation and arbitration, corporate, finance, and intellectual property". In 2012 Hogan Lovells helped an American semiconductor company secure an exemption in European environmental law that allowed it to continue using a potentially hazardous substance in the computer chips it makes.

Despite not being signed up to the EU lobby register, Hogan Lovells is engaged in lobbying activities, with a strong interest in TTIP and its investor rights proposals. It even provides one of the two board chairs of the Trans-Atlantic Business Council (see page 42), Hugo Paemen, a former top Commission official and trade negotiator.

The firm has a thriving business using ISDS tribunals (see page 141) to sue governments on behalf of corporations. In recent years, Hogan Lovells assisted British company Churchill Mining in its US\$1 billion claim against the Indonesian government over the revocation of coal mining permits on the Indonesian island of Borneo.



## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (DG RESEARCH)

**Square Frère Orban 8 - ARMS tour**

**Type: Public institution**

This DG, part of the European Commission, is responsible for the EU's research and innovation policy. Headed by Commissioner Carlos Moedas, it manages the Horizon 2020 research funding programme. In the name of supporting and fostering research and innovation, billions within Horizon 2020 are handed over to industry in an effective subsidy for big business, including €1.7 billion for the "Secure Societies" programme, likely to go to defence companies.

Horizon 2020 strongly favours public-private partnerships, compromising universities' independence. Large agribusiness and biotech corporations are keen beneficiaries, crowding out much-needed public support to crucial research projects into more sustainable agricultural practices than these companies' profit-driven approach.



## GERMAN ASSOCIATION OF THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY (VDA)

**Rue Marie de Bourgogne 58**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 14 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.5m (2016)**

The VDA (Verband der Automobilindustrie) represents German car manufacturers, a lobbying juggernaut that has worked to ensure the EU's response to the Dieseltgate scandal (see page 37) would be half-hearted.

The relationship between government and the car industry is particularly cosy in Germany: German Chancellor Angela Merkel herself reportedly intervened directly on their behalf on EU rules over vehicle emissions. Meanwhile the current President of the VDA Matthias Wissman previously served in government in the ruling Christian Democratic Union party. The VDA shows the influence enjoyed by the car industry in Brussels – and Berlin.



## BASF

**Rue Marie de Bourgogne 58 - AGRI tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 11.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2.2m (2016)**

BASF is the largest producer of chemicals in the world with annual sales of about €70 billion.

This German chemical giant is strategically embedded into all relevant lobbying associations and networks in Brussels. As the European Chemicals Directive, REACH, was being cooked up, BASF's directors were at the helm of the powerful counter-attack by the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), the German Association of the Chemical Industry, and the European employers' association BusinessEurope.

The company is also a member of other influential associations such as the Trans-Atlantic Business Council (TABC), the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN), and the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT).

In the 2000s BASF jointly initiated the Bees Biodiversity Network, a corporate-funded front group for the pesticides industry. This network sought to counteract measures to protect or promote biodiversity at EU level and focused heavily on playing down the role of pesticides in bee colony collapse.

BASF has also been among the corporations concocting a chemical industry campaign against a potential ban on hormone disrupting chemicals (see page 123), finding allies in various member states, actors within the European Commission, and in the European Parliament to fight with them against restrictions on these toxic substances.



## RED FLAG

**Rue du Trône 108**

**Type: PR / lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €100,000 - €200,000 (2015)**

This consultancy declares: "the Red Flag moment comes when you recognise an issue on the horizon and realise you need to act". Far removed from any association with socialism that its name might suggest, Red Flag has lobbied for companies from British American Tobacco to Monsanto.

Its report "Closing Doors: Is industry being frozen out in Brussels?" was an appeal for sympathy, claiming big business is increasingly excluded from Brussels decision-making. Mentioned nowhere is the corporate sector's utter dominance in terms of spending power, Commission meetings, advisory group representation, access to national officials, and a whole host of other factors.

One example featured in the report was the tobacco industry complaining they were being excluded from policy-making. The EU signed up to the UN Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2003 which strictly limits interactions between lawmakers and the tobacco industry lobbyists because of the history of widespread industry interference with health policies. According to the WHO, tobacco use is currently responsible for 16 per cent of all deaths in adults over 30 in Europe.

# ON AND AROUND THE PETITE CEINTURE

The urban motorways, tunnels and overpasses circling downtown Brussels are known as the 'Petite Ceinture' (small belt). Built in the 1950s at the height of the automobile and motorway-mania that lead to the destruction of large parts of the urban fabric of Brussels, the city has only recently begun to recover from this post-war car frenzy.

One of the lobbying hotspots on the Petite Ceinture is Porte de Namur, marked by the 26-storey Bastion Tower which houses many lobby offices. Behind this lies the Matongé district, characterised by its African, and especially Congolese, community. The Matongé neighbourhood is under considerable property pressure, located as it is between the expanding European quarter and the luxurious fashion district of Avenue Louise.

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. Edelman
2. Covington & Burling
3. Forum Europe

## CORPORATION

4. BMW
5. Deutsche Bank
6. Airbus
7. Telefónica
8. Siemens AG
9. Amazon
10. eBay
11. Electricité de France (EDF)

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

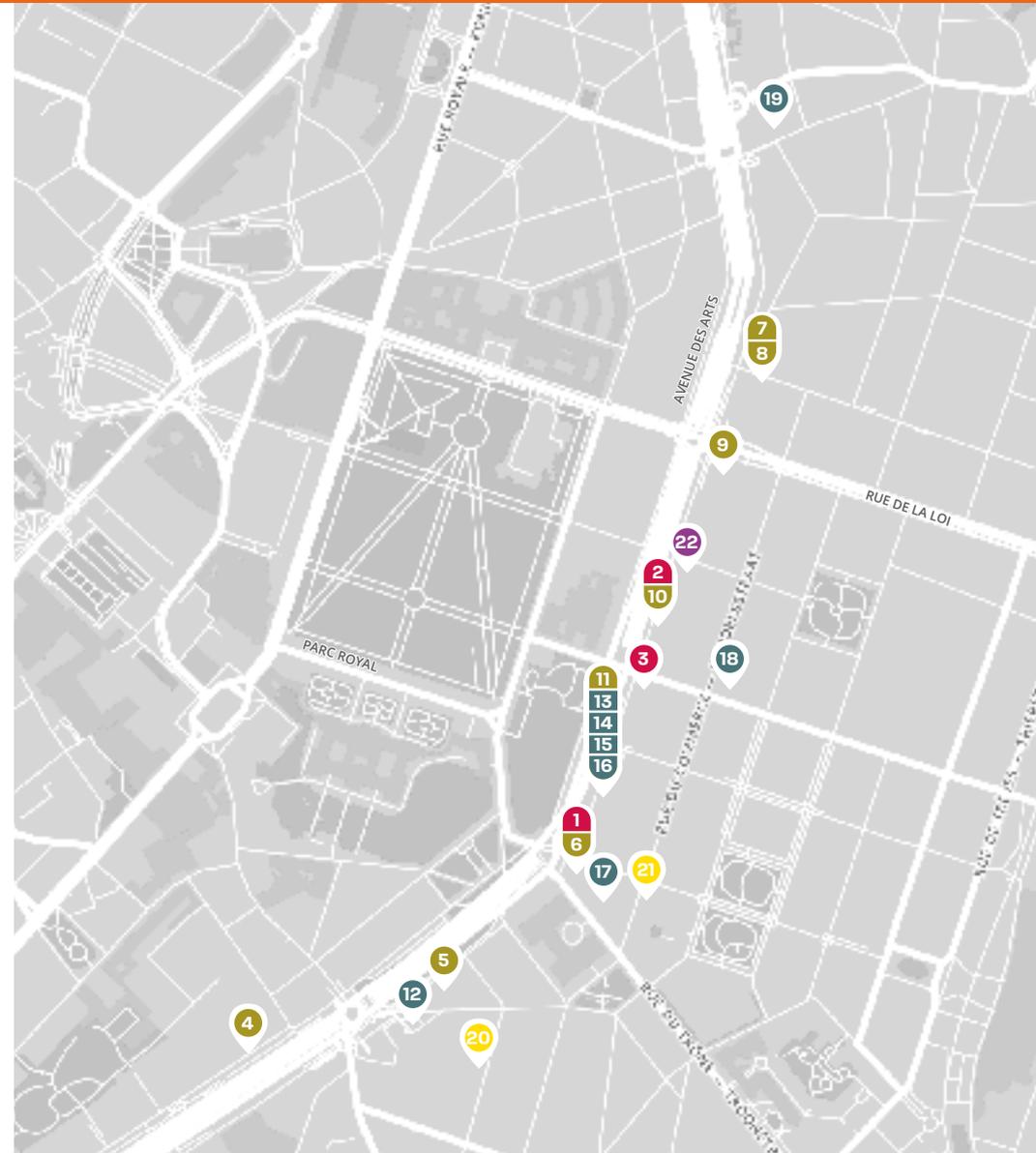
12. Invest Europe
13. The European Seed Association (ESA)
14. American Chamber of Commerce to the European Union (AmCham EU)
15. FORATOM
16. European Banking Federation (EBF)
17. Union of European Beverages Associations (UNESDA)
18. SpiritsEurope
19. European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers' Association (ETRMA)

## VENUE

20. Mundo-B
21. Stanhope Hotel

## THINK TANK

22. European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE)



## BMW

Boulevard de Waterloo 25

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 5.5 FTE

Lobby spend: €1.25m - €1.5m (2016)

Notorious for its expensive, fuel-guzzling cars, German auto manufacturing company BMW is one of the biggest automakers in the world. The controlling majority shareholder of the company is the Quandt family, which owns almost half of the stock. Both BMW and the Quandt family are big political donors in Germany. In October 2013, the family gave €690,000 to the CDU, which came after German Chancellor Angela Merkel personally intervened to secure a delay on a decision in Brussels on stricter EU emissions limits for cars (see Dieselgate, page 37).



## INVEST EUROPE

Bastion Tower, Place du Champ de Mars 5 - FINANCE tour

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE

Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2016)

Invest Europe is a trade association representing Europe's private equity and venture capital businesses. It won a 'Worst EU Lobbying Award' in 2010 for its efforts in the realm of deceptive lobbying to block regulation of damaging financial speculation. EVCA (as Invest Europe was then called) hired Brussels-based lobby consultancy FD Blueprint (now called FTI Consulting) in 2009 on "a pan-European media and PR brief" to help improve the image of the private equity industry after the 2008 financial crash and in the run-up to a decisive European Parliament vote on the investment fund directive.

## DEUTSCHE BANK

Avenue Marnix 13-15 - FINANCE tour

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 6.75 FTE

Lobby spend: €3,379,000 (2016)

Deutsche Bank is a global financial services company headquartered in Frankfurt. Deutsche Bank's core business is investment banking and it has a record of links to tax fraud and illegal activities. These include involvement in the 2012 Libor scandal (a widespread plot by multiple banks to manipulate interest rates for profit) and more recently, in January 2017 Deutsche Bank was forced to pay \$7.2 billion to settle the US Department of Justice investigation into alleged mis-selling of toxic mortgage-backed securities in the lead-up to the housing crisis.

However, with friends in high places (such as former board member of a Deutsche Bank investment fund Edgar Meister, who now holds a key position in the recently established European supervisory structure for banks) Deutsche Bank's access and clout are serious assets when it comes to dealing with sanctions and regulations it doesn't like.

With tonnes of high-level Commission meetings and ties to other lobby groups such as the International Swaps and Derivatives Association and the Association for Financial Markets in Europe, Deutsche Bank wields considerable influence in the EU quarter.

Deutsche is US President Donald Trump's major creditor, having lent billions to him since the 1990s setting up several arenas for potential conflicts of interest between the Trump business and administration.



## MUNDO-B

**Rue d'Edimbourg 26**

**Type: Venue**

Along with 60 other civil society and non-profit organisations, Corporate Europe Observatory has an office in the Mundo-B building on the border between the Matongé and EU districts. The Mundo-B project was launched in the 2000s by a group of non-governmental organisations (NGOs or campaign groups) who wished to ecologically renovate a building in Brussels to be used for office space, shared meeting rooms, an organic café and gardens.

The presence and activity levels of NGOs and trade unions in Brussels has been growing steadily over recent years but the playing field on which lobby battles take place between big business and these groups is still extremely unequal.

Civil society groups have also endured an ongoing counter-offensive from big business lobby groups that claim NGOs have too much power. These moves came in the wake of mass popular mobilisations led by campaigners on the question of EU trade policy and particularly TTIP. Awareness on the part of corporate lobbyists of the potential impact of such campaigns has led them to seek to discredit NGOs in Brussels and even campaign to defund them.



## AIRBUS

**Avenue Marnix 28 - ARMS tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 6.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.75m - €2m (2015)**

Aircraft and arms manufacturer Airbus is a big employer in Europe, enjoying easy access to the Commissioners and top officials; it is among the five organisations with the most high-level Commission meetings since 2014. Airbus is a member of the European Organisation for Security which plays a big role in lobbying for the arms industry and pushing for increased border security. Airbus is also an active member of the International Aviation Transport Association (IATA) lobby group which was instrumental in keeping aviation out of 2015's Paris climate negotiations, despite being one of the fastest growing sources of CO2 emissions.



## EDELMAN

**Avenue Marnix 28**

**Type: PR / lobbying consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 11.75 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.75m - €2m (2015-2016)**

Edelman is a global public relations firm offering lobbying and communications services on policy areas such as climate change, transport, agriculture, food, healthcare, and financial services. Major clients include General Electric, Chevron, and the US Chamber of Commerce, and recent clients include ExxonMobil, and the vegetable oil producers' association FEDIOL which pushes palm oil interests linked to tropical deforestation.

Edelman are especially well-remembered for their 2010 'GM food tasting' event for MEPs, supposedly done on behalf of the 'Farmers Biotech Network' which turned out to be a front group for biotech lobby group EuropaBio (see page 114), that had paid for the event.



## UNION OF EUROPEAN BEVERAGES ASSOCIATION (UNESDA)

**Rue du Trône 14-16**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 2.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €600,000 - €700,000 (2015)**

UNESDA is a trade association of soft-drink manufacturers from around Europe that includes Coca-Cola, Nestlé, and Red Bull among its members. The group argues that sugary soft drinks are not responsible for obesity. Another core lobbying theme is opposition to sugar taxes such as those recommended by the World Health Organisation.

The association hired PR lobby consultants Fleishman-Hillard (see page 79) who made a website about "Why Food & Drink Taxes Won't Work" for them. In Denmark, lobbying by groups such as UNESDA helped overturn a soft drink tax in 2014 that had been in place for 80 years.



## STANHOPE HOTEL

**Rue du Commerce 9**

**Type: Venue**

Used for high-powered lunches, dinners and lobbying events, the Stanhope's dining room serves as the venue of choice for some of the EU's key players who regularly gather here for a relaxed chat about policy over dinner and drinks.

One recurrent behind-the-scenes chow down became known as the G5 as it brought together five of the top Brussels decision makers – the Presidents of the European Commission (and his deputy) and Parliament, and the heads of the two main political groups in the EU's political landscape: the centre-right European People's Party and the centre-left Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats. The informal meeting of these five men involved chat and jokes but also discussion on issues of major importance to millions of citizens.



## EUROPEAN ATOMIC FORUM (FORATOM)

**Avenue des Arts 56**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 3 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €400,000 - €500,000 (2014)**

The European Atomic Forum (FORATOM) is the Brussels-based trade association for the nuclear energy industry in Europe, made up of 16 national nuclear associations representing nearly 800 firms. The nuclear industry has been desperately rebranding itself since 2011's Fukushima disaster in Japan, with the new spin portraying nuclear power as "low-carbon, competitive and secure" in order to maintain its place in the EU power generation mix.

Despite clear opposition to nuclear power from several member states and public concerns about risks, the Commission appears to have welcomed industry input and involvement in advisory boards and technology platforms and has even provided funding support to the sector.



## EUROPEAN BANKING FEDERATION (EBF)

**Avenue des Arts 56 - FINANCE tour**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 17 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €4m - €4.25m (2016)**

EBF is the umbrella organisation of Europe's various banking associations. In recent years the importance of the EBF has grown alongside the transfer of more banking regulation from the national to the European level, actively opposing such regulation, particularly since the 2007-08 crisis. It even played a major part in forming the proposals of the Commission, including a key piece of banking union policy: the 2014 Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive.

The association has played an influential role in the negotiations on TTIP and been strong advocate of 'regulatory cooperation' (see page 142) as an integral part of the talks. The global financial services sector is aggressively promoting regulatory cooperation because harmonising standards between the US and EU offer a way for the relatively tighter regulations adopted after the financial crisis in the US to be relaxed.

Another aspect of regulatory cooperation, an 'early warning' system for new regulation, would provide the opportunity to weaken or block proposals for new banking rules at an early stage.

## AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION (AMCHAM EU)

**Avenue des Arts 53 - TRADE tour**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 8.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2016)**

AmCham lobbies for US transnationals on virtually every piece of EU legislation. From the very beginnings of the EU, the transatlantic business community has seen the European Commission as a way to boost access for US companies to a unified European market.

A connoisseur of the revolving door, AmCham has been intimately involved in wheeling and dealing at the EU institutions for years. Its specialist committees draw on insider and expert knowledge about EU policy. AmCham's board of CEOs and other representatives of member companies routinely meet European Commissioners, Directors-General (58 Commission meetings in 2015-16) and are active at the Council, lobbying representatives of national governments.

Under the leadership of its appropriately-named CEO, Susan Danger, AmCham's mission has culminated in the proposal for a EU-US TTIP agreement and been a crucial driving force in the negotiations, holding private meetings with high level officials on trade deals negotiated in total secrecy. Alongside other corporate lobby heavyweights AmCham EU advocates for ISDS (see page 141), that is, privileges for foreign investors in TTIP, as part of a hope that an EU-US deal would set a global 'gold standard', a model for investment protection for other agreements around the world.

## ELECTRICITÉ DE FRANCE (EDF)

**Avenue des Arts 53**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 11 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2m - €2.25m (2016)**

EDF is an electric utility company largely owned by the French state. One of the world's largest producers of electricity, primarily from nuclear power, EDF presents itself as a cheerleader for the green energy transition and was a prominent corporate sponsor of the 2015 Paris climate talks. However, EDF is primarily a champion of dirty energy, owning coal plants around the world and it is involved in oil, coal and gas extraction, and shipping. EDF enjoys high-powered access to top decision-makers in Brussels.

## THE EUROPEAN SEED ASSOCIATION (ESA)

**Avenue des Arts 52 - AGRI tour**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 7 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000 (2015)**

If you want to dominate the food chain, you start with seeds. The seed industry's lobby group in Brussels, the ESA, represents the interests of agri-food giants such as Syngenta when it comes to EU policy on seeds. Secretive discussions on TTIP have led to concerns over food and environmental safety standards with potential weakening of Europe's GMO rules among the most contentious issues. Together with the American Seed Trade Association, the ESA has been lobbying negotiators in the presumptive hope to plant (lower) US standards on EU soil.

## FORUM EUROPE

**Avenue des Arts 46**

**Type: Lobby consultancy**

**Declared lobbyists: 15.25 FTE**

**Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2015-2016)**

Forum Europe is a very interesting Brussels organisation, illustrating the creativity of business in getting policy ideas into politician's heads, as well as in networking and winning contracts. An events organiser that calls itself "The platform for EU policy debate", Forum Europe brings together decision-makers with the business community on central EU policy processes.

Companies can buy themselves into policy processes by sponsoring conferences, buying ad space during the event, or actually buying a seat on a panel (this can cost up to €10,000). Its June 2017 event on Border Management, Defence, Internal Security and Migration, boasted 22 per cent corporate attendance and 28 per cent attendance by representatives of EU institutions.

Forum Europe claimed, "sponsoring this event is a cost effective, hassle-free means to successfully target the key decision makers in Europe" and included talks by 2 Commissioners, Global Defence and Border Services executives in corporate consultancy Accenture, as well as digital intelligence experts SAS, a private company that is "the largest independent vendor in the business intelligence market".



## SPIRITSEUROPE

**Rue Belliard 12**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €500,000 - €600,000 (2015)**

A coalition of alcohol industry lobby groups from across Europe, these boozy bigwigs have nabbed more than 20 meetings with top Commission officials in 2015-16. Members include Bacardi-Martini, Pernod-Ricard, and Diageo, the world's largest producer of spirits and a major producer of beer including brands such as Smirnoff, Baileys, and Guinness.

Glasses must have been raised in the offices of spiritsEUROPE following the 2010 European Parliament vote on EU food labeling rules as new requirements for nutritional information on food labels exempted alcoholic products. After a major lobby effort from the drinks industry, MEPs seemed to cave on the issue despite alcoholic products' high-calorie content.

This lobby group has also been a spirited promoter of the TTIP and CETA trade deals with the industry's main priority in Brussels to keep policy-makers under the influence in order to achieve lower public health regulations on both sides of the Atlantic and avoid stricter rules on alcohol consumption at the EU level.

In Autumn 2016, when CETA was facing unprecedented public opposition, spiritsEUROPE launched a pro-CETA PR campaign that included getting a group of alcohol industry lobbyists to dress up as Canadian 'mounties' and parade around the EU quarter. Feeling hungover? Us too...



## COVINGTON & BURLING

**Avenue des Arts 44**

**Type: Law firm**

**Declared lobbyists: 8 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2015-16)**

Part of the trend of US law firms setting up shop in Brussels, especially in the context of the TTIP negotiations, Covington & Burling is an international law firm that advises transnational corporations on litigation and regulatory matters. In 2016, this lobby heavyweight recruited high-level Commission officials with experience in cartel policy, economic policy, and trade. One of the firm's advisers, former Belgian diplomat Jean De Ruyt, told the New York Times in 2013 that "There is a certain excitement of getting what you want through the system... I now know exactly how to do it." Covington's international arbitration (see page 141) division handles disputes in a wide variety of industries like energy, mining, construction and finance.



## EBAY

**Avenue des Arts 44 - TECH tour**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 1.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €400,000 - €500,000 (2015)**

eBay, a giant online commerce company, has more than 90 million active users worldwide. One of the biggest lobby offensives of the last decade was over changes to EU data privacy laws in 2013. Data is big business and US transnationals like eBay, Amazon, Facebook, and Google were looking to weaken data protection proposals and operated together via several different bodies such as the European Internet Foundation, comprised of MEPs, tech companies, and internet retail giants such as eBay.

Dozens of amendments to the Data Protection Regulation proposed by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were found to have been copied word-for-word from corporate lobby papers written by representatives of Amazon, eBay, the American Chamber of Commerce, and the European Banking Federation. Eager lobbyists on TTIP, eBay more than quadrupled its declared Brussels lobby spend between 2013 and 2014, with a focus on trade policy as well as the Digital Agenda Strategy, Data Protection, and consumer information legislation.



## EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (ECIPE)

**Avenue des Arts 40**

**Type: Think tank**

**Declared lobbyists: 7 FTE**

**Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2015)**

The European Centre for International Political Economy is a Stockholm and Brussels-based corporate-funded think tank "rooted in the classical tradition of free trade and an open world economic order". Specialised in international trade policy issues, its founders and advisory board have links to JP Morgan and right-wing American think tanks like the Cato Institute.

ECIPE organises lunch seminars and events promoting industry-friendly trade policies, such as the strict enforcement of patents on medicines – which dramatically restricts the availability of affordable medicines in the global south. Its core funding comes from the Free Enterprise Foundation in Sweden.

The think tank's 2016 report, "Manufacturing Discontent: The Rise to Power of Anti-TTIP Groups" claimed that widespread public concern about the proposed EU-US trade treaty TTIP was irrational and orchestrated by NGOs spreading misinformation. The report, full of factual errors and false claims, also urged caution on EU funding for NGOs that criticise TTIP, a demand that has now been taken up by right-wing MEPs.



## AMAZON

**Avenue des Arts 27**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 6 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.75m - €2m (2016)**

Founded in 1994 as an online bookshop, Amazon.com is the largest internet-based retailer in the world and has since diversified into selling a wide range of consumer products, as well as producing streaming content, Kindle e-readers and the books to upload onto them. Notorious for tax avoidance and abominable working conditions, Amazon lobbies heavily in Brussels, particularly over EU data protection law. It was one of the companies involved in convincing a number of MEPs to submit hundreds of industry-drafted amendments to a reform of data protection rules in 2013.



## TELEFÓNICA

**Avenue des Arts 20**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 6 FTE**

**Lobby spend: € 2 million (2016)**

Spanish telecommunications provider Telefónica is one of the largest telephone operators and mobile network providers in the world. A major player in the corporate lobbying scenes in Madrid and Latin American national capitals, ex-Chairman César Alierta drove the global expansion of the company in the 2000s. Alierta until recently presided over an elite industry lobby group in Spain, the Consejo Empresarial para la Competitividad (Business Council for Competitiveness), that brings together the CEOs of Spain's biggest corporations and meets regularly with the government.

Telefónica is also a member of the Brussels-based trade association European Telecommunications Network Operators Association (ETNO) which lobbied for loopholes in the EU's removal of roaming charges for mobile phone use in Europe.



## SIEMENS

**Avenue des Arts 20**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 11.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €2,764,773 (2015)**

Big lobby machine Siemens is a German conglomerate and the largest manufacturing and electronics company in Europe. It has excellent access with 26 high-level Commission meetings in 2015-16. Siemens has been involved in corruption scandals in several countries, such as a case of bribery over deals between the company and Greek government officials during the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Big proponents of TTIP, Siemens representatives joined other big business figures in late 2016 to lament growing public awareness of the threats posed by the secret negotiations and the resulting cold-shouldering of the talks by several mainstream European leaders.



## EUROPEAN TYRE & RUBBER MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION (ETRMA)

**Avenue des Arts 2**

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 3 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €600,000 - €700,000 (2016)**

The ETRMA represents the interests of tyre manufacturers like Bridgestone, Continental, Goodyear, Michelin, and Pirelli, as well as most of Europe's rubber manufacturing industry. It successfully fought to ensure that rubber granulate from old car tyres used to make artificial turf sports fields would be excluded from stricter EU chemicals rules.

This was in spite concerns about the health risks of playing on artificial sports fields and playgrounds containing toxic and carcinogenic substances normally considered chemical waste; especially given these surfaces are used by thousands of children every week. ETRMA says its lobbying focuses on issues related to chemicals, climate change, nanomaterial regulation, trade, road safety rules, and transport.

# RUE DE LA LOI AND SIDE STREETS

Big, noisy and congested, Rue de la Loi connects the EU quarter to the main Belgian government institutions around Parc Royal. In the Belgian media, "Rue de la Loi" is often used as short-hand for the national and European political elites. A short walk north of Rue de la Loi brings you to the Saint-Josse-ten-Noode district, the poorest and most densely populated part of Belgium.

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. White & Case

## MEDIA OUTLET

2. Politico Europe

## PUBLIC INSTITUTION

3. Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (DG FISMA)
4. Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)
5. Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN)

## CORPORATION

6. Total

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

7. Hume Brophy
8. COPA-COGECA (Committee of Professional Agricultural organisations & and General Association of Agricultural Cooperatives)
9. Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME)

## VENUE

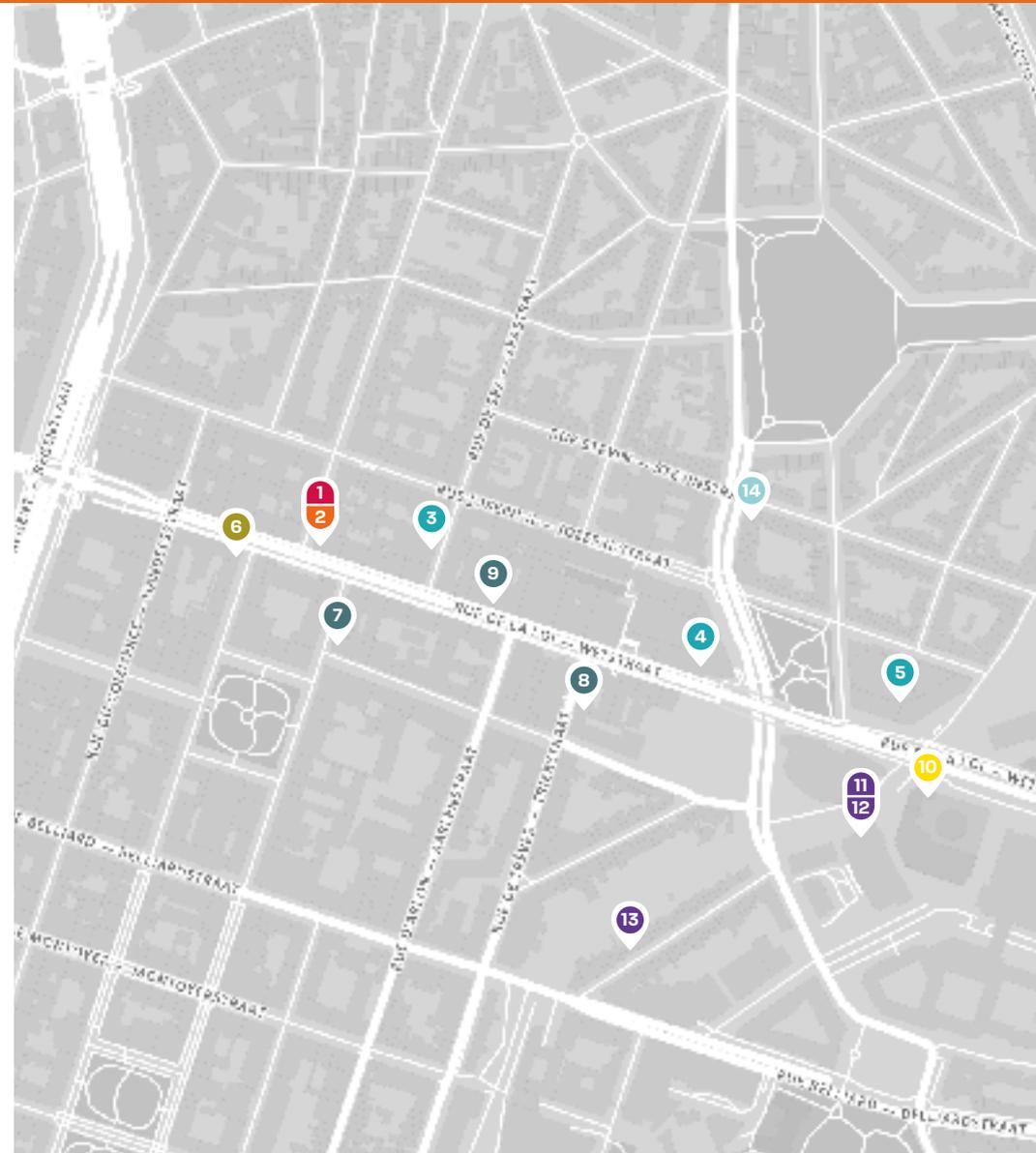
10. The Residence Palace

## THINK TANK

11. Lisbon Council
12. Bertelsmann Stiftung
13. European Foundation for Freedom

## OTHER

14. Clean Europe Network





## TOTAL

**Rue de l'Industrie 52**

**Type: Corporation**

**Declared lobbyists: 6 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €1.75m - €2m (2016)**

Total is one of the seven 'supermajor' oil companies in the world and a large scale chemicals manufacturer. Oil companies like Total and Shell have promoted natural gas as the future of clean energy (see Gas box, page 77), even though extraction and transportation (particularly in the case of fracking) leads to leakage of the potent greenhouse gas methane.

The company actively pushed this false climate solution at the major global climate summit in Paris COP21 in December 2015. Its Executive Jean-Michel Laverne sits on the board of directors of the American Petroleum Institute, notorious for its long-term promotion of climate change denial.

In recent years dirty energy companies have been buying up European renewable energy groups as part of their effort to stymie the transition to clean energy. In 2013, Total took over key roles in the solar panel trade association, the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (now called SolarPower Europe) with Total Marketing Director, Oliver Schaefer becoming EPIA president and another Total executive, Arnaud Chaperon, becoming Vice President.



## WHITE & CASE

**Rue de la Loi 62**

**Type: Law firm**

**Declared lobbyists: Undeclared**

**Lobby spend: Undeclared**

New York-based White & Case is among the top global law firms in the investment arbitration business. That's the controversial aspect included in many trade treaties that allows companies to sue countries (see page 141). White & Case have not been shy about taking on some of the most controversial cases in the investment arbitration business.

They helped Italian bondholders sue Argentina in a multi-billion dollar case, following the country's sovereign debt restructuring in the aftermath of its 2001 financial crisis. And when India allowed a generic drug producer to sell a cheaper version of a patented cancer drug in 2012, White & Case was quick to drum up business, pointing out that patent-holding drug transnationals "may be able to seek relief under applicable bilateral investment treaties." Such ambulance chasing by some law firms is a driving force in the boom in international investment arbitration.

As a member of the think tank the European Federation for Investment Law and Arbitration (EFILA), it is part of a platform for a supposedly "objective debate" on investment arbitration but which has intensively promoted highly controversial private arbitration tribunals in TTIP. Like most law firms in Brussels, it is not currently signed up to the transparency register.



## POLITICO EUROPE

**Rue de la Loi 62**

**Type: Media**

Sharing a building with White & Case is Politico Europe, the biggest Brussels-based EU affairs media outlet. Co-owned by Politico USA and German publisher Axel Springer (which publishes the right-leaning tabloid Bild, the newspaper with the largest circulation in Europe), Politico's mission upon its launch in 2015 was to shake up the Brussels media scene.

It certainly has, with features and insight into previously rarely reported people and processes running the show in the European capital. However, with a business model that seems to rely on native advertising (paid articles that match the format and look of regular news), sponsorship of articles and other content by groups that are subject of their writing, and the co-organising of corporate-dominated debates and events, Politico runs the risk of blurring the line between journalism and business.

## HUME BROPHY

Rue de la Science 41

Type: PR / lobby consultancy

Declared lobbyists: 18 FTE

Lobby spend: €1.25m - €1.5m (2016)

Irish consultancy Hume Brophy is a lobby-gun-for-hire, with major finance clients including the Commodity Markets Council, Citadel Investment, and the European Fund & Asset Management Association. Other clients include Monsanto and Tate & Lyle.

In February 2015 Hume Brophy breached EU rules by organising a meeting with a member of Research Commissioner Carlos Moedas' cabinet for then-unregistered coal industry lobby group, the World Coal Association. Hume Brophy is no stranger to the Brussels revolving door system, having recruited a number of ex-MEPs in recent years.

The firm also runs the 'Glyphosate Task Force', an industry platform uniting producers of glyphosate-based herbicides, whose members include Monsanto, Syngenta, and Barclay Chemicals. The Glyphosate Task Force campaigns for the re-authorisation of the herbicide glyphosate, despite the fact that the World Health Organisation's cancer institute declared the substance as "probably causing cancer to humans".

## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR FINANCIAL, STABILITY FINANCIAL SERVICES AND CAPITAL MARKETS UNION (DG FISMA)

Rue de Spa 2 - FINANCE tour

Type: Public institution

As part of DG FISMA's main job is initiating and implementing EU policy in the area of banking and finance; following the 2007-08 financial crisis and proposals for new financial rules, it has been a target of heavy corporate lobbying.

Unfortunately, in what was seen as a concession to the UK ahead of the 2016 Brexit referendum, British Commissioner and ex-business lobbyist Jonathan Hill was put in its charge of it in 2014. Hill resigned after 2016's Brexit referendum but it remains business as usual for this powerful DG today.

A 2017 analysis by ALTER-EU showed that up to 83 per cent of lobby meetings with DG FISMA officials are not disclosed online because the meetings are with mid and lower level officials. Worse, 92 per cent of lobby meetings with DG FISMA officials are held with corporate interests.

## ASSOCIATION FOR FINANCIAL MARKETS IN EUROPE (AFME)

Rue de la Loi 82 - FINANCE tour

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 26.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €4.5m - €4.75m (2015-16)

Major financial lobby group AFME is the voice of the leading global and European banks on EU policy. AFME's lobbying efforts have particularly focused on the EU's 2014 banking union rules, sold as a post-crisis measure to fix the banking sector. However banking lobby groups were part of the process of its creation every step of the way; as a result it is so flawed and carries so many risks, that you'd be forgiven for thinking the point of the banking union was to serve the big banks.

## COPA-COGECA (COMMITTEE OF PROFESSIONAL AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATIONS & AND GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES)

Rue de Trèves 61 - AGRI tour

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 18 FTE

Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2015)

The biggest industrial farming lobby in Brussels, COPA-COGECA's advocacy work tends to benefit mostly an elite of big farmers, rather than the majority. Its vision generally matches that of the largest agri-industries, despite the threats posed by industrial agriculture to small and family farmers throughout Europe.

A powerful lobby group, the body overwhelmingly dominates many Commission working and advisory groups. In 2015, COPA-COGECA showed its lobbying positions were more than just hot air when it threatened MEPs that the industry could quit the EU if the Parliament voted to cap agricultural gas emissions from livestock! Agriculture causes 40 per cent of the EU's methane pollution, a powerful greenhouse gas.



## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DG AGRI)

Rue de la Loi 130 - AGRI tour

**Type: Public institution**

DG AGRI is the branch of the Commission responsible for EU policy on farming and rural development and in charge of the EU budget's biggest item, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). DG AGRI tends towards an intensive, industrial model of food and farming that creates problems, from damaging human health and the environment to exacerbating inequalities among farmers.

Some of Europe's largest and most powerful lobbies represent corporate farming and have a history of intensive lobbying and significant success, including groups like COPA-COGECA (see page 105) This is an agricultural model in which farm workers and livestock are expendable commodities. On the opposite side are those who want a fair and green agricultural policy with an end to public subsidies for harmful industrial farming.



## THE RESIDENCE PALACE

Rue de la Loi 155

**Type: Venue**

A luxurious apartment block for Brussels' bourgeoisie and aristocracy, following a housing shortage caused by the First World War, the Residence Palace complex was also intended to address the shortage of domestic workers at the time, by having them shared among, and available to all, residents. The building currently mostly houses think tanks and media organisations. It is an EU district lobbying hotspot and the place to organise events and conferences when one needs to attract media attention.



## LISBON COUNCIL

Résidence Palace, Rue de la Loi 155

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: 6 FTE

Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2015)

The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness and Social Renewal was founded in 2003 as a corporate-funded think tank promoting neoliberal reforms, with transnational giants such as Accenture, Apple, Uber, and Google among its funders. Its 'Europe 2020' events convene leaders from politics and business.

In 2014, Lisbon Council Director Ann Mettler took up a job as head of the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), the in-house think tank of the Commission. She had previously served as Europe Director at the global corporate lobby group the World Economic Forum. Her current EPSC position involves advising President Juncker and the Commission College on policy priorities. The Commission's appointment demonstrated its woefully inadequate conflict of interest assessment for new appointments, as it paid zero attention to Mettler's previous close cooperation with some of Europe's biggest corporate players.

## BERTELSMANN STIFTUNG

Résidence Palace

Rue de la Loi 155 - TRADE tour

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: 15 FTE

Lobby spend: €3.75m - €4m (2016)

The Bertelsmann Stiftung (Foundation) is a major German think tank which holds a 77 per cent stake in the global mass media corporation Bertelsmann. A fierce advocate of the secretive TTIP talks, the think tank ran a "roadshow" through five US cities to showcase the benefits of the proposed EU-US trade agreement.

In Germany, the foundation has a history of promoting neoliberal ideas such as the elimination of free access to education. Here in Brussels, Bertelsmann Stiftung has been part of the unhealthy close relationship between the Commission and the corporate sector, hiring MEP and former Commissioner Viviane Reding to its board in 2015, despite concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Reding was a Commissioner for 15 years, accumulating impressive political know-how and contacts, especially in the media, privacy, and education portfolios.

The Bertelsmann company itself is also no stranger to high-profile recruits. Between 2004 and 2011, influential German MEP Elmar Brok served as Senior Vice President for Media Development at Bertelsmann, while still a voting MEP and Chair of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs committee. The Bertelsmann company has offices just down the road at Chaussée d'Etterbeek 166.

## EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR FREEDOM

Rue de la Croix de Fer 23, 1000 Brussels

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: Unknown

Lobby spend: Unknown

The European Foundation for Freedom is the think tank of the pan-European far-right political party European Alliance for Freedom (EAF). Founded in 2010, the EAF's senior members include the leader of the French Front National Marine Le Pen, British politician and former UKIP MEP Godfrey Bloom, and MEP Franz Obermayr from Austria's Freedom Party. Members and associated political parties are known for hard-line anti-immigrant and racist propaganda that often includes hate speech against refugees. The European far-right has used the economic crisis and the austerity response to it to advance their racist agenda and direct popular anger towards a "foreign enemy" who can be blamed for people's woes.

## CLEAN EUROPE NETWORK

Avenue Livingstone 13-15

Type: Other

Declared lobbyists: .25 FTE

Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2016)

Who could disagree with a Clean Europe Network, a benign-sounding group that promotes consumer awareness-raising as the best way to tackle litter? But what's this? The Clean Europe Network office is run by Eamonn Bates, a veteran Brussels lobby firm that also chairs Pack2Go, the lobby group of companies producing plastic bottles, disposable cups, and other packaging.

And Clean Europe Network's positions are aligned with the interests of the packaging industry, which include delay tactics against effective ways to tackle litter, from deposits on bottles and cans, to schemes to make producers pay for collection and management of rubbish. The Network is another reminder that Brussels-watchers need to look below the surface of groups that seem to be sympathetic coalitions but which are, in fact, run in the interests of big business.

## MASTERS OF AUSTERITY

### DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS (DG ECFIN)

Charlemagne Building Rue de la Loi 170

**Type: Public institution**

DG ECFIN is the Commission department responsible for Economic and Monetary Union, involving policy coordination and surveillance of member states' economies. Let's just say this Commission department's handling of the deepest economic recession since World War II has left a lot to be desired.

The financial crisis has devastated not just economies but also has serious consequences for democracy and human rights, especially in the 'bailout' countries. Since the financial crash of 2008, major reforms of the EU's economic governance have been introduced. These are designed to lock in policy at a national level and enforce austerity, constraining the options available to governments in favour of a model that promotes cuts to basic public services such as healthcare and education.

The politics of austerity and neoliberal economic governance aren't simply the result of a mistaken economic theory; they have been deliberately promoted by, and serve, powerful interests. Austerity advocates at the top of EU institutions and member states preached the need to cut government expenditure after several countries in the eurozone faced mounting public debt as a result of bank bailouts.

Despite the fact that an unregulated financial market was one of the key causes of the crisis, Europeans were forced to foot the bill and endure 'structural reforms' and attacks on workers' and social rights under the new system. This culminated in the Fiscal Compact, a 2012 treaty designed to enshrine austerity into law via a tightening of rules on public expenditure. Meanwhile Europe's far right, already feeding off the despair of economic crisis, jumped on the opportunity to exploit dissatisfaction with austerity and redirect it against refugees fleeing violence in the Middle East.

"Never waste a good crisis", the saying goes, and big business, especially via key lobby groups BusinessEurope (see page 40) and the ERT (see page 115), has used the crisis as an opportunity to put even more of its long-term goals onto Europe's political agenda. For years before it became a reality, business lobbies had been pushing for a procedure known as the 'European Semester'.

This is a rolling annual scheme involving the Commission and the Council that forces macro-economic, budgetary, and structural policy coordination on all countries. It ends with a set of recommendations for reforms to each member state. At the beginning in 2011, the recommendations were non-binding, but in 2013 industry's dream came true as a new set of rules went into force to ensure budget controls and so-called structural reforms. Commission and Council policy had become a near perfect mirror image of the corporate wishlist.

## THE EIGHT WISE BANKERS

The High Level Group on the Financial Crisis was an expert group set up by the Commission and the Council in the wake of the 2008 crash, and was also known as the De Larosière group after its chair, French banker Jacques de Larosière de Champfeu. Its purpose? To identify proposals for the reform of the financial system.

Out of eight members, four had close links to financial giants: Goldman Sachs, BNP Paribas, Citibank, and the bankrupt Lehman Brothers. Also granted a seat at the table was an employee of a consultancy representing some of the largest banks, as was the former head of the UK Financial Services Authority, which was largely responsible for the near collapse of several British banks.

In other words, the organisations most responsible for the crisis were tasked with reforming the broken financial system. The group exemplified the concept of corporate capture from the beginning, as the Commission practically promised that it would take forward its proposals, whatever these would be. The group issued its reform recommendations for the banking sector in 2009, which, unsurprisingly, did not ruffle many bankers' feathers.

# BEYOND THE EU QUARTER

## LOBBY CONSULTANCY OR LAW FIRM

1. Alber & Geiger

## PUBLIC INSTITUTION

2. Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA)

## CORPORATION

3. Uber
4. Syngenta
5. BNP Paribas
6. BMW
7. Engie
8. Arcelormittal
9. Monsanto
10. Chevron
11. ExxonMobil

## TRADE ASSOCIATION

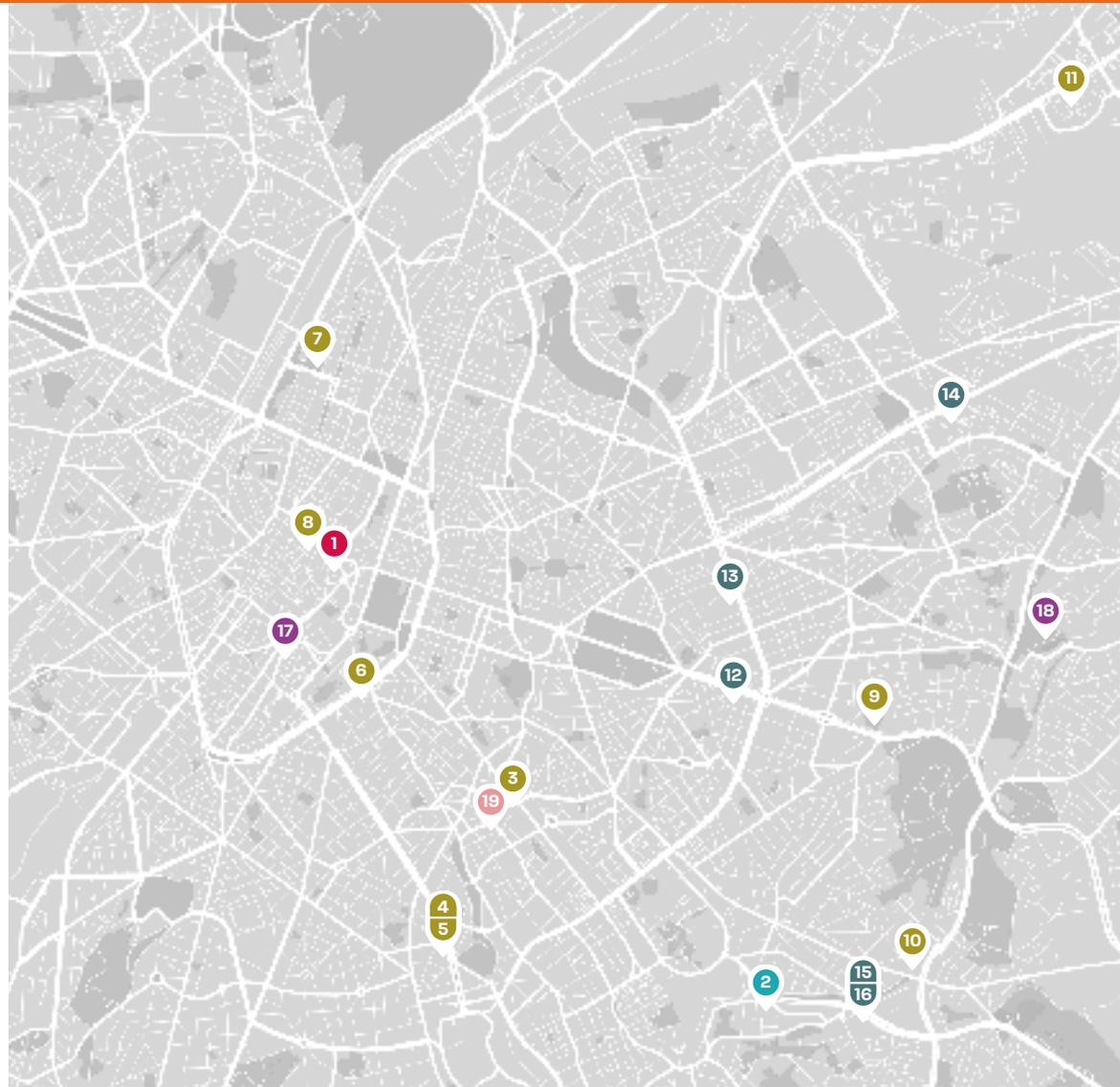
12. The European Association for Bioindustries (Europabio)
13. European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT)
14. European Energy Forum (EEF)
15. European Crop Protection Association (ECPA)
16. European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC)

## THINK TANK

17. European Food Information Council (EUFIC)
18. International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI Europe)

## OTHER

19. European Business Summit (EBS)



## EUROPEAN BUSINESS SUMMIT (EBS)

Rue du Bélvédère 28

Type: Other

Declared lobbyists: 1 FTE

Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2015)

The European Business Summit (EBS) is a prestigious two-day conference of business leaders and policymakers put on by the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium and BusinessEurope (see page 40) each May. Enjoying the "high patronage of His Majesty the King of the Belgians" no less, the event attracts 2000 participants from all over Europe from CEOs to European Commissioners, Prime Ministers to journalists.

The focus is on the big business agenda with workshops, seminars, networking cocktails, and media briefings. During the rest of the year, the EBS also runs regular one day events on topics like energy and climate, digital technology, and an annual 'Back from Davos' event for returnees from the Alpine 'one percent' jamboree that is the World Economic Forum. In May 2014, 250 people were arrested during a peaceful anti-TTIP demonstration outside the European Business Summit.

## THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR BIOINDUSTRIES (EUROPABIO)

Avenue de l'Armée 6, Etterbeek

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 1 FTE

Lobby spend: €200,000 - €300,000 (2016)

EuropaBio is Europe's largest and most influential biotech industry lobby group, whose members include Monsanto, Bayer, and other biotechnology companies. Europabio pushes for GM crop approval in the EU, less regulation on GMOs, and more public funding for biotech research. It has boosted its Brussels lobbying via various consultancies such as Edelman (see page 91) and Aspect consulting, who used celebrity ambassadors for Europabio's 2011 PR bid to overcome public opposition to GM food.

## EUROPEAN ROUND TABLE OF INDUSTRIALISTS (ERT)

Boulevard Brand Whitlock 165, Woluwe-St Lambrechts

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 3 FTE

Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000 (2016)

The ERT is a lobbying powerhouse made up of chief executives from about 50 of Europe's biggest transnational companies. It wields remarkable levels of influence, particularly on its main priority, the single market, and played a key role in lobbying for its creation with the Single European Act, adopted in 1986. Former ERT heavyweight Baron Daniel Janssen has described the group's role as leading a "double revolution": "reducing the power of the state and of the public sector in general through privatization and deregulation" and "transferring many of the nation-state's powers to a more modern and internationally minded structure at European level".

The ERT rarely gets involved with single pieces of legislation but mainly focuses on treaties and big picture strategies including the current digital agenda, trade, and ongoing work to lower corporate taxes across the continent.

Another key issue the ERT has been working on is the so-called 'Better Regulation' agenda of the Commission. Sold as an exercise to cut 'red tape', this is a proposal to remove regulations and weaken standards that inconvenience businesses, even when they protect the rights of citizens, workers and consumers. The 'Better Regulation' agenda demands a complete overhaul of EU legislation, affecting current, drafted, and future regulation. Back in 2011, the proposals seemed far too extreme to be serious, but in one form or another they have been adopted and continue. (Also see jargon section, page 140.)

Needless to say, the ERT enjoys privileged access to the most senior European leaders including annual meetings with the Commission President and the French and German governments.

## UBER

Rue de la Brasserie 120, Elsene

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 1.75 FTE

Lobby spend: €700,000 - €800,000 (2016)

The Uber taxi app allows consumers with smartphones to hail rides from drivers using their private cars in cities around the world. Notorious for its cut-throat business practices and dodging of labour laws, Uber's legality is regularly challenged by local governments, including whether its drivers are employees who are owed rights, or merely independent contractors as it claims, and whether Uber cars require taxi licenses.

The company has thus boosted its Brussels lobby spending sevenfold since 2014, and hailed a host of former officials to help it navigate the multiple roadblocks it faces. Its accredited lobbyists all have previous experience from inside the EU institutions. The most prominent revolving door hire was former European Commissioner Neelie Kroes, a vocal proponent for Uber while in office who famously lashed out at efforts to ban the company in the city of Brussels in 2014. Within two years of leaving her public servant job, Neelie Kroes became a paid adviser to various companies including Uber (see Revolving Doors, page 74).

Uber faced strong public outcry after its CEO Travis Kalanick joined US President Trump's business advisory council. A 'delete Uber' campaign went viral in the wake of Trump's 'Muslim ban' announcement with millions of people deleting the Uber app to boycott the company. In February 2017, Kalanick resigned from the advisory council.

## SYNGENTA

Avenue Louise 489, Brussels

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 2 FTE

Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2016)

Syngenta is a global biotechnology company and producer of agrochemicals and seeds. It has ganged together with other corporations and lobby groups in order to halt the EU taking action against its hormone disrupting chemicals (see page 123).

A member of Europabio, the European Crop Protection Association (ECPA), AmCham EU and many other associations and lobby groups, Syngenta has recruited lobbyists through the revolving door from EU institutions and bodies including the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), offering the firm detailed insider knowledge of how these institutions operate. In 2013, along with Bayer (see page 71) it furiously lobbied against a limited ban on pesticides that harm bees including actually trying to change the text of an EFSA press release on the topic before it was published, issuing legal threats against the agency and its director.

## BNP PARIBAS

Avenue Louise 489, Brussels

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 6 FTE

Lobby spend: €900,000 - €1m (2016)

The largest bank in the Euro area, BNP Paribas is one of the biggest financial investors in coal and nuclear, yet was also one of the corporate sponsors for the COP21 climate talks in Paris. BNP is well connected to key EU decision-making bodies and has representatives in all of the Commission's key advisory groups on financial regulation. It is also close to officials at the European Central Bank. Crucially for BNP, it got to advise the Commission on how to respond to the financial crisis in the late 2000s, ensuring that reforms to how the European financial sector operates would be minimal (see Box, The eight wise bankers, 111).

## ALBER & GEIGER

Rue des Colonies 11, Brussels

Type: Law firm

Declared lobbyists: 6.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €50,000 - €100,000 (2016)

Alber & Geiger is an international outfit that calls itself a "lobbying-law firm" with offices in Brussels, Berlin, London, Washington DC and a litigation practice at the European Court of Justice. Alber & Geiger boasts that it helped torpedo a possible EU-wide ban on plastic bags on behalf of its client, German firm Papier-Mettler, the largest producer of plastic bags in the EU.

The firm launched a campaign to undermine (other) proposed alternatives and spread fears about job losses. It explains how its lobbyists adopted an expansive macro-strategy with "scientific, legal, political, social and economic elements" to smother the proposals.

Writing in online media Euractiv in 2014, the firm's partner Andreas Geiger described his company as "white knights" coming to the rescue of clients such as persecuted former regime members in the Ukraine. At the time they were representing toppled Prime Minister Azarov and his son, who had fled to Russia after the Ukrainian uprising, had multi-million dollars worth of assets frozen by the EU and were wanted by Interpol for embezzlement and other crimes.

## EUROPEAN FOOD INFORMATION COUNCIL (EUFIC)

Rue Joseph Stevens 7, Brussels

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: .75 FTE

Lobby spend: Below €10,000 (2015)

EUFIC is a think tank / information platform based in Brussels which claims to provide "science-based information on nutrition and health, food safety and quality". In reality it often acts more like a food industry lobby group, although it has failed to join the Transparency Register. It is co-financed by the European Commission and the European food and drink industry.

The Board includes members from Coca-Cola, Ferrero, General Mills, Mondelēz Europe, Mars, McDonald's, Nestlé, PepsiCo, and Unilever. EUFIC was heavily involved in the 2010's food labelling "traffic light" battle which the food lobby won by spending huge sums. EUFIC commissioned its own selective research which focused on the industry's lighter touch labelling systems, and which contradicted independent studies supporting a "traffic light" labelling system providing consumers with a simple visual warning for high fat, sugar or salt content.

## ENGIE

Boulevard Simon Bolivar 34, Brussels

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 11 FTE

Lobby spend: €2m - €2.25m (2016)

Engie (formerly GDF Suez) presents itself as a cheerleader for the green energy transition while focused on dirty energy such as gas and coal: it owns no less than 30 coal fired power plants. Even its stated commitment to green energy involves building destructive hydroelectric mega-dams, such as Jirau in the Amazon.

In May 2014, Friends of the Earth Europe, Corporate Europe Observatory, and LobbyControl reported on the unanswered questions over French MEP Rachida Dati's work for the company. French media reports suggested Dati had been acting as a paid consultant for GDF-Suez while an MEP and while she was putting down amendments to legislation at committee stage which called for EU energy policy to focus on natural gas. Dati had never previously been particularly active on EU energy policy. The conflict-of-interest claims against Dati have been left uninvestigated by the European Parliament.

## ARCELORMITTAL

Boulevard de l'Impératrice 66, Brussels

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 5.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €1.5m - €1.75m (2016)

The world's largest steel and mining company, ArcelorMittal is a major EU lobbyist with at least 34 meetings with top Commission officials since November 2014. One of the biggest beneficiaries of the dysfunctional EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (see ETS, page 141) – essentially receiving public subsidies for a flawed scheme that does not reduce greenhouse gas emissions – it has lobbied hard against any reform of the system.

ArcelorMittal's annual emissions are approximately equal to those of the Czech Republic. It has actively scaremongered against climate solutions with vociferous threats of job losses. It is also very active in Eurofer, a transnational lobby group for the steel sector with close ties with DG GROW (see page 42). In 2016 the company board welcomed ex-Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht to its ranks.

## EUROPEAN ENERGY FORUM (EEF)

Avenue Ariane 7, Woluwe-Saint-Lambert

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 3.75

Lobby spend: €385,141 (2015)

Funded by mega energy companies like Shell, BP, and RWE, the European Energy Forum brings MEPs, Commissioners, and business representatives together for 'informal debate and discussion'. The EEF offers big energy a golden 'under the radar' lobbying opportunity to influence MEPs.

Headed by ex-President of the European Parliament, and chair of its Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, Jerzy Buzek, EEF thematic dinner debates, lunchtime discussions and briefings are unregulated by the European Parliament. The EEF also organises visits such as the controversial 2013 trip to Malaysia sponsored by Europe's biggest palm oil importer, Neste. Upon returning to Europe, one EEF MEP on the lobby-holiday wrote a pro-agrofuels parliamentary report which advised against crucial environmental measures to tackle deforestation.

## INTERNATIONAL LIFE SCIENCES INSTITUTE (ILSI EUROPE)

Avenue E. Mounier 83, Woluwe-Saint-Lambert

Type: Think tank

Declared lobbyists: Undeclared

Lobby spend: Undeclared

The European branch of the Washington-based industry-funded think tank and lobbying organisation, the International Life Sciences Institute is an invisible Brussels lobby cell. Founded by companies in the food, chemical, and genetic engineering industries, ILSI's activities are often a vehicle to promote business-friendly scientific concepts and methodologies intended to influence new food and health policies.

It funds industry-friendly research and brings scientists from industry together with scientists from regulators in their committees and expert groups. This eases the path to indirectly influence laws and recommendations. ILSI Europe's research has been used to weaken EFSA evaluation processes and risk assessments of new GM plants, for example. ILSI is not on the EU lobby register.

## MONSANTO

Avenue de Tervuren 270, Woluwe-Saint-Pierre

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 1.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2015-2016)

Monsanto is a leading producer of genetically modified seeds and herbicides. Known for its aggressive lobby tactics, in Brussels Monsanto is an active member of lobby groups such as the European Seed Association, EuropaBio, and the International Life Sciences Institute (see pages 95, 114, 120).

One tactic of this industry is the hiring of product defence companies to shape and skew science: these employ scientists to perform studies to produce data that suit the client's interest, or to criticise studies that do not.

In 2016, an international civil society initiative – the Monsanto Tribunal – was set up to investigate the company, which has been accused of human rights violations, crimes against humanity, and ecocide. Eminent judges heard testimonies from victims and delivered an advisory opinion that Monsanto had violated human rights to food, health, a healthy environment and the freedom indispensable for independent scientific research.

Monsanto is also deeply involved in the ongoing battle over the regulation of common weedkiller glyphosate. Richard Garnett, a lobbyist for Monsanto Europe, is chair of industry lobby platform the Glyphosate Task Force (see Hume Brophy for more, page 104). The World Health Organisation has said glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic" but industry has fought hard against calls for a ban in the EU.

## EUROPEAN CROP PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (ECPA)

Avenue Edmond Van Nieuwenhuysse 6, Auderghem

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 3 FTE

Lobby spend: €600,000 - €700,000 (2016)

A lobby group for the agrochemical industry, ECPA aggressively pushes for weak regulation of pesticides and GMOs. It represents transnational pesticide manufacturers such as Syngenta, Monsanto, BASF, Bayer CropScience, and Dow AgroSciences. The association has a significant presence with the EU institutions and is a member of a large number of advisory committees and expert groups in the agricultural, health, and environmental sectors.

ECPA and its US counterpart, CropLife America, lobbied for their industry to get the most out of TTIP. Luckily for them, both US and EU negotiators have been happy to work closely with the pesticides industry to ensure TTIP "minimises their costs and burdens" even if this means increasing risks to human health and the environment.

Both associations were pronounced the joint winners of the 2016 Democracy for Sale awards (co-organised by Corporate Europe Observatory) for their attempt to use the TTIP talks to shape current and future pesticides regulation. If the pesticides lobby continues to get its way in Brussels, consumers face increased amounts of pesticide residue on food, weak regulation on hormone disrupting chemicals (see page 123), and pollinator-killing pesticides.





## EUROPEAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY COUNCIL (CEFIC)

Avenue Edmond Van Nieuwenhuysse 4, Auderghem

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 48 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €12,100,000 (2016)**

CEFIC is the main European trade association for the chemical industry – and the biggest lobby spender in town. The Commission has been a willing partner in helping the chemicals lobby get what it wants.

For example, in the 2000s the EU's REACH proposal for improving regulation of chemicals sparked a massive industry lobbying campaign. CEFIC led the fight with scaremongering tactics and misinformation campaigns to weaken the proposal. And from the early days of TTIP the European Commission used the wish-lists of CEFIC – and its US counterpart, the ACC – as guidance for parts of the talks. CEFIC saw TTIP as a way to achieve a roll-back on the already tame standards introduced by REACH. TTIP's 'regulatory cooperation' (see jargon section, page 142) offers opportunities for business to reduce so-called 'burdensome' regulations.

CEFIC has been a key player in the hormone disrupting chemicals saga (see box on the following page), and has a strong track record fighting against an ambitious EU climate policy. In 2015 it scare-mongered over "carbon leakage" – where businesses move overseas because of high energy costs in Europe. It also used its sponsorship of the Business and Climate Summit before the COP21 climate summit to try and water down all references to climate science.

## A TOXIC AFFAIR: HORMONE DISRUPTING CHEMICALS

Hormone disrupting chemicals (or endocrine disrupting chemicals / EDCs) are present in thousands of everyday products – from plastics and cosmetics to pesticides. Because of their ability to interfere with the hormonal (endocrine) systems of living organisms, they are very likely to have serious health impacts.

EU law demands action be taken on endocrine disruptors: if a chemical is identified as an EDC, a ban should follow. This sounds good, but reality is different. While the rules obliged the Commission to take this first step towards regulation by the end of 2013, it delayed for years due to a massive industry lobbying campaign.

The chemical lobby, supported by certain Commission departments (notably DG SANTE and the Secretariat-General) and some member states (UK and Germany), put significant obstacles in the way of effectively dealing with these chemicals. The main lobby groups involved were the chemical and pesticide lobbies (CEFIC and ECPA), and the corporations at the forefront were BASF and Bayer.

They successfully campaigned using classic corporate lobbying tactics and found allies in various member states, within the European Commission, and in the European Parliament. They attempted to undermine and discredit the independent science on EDCs, while promoting industry's own studies as the only 'sound science'; pressured other Directorates-General in the Commission to go against DG ENVI (Environment); scare-mongered about economic damage industry would suffer; created delays in the policy process; and used the EU-US trade negotiations (TTIP) as leverage, claiming EDC regulation could be a new 'trade barrier'.

A 2015 ruling by the General Court of the EU said that the Commission was in breach of EU law by failing to act and so the following year, the new Commission finally announced the long-awaited scientific criteria to regulate the hormone disrupting chemicals. However, the proposal indicated that the Commission (with DG SANTE now in charge instead of DG Environment) was bound to include enough loopholes to satisfy industry, instead of prioritising public health.

## CHEVRON

Boulevard du Souverain 165, Auderghem

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 3.25 FTE

Lobby spend: €1m - €1.25m (2016)

Chevron is an American transnational energy corporation whose massive lobbying strategy to get fracking accepted in Eastern Europe was able to call on Hillary Clinton and the US network of foreign embassies to ramp up domestic political pressure and push fracking at the highest level.

The company recently won a controversial legal battle with Ecuador, having initiated arbitration to avoid paying US\$18 billion to clean up oil-drilling-related contamination in the Amazon rainforest. In 2016, it was revealed that Chevron lobbied the EU to give foreign investors the legal right to challenge government decisions under the proposed US-EU TTIP trade deal because it would act as a deterrent against laws such as fracking bans.

## DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR CLIMATE ACTION (DG CLIMA)

Avenue de Beaulieu 24, Auderghem

Type: Public institution

DG CLIMA is the European Commission department dealing with climate policy. It participates in UN negotiations on climate and manages the EU Emissions Trading System (see page 141), among other responsibilities. DG CLIMA is led by former Spanish Minister Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete, whose close links to the oil industry meant his 2014 appointment was highly controversial.

Cañete and his colleague Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President for the Energy Union overwhelmingly met with corporate lobbyists rather than public interest groups during their first two years in office. This is reflected in the Commissioners' policies which, despite being presented as climate champions, have been a boon for the fossil fuels industry.

## EXXONMOBIL

Hermeslaan, Machelen

Type: Corporation

Declared lobbyists: 8 FTE

Lobby spend: €4.5m - €4.75m (2016)

Exxon is the largest of the world's big oil and gas companies and a member of more than a dozen trade associations, think tanks and lobby groups. On top of its almost €5 million lobby spend in Brussels ExxonMobil also spends large amounts of money on lobby consultancies including Burson-Marsteller, Fleishman-Hillard and FTI Consulting.

ExxonMobil was responsible for one of the world's worst oil spills in 1989 in Alaska. It has also been a leader of climate change denial, and lobbying against the scientific consensus that global warming is caused by the burning of fossil fuels.

In an example of how the oil industry copied strategies from the tobacco industry playbook (deny the science that hurts your profits), Exxon knew about the connection between fossil fuels and climate change long before it became a public issue. Despite this, the firm spent millions during the 1980s and 1990s to promote climate denial.

Numerous EU-focused climate-sceptic think tanks active in Brussels received ExxonMobil funding but were unwilling to voluntarily disclose their funding sources.

Recently, the company's influence on US foreign policy has reached another peak: former ExxonMobil CEO Rex W Tillerson is now US President Donald Trump's Secretary of State.

# EU LOBBYISTS WITHOUT BRUSSELS OFFICES

## US CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Washington DC - TRADE tour

Type: Trade association

Dedicated lobbyists: 2 FTE

Lobby spend: €300,000 - €400,000 (2016)

The US Chamber of Commerce is a right-wing lobby group known domestically for its opposition to Obama's healthcare plan and Wall Street regulation, as well as the millions it spends backing right-wing candidates in Congressional elections.

Peter Chase, the US Chamber's lead lobbyist in Brussels from 2012 to 2016, previously had a long career in the US government, for a time even acting as the US special envoy on biotechnology promoting GM crops in the global south.

The US Chamber of Commerce has been especially active on the EU-US TTIP trade talks, securing meetings with Commission officials and demanding a formal role in TTIP's proposed 'regulatory cooperation' system, whereby business would essentially co-write legislation alongside politicians (see jargon section page 142). This was done in tandem with BusinessEurope (see page 40) in an example of close transatlantic cooperation between corporate lobbyists, a fundamental characteristic of the push for TTIP.

## ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (AIMA)

London

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 5 FTE

Lobby spend: €800,000 - €900,000

AIMA is a big-spending lobbying organisation representing the interests of hedge funds. In 2010 it was nominated for the Worst EU Lobbying Award for a deceptive campaign to block regulation of damaging speculation in the financial sector. The financial crisis focused attention on the activities of risky 'alternative investment' firms such as hedge funds, which specialise in speculative investments, and private equity firms. Following calls for stricter regulation, the investment industry launched a lobby campaign claiming tougher regulation would make Europe less competitive. As a result, the new rules lacked real teeth.

## THECITYUK

London

Type: Trade association

Declared lobbyists: 5 FTE

Lobby spend: €100,000 - €200,000

Eurostar regulars TheCityUK "champion UK-based financial and related professional services". British financial lobbyists have been eager to band together to influence EU financial regulation, often with London-based lobby groups such as TheCityUK in the lead.

Used to getting their way, TheCityUK's power and prominence stem from its heavy-weight City members and close links to decision-makers: London's Deputy Mayor and the City of London Corporation are represented on its board, while the Bank of England is represented on its advisory council.

Its lobbyists jumped with joy when the Commission proposal on financial regulation in the EU-US trade deal the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) was leaked, because in their words it "reflected so closely the approach of TheCityUK that a bystander would have thought it came straight out of our brochure on TTIP".

Putting finance in TTIP would help banks get round the more stringent financial regulation brought in by the Obama administration in the wake of the 2008 crash.



## LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE GROUP (LSEG)

London

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: 3.5 FTE**

**Lobby spend: €400,000 - €500,000 (2016)**

The London Stock Exchange Group sits at the heart of the world's financial system, operating a wide range of global equity, bond, and derivatives markets. In a shocking revolving doors case (see page 74) in 2014, the former Chair of the European Parliament's Economic Affairs committee Sharon Bowles joined LSEG just months after leaving her job as an MEP. LSEG clearly had a strong interest in Bowles' insights, contacts, and insider know-how, as she would have been very familiar with the detail of regulations affecting the group. As an MEP Bowles had ten meetings with LSEG in the two years before she joined their board.



## WORLD BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WBCSD)

Geneva

**Type: Trade association**

**Declared lobbyists: Undeclared**

**Lobby spend: Undeclared**

This business association of more than 200 transnational corporations, from Shell to Monsanto, is dedicated to promoting big business as 'green'. Established to coordinate the 'industry position' at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, it has played a key role in shaping a corporate-friendly version of sustainable development at the UN and was a major force in lobbying for voluntary outcomes at the Johannesburg Earth Summit in 2002 and since, in other UN summits on climate and biodiversity.

At the 2015 climate summit in Paris, the WBCSD helped launch an action plan for so-called Climate Smart Agriculture – popular with the corporate sector because it does not demand any real change – whose working group is chaired by Monsanto, PepsiCo and Kellogg and backed by carbon-intensive fertilizer companies.

# THEMATIC GUIDE

From trade to tech and tobacco, the following thematic sections provide an overview of key corporate sectors fighting some of Brussels' biggest lobbying battles. To create your own thematic tour, simply go to the indicated pages in the geographical section of the Lobby Planet guide (starts on page 20).

## TRADE

Boosting 'competitiveness' has long been the mantra of EU trade policy. This involves ensuring big corporations get their way in often secret talks over free trade deals and removing 'burdensome' public interest regulations.

This drive for competitiveness advances corporate Europe's priorities, while relegating issues such as social and environmental justice to the back of the queue. Your trade policy tour will take you via the Commission's DG TRADE where officials lead EU trade talks with the rest of the world with a distinctly business-friendly approach, and you'll also visit some of the keenest corporate proponents and lobby groups for trade deals like CETA and TTIP. Not to mention the US interests pushing the TTIP deal, and the lawyers who specialise in helping corporations sue countries over laws they dislike, using trade deal rules.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked TRADE tour: DG Trade (p. 32), Bertelsmann Stiftung (p. 108), US Chamber of Commerce (p. 126), American Chamber of Commerce (p. 126), American Chamber of Commerce to the European Union (p. 94), Albert Borschette Centre (p. 49), Hogan Lovells (p. 83).**

## FINANCE

The financial industry spends over €120 million on lobbying annually in Brussels, and employs more than 1,700 lobbyists working on behalf of banks, investment funds, and insurance firms. Many were engaged in the wake of the financial crash of 2008 to help avoid or shape new regulations for the banks and financial entities that had precipitated the crisis.

The tour will show you the heavyweights of the finance world, including lobbyists from the City of London; the finance and bank associations that played major roles in shaping the EU's 2014 banking union rules and TTIP, and the Commission's DG FISMA with its alarming level of meetings with unregistered lobbyists from the finance world. Not forgetting players such as notorious global investment shark Goldman Sachs (now controversially, employer of former Commission President Barroso!) and big lobby spenders Deutsche Bank.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked FINANCE tour: DG FISMA (p. 104), City of London Corporation (p. 29), Association for Financial Markets in Europe (p. 105), Goldman Sachs (p. 73), European Banking Federation (p. 93), Deutsche Bank (p. 89), Invest Europe (p. 89).**

## BIG POLLUTERS

A major obstacle to achieving effective EU policies to tackle climate change are the big energy lobbyists' cosy relationship with officials responsible for climate and energy policies. Your tour will take you by the offices of major oil and gas companies, whose lobbyists have been instrumental in pushing for an EU climate policy focussed on emissions trading, at the expense of ambitious renewable energy and energy efficiency measures (see page 141).

You will also discover the emissions trading lobbyists advocating on behalf of big polluters like BP and Shell, as well as banks like Goldman Sachs, for a global market in greenhouse gases which allows companies and countries to trade the 'right to pollute' (see page 35). You'll find all sorts of corporate backed lobby groups promoting other false solutions that maintain business as usual, from unproven technology to 'capture' carbon, to gas – including fracking – as a green energy. And you'll find the car and air transport companies colluding to water down or cheat pollution regulations entirely.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked POLLUTERS tour: BP (p. 31), Shell (p. 49), Vattenfall (p. 33), Volkswagen (p. 36), RWE (p. 63), GasNaturally (p. 76), International Emissions Trading Association (p. 35).**

## AGRIBUSINESS

The corporate agri-food sector is wedded to an industrial model that includes intensive farming of livestock, monocultures, soil and biodiversity depletion, heavy use of pesticides, fertilisers, corporate patented seeds, and GMOs. It boasts very powerful players in the Brussels bubble with privileged access to top decision-makers.

Tactics include PR stunts, fancy conferences, media greenwash, networking events for policy-makers and journalists, as well as 'revolving door' recruitment of former public officials to the private sector. You will find the food and drink trade associations pushing for TTIP and resisting sugar taxes and clear food labelling; the corporations pushing GMOs; chemical companies involved in controversies from hormone-disrupting chemicals to playing down the impact of pesticides on bees; the Commission's DG AGRI which controls the EU's biggest budget item, the Common Agricultural Policy; and famous agro-food and chemical giants such as Monsanto, Dow, and Syngenta.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked AGRI tour: DG AGRI (p. 106), COPA-COGECA (p. 105), BASF (p. 84), European Seed Association (p. 95), FoodDrinkEurope (p. 45), European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (p. 33).**



## TOBACCO

This tour will take you via the main players promoting the interests of big tobacco, whose product is the single greatest cause of preventable death globally. They include the corporate trade associations aggressively lobbying decision-makers, despite the pushback via UN rules that prohibit this (see Article 5.3 in the jargon section on page 140); some of the players behind the 'Dalligate' scandal when the Health Commissioner was forced to resign over links to tobacco lobbyists; giant tobacco companies not shy to sue governments over plain packaging rules; and the spin doctors who originally devised the tobacco industry's decades-long denial tactics over the link between smoking and cancer.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked TOBACCO tour: British American Tobacco (p. 64), European Smoking Tobacco Association (p. 30), Philip Morris (p. 65), Hill and Knowlton (p. 66), EUTOP (p. 62).**

## TECH

They might be relative newcomers on the scene, but tech giants have been dramatically increasing their lobby spending in Brussels in recent years, with Google now having the most high level Commission meetings of any company since 2014. The sector often uses astroturfing – creating a fake grassroots movement – as a lobbying tactic.

Hot topics include data protection – that is, making sure users don't have too much of it! One of the biggest lobby offensives of the last decade was over changes to EU data privacy laws in 2013. Data is big business and transnationals like Amazon, Facebook, and Google were keen to weaken data protection proposals. Tech giants have also stepped up lobby spending after major fines for tax avoidance and monopolistic behaviours. Other hot topics for the tech giants include the so-called 'sharing economy', copyright, and the Digital Single Market.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked TECH tour: Yahoo! (p. 28), Facebook (p. 31), Huawei (p. 57), Google (p. 57), Apple (p. 82), Microsoft (p. 66), eBay (p. 97), European Privacy Association (p. 75).**

## ARMS

As the home of both NATO and the EU, Brussels is a natural magnet for arms lobbyists. Discretion is crucial, as the hugely profitable defence sector is close to policymakers and government. And of course, infamous for dodgy export deals, bribery and corruption. No key industry player is without an office here, many clustered by the EU institutions.

The current political climate of insecurity, increased border controls, and dramatic increases in military spending have meant big business opportunities for European defence firms. Your tour will take you past some of the world's largest arms producers, including those lobbying hard for fewer 'restrictions' on who EU member states can sell arms to; those who construct the EU's common foreign policy including the development of a worrying trend towards corporate-fuelled militarism; corporate lobby associations with deep pockets and significant influence over EU security policy, including active advocates for the interests of Europe's private security companies; corporate-linked think tanks weighing in on EU security and defence policy; and DG RESEARCH, where some €1.7 billion of EU funding is dedicated to security research, likely to go to defence companies.

**Look up the key actors and locations marked ARMS tour: DG RESEARCH (p. 83), Airbus (p. 90), Friends of Europe (p. 81), European External Action Service (p. 29).**

# WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Corporate lobbying tends to thrive in the absence of public scrutiny. So while the firepower of corporations lobbying the EU might seem overwhelming, take heart in the fact that the more of us are watching, getting informed, and taking action, the better!

We hope that by shining a light on the murky world of the influence peddlers, this guide book will motivate you to take action. If you want to join the pushback against the corporate capture of the EU institutions in Brussels, here's how to get started.

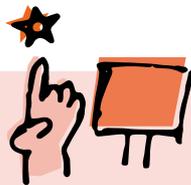
## GET INFORMED

Join our mailing list to stay up to date with our newest publications, come to our discussion events or participate in one of our lobby tours.



## GET INVOLVED

As an individual, join a grassroots activist movement or political group in your area to help curb corporate power and promote democratic decision making. As an organisation, join like-minded organisations, for example, in the Alliance for Lobby Transparency and Ethics Regulation. As a journalist, use our [lobbyfacts.eu](http://lobbyfacts.eu) website for investigative projects, or contact us for comments.



## SPREAD THE WORD



Follow us and share our research on Facebook and Twitter. You can also download all of our reports as PDFs.

## CONTACT YOUR MEP



Contact your Member of the European Parliament (MEP) to tell him why you think it is vital to push for greater lobby transparency and stricter codes of conduct for Commission officials and Members of the European Parliament.



## SUPPORT CEO



We finance our work with donations from individual supporters and with grants from several trusts and foundations. To support what we do, you can find our bank account details on our website and at the end of this booklet.

## GET INFORMED:

Finding out about the issues that interest you most is a good first step. You can find background reading on all of the topics mentioned in this guide on our website [www.corporateeurope.org](http://www.corporateeurope.org). The DIY section below also offers some tips for investigating corporate power yourself.

If you visit Brussels, join one of the free guided 'lobby tours' of the EU quarter that are regularly run by our team, during which we provide either a general introduction to the lobbying scene or give a thematic tour looking at specific industries. We also organise discussion events, in which you are very welcome to join. For more information on tours and events, please sign up to our newsletter online.

## GET INVOLVED:

Keeping tabs on corporate lobbyists is just as important at the member state level. Groups like LobbyControl in Germany, SpinWatch in the UK, and l'Observatoire des Multinationales in France have a wealth of knowledge of and resources on what is happening at the national levels. Lobby tours and lobby guidebooks similar to this one are available for Paris, Berlin, and London.

As an organisation, you can join the 200 groups from all over Europe who have been collaborating under the Alliance for Lobby Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU) since 2005. Their shared vision is: EU institutions free from conflicts of interest; no undue influence and access for corporate lobbyists; strong ethics rules for politicians, officials and lobbyists; openness and transparency in the way they work; and always operating in the public interest.

As an individual, you can join a grassroots organisation or public interest group in your area to connect

with the growing pan-European network mobilising people power on the ground and online to challenge the attempts of big business to subvert democracy. To get started, you can look up the ALTER-EU member organisation closest to where you live, and get in touch.

## SPREAD THE WORD:

Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something. So talk to your friends, family and colleagues about the threat which excessive corporate power poses to democracy. Following Corporate Europe Observatory on Facebook and Twitter means you can easily stay in the loop with our latest research and easily share it. All of our reports are also available for download as PDFs.

To help create greater awareness of corporate capture and the importance of lobby transparency and regulation, you can also contact your local, regional or national media to promote the coverage of these issues.

## CONTACT YOUR MEP:

The public are more than ever aware of weak standards, shoddy regulation, and the dangers of the excessive influence of corporations. Measures to curb these are crucial, but resistance to change is deeply rooted, both among the lobbyists, certain parliamentarians, the European Commission, and particularly member states.

This means we need to pile on the pressure for national governments and the EU to be more ambitious and make lobby transparency and regulation a political priority. Contacting your MEP and raising these issues with national politicians and governments can have an impact.

## SUPPORT CEO:

To maintain the independence of Corporate Europe Observatory's research, we don't take funding from the EU, governments, political parties and corporations. Instead, we finance our work with the help of donations from individual supporters as well as grants from a number of trusts and foundations.

Please find our bank details at the end of this booklet, if you would like to make a donation to help us continue our work. Every little helps!

For more information about our finances, please visit [corporateeurope.org/about-ceo](http://corporateeurope.org/about-ceo).

## DO-IT-YOURSELF: HOW TO INVESTIGATE CORPORATE POWER

If you're looking to research the world of big business lobbying, there are a range of free tools online that can help:

- [www.asktheeu.org](http://www.asktheeu.org) was built by civil society organisations to help members of the public get information about the EU. You can view access to documents requests to the EU institutions and submit your own.
- [www.lobbyfacts.eu](http://www.lobbyfacts.eu) provides essential data on lobbying in the EU institutions, with handy tools to search, sort, compare and analyse official EU lobby data from past and present.
- [www.integritywatch.eu](http://www.integritywatch.eu) is a central hub for data that is often scattered and difficult to access, allowing you to search, rank, and filter information on Commission meetings with lobbyists, MEP incomes from second jobs, and the statistics of revolving door moves between the public and private sectors.
- [corporateeurope.org/revolvingdoorwatch](http://corporateeurope.org/revolvingdoorwatch) offers in-depth analysis of key revolving door cases of commissioners, MEPs and other EU officials. Former lobbyists who have taken up jobs in the EU institutions are also featured.

# JARGON-BUSTING DICTIONARY

The language of the Brussels bubble is often incomprehensible, full of strange acronyms, odd technical phrases, and elite jargon designed to keep the discussion exclusive to lobbyists, politicians, and officials.

But it is a democratic necessity for ordinary citizens to be able to participate in the political debate and grasp the issues at stake. With this in mind, here is our jargon-busting glossary.

**Article 5.3** – When the UN's World Health Organisation (WHO) was working on an international tobacco control treaty, negotiators realised that it was impossible to act in the public interest so long as tobacco lobbyists were involved.

The WHO therefore created 'Article 5.3', a provision within the United Nations Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, that aims to keep the tobacco industry away from decision-making at the UN, national and regional policymaking levels. The same principle could be applied to other policy areas. The tobacco industry is no longer involved in public health policy because of the clear conflict of interest so why, for instance, should fossil fuel companies be allowed anywhere near climate policy?

**Astroturfing** – In order to mask the forces behind a lobby campaign, occasionally groups are established by industry to give the image of a grassroots, authentic citizens movement. However, these groups have no roots in public opinion and are nothing but fake grassroots lobbies, hence astroturfing, in reference to the artificial grass surface used for sports fields.

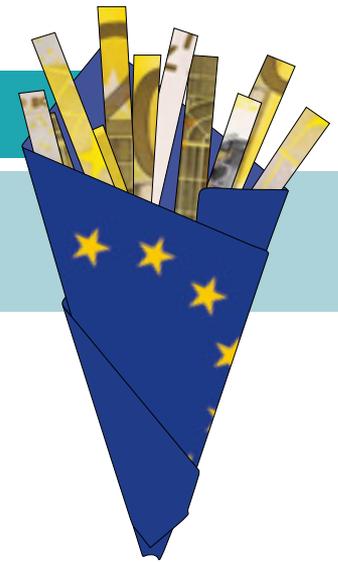
**Better Regulation** – Despite its

name, the 'Better Regulation' agenda provides industry with a tool to weaken or remove regulations that protect the environment, workers' rights, and health and safety. This EU deregulation agenda, officially aiming to 'cut red tape', has the fingerprints of corporate lobbyists all over it. Together with their allies inside EU institutions and national governments, they've been pushing Better Regulation in an effort to undermine progress in rules which serve social or environmental purposes.

**Carbon capture and storage (CCS)** – An expensive and unproven technique that seeks to bury the CO<sub>2</sub> produced from the fossil fuels used in electricity generation and industrial processes. It essentially allows dirty energy power plants and fossil fuel infrastructure to continue to be built on a speculative promise that in the future we will be able to bury CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It attracts the support of many major polluters and energy companies.

**CETA** – The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada is major treaty that was negotiated in secret between the European Commission and Canadian government. It is one of the 'new generation' of trade deals that are set to undermine democratic decision-

*Brussels - famous for its fries, infamous for corporate lobbying and EU jargon.*



making in the EU and beyond. CETA includes the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism, which allows companies to sue governments over any new law or policy that might reduce their profits in future.

**Corporate capture** – Corporate capture refers to the means by which economic elites exert undue influence over decision-makers and public institutions. By coopting insiders, through revolving door hirings and numerous other influencing strategies, agencies and institutions can be effectively turned against the interests of the people they purport to represent, in favour of the private sector.

**Directorate-general** – Within the EU, a directorate-general or DG is a department dedicated to a specific policy. The European Commission's 30 DGs report to the Commissioner in charge of the corresponding policy area.

**Emissions Trading System (ETS)** – The European Union's flagship climate policy, intended to establish a legal cap on greenhouse gas emissions by making it expensive to pollute beyond this limit. It gives incentives to companies who pollute less by allowing them to trade surplus permits

with other companies. However, the cap has been so generous that permits have been over-abundant and their price has collapsed. The scheme hasn't reduced carbon emissions, yet is repeatedly evoked to undermine more effective forms of emissions cuts. ETS is flawed by design and should be scrapped.

**Greenwashing** – A corporate diversion tactic used to cover a questionable environmental record, greenwashing is a form of deceptive spin aimed to convince that an organisation's products, aims or policies are environmentally friendly. The term greenwashing was coined in the 1980s when big polluters began flooding TV, radio and print media with slickly-produced ads vaunting their supposed ecological credentials.

**ISDS** – Investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) (also known as the investment court system, ICS) is a highly controversial system through which companies can sue host countries for laws that allegedly discriminate against them or affect future expected profits. ISDS is found in international trade and investment agreements such as TTIP and CETA.

As The Economist put it in 2014: "If you wanted to convince the public that international trade agreements are a way to let multinational companies get rich at the expense of ordinary people, this is what you would do: give foreign firms a special right to apply to a secretive tribunal of highly paid corporate lawyers for compensation whenever a government passes a law to, say, discourage smoking, protect the environment or prevent a nuclear catastrophe. Yet that is precisely what thousands of trade and investment treaties over the past half century have done, through a process known as 'investor-state dispute settlement', or ISDS."

**Neoliberalism** – The idea that keeping markets free from regulations and restrictions is the best way to run the economy. The term was popularised during the 1980s in connection with politicians and policy-makers such as Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and Augusto Pinochet. Neoliberalism sees competition as the defining characteristic of human relations and redefines 'citizens' as 'consumers'.

**Precautionary principle** – If there is the possibility that a given policy might cause harm to the public or the environment, and if there is still no scientific consensus on the issue, the policy should not be pursued.

**Regulatory cooperation** – Under the proposed TTIP agreement, regulatory cooperation is ostensibly to harmonise regulatory frameworks between the EU and the US – for things like chemicals, food standards, public services, occupational health and safety, and financial regulation. In reality it could lead to a lowering of standards on both sides of the Atlantic.

It would apply to both existing and future regulations, ensuring that no new rules are a "barrier to trade". Business would have unprecedented opportunities to "co-write legislation" before even parliamentarians have

had a say in them. The system considers standards simply in terms of whether they impact or restrict transatlantic trade, and could thus become a graveyard for public interest regulations.

**Revolving doors** – The term refers to the all too common practice of corporate lobbies hiring ex-EU officials and MEPs to exploit their contacts and insider knowledge. Likewise, it is not uncommon for EU institutions to hire 'policy experts' who have had careers in the same corporate sectors they are then supposed to help regulate.

**Sound Science** – 'Sound science' is a benign-sounding phrase used by corporate spin doctors to describe research that matches their profit goals. Sound science, moreover is a vague term with no specific definition; the phrase is always used with an agenda in mind. Often contrasted with 'junk science', a phrase used by corporate lobbyists to describe scientific data, research, or analysis that reflects badly on the environmental or public health effects of a particular industry.

**Trilogue** – Closed-door negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission to fast-track legislation. These secret meetings shape laws that affect the daily lives of millions of people and have become the main tool by which EU legislation comes about. Despite this, there is very little public information about the negotiation processes.

**TTIP** – The controversial proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), between the EU and US would create the world's biggest free trade zone. Supporters say TTIP will create new business opportunities and jobs; opponents warn it will undermine workers' rights, environmental regulation, and democratic decision-making itself. As we go to print it is on ice, but likely to return in one form or another.

## DONATIONS:

To support our work, you can make a donation to Corporate Europe Observatory. Every little helps, thank you very much for your help!

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Corporate Europe Observatory is registered in the EU lobby transparency register under identification number 5353162366-85.

