

lobby planet

NEW
EDITION

Brussels

The EU quarter



This guide

This concise guide introduces you to the hidden world of corporate lobbying in Brussels. First produced in 2004, the fully revised and updated version provides an overview of lobbying in Brussels as well as specific tours highlighting the lobbying powers in different sectors – finance, carbon and agribusiness.



Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) is a research and campaign group working to expose and challenge the privileged access and influence enjoyed by corporations and their lobby groups in EU policy making. This corporate capture of EU decision-making leads to policies that exacerbate social injustice and accelerate environmental destruction across the world.

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Revised and updated edition, September 2011

Contents

Foreword	3
Brussels' EU quarter	6
Lobbying in Brussels – an introduction	7
The lobby targets	11
Around Rond-Point Schuman	17
Around the Place du Luxembourg	26
On the outskirts	34
Lobby tours:	
The financial lobby	37
The carbon lobby	41
The food and biotech lobby	45
Ending corporate capture of EU decision-making	48

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4th edition, fully revised and updated – September 2011.



Foreword

This guide introduces you to an area of just a few square kilometres in the EU capital, Brussels, home to one of the highest concentrations of political power in the world. Dozens of key EU decision-making bodies (European Commission, Parliament, Council) are based in the EU quarter, as well as thousands of offices where those who want to influence EU decisions are found. As the power of the EU institutions has grown, Brussels has become a magnet for lobbyists, with the latest estimates ranging between 15,000 and 30,000 professionals representing companies, industry sectors, farmers, civil society groups, unions and others, with those representing big business far outnumbering the rest.

This guide introduces the most powerful players in EU lobbying, the streets and squares and the offices from which they operate, the multiple ways – some controversial – in which they work to steer decisions to their advantage, and the often serious impacts this has on people across Europe and in the rest of the world. While focused on corporate lobbyists, who most often stay out of sight, this guide also highlights how EU decision makers very often align themselves with lobbyists' commercial agendas at the expense of the public interest.

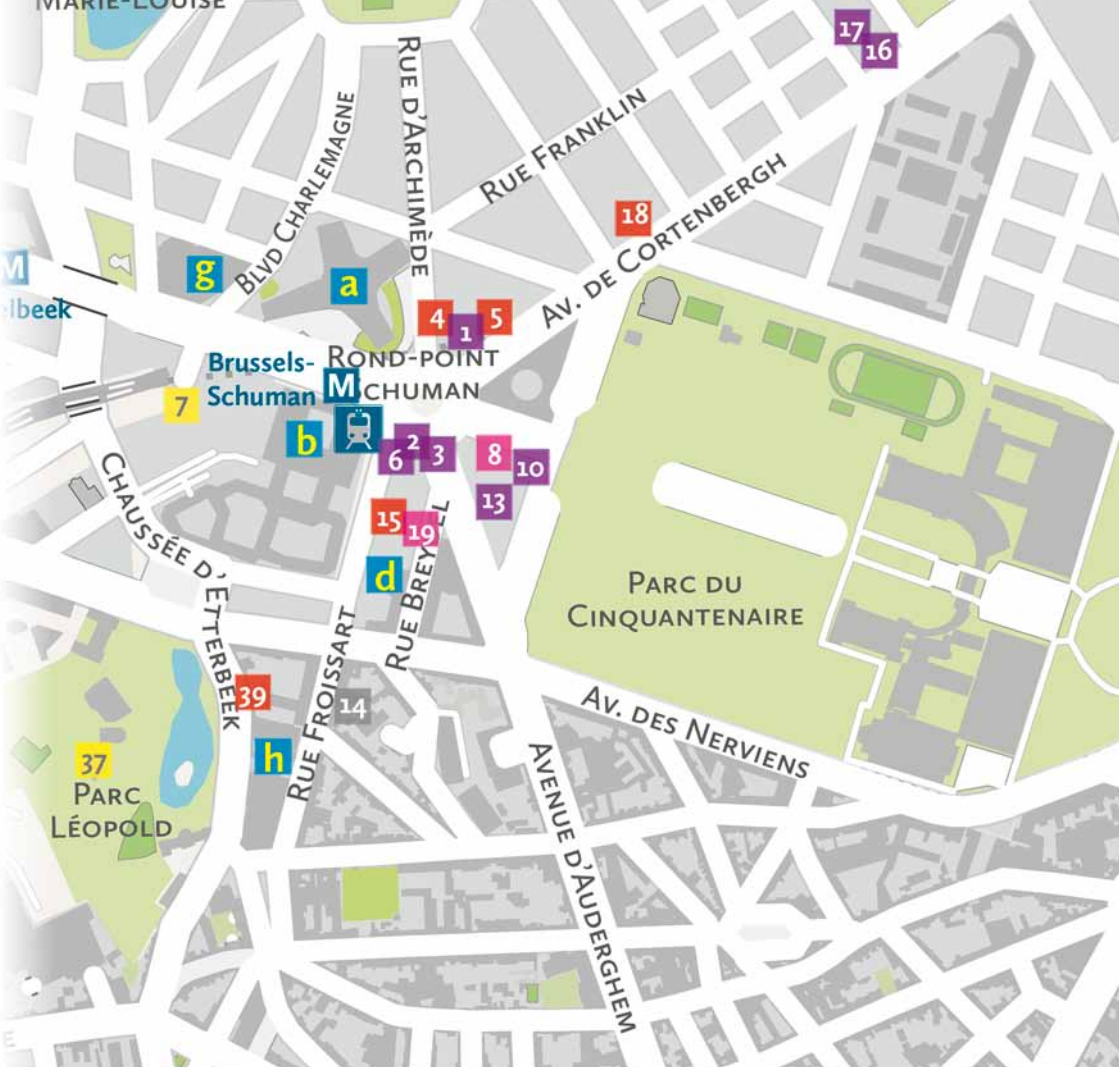
When published in 2004, the first edition of this guidebook was an eye-opener to many – and caused anger among corporate lobbyists

who were not used to being criticised. In the years since then, a debate has emerged about the privileged access to decision makers that industry enjoys in Brussels, and about the lack of transparency around lobbying. A growing number of MEPs have spoken out against the constant offensive from industry lobbyists that often leads to watered down social and environmental laws and policies. There has been growing support for transparency and ethics rules to curb the impact of corporate lobbying. So far, however, genuine change has been minimal. It is our hope that this new, fully revised edition of the Lobby Planet guide will inspire you to engage in action for genuine change, for reclaiming democracy and insisting on policies to protect people and the environment.

This guide divides the EU quarter geographically and thematically. The first section divides the quarter into two main blocks – around the Rond-Point Schuman (Rue de la Loi, Avenue de Cortenbergh, Rue Breydel) and around the Place du Luxembourg (including Rue du Luxembourg, Square de Meeûs, Rue d'Arlon, Rue Montoyer and Parc Léopold).

A further section looks at the lobby players who sit outside the EU quarter, but who are still influential. Three thematic tours then follow, looking at the biggest players in the finance lobby, the carbon lobby and the food and biotech lobby.





- 23 European Seed Association
- 24 Burson-Marsteller
- 25 Fleishman-Hillard
- 26 International Swaps and Derivatives Association
- 27 Edelman The Centre
- 28 Deutsche Bank
- 29 Bank of New York Mellon
- 30 APCO Worldwide
- 31 Hill & Knowlton
- 32 European Banking Federation

- 33 European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum
- 34 Concert Noble
- 35 Unilever
- 36 Cabinet DN
- 37 Bibliothèque Solvay
- 38 Bavarian Representation
- 39 Bertelsmann
- 40 Bastion Tower
- 41 Corporate Europe Observatory

- EU Institutions
- Corporations
- Lobby consultancies /public affairs agencies
- Lobby groups
- Think tanks
- Law firms
- Government representations

Brussels' EU quarter

Brussels has gone through a major transformation since becoming the self-declared capital of Europe. Nowhere has the metamorphosis been more dramatic than in the European quarter, which lies just east of the city's centre. Once a wealthy residential neighbourhood known as the Quartier Léopold, the area has been transformed, with glass and steel blocks replacing the art nouveau architecture. Housing has been replaced by offices filled with the ever-expanding EU institutions and others attracted by the institutions' power – including the ever-multiplying number of lobby consultancies, law firms and PR agencies.

The Brussels EU quarter is essentially the four square kilometres between the Avenue des Arts and Parc du Cinquante-naire. Demand for office space in the area is virtually endless and one street of houses after another has been demolished to make way for office buildings. Local residents had little choice but to move out and just 15,000 people live in the EU quarter today, many of them high-income eurocrats who can afford the skyrocketing rents.

During the day, more than 85,000 people work here – and the streets are dotted with bars, cafes and restaurants to keep them fed and watered. The Belgian elite of 100 years ago, who enjoyed living in this once green and spacious neighbourhood modelled on Bloomsbury in London, has been replaced by an EU elite, encased in glass and concrete.

To see eurocrats and lobbyists in action, the time to visit is during office hours and ideally around lunch time. In the evening, and at the weekend, the area is largely deserted.

Getting there & away

The easiest way to get to the EU quarter is by taking metro line 1 or 5 and getting off at Schuman. Trains stop at Brussels-Schuman station, close to the European Commission and the heart of the lobby-cracy. Alternatively Brussels-Luxembourg station is close to the European Parliament.

Don't forget to bring an umbrella, as, according to the statistics, it rains on average 200 days a year in Brussels. It can also be quite hot with temperatures at times reaching above 35 degrees in summer.

Lobbying in Brussels – an introduction



There is no precise figure available for the number of lobbyists in Brussels, but some estimates have suggested that 15,000 – 30,000 people are actively employed in trying to influence the work of the EU institutions. Two thirds work on behalf of business interests. Civil society and trade unions remain dramatically under-represented. Corporate lobbying in Brussels has long passed the one billion euro mark in annual turnover, which makes the city the world's second biggest centre of corporate lobbying power, after Washington DC.

Lobbying is usually defined as seeking to influence legislation, policy or regulation, usually in return for payment. A narrow definition of lobbying focuses solely on direct representation by those seeking to influence legislators. A broader and more realistic picture includes the different

forms of communication and research activities which underpin, inform, and support the formation of policy.

The Brussels lobby scene is populated by a bewildering variety of different organisations and individuals engaged in lobbying.

Most are 'in-house' lobbyists, employed by corporations and trade associations to directly represent their employers' interests to policy and decision makers. Five hundred large corporations have their own lobbying offices in Brussels, including BP, Rolls Royce, BASF, E.ON and Thales, often in high profile locations.

There are more than 1,500 industry lobby groups and several hundred 'public affairs' consultancies and law firms that advise and lobby for corporate clients. Almost every industry imaginable has its own trade lobby group in Brussels, from the European

Bottled Watercooler Association to the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic), which has more than 170 employees and represents 29,000 companies. These sectoral associations lead EU lobbying efforts and coordinate lobbying activities by their members – national federations and individual companies.

In-house lobbyists often work alongside hired consultants, generally employed by large public relations firms or by international law firms, and who work for a fee for a number of different clients. These ‘for hire’ firms sometimes specialise in repairing damaged reputations or setting up front groups or fake NGOs.

Think tanks and the media also play an important role in the modern world of lobbying – sometimes directly, sometimes inadvertently helping the lobbying cause. The numerous think tanks fill the vacuum created by the absence of a European public opinion and real public debate in Brussels by organising purportedly ‘neutral’, but mostly corporate-sponsored events and debates. Some also offer report writing and other services to clients with big pockets.

Many who work in the EU quarter have embarked on typical EU careers which can involve a chain of jobs at the Commission, with EU media or in event organising, before moving into lobbying – or they start in lobbying and move the other way.

Targets

The Brussels lobbyists’ prime target is the European Commission – the source of almost all legislation and policy in the EU. But as the powers of the European Parliament have grown, MEPs have also become an important target – with some 4,000 lobbyists registered to hold access badges for the Parliament.

There are many legitimate reasons for wanting to have a say in decision making, but the power of money combined with the complex and often unaccountable decision-making procedures within the EU – and the lack of any real scrutiny – have created an environment where big business interests can effectively capture the policy agenda. This makes Brussels a corporate lobbying paradise.



The lobby register

The European Commission launched a voluntary lobby register in June 2008, as part of the European Transparency Initiative, intended to improve accountability in the European Union. Companies and organisations were asked to register basic details about their lobbying activities – and these entries were made available online.

While a first step, the limited information provided by this register did not provide proper transparency. Lobbyists who wanted their activities to remain out-of-sight could simply chose not to register – and indeed many did. But the Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU), which brings together a broad coalition of NGOs campaigning for greater transparency

and accountability, continued to push for an improved register and found support in the European Parliament.

In May 2008 the European Parliament called for a joint EU mandatory lobbying register for all the main EU institutions. As a result, a new, shared transparency register for the European Parliament and the Commission was launched in June 2011 (see: <http://europa.eu/transparency-register/>). The new register is still not mandatory, but does require more detailed information about the size of lobbyists' budgets and the nature of their activities. Pressure for a mandatory register continues to grow – and the debate about transparency goes on.

The EU lobbyists' tool box

1. Set up shop in Brussels

It helps to be where the action is. And if you can afford it, a prestigious office will enhance your status. Hundreds of large corporations have their own Brussels office, often with dozens of lobbyists working to promote their interests.

2. Be an expert

The Commission has more than 1,000 advisory groups (many of which are described as expert groups). Being in such a group allows privileged access to the policy making process. These groups often put forward the first draft proposals for new EU laws and policies. Industry lobbyists have found their way on to many of these advisory groups – over 100 of these groups are entirely dominated by big business lobbyists.

3. Headhunt an EU decision-maker

In 2010, no less than six out of 13 departing ex-commissioners went through the revolving door from the Commission to private sector jobs that in many cases involved lobbying. Former Enterprise Commissioner Günter Verheugen even set up his own lobby consultancy firm – and got the Commission's approval to do so. Commission officials, MEPs and MEP advisers are all in demand – and industry lobby groups are eager to hire them to exploit their contacts and insider knowledge.

4. Pay a think tank to promote your agenda

It is so much easier to convince policy makers if they hear your message coming from somebody else, and even more so if it comes from a well-established think tank. Brussels has dozens of think tanks that are heavily dependent on industry funding and offer their business members a range of services in return. Some go as far as to give their corporate sponsors a prominent role in debating panels on issues of their choice. Others publish tailor-made reports for industry members in return for cash.

5. Hire a law firm to draft your amendments

Many MEPs will gratefully use your amendments, especially if they are drafted professionally.

That's where the law firms come in. If they do their job right, your involvement will be invisible and your amendments will be passed.

6. Mingle with MEPs

Get the time and attention of MEPs (and their assistants) and nurture informal relations by setting up your own MEP-industry forum, inviting MEPs to swanky receptions, taking them on expenses-paid trips or inviting them to dinner.

7. Establish a front group

Want to disguise your lobbying activities? Worried that legislators 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.

8. Scaremonger about job losses

Warn the Commission and MEPs that the policy proposal that you want to get rid of will cause job losses, or affect EU competitiveness; threaten to leave Europe because of rising costs. You can always pay a consultancy to come up with some numbers to back your arguments – although hard evidence isn't always required.

9. Bury unwanted measures in process

If you want to stop a new piece of legislation you can always try to delay or weaken the proposals. Argue that more study is needed; advocate setting up a special task force; propose a voluntary business code of conduct.

10. Distract

Try to focus the political debate on a side issue in order to smuggle in the main items on your political agenda and have them passed unnoticed.

Read more about the ways in which corporate lobbyists capture the policy agenda in the EU in [Bursting the Brussels Bubble – the battle to expose corporate lobbying at the heart of the EU \(www.alter-eu.org/book/bursting-the-brussels-bubble\)](http://www.alter-eu.org/book/bursting-the-brussels-bubble)

The lobby targets



The European Commission, Rue de la Loi

The European Commission is at the centre of EU decision making, devising the policy proposals which go on to become laws. The Commission employs some 31,000 civil servants and its offices are spread across Brussels, but mainly concentrated around Rue de la Loi.

The Commission has a president, currently José Manuel Barroso. He presides over a college of 27 commissioners, each with responsibility for specific areas of policy.

The **headquarters of the European Commission** can be found in the Centre Berlaymont at 200 Rue de la Loi. This 13-story x-shaped skyscraper (also known as the Berlaymonstre) provides office space for the president, commissioners and their cabinet staff.

Just next to it, at 170 Rue de la Loi, is the Charlemagne Building, a steel and glass construction which houses the **Directorate-General Trade** – a key Commission department, responsible for EU trade policy. The departments for External Relations, EU Enlargement and Interpretation are also there.

DG Trade's business-friendly approach to international trade – often at the expense of environmental and social justice – has led to open warfare with civil society. But DG Trade just ignores citizens' protests and carries on developing trade policy with corporate lobby groups such as BusinessEurope. DG Trade has not been scandal-free however, with former Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson accused of favouring friends when he lifted import tariffs for an aluminium company owned

by Russian oligarch and close friend Oleg Deripaska.

The department for the internal market and services (**DG Markt**) is at 2 Rue de Spa – at the other end of the Rue de la Loi. DG Markt is famous for its close relationship with business – and lobbyists from the financial sector have been regular visitors over the years. This is a key factor behind the lax regulation which led to the financial crisis.

The departments for climate, environment, and economic and financial affairs can all be found in the Beaulieu Building on Avenue de Beaulieu.



The European Parliament,

Place du Luxembourg

The European Parliament, the only directly-elected European institution, has the power to approve, amend and in some cases block proposals put forward by the EU Commission. While its powers were initially limited compared to the Commission and Council, recent treaty changes have boosted the Parliament's powers substantially, making it an ever-more popular target for lobbyists. As a result, more and more big names in the lobbying industry have set up shop around the Parliament, making this area the new lobbying hot spot. There are 736 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

The Parliament sits in Strasbourg as well as Brussels, but the main business of the parliamentary committees is done in Brussels – in a vast complex entered via Place du Luxembourg. Although MEPs are now jointly responsible for finalising most legislation with the Council, they cannot initiate new laws.

Lobbying in the European Parliament

Lobbying plays a major role in parliamentary decision-making. Close to 1,800 firms and lobby groups are accredited to the European Parliament, with well over 4,000 lobbyists holding passes granting them permanent access to the Parliament's buildings.

For many MEPs, meetings with lobbyists are a key aspect of their work, even perhaps the main priority. Giles Chichester MEP, a member of the Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee, had 219 meetings with lobbyists during one six-month period – almost all were from industry.

Lobby Planet Brussels – the EU quarter

It is common practice for lobbyists to draft amendments for MEPs. Of the 1,600 amendments tabled on a directive intended to regulate financial speculation, more than half were written by industry lobbies and tabled by MEPs close to industry, according to parliament sources. And the Swedish MEP Carl Schlyter told CEO that over 95% of all amendments on a climate proposal on fluorinated gases (the F-gases dossier) came from lobbyists.

Industry infiltration

Intergroups and other cross-party groups that bring together industry and MEPs have become a popular way for business lobbyists to get close to MEPs. A lot of

industry sectors have their own MEP-industry forum where they meet with MEPs interested in that issue.

The European Energy Forum, for example, took MEPs on a trip to the Arctic, paid for by Norwegian oil firm, Statoil. The secretariat of the Sky and Space Intergroup is run by the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Europe. The Forum for the Automobile and Society is run from the Brussels lobbying headquarters of the International Automobile Federation (FIA). The European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum (EPFSF) used to be chaired by Piaa Noora-Kauppi MEP, who in 2008 went through the revolving door and became a banking lobbyist (read more about EPFSF in the financial lobby section).

Parliament dominated by big business allies

After the 2009 elections returned a right-wing majority, Brussels lobbyists were quick to predict that the new European Parliament would be “more pro-business”, more “industry-friendly” and less green. These predictions were confirmed when the chairs of the parliamentary committees were elected, with many key committees headed by MEPs who have a record of siding with big business interests in decisions on environment and consumer rights.

Indeed, some of the new committee chairs have previously been accused of conflicts of interest as a result of jobs they do alongside being MEPs or because of other close links to industry. The Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) is currently headed by UK Conservative MEP Malcolm Harbour. Over the past 10 years, Harbour, once a director of former car manufacturer Austin Rover, has been one of the closest allies of the car industry in the European

Parliament. In return, car companies lent him luxurious new cars for ‘test-drives’ and invited him to grand prix racing events. Recently he was an advocate of government support for the EU’s troubled car industry.

The new chair of the Industry Committee (ITRE), German Christian Democrat Herbert Reul has also been described as an industry lobbyist. According to Financial Times Germany, Reul allegedly tabled amendments written by car and energy industry lobbyists when the Parliament was deciding on important climate-related issues.

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), responsible for regulating the financial sector, is chaired by British MEP Sharon Bowles, who was previously accused of a conflict of interests after pushing for software patents while also being partner in a law firm representing clients with a direct interest in software patent protection.



The lobbyists' tree

In Rue Wiertz, just outside the European Parliament's Spinelli building, there is a small tree that has gained a certain degree of notoriety as a symbol of commercial lobbying. The tree was planted by the **Society of European Affairs Professionals (SEAP)** complete with a memorial stone celebrating the role of lobbying in EU policy-making. The SEAP logo can still be made out among the leaves of the tree. The tree has been the focus of several happenings by activists, who see the tree located at such a symbolic spot in front of the European Parliament as a symbol of privileged access and dominance by corporate lobbyists in the EU.

SEAP, one of three lobby groups that represents corporate lobby consultants active in Brussels (along with EPACA and ECPA) used to deal with practical issues such as the availability of seats and translation equipment for lobbyists in the Parliament



– and once wrote to the Parliament's president to complain that its members at times had difficulties finding a seat during committee meetings. But following the launch of the European Transparency Initiative in 2005, SEAP became one of the leading voices opposing improved transparency around lobbying activities, lobbying intensively to ensure the Commission's lobby transparency register remained voluntary.

Cash-for-influence scandal

In March 2011, the Sunday Times unleashed one of the biggest lobbying scandals in EU history by exposing three MEPs who had agreed to table amendments to change an EU law in return for promised payments. In a sting operation, undercover journalists posing as lobbyists approached 60 MEPs, inviting them to join the advisory board of a fake lobby consultancy firm and assist with influencing decision-making in the Parliament. Fourteen MEPs agreed to meet with the fake lobbyists to discuss the €100,000 a year offer. Video footage suggested that Romanian MEP Adrian Severin, Austrian MEP Ernst Strasser and Slovenian MEP Zoran Thaler accepted the offer. Thaler and Strasser resigned following the revelations, but Severin refused to do so.

The Parliament President Jerzy Buzek started an internal investigation following the scandal, and both OLAF (the EU's anti-fraud agency) and the Belgian Public Federal Prosecutor were involved. The scandal sent shockwaves through the European Parliament and started a debate about corruption and the Parliament's weak rules around financial interests and relations with lobbyists.

The Council of the European Union, Justus Lipsius, Rue de la Loi

The Council of the European Union (the Council) is the institution that represents the EU member countries. When all heads of state or government of the EU member states come together at EU summits (aka European Council meetings), they decide on the general EU political agenda. This “European Council” became an official institution under the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 and is currently presided over by Herman Van Rompuy. More frequently, at the regular Council meetings, a group of ministers come together to take decisions on more specific issues.

The Council is based in the Justus Lipsius building at 175 Rue de la Loi – a fortress-like bulk of a building, which has been expanded a number of times to accommodate the delegations from the growing number of member states. The four annual EU Summits are also held here.

National governments

As well as targeting the EU institutions, most effective lobby campaigns also target member state governments – ensuring support at every level.



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Around Rond-Point Schuman



Rond-Point Schuman is the traditional heart of the EU quarter, home to the Council and Commission – and a busy, noisy junction for traffic. Office blocks surround the roundabout, putting the occupants at the heart of the action. Despite the high rents, these are popular places for well-resourced lobbyists.

European Financial Services Roundtable (EFSR), Rond-Point Schuman 11

The offices of the **European Financial Services Roundtable (EFSR)** can be found on the fifth floor of 11 Rond-Point Schuman. EFSR is a member organisation for chief execs and currently represents some of the biggest financial players in the EU. It has lobbied for a single market in Europe for pensions – and liberalisation of the financial services industry. It works

closely with its US sibling, the Financial Services Roundtable.

City of London, Rond-Point Schuman 6

Next door to the EFSR and strategically located opposite the EU Commission HQ are the offices of the UK's **City of London**, which lobbies on behalf of the banks and investment funds operating in the UK. The City of London has played a leading role in campaigning against the proposed EU regulation of hedge funds – including organising high profile visits from London's Mayor Boris Johnson to the Commission. In August 2011, the City of London still had not declared its activities in the EU's lobby transparency register.

US Chamber of Commerce,

Rond-Point Schuman 6/5

The Brussels office of the **US Chamber of Commerce**, one of the most powerful corporate lobby groups in the United States, is also in this building. While the Chamber's activities in Europe are modest compared to in the US, it enjoys high level political access on this side of the Atlantic, including breakfast meetings with the President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek and private lunches with Spanish President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

In the US, the Chamber of Commerce opposed President Barack Obama's health-care programme and spent millions of dollars on lobbying and advertising campaigns to block Obama's proposals for regulating Wall Street banks after the financial crisis. The Chamber of Commerce invested tens of millions of dollars in getting rightwing candidates voted into Congress in the 2010 mid-term elections and funded more than 8,000 TV ads supporting Republican candidates.

A number of EU companies fund the US Chamber of Commerce and its political campaigns, including BP, Shell and Siemens (**BP** also has an office on the Rond-Point – see the **Carbon Lobby**). In the US, the Chamber is fighting tooth and nail against the proposed DISCLOSE Act, which would force corporations to disclose their involvement in election campaign activities. In the light of the Chamber's hostility towards transparency it might not be surprising that so far it has not disclosed its Brussels lobbying activities in the EU's voluntary register.

Aquafed, Rond-Point Schuman 6

The International Federation of Private Water Operators (**Aquafed**) is one of the main pro-privatisation lobby groups, established in October 2005 by giant water



multinationals Suez and Veolia. According to Veolia lobbyist Jean Claude Banon, AquaFed also serves to counter “disinformation” spread by public water activists. Its headquarters are in Paris, but it has a Brussels office. The chair is Gérard Payen, former chief executive and chairman of Suez. Although in reality AquaFed primarily represents Veolia and Suez, it presents itself as the global voice of the private water industry, amplifying the multinationals' calls for water privatisation.

Rue de la Loi

The Rue de la Loi is a motorway that slices through the EU quarter and is **probably**

Lobby Planet Brussels – the EU quarter



the most polluted street in Brussels.

Indeed the air pollution is so bad that the 102 very expensive street lamps designed by French artist Patrick Rimoux corroded just six years after they were installed. The repair works were estimated at over €70,000. Rue de la Loi links the Parc du Cinquantaire and the Parc de Bruxelles. Lined by office-buildings and frequently clogged with traffic, pedestrians are not made welcome – but a large number of important lobby groups are based here.

Lisbon Council, Rue de la Loi 155

Just down from the Rond-Point Schuman and surrounded by what seem to be almost permanent building works, the gloomy **Residence Palace** at 155 Rue de la Loi is



home to the influential **Lisbon Council** among others. Built in the 1920s to provide luxury modern apartments for the elite, it became the HQ of the occupying forces during the war. The building currently houses think tanks, news organisations (the International Press Centre is based here) and one or two NGOs.

The Lisbon Council was founded in 2003 as a corporate-funded think tank, designed to push for greater neoliberal reform. It is funded by, among others, Shell, Siemens, Google, Tesco, Philips and IBM. Much of its work is focused on the ambitious implementation of what was the Lisbon Agenda, the EU's over-arching economic strategy – now known as the Europe 2020 Strategy. Despite its dependence on corporate funding and a radical free-market political agenda, it has had some success in depicting itself as a genuine think tank and can be frequently quoted in the media as a source of independent expertise. Barroso and other commissioners frequently speak at Lisbon Council events.

Finsbury International, Rue de la Loi 227

Further along the street is the Brussels office of **Finsbury International** at 227 Rue de la Loi. Finsbury International Policy & Regulatory Advisors (**FIPRA**) claims to be

Europe's most extensive lobby consultancy network. In 2010, FIPRA came under criticism after headhunting Joe Borg, the former Commissioner for maritime affairs, and John Richardson, Borg's former right hand man. FIPRA lobbies the Commission on maritime issues for clients including Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. One media report pointed out that FIPRA appeared to have "bought up the top of the EU's maritime department lock, stock and barrel." FIPRA's office is also the base for the **European Risk Forum**, led by senior FIPRA consultant Dirk Hudig (former secretary general at BusinessEurope).

The European Risk Forum was originally set up by the European Policy Centre, which helped British American Tobacco (BAT) and big pharma persuade policy makers of the importance of business-friendly impact assessment models. So instead of measuring the impacts of policy on the environment or public health, policy



makers looked at the competitiveness of industry.

White & Case, Rue de la Loi 62

International law firm **White & Case** is also based somewhat appropriately on the Rue de la Loi, where as well as dispensing legal advice to its corporate clients, it provides lobbying advice, working to achieve “a comfortable legal and regulatory environment for them”. White & Case, like many law firms lobbying for clients in Brussels, does not declare its lobbying activities in the Commission’s lobby register. In 2011 three of its employees held lobby passes for the European Parliament.

The **International Emissions Trading Association (IETA)** a candidate for the 2009 Angry Mermaid Award (see page 42 for more on IETA), and the **European Feed Manufacturers’ Federation, FEFAC** (see page 46) are both also based on the Rue de la Loi.

Avenue des Arts

AmCham EU, Avenue des Arts 53

AmCham EU – a separate body from the US Chamber of Commerce – lobbies on behalf of 140 American companies present in Europe. Its lobbying involves “a network of over 650 active member company representatives”, organised in 15 sectoral policy committees, which “monitor up to 80 issues at any one time”. The Economist magazine has called AmCham EU “the most effective lobbying force in town”. The group’s offices are conveniently close to the United States Mission to the EU, on Rue Zinner.

Rue Froissart

The Albert Borschette Centre, Rue Froissart 36

The **Albert Borschette Centre**, named after the Luxembourg European Commissioner

FIPRA and the Non-Toxic Solar Alliance

In 2010, the little known Non-Toxic Solar Alliance hired two lobbyists to lobby on the EU Directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS). The Non-Toxic Solar Alliance claimed to be founded and driven by scientists, researchers, solar industry representatives and members of civil society concerned about the use of potentially toxic substances in the production of solar photovoltaic modules and the long-term safety of consumers and the environment.

However, research by German watchdog group LobbyControl revealed that the group was founded by the lobby firm Bohnen Kallmorgen & Partner – a FIPRA

network partner – and was chaired by one of their partners. Not only did the lobby firm hide the actual background of the Non-Toxic Solar Alliance from the public but they also obscured the organisation’s funding source and their commercial goals. Confronted with the facts, the lobby firm admitted that the Alliance served as a “business development scheme”.

There were rumours about a further, hidden source of finance for the Non-Toxic Solar Alliance but they could not be proven. Following a complaint by LobbyControl the German Council for Public Relations issued a warning to Bohnen Kallmorgen & Partner and the Non-Toxic Solar Alliance for having violated transparency rules.

from 1970-76, hosts meetings for the 1,000 or so Commission expert groups, set up to advise on new legislation. While most of these groups are made up of government representatives, more than 100 are dominated by corporate lobbyists. Through these advisory groups, corporations influence critical areas of EU policy making such as financial regulation, enterprise and industry and the research agenda.

The European Training Institute, Rue Froissart 57

Otherwise known as Brussels' lobby school, the **European Training Institute** was founded by former agri-business lobbyist Daniel Guéguén in 2005. It claims to be "the only training centre in Brussels offering a full range of programmes and seminars dedicated to European Public Affairs". The institute claims that its students are taught "the best ways of influencing [the] policies" of the EU institutions as well as enhancing their lobbying skills. Among the techniques taught by the ETI is how to control the agenda in an expert group and how corporations can form coalitions with NGOs to make their ambitions more politically acceptable. Guéguén has predicted that Brussels-based lobbyists are likely "to adopt ever tougher lobbying strategies and ever more sophisticated approaches to economic intelligence that will probably involve practices such as manipulation,

destabilisation and disinformation". In April 2011, ETI Masterclass teacher Yves Lespinay was involved in lobbying for the "Alliance for Food Transparency", a front for the food industry to lobby on food labelling. Roth-Behrendt MEP said that the Alliance's lobbying activities were "dark and dirty". The Alliance was set up by **CLAN Public Affairs**, which employs both Lespinay and Guéguén and is based at the same address.

DG Consumer Protection,

Rue Froissart 101

The Commission's consumer protection department, responsible for a wide range of consumer issues from consumer credit to computer software, is also based in Rue Froissart. Its former head, the Bulgarian Commissioner Meglena Kuneva left the Commission to take up a lucrative post on the board of French bank BNP Paribas. During her term she was responsible for financial issues such as the EU's consumer credit directive, raising questions over conflicts of interest. But the Commission approved the move without batting an eyelid.

While Commissioner, Kuneva hired the Irish former European Parliament president Pat Cox as a special advisor, even though Cox was also on the advisory board of several corporations with strong interests in influencing EU consumer policies, including Microsoft, Michelin and Pfizer. He was also a senior counsellor to consultancy giant APCO, which represents Unilever, Coca-Cola, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) among others. But the Commission chose not to intervene. The EU Ombudsman later ruled that the Commission had failed to adequately assess whether hiring Cox created a conflict of interest.





The German car manufacturer **Daimler** (see page 42) can also be found on Rue Froissart.

Avenue de Cortenbergh

The Avenue de Cortenbergh runs north east from Rond-Point Schuman, with easy access to a number of the Commission buildings. Once the place to be for Brussels lobbyists, the shift of power towards the EU Parliament has led some of Brussels lobby firms, such as Burson-Marsteller and Hill & Knowlton to relocate – the company of MEPs has become much more attractive. The heavily congested Avenue de Cortenbergh is however still home to some of Brussels' traditional big industry groups, as well as the offices for a number of the EU member states

BusinessEurope, Avenue de Cortenbergh 168

BusinessEurope, the main organisation representing employers in Europe, is on the corner of Rue Fulton and Avenue de Cortenbergh. Its membership includes 20 million companies in 34 countries – but it is the big multi-nationals which dominate its agenda. BusinessEurope is a regular visitor to the Commission, receiving exclusive briefings on trade negotiations, climate strategy and more.

The power of BusinessEurope is based on its privileged access to the European Commission and its vast network of thousands of lobbyists from national federations and Europe's biggest corporations who bombard the EU institutions and national governments with their synchronised demands. Examples of BusinessEurope's 'lobby successes' include watering down EU chemicals regulation, free pollution rights for large chunks of the European manufacturing sector under

the EU's Emission Trading System and an EU trade strategy that has virtually been co-written by big business. Recently the group has played a strong role in pushing for austerity reforms across Europe, via the EU's new 'Economic Governance' initiative.

The **European Services Forum (ESF)** can be found in the same building, pursuing a globalised, deregulated market for services on behalf of Deutsche Bank, British Telecom, Telefónica, Veolia and others. Established in 1999 to support the EU Commission push for service liberalisation through the World Trade Organisation (WTO), ESF promoted the interests of EU-based transnational corporations at the expense of small firms in local markets. Its focus has remained the liberalisation – in practice privatisation – of public services

(education, water etc), and it now targets bilateral negotiations with countries from Asia, Africa and the Americas, as well as the on-going talks within the WTO.

BASF, Avenue de Cortenbergh 60

Behind the glass facade of no 60, are the Brussels lobbying offices of German chemical giant **BASF**, French arms and electronics producer **Thales** and energy conglomerate **E.ON** among others. BASF is a powerful force in Brussels and led the toxic lobby against the EU's chemical regulation REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical substances), which was finally passed in December 2006. This was one of the biggest lobby battles in EU history.

The toxic lobby against the EU's chemical regulation

Between 1999 and 2007, the creation of a pan-European set of rules for chemicals resulted in what is probably the biggest lobbying battle in EU history.

In 1999, the European Commission put forward an ambitious proposal for new legislation on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical substances (REACH), requiring the chemical industry to demonstrate the safety of its products. The aim was to substitute chemicals considered to be of "very high concern" with safer alternatives. The chemical industry launched a multi-million euro campaign to delay and weaken the proposal.

Numerous industry groups including BusinessEurope (then UNICE), the European chemical lobby, Cefic, and the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD) were involved, but BASF orchestrated the campaign, drowning

out the NGOs supporting tighter health and environmental rules.

Industry-funded studies wildly exaggerated the costs of the new legislation and the likelihood of job losses. The chemical lobby also reached out to its allies in the US, including in the Bush administration. US Secretary of State Colin Powell sent alerts to US embassies in Europe, warning of the impact the legislation would have on US industry.

BASF was also found to be funding advisers within DG Enterprise, the Commission department responsible for the legislation, and more than 200 BASF employees were seconded to the German government. A lobbyist from the German chemical federation VCI acted as an adviser to key MEPs.

As a result of the corporate lobby campaign, the REACH proposals were dramatically weakened, with many loopholes allowing toxic chemicals to remain on the market.

Rue Breydel

A short stroll from Rond-Point Schuman, Rue Breydel runs south off the Avenue d'Auderghem.

Gplus, Rue Breydel 42

Close enough to the Commission to be cordoned off when heads of state are in town, consultancy **Gplus** claims to be made up of “political and media advisers drawn together by a shared passion for politics, communications and European affairs”. It also has offices in London and specialises in clients with an ‘image problem’. The Putin government, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) have all been on its books. It was founded by a typical EU careerist, former Times journalist and Commission spokesperson Peter Guilford, and has a large number of former EU institution employees among its staff.

Gplus was hired by the Malaysian Palm Oil Council in an attempt to counter reports that palm oil plantations were leading to deforestation, human rights abuses, and excessive carbon emissions, and to encourage the EU to back targets for the use of agrofuels under the Renewable Energy Directive. It designed the Russian media strategy during the Russia-Georgia war in summer 2008, while competitor lobby firm Aspect Consulting did the same for the Georgian government.

Rue Belliard

Like Rue de la Loi, Rue Belliard slices through the EU quarter. It is an ugly five-lane motorway providing an exit for tens of thousands of cars every day. As a result, the

air is thick with petrol fumes, but the street is a popular location for lobby offices.

The European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE), Rue Belliard 4-6

The **ECIPE** is one of Brussels many corporate-funded think tanks, and specialises in international trade policy issues. It organises lunch seminars and events promoting industry-friendly trade policies, such as the strict enforcement of patents on medicines – which dramatically harms the availability of affordable medicines in the South. With an annual budget of about €1 million, its “core-funding” comes from the Free Enterprise Foundation in Sweden, but corporations also contribute, including pharmaceutical giants Eli Lilly and Pfizer, as well as Nokia, Unilever, Siemens, Nestlé, Nike, Google and BP.

Foratom, Rue Belliard 65

Foratom, which has its headquarters here, is the umbrella lobby group for the European nuclear industry, and declared spending €1.7 million a year on lobbying. This makes it one of the biggest lobby groups, but the nuclear industry’s political clout is given even greater oomph through the lobbying activities of EDF, Areva, TVO, Siemens, E.ON, RWE, Vattenfall, BNFL and CEZ which together had a total of 21 accredited lobbyists in the European Parliament in summer 2011. The nuclear industry also enjoys easy access to MEPs, for instance via the MEP-industry European Energy Forum.

Around the Place du Luxembourg



Place du Luxembourg

Following its renovation, Place du Luxembourg has become one of the main meeting places for MEPs and lobbyists in Brussels. Packed with restaurants, and with direct access to the Parliament, this is the place to see powerbrokers at lunch. Brussels reportedly has the highest number of restaurants per head in Europe – which perhaps reflects the number of people eating on generous expense accounts. Fabian O'Farrell's, the Irish bar on the corner of the square closest to the Parliament, is known to be a favourite among rightwing MEPs from the UK – and the lobbyists courting them. At the end of the week, the bars in Place Lux teem with MEPs and their assistants, lobbyists and others, schmoozing in a more relaxed setting.

The growing powers of the European Parliament have made the square and its immediate surroundings increasingly popular with lobby firms.

Another sign of Parliament's growing power is the number of MEPs and advisers being headhunted by lobbyists. The EU Parliament's secretary general Julian Priestley joined the **European Public Policy Advisers (EPPA)** consultancy in 2009, which has its office on Place du Luxembourg (no 2). The deputy secretary-general David Healey joined Burson-Marsteller in 2010 (a few hundred metres away at 37 Square De Meeûs).

Place du Luxembourg now competes with Rond-Point Schuman as the centre of the EU quarter. This also makes it a popular spot for PR stunts, as when Swedish energy company Vattenfall filled the



square with small plastic orange figures in 2009, each one supposedly representing an individual who had signed Vattenfall's 'Climate Manifesto'. This was part of Vattenfall's successful campaign to secure billions of euros in EU subsidies for controversial carbon capture and storage technology.

Rue du Luxembourg

The Rue du Luxembourg runs west from the Parliament, through the Square de Meeûs and on to Metro Trône. Several buildings have been refurbished, as more and more lobby firms move into the area around the Parliament, known as the Quartier Leopold.

Interrel Cabinet Stewart,

Rue du Luxembourg 24

This lobby consultancy is based in one of a number of the elegant buildings constructed in the second half of the 19th century. The high entrance was designed to allow carriages to drive right to the steps of the house.

The name plates outside reveal the industry groups represented by the Interrel Cabinet Stewart offices – that is to say: the consultancy provides a secretariat for them. These include the Free and Fair Trade Initiative and the European Casino Association. Another client used to be the International Council for Capital Formation (ICCF), a controversial 'think tank' which was set up as a front group for the Exxon-Mobil funded American Council for Capital Formation to promote an ultra-liberal US agenda in Brussels. The ICCF was nominated for the Worst EU Lobbying Awards in 2007 but appears to be less active in Brussels today.

Interrel says that it represents some 67 clients, including the Bank of America, Google, L'Oréal and mining giant Rio Tinto and reports turnover of "over 1 million euro". Among the staff are ex-Commission employees, including Jean-Philippe Monod de Froideville, a competition policy specialist who was previously in Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes' cabinet. Interrel's chairperson Catherine Stewart is also spokesperson for the lobbyists' club SEAP, and has been a leading campaigner against stronger lobby transparency rules.

The **European Seed Association** is also found on the Rue du Luxembourg, representing GM seeds corporations like Monsanto, Syngenta and BASF. It often works in tandem with biotech and pesticide lobby groups like EuropaBio and the European Crop Protection Association (ECPA). (See page 45)

Square de Meeûs

A short stroll from Place du Luxembourg, the grassy and shaded Square de Meeûs is framed by glass and steel modern office blocks, home to, among others, Burson-Marsteller, Fleishman-Hillard and the Commission's DG Research.

On the south west corner is the Czech House, one of the buildings run by one of the 27 member states – known for its annual beer parties.

Burson-Marsteller, Square de Meeûs 37
Burson-Marsteller competes with Hill & Knowlton for the status of biggest lobby

consultancy in Brussels, with a turnover of over €7.5 million and around 50 staff lobbying on behalf of more than 50 corporate clients, mainly from big pharma, the chemicals industry and oil. Also based at the Burson-Marsteller offices is the **Bromine Science and Environment Forum (BSEF)**. Although the name suggests an academic body or environmental organisation, BSEF in fact represents – and is funded by – four of the world's major producers of brominated flame retardants, based in the US, Israel and Japan. Burson-Marsteller has assisted their campaign against a ban on this toxic substance. Despite the frequent scandals that the firm continues to run into, the chief executive of its Brussels office claims "ethics is probably the most important part of what we do".

Fleishman-Hillard, Square de Meeûs 35
Fleishman-Hillard, next door, is only slightly smaller than its neighbour, with a reported lobbying turnover of over €7 million per year. Clients include numerous large banks, insurance group Aviva, BP and ExxonMobil.



In 2010 Fleishman-Hillard headhunted ex-Commissioner Günter Verheugen to further boost its lobbying clout.

Following the launch of the “European Citizens’ Initiative”, a Commission initiative whereby citizens can collect signatures calling on the Commission to initiate legislation, Fleishman-Hillard started offering corporations assistance with collecting signatures. While the ECI was clearly intended as a tool for citizens, the legislation is vaguely worded and “corporations can use it too”, as Fleishman-Hillard points out to its industry clients.

Edelman The Centre, Avenue Marnix, 22
Edelman, one of the top lobby consultancies in Brussels, recently merged with The Centre, which used to describe itself as a “think-do tank”. Based on Avenue Marnix, **Edelman The Centre** is a short stroll from the Parliament, and just around the corner from Square de Meeûs.

Like its US parent company, Edelman The Centre offers “grassroots advocacy” services. That is to say it creates the impression that its campaigns are backed by people, not just industry. The advantage of this approach, the lobby firm explains, is that industry lobby demands “will not be seen as biased, unlike your organisation”. Taking this approach, they organised a GM food tasting event in the Renaissance Hotel, in front of the European Parliament, in 2010, which appeared to have been organised by an unknown group called the Farmers Biotech Network. Only later did they admit that the biotech lobby group EuropaBio paid for the event – a fact that was not disclosed to guests nor to journalists covering the event. The demand to “give farmers more choice” is part of EuropaBio’s wider lobby campaign on behalf of large biotech corporations to promote GM.

Rue Montoyer

Rue Montoyer runs parallel to Rue du Luxembourg and has become an increasingly popular spot for lobby consultancy firms, as well as regional government offices, which play an active role in lobbying in Brussels on behalf of their local industries.

Bank of New York Mellon,

Rue Montoyer 46

The Brussels branch of global asset management and securities services company **BNY Mellon** is located at 46 Rue Montoyer. Former EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy joined its derivatives trading unit, BNY Mellon Clearing in April 2011. McCreevy took up the job immediately after the 12-month period during which he needed to get permission from the European Commission. The ex-Commissioner responsible for regulation of financial markets had previously been stopped from joining investment group NBNK because of a conflict of interests related to his previous role at the Commission.

APCO Worldwide, Rue Montoyer 47

The offices of **APCO Worldwide**, another of Brussels’ top lobbying firms, are on the fifth floor of 47 Rue Montoyer. From here, APCO lobbies the EU institutions on behalf of dozens of clients including Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Novartis and Unilever.

APCO Worldwide is also known to have lobbied on behalf of governments, including several with controversial human rights records such as Nigeria, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan. In Brussels the company also lobbies for the regional government of the Azores, as highlighted on the nameplate on the facade.

Hill and Knowlton, Rue Montoyer 51

High profile lobby firm **Hill & Knowlton** is based in the “NEO building” on Rue Montoyer, a building that boasts one of the highest rents per square meter in the whole of the EU quarter.

Among its clients is Nord Stream AG, a joint venture (Gazprom holds a 51% stake) to construct a gas pipeline between Russia and the EU. On its website, Hill & Knowlton explains how it is manipulating public opinion to support Nord Stream: “shaping the media strategy to address imbalances in the political discussion over the Nord Stream project [...] By utilizing the UK media’s influential and opinion forming status in Europe, H&K will support the launch process and help ensure acceptance and endorsement from key UK stakeholders.”

H&K has also been active influencing MEPs on behalf of Gazprom, organising a series of closed-door events inside the Parliament building. According to media reports, the lobby firm flew MEPs to Siberia on a private jet on behalf of Russian oil giant Rosneft.

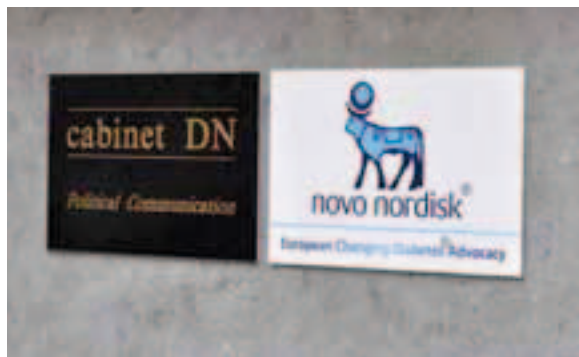
The consultancy also lobbies on behalf of the Indian National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) to increase deregulation in the European labour market – increasing pressure for lower labour standards in Europe, potentially resulting in worse working conditions for migrant workers. Other clients include Republika Srpska, and ‘stun gun’ manufacturer Taser.

Rue Montoyer is also home to the **Euro-pean Banking Federation** and the **Euro-pean Parliamentary Financial Services Forum** (see page 38).

Rue d’Arlon

Concert Noble, Rue d’Arlon 82

This building, one of the most prestigious venues in the EU quarter, was built in 1873 as a banqueting room for Belgian aristocrats. It is not generally used for high-profile events, but more often for ‘private’ gatherings in a luxurious setting. For several years, it was the venue for the annual Capitalist Ball, bringing together tuxedo-clad representatives of radical free-market think tanks. Goldman Sachs used Concert Noble for its ‘Markets & Policy Symposium’ in the summer of 2009, shortly after the peak of the financial crisis.



Cabinet DN, Rue d’Arlon 25

Cabinet DN, located just a stone’s throw from the European Parliament, was founded in 2005 by two Danish former MEP assistants, Timme Bertolt Døssing and Jacob Lund Nielsen. Their clients include the Brazilian sugar cane industry association UNICA (heavily criticised for defending the sugar cane industry’s appalling working conditions and environmental damage caused by burning forests). Cabinet DN promises complete client confidentiality, using secrecy as a selling point for potential new clients. Indeed Cabinet DN only grudgingly joined

the Commission's lobby transparency register after a Danish newspaper exposed this business strategy. Among their staff is the Guardian's former European business correspondent David Gow and Danish former MEP Christian Røvsing.

Parc Léopold

Friends of Europe, Bibliothèque Solvay

The Bibliothèque Solvay, an art nouveau building which was originally part of the Free University of Brussels, was funded by the industrial chemist Ernest Solvay. It now houses **Friends of Europe**, "an independent, not-for-profit think-tank dedicated to fostering open discussion and stimulating new thinking on the issues facing Europe and its citizens".

Established by former journalist Giles Merritt, Friends of Europe brings industry representatives together with EU officials to debate the issues of the day. Although Friends of the Europe claims not to have an agenda beyond the challenges facing Europe, its funding and its VIP partners tend to come from the corporate sector and its events are an ideal lobbying opportunity. The **Security and Defence Agenda**, which boasts former NATO secretary general Javier Solana as a patron, shares the building. This think tank, with many large arms producers among its members, was also founded by Merritt and



argues for an increase in European military spending.

Rue Wiertz

The Bavarian Representation,

Rue Wiertz 77

The **German state of Bavaria** secured this luxurious, historical complex nicknamed "Schloss Neuwahnstein" just outside the Léopold Parc for the bargain price of €30 million. The representation's 30 employees and a dozen trainees lobby the European institutions to promote Bavaria's interests – whether these are agricultural subsidies or supporting car manufacturing (eg BMW). Around 600 events take place here every year, offering MEPs, EU officials and industry lobbyists intimate get-togethers with Bavarian sausage, pretzels and wheat beer.

Just around the corner, in the uninviting concrete block on Rue Belliard 60-62, the **German state of Baden-Württemberg** has its base. Well known among the German Eurocrat community for its "Schwarzwaldstube" (Black Forest room), it offers culinary specialities from home. One floor of the building is rented to Baden-Württemberg's corporate champions, including technology giant Bosch and energy company EnBW.

Around one fifth of the lobbying in Brussels is done on behalf of states, regions and cities.

Bertelsmann, Chaussée d'Etterbeek 166

Just across the Léopold Parc, this Art Nouveau building (with the inscription "L'Ecole Dentaire Belge") is now the "Brussels Liaison Office" for the media giant **Bertelsmann**. And in fact, the liaison office has close ties inside the Parliament. One of Brussels' longest standing MEPs,

Elmar Brok is Senior Vice President for Media Development at the company.

Brok claims to keep his two roles separate, but leaked internal documents show this is not the case. A 1994 report from the Brussels lobby office, signed by Brok, boasted that Bertelsmann had ensured: “that the initial wording of ‘cross-ownership’ restrictions [for media] are weakened.”

More recently Brok has been pushing for a transatlantic free trade zone – which would be very welcome for Bertelsmann. This blurring of roles has been repeatedly criticised, but the European Parliament’s weak rules around conflicts of interest have allowed him to continue.

Place du Champs de Mars

West of the Square de Meeûs, on the edge of the EU quarter, is the Place du Champs de Mars, home to the 26-floor Bastion Tower with 31,484 m² of office space. Tenants include water and energy giant **Suez**, French bank **Société Générale** and several law firms and consultancies.

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer is one of the international law firms based there, offering clients “strategic policy advice and help to shape EU legislation and administrative decisions”, according to an online brochure. But while Freshfields and many other law firms are happy to advertise their lobbying services to clients, they have failed to declare their lobbying activities in the Commission’s lobby register.

Lobby groups like the **European Satellite Operators Association** and the **European Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (EVCA)**, are also in the building, with EVCA overlooking the EU quarter from the 17th floor. With a reputation for asset-stripping companies,



EVCA was nominated for the Worst EU Lobbying Awards in 2010 for its campaign against regulation of private equity investments.

Next door, at 4 Place du Champs de Mars is the local unemployment office for the Ixelles neighbourhood, where unemployed residents come to stamp a card to secure their unemployment benefit. The contrast with the lawyers and lobbyists in their expensive suits in the Bastion Tower is striking.

Just around the corner from this power tower is Brussels’ African quarter, Matongé. With its vibrant markets, cafés, hair dressers and music stores, it is a far cry from



the stuffy EU zone. However, Matongé is definitely at risk of gentrification.

Corporate Europe Observatory sits on the border between Matongé and the EU quarter in the Brussels Sustainable House,

Mundo-b. This eco-renovation provides office space for a number of NGOs, a conference centre and organic café, also hosting cultural events.

The northern part of the EU quarter is part of the Saint-Josse-ten-Noode district, the poorest district in Belgium with an average taxable income of just over €8,000 a year and staggering levels of unemployment (40% of young people are out of work). The contrast with the 5,000 highly paid EU officials and lobbyists who work in the futuristic office buildings is stark.

Bruegel, one of the most quoted sources on EU economic and financial policy is based here

at 33 Rue de la Charité. Like many EU think tanks, Bruegel depends heavily on industry funding for its work. Corporate members include BNP Paribas Fortis, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Pfizer and Syngenta. Bruegel insists that its “independence, integrity and objectivity” is guaranteed, but don’t its links to megabanks stand in the way of a critical assessment of the role of these players in the financial crisis?

On the Outskirts

The EU quarter seems to be continuously expanding its borders. On the other side of Parc du Cinquantenaire, in the posh neighbourhoods around the Merode and Montgomery metros, there are an increasing number of corporate lobby offices, law firms and lobby consultancies. The Commission buildings at Rond-Point Schuman and Rue de la Loi are just a short hop away by metro. Lobby consultancy giant **Kreab Gavin Anderson (KGA)** is based right next to Merode station. KGA is one of the major consultancies lobbying in Brussels for large banks and other financial industry clients, particularly since it acquired Houston Consulting. Like many lobby consultancies, KGA employs several former Commission officials, including former Commissioner Henning Christophersen and Mogens Peter Carl, the former director-general at DG Environment who works for KGA clients on energy issues. The energy giant **Vattenfall** has its Brussels office around the corner at 8 Avenue de Tervueren.

Microsoft, Avenue des Nerviens 85

The headquarters of the software giant **Microsoft** are on the Avenue des Nerviens, next to the Parc du Cinquantenaire. The building, the “Microsoft Executive Briefing Center for European Innovation”, is probably the largest Brussels lobby office of any single corporation. Microsoft declared spending almost a million euros on EU lobbying in 2009-2010 in the Commission’s lobby register (which is probably an underestimate). As well as the lobbying done by Microsoft directly, it is also part of around 40 lobby coalitions and think tanks, and also hires consultancies and law firms to lobby on its behalf. A controversial example

of this lobbying by proxy was the Campaign for Creativity (C4C), which campaigned for US-style software patents in the EU in 2005. C4C claimed to represent artists and small programmers, but in fact was run by a London-based lobby consultancy and almost certainly funded by Microsoft. The C4C campaign was closed down soon after the final vote on the directive.

Centre for European Energy Strategy (CERES), Avenue de Tervueren 168

The Centre for European Energy Strategy (CERES) is further down the prestigious Avenue de Tervueren, at number 168.

CERES specialises in providing lobbying advice for large energy corporations, including the nuclear industry and was founded by former MEP Rolf Linkohr, who was fired as a Special Advisor to Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs in 2007 after concerns were raised about conflicts of interest. Linkohr had until then combined his role as a public policy advisor with working as a lobby consultant for large energy multinationals. The European Association of Coal and **Lignite (Euracoal)** and the German coal lobby groups **DEBRIV** and **Deutscher Kohlenbergbau** are on the same floor and the **International Cadmium Association (ICdA)** and **WWF’s European Policy Office** are also in the same building. WWF is unusual in the NGO sector in that it is willing to enter partnerships with industry. Quite a few of these partnerships have been criticised because they enable industry to greenwash its activities. Examples include WWF’s partnership with CocaCola on water issues and Monsanto’s involvement in the Roundtable for Responsible Soy.

European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT),

Place des Carabiniers, 18a

The **European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT)** is a powerful lobby group made up of chief executives from 45 or more of the EU's biggest transnational companies. It has its offices on the smart Place des Carabiniers in Brussels' eastern outskirts. Leif Johansson of Volvo currently chairs the ERT, while working groups are led by the chief executives of Siemens, Nestlé and Lafarge. The ERT has wielded remarkable levels of influence, particularly on its main priority: the single market. It played a key role in lobbying on the Single Act, adopted in 1986, which reformed the Treaty of Rome – the European Union's founding document. Former ERT heavy-weight Baron Daniel Janssen has described the ERT'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-states’ 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 strategies, including the current Europe 2020 Strategy that lays out the neoliberal economic reform priorities of the EU.

European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic), Avenue E. van Nieuwenhuysse 4

Cefic is one of the biggest industry lobby groups in Brussels, with around 170 staff and a total budget of close to €45 million. In 2009 Cefic was temporarily suspended from the European Commission's lobby transparency register and was only readmitted after increasing its declared lobbying expenditure from “less than €50,000”

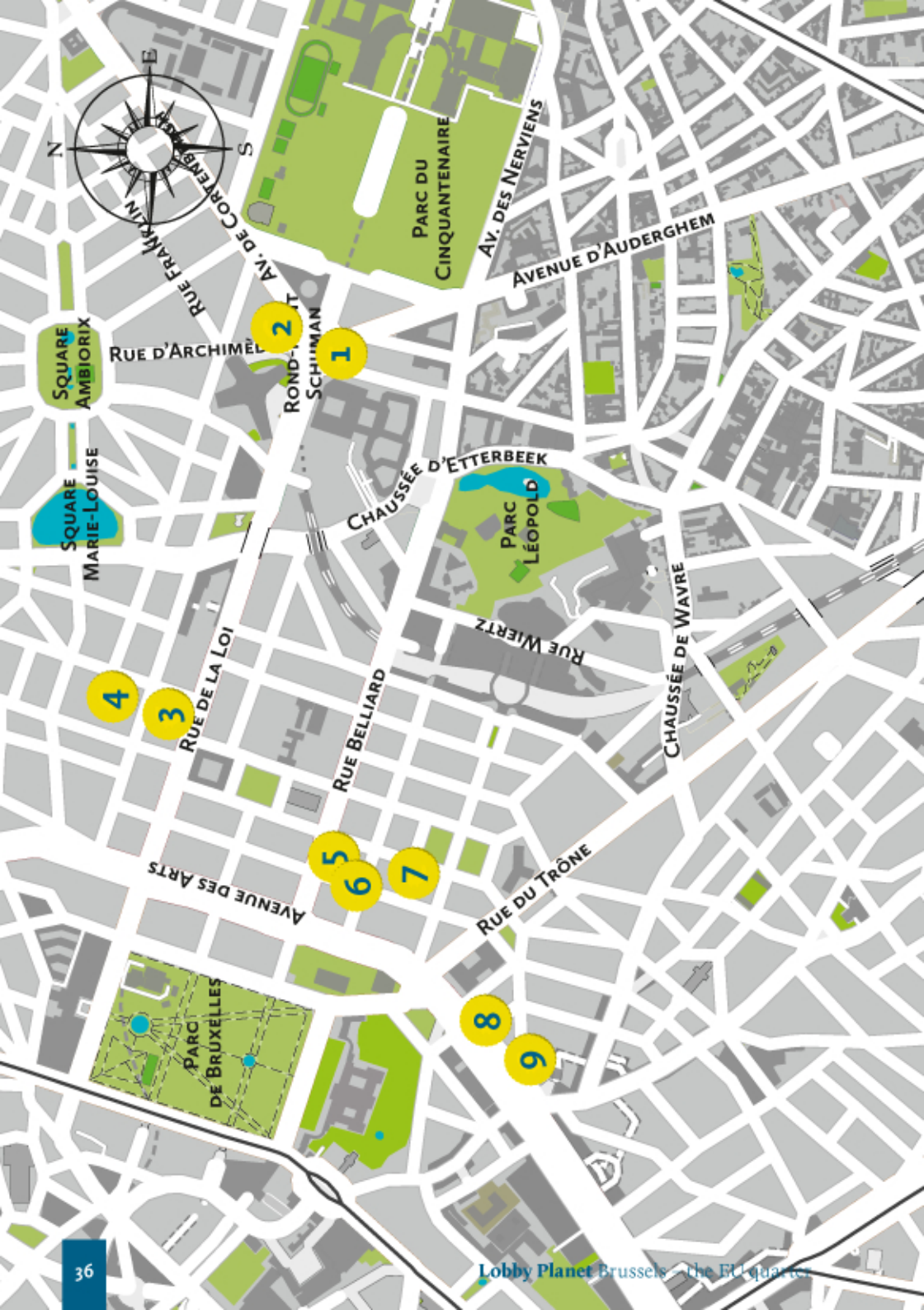
to €4 million – still a remarkably small fraction of the organisation's total budget.

Cefic was one of the key players in the chemical industry's battle against the EU chemicals regulation, REACH (see page 24). It also sprang into action to help ensure that the chemical industry did not have to meet the costs of action to tackle climate change through the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). Cefic argued that increased costs would force chemical manufacturers out of Europe, taking jobs from the EU. As a result, chemical manufacturers will receive free permits in the next phase of the ETS. Cefic has also lobbied to keep the EU's emission reduction commitments as low as possible.

ASD (AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe), Avenue de Tervueren 270

ASD is the umbrella organisation for the arms industry in Europe. The product of a 2004 merger between three arms industry lobby groups, it represents 28 national trade associations in 20 European countries, with a steering committee representing 18 major aerospace and defence companies. The emerging ‘homeland security’ market, which blurs the line between traditional defence and civil security, provides a lucrative opportunity for the arms industry to boost sales and to get rid of their image as merchants of war. The EU – which likes to see itself as a ‘civil power’ – is supporting this approach with its security research funding programme.

The Brussels lobby offices of biotech giant **Monsanto** (See page 46) are also at 270 Avenue de Tervueren.



SQUARE
AMBIORIX

SQUARE
MARIE-LOUISE

RUE D'ARCHIMÈDE

RUE DE LA LOI

AVENUE DES ARTS

PARC
DE BRUXELLES

PARC DU
CINQUANTAIRE

AV. DES NERVIENS

AVENUE D'AUDERGHEM

CHAUSSEE D'ETTERBEEK

PARC
LEOPOLD

RUE WIERTZ

CHAUSSEE DE WAVRE

RUE BELLIAUD

RUE DU TRONE

ROND-POINT
SCHUMAN

The financial lobby

Industry lobbying has been a major factor in both the US and in Europe in rolling back regulation of the financial markets – regulation which might have prevented the economic meltdown in 2008. And despite the disastrous impacts of the crisis, big banks, hedge funds and other investment funds continue lobbying against effective regulation of their activities. This is a brief guide to the main financial lobbies in Brussels.

1 **City of London**, Rond Point Schuman 6

Strategically located opposite the European Commission's headquarters, the **City of London** lobbies on behalf of the hundreds of banks and investment funds operating from the UK's financial centre. The City of London has played a leading role in industry campaigning against proposed EU regulation of hedge funds and private equity. This has included media stunts such as the Mayor of London Boris Johnson's visit to Brussels in September 2009 to lobby former Commissioner for the Internal Market, Charlie McCreevy, and MEPs. The City of London has not declared its activities in the Commission's lobby transparency register.

2 **European Financial Services Roundtable (EFSR)**,

Rond Point Schuman 11 (5th floor)

The **EFSR** is modelled on the European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT) and similarly does not allow companies as members, but instead is made up of their chief executives. The EFSR currently has 18 members from some of the largest financial firms in Europe, most of them banks. The EFSR works closely with its US counterpart, the Financial Services Roundtable. It has actively lobbied for the creation of a single European market for private pensions through full-scale liberalisation.

3 **DG Internal Market**, Rue de Spa 2

The **Directorate General of the Internal Market and Services** maintains close links to the financial sector, including via several advisory groups ('expert groups') set up to advise the Commission on legislation. Most of the expert groups that advise on financial legislation are dominated by representatives from the private financial sector. The number of corporate lobbyists advising the Commission as members of expert groups is greater than the number of Commission officials drafting policies in DG Internal Market. Former Commissioner McCreevy was heavily criticised for being too close to the financial sector, including by the Social Democrats who accused him of behaving as "a paid lobbyist". His successor Michel Barnier has called for a more balanced approach, but few concrete changes have been made so far. McCreevy has in the meantime taken up a number of lobby jobs in the private sector.

4 **Alternative Investment Management Association (AIMA)**, Rue de Spa 30

AIMA is a lobby organisation for the hedge fund industry which works closely with the biggest hedge fund lobby in the US, the Managed Funds Association. Its main aim is to keep hedge fund regulation to a minimum. The group, which is represented in Brussels by public affairs consultancy

Hume Brophy, has played a leading role in the industry fight-back against the European Commission's proposed investment fund directive. This draft directive had in fact been widely criticised for being too weak, but AIMA and other industry lobby groups fiercely opposed the modest transparency obligations proposed by the Commission.

5 European Banking Federation, Rue Montoyer 10

The **European Banking Federation** represents 5,000 corporate banks from 31 European countries. The big European banks such as HSBC, BNP-Paribas, Deutsche Bank, Barclays, the Royal Bank of Scotland and Crédit Agricole are influential within the federation.

In July 2009 the EBF together with other financial lobby groups and industry body BusinessEurope asked the EU to coordinate and optimise a bail out of those banks and insurance firms which had a trans-European reach in the event of a collapse. At the same time, EBF was promoting austerity measures and labour market deregulation as a response to the crisis created by its members. It has also lobbied to delay EU legislation against tax havens.

Many of EBF's prominent members are also members of the "Shadow ECB Council", a body of banking lobbyists that issues its own verdict before each meeting of the European Central Bank. The big banks have been lobbying since May 2009 to retain a preferential 1% lending rate from the ECB. When the ECB started lending to governments which were in trouble in late 2010, the big banks were able to make huge profits by borrowing at 1% from the ECB and then lending to the Greek, Irish and Portuguese governments at a much higher rate.

6 European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum (EPFSF), Rue Montoyer 10

The **European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum** (EPFSF) provides the European Banking Federation with a presence in the European Parliament. In theory it is a "forum for industry-Parliamentary dialogue" and "does not lobby", but the 55 paid-up industry members clearly use it to influence key MEPs via the Forum's lunch and breakfast debates. Journalists and civil society are seldom invited. One former MEP who chaired the Forum, Piia-Noora Kauppi, went through the revolving door to lead the Finnish banking lobby in 2008. Kauppi later also joined the steering committee of the European Banking Federation and became the chair of the European Banking Industry Committee.

7 International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA), Square de Meeûs 38-40

The **International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA)** – joint winner of the Worst EU Lobbying Award 2010 in the finance sector – is based in the popular Square de Meeûs, a short stroll from the Parliament. The lack of transparency and light-touch regulation in the derivatives market faced heavy criticism following the financial crisis – but ISDA, and prominent members such as investment bank Goldman Sachs urged the European Commission to take minimal action, arguing that tough new rules would be bad for business.

8 Deutsche Bank, Avenue Marnix 13-15

Deutsche Bank is one of the most active players in the banking lobby in Brussels, with representatives on a number of the Commission's advisory groups.

It is also one of the banks involved in speculating on food prices, advertising its Agriculture Euro Fund during the global food crisis in 2007-2008, offering investors the opportunity to profit from the rising food prices – which left 100 million people living below the poverty line. Speculation on the food markets uses the same type of controversial financial instruments which led to the collapse of financial markets in the US and Europe. These speculative instruments were promoted in Brussels by the International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) and the Futures and Options Association (FOA), both of which count Deutsche Bank as one of their members.

9 European Venture Capital Association, Place du Champ de Mars 5

The **European Venture Capital Association (EVCA)**, based in the Bastion Tower at 5 Place du Champ de Mars, next to Porte de Namur metro station, battles against the regulation of hedge funds and private equity funds, arguing that tighter regulation would damage EU competitiveness. It has some 30 employees representing the interests of large investment firms, who lobby in person, or pull the strings behind the scenes. In April 2010 hundreds of small and medium sized companies objected to hedge fund regulation, having been lent on by EVCA. This campaign won it a nomination for the Worst EU Lobbying Awards 2010.

Eurofi – present in Brussels, based in Paris

This Paris-based ‘think tank’ is funded by big European banks and functions as a lobby group. It is chaired by the former IMF and BNP-Paribas chair, Jacques De Larosière. He was the chair of the High Level Group on financial supervision that was set up in late 2008 by Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso to shape the EU’s response to the economic crisis. In the autumn of 2010, **Eurofi** hosted a large-scale banking industry conference in Brussels, where Goldman Sachs and other Eurofi members attacked proposed regulation of their activities.



The carbon lobby

Industry lobbying has been shown to have played a significant role in weakening and undermining the effectiveness of EU's climate policies. This has resulted in an EU climate policy which relies on a combination of weak CO₂ reduction measures, carbon trading and other dangerous pseudo-solutions such as agrofuels to tackle growing emissions – a raft of measures which have allowed large corporations to continue emitting and profiting from a new market.

1 BP, Rond-Point Schuman 11

BP is one of the world's most notorious oil companies and is a big player on the Brussels lobby scene. Their office is located in the Archimedes Building, at 11 Rond-Point Schuman.

BP has actively lobbied to manipulate the EU's efforts to tackle climate change by promoting carbon trading as a solution. With the support of the UK government, BP lobbied the EU to make the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) the main instrument in its climate change strategy. Since the introduction of the ETS, BP has lobbied to secure free permits for its refineries. In 2007 BP's then chairman Peter Sutherland was appointed adviser on energy and climate change to Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

2 Shell, Rond-Point Schuman 11

Shell is the world's largest company and most carbon intensive oil company (measured in carbon per barrel). It recently moved its Brussels offices to Rond-Point Schuman.

Shell has a long track-record of avoiding any environmental responsibility for its crimes, and for infiltrating governments, as in Nigeria. The oil giant plays a key role in the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the Global Climate Coalition and the Centre for European

Policy Studies. In 2009 it was runner up in the Angry Mermaid Award for lobbying to undermine action to tackle climate change ahead of the UN climate talks in Copenhagen.

While claiming to support action to tackle climate change, Shell lobbies for lower emission reduction targets and for subsidies for carbon capture and storage technology (CCS) which it claims is a solution to global warming – a solution that allows it to go on exploiting dirty fossil fuels. Shell is also one of the leading champions of high carbon, devastating tar sands exploitation in Canada which it attempts to argue can be done in an environmentally-sensitive way.

3 Vattenfall, Avenue de Tervueren 8

In September 2008, Brussels' Place du Luxembourg witnessed an astounding example of greenwash, thanks to the Swedish energy company **Vattenfall**. The company filled the square with small plastic orange figures, one for each individual who had signed Vattenfall's 'Climate Manifesto', which the company claimed was all about "curbing climate change".

But Vattenfall's manifesto demands were designed to boost Vattenfall's profits, not curb CO₂ emissions. And at the same time as it was busy portraying itself as a climate champion, it lobbied from its Avenue de

Tervueren office to continue with business as usual, using coal to generate electricity, which it claims can be cleaned up using carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. The company was given the Climate Greenwash Award in Copenhagen in May 2009 for its troubles.

Vattenfall is the fourth biggest producer of electricity in Europe and emitted 82.5 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2008. It is a member of a number of international industry coalitions including “Combat Climate Change” and the Global Compact’s “Caring for Climate” initiative, which specifically targets the UN climate talks. But the company’s legal action against German environmental restrictions on a coal-fired power station is less environmentally friendly.

4 International Emissions Trading Association (IETA), Rue de la Loi 235

IETA is the main lobbyist for a global market in greenhouse gases which allows companies and countries to trade the right to pollute. It represents all the big players with an interest in carbon trading (including Shell, BP, JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank, etc.). It was set up by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Business

Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) to establish a market in greenhouse gas emissions. It can be found at 235 Rue de la Loi.

IETA regularly has the largest “non-governmental” delegation at UN climate talks – and provides business support for the UN (and the EU’s) market-based approach to tackling climate change – regardless of the fact that carbon trading leads to exploitation in the South (through ‘carbon projects’), and evidence which suggests that there are fundamental flaws in the EU carbon market.

5 Daimler, Rue Froissart 133

In the 1990s, the car industry committed to substantially reduce CO₂ emissions from cars by 2010, under a voluntary agreement with the Commission. By 2006, it had become obvious that the target would never be met voluntarily and the Commission decided to set a mandatory target. **Daimler**, together with other carmakers waged a full-scale lobbying offensive and succeeded in watering down and delaying the EU mandatory targets for CO₂ emissions from cars. For this campaign Daimler, together with BMW and Porsche, was awarded the Worst EU Lobbying Award in 2007.

Coal and CCS

Vattenfall plans to use carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology, capturing CO₂ and storing it underground, to clean up its coal-fired power stations. Coal is one of the dirtiest sources of energy but Vattenfall uses coal in 20 power plants across Europe and wants to build more. According to the International Energy Agency (a champion of CCS)

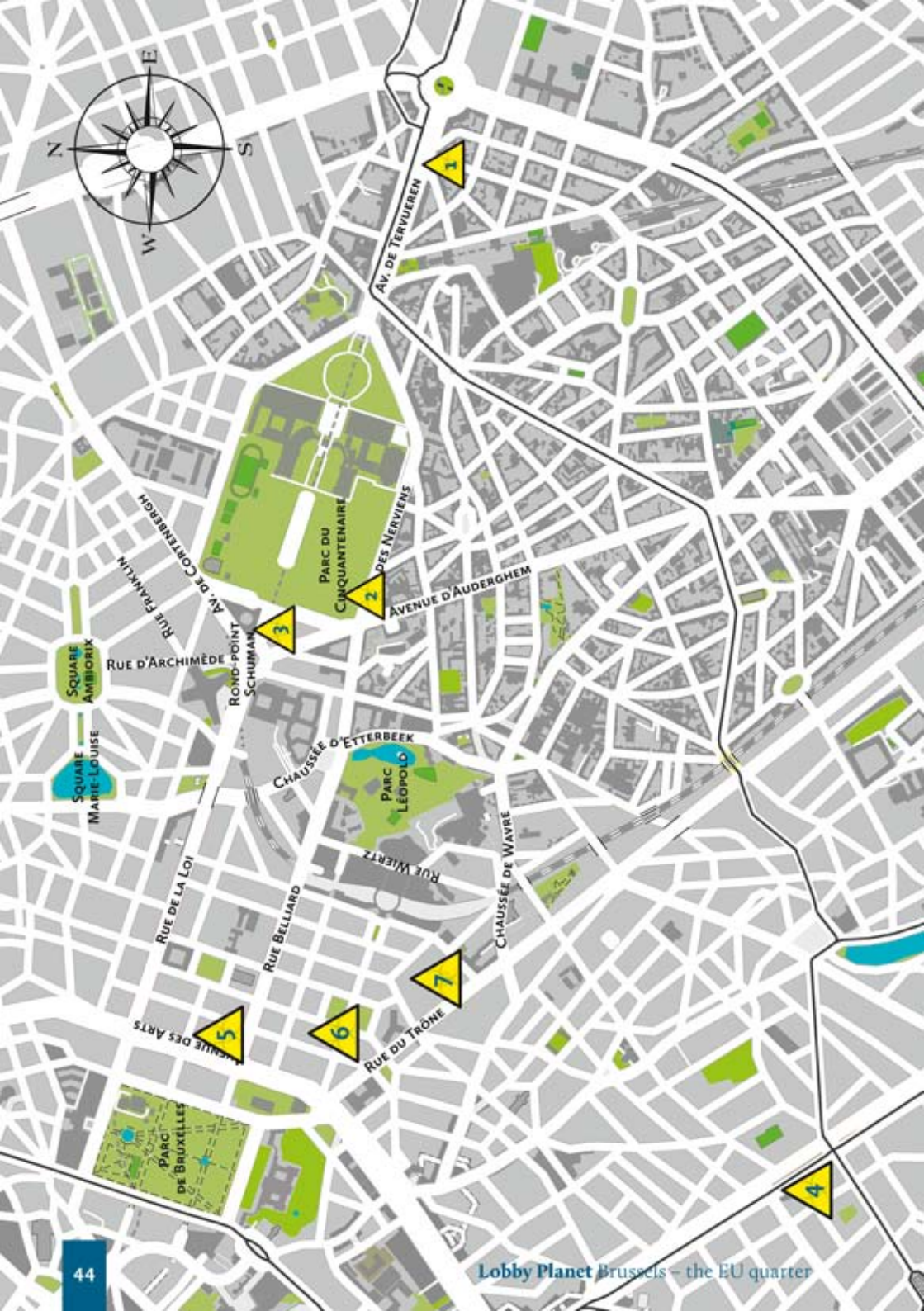
the technology is unlikely to be commercially viable until after 2020 – too late to prevent dangerous climate change. Vattenfall has successfully lobbied for political and financial support for CCS in Europe and the company is also actively lobbying for nuclear power – despite leaks at its generators in Germany and Sweden.

6 International Air Transport Association, Avenue Louise 350

The **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** is the umbrella lobbying organisation representing the international airline industry. Their office is at 350 Avenue Louise and their 230 member airlines include many of the big carriers including British Airways, Lufthansa and Qantas.

IATA lobbied against regulatory action on climate change for many years, both at the EU and at the UN level. They have been known to manipulate the data on emissions from aviation, and in recent years have consistently tried to greenwash their business. Brussels-based campaign group Transport and Environment has described their messaging as “almost always 100% away from the truth”.

Aviation is due to be included in the EU’s Emissions Trading System from 2012 – forcing airlines using EU airports to have permits to cover emissions. But ahead of the UN climate talks in Copenhagen in 2009, IATA called for a voluntary carbon reduction scheme for airlines, in an attempt to pre-empt regulatory measures.



The food and biotech lobby

The corporate agri-food sector incorporates everything from seeds and agrochemicals to food processing and retail, and lobbies in Brussels through a myriad of lobby associations.

1 EuropaBio

EuropaBio (6 Avenue de l'Armée) is the umbrella lobby group for many biotech-related industries fighting to increase their profits. It urges faster GM crop approval in the EU, claiming that GM crops are safe, that they will feed the world and help combat climate change. It fights for less regulation (see also FEFAC, page 46), and for more public funding for biotech research.

EuropaBio and the **European Seed Association (ESA)** are fierce advocates of EU-funded platforms such as Plants for the Future to get public money in the pockets of their members.

EuropaBio hires PR firms to persuade MEPs, for example that there is such thing as a 'pro-GM' farmers movement (see page 29).

2 EuroCommerce, Avenue des Nerviens 9

EuroCommerce claims to represent some 6 million companies in retail,

wholesale and international trade, with Carrefour, Auchan and fastfood giant McDonald's among its members. Its offices can be found at the end of Avenue d'Auderghem, at 9 Avenue des Nerviens. EuroCommerce pushes for "less red tape, better regulation..." and states that its mission is to "promote the visibility and defend the interests of commerce in the European institutions". It has played an influential role in the services negotiations within the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Individual food companies also maintain their own lobby offices in Brussels, as well as making use of the various umbrella bodies, networks and trade bodies. **Unilever**, for example, actively lobbies from its office at 50 Rue d'Arlon to promote recognition of the sustainability of palm oil and soy through the Round Table on Responsible Soy and the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil.

The biotech lobby

The biotech lobby mainly operates in Brussels through umbrella groups EuropaBio (representing the entire biotech sector) and the European Seed Association (ESA). Biotech corporations including Monsanto, Syngenta, Pioneer, Bayer Cropscience, BASF, Dow Agrosciences and Novartis are members of both groups, but many also have their own lobbying offices in Brussels.

Biotech companies have not managed to convince the European public of the alleged benefits or necessity of genetically

manipulated crops. Various EU member states have been wary of genetically modified food and have blocked authorisation for cultivating new GM crops in the EU for the last 14 years. However, in early 2010 the European Commission approved the controversial BASF Amflora potato for cultivation in the EU.

The biotech lobby groups want to get rid of the EU zero-tolerance policy for the presence of non-authorised GMOs in any imported food or feed (see FEFAC below).

The biotech giant **Monsanto** hides its Brussels' base outside the EU quarter at 270 Avenue de Tervueren. The building appears to be entirely occupied by the ING Bank, but in fact Monsanto is based here – and once proudly displayed its name and logo on the front. Perhaps it has opted for this low key approach having realised that its genetically modified products were not necessarily welcome in Brussels.

Despite the opposition, Monsanto continues to push for approval for its Round-upReady soy in Europe, with Romania the most likely host. It also lobbies actively at the UN, pushing for GM soy to be recognised as climate-friendly – and in 2009 won the Angry Mermaid Award for its efforts to prevent effective action to tackle climate change. It also is an active member of EuropaBio, the European Crop Protection Association and the European Seed Association.

European Feed Manufacturers'

 **Federation, Rue de la Loi 223**

More commonly known as **FEFAC**, the European Feed Manufacturers' Federation sits practically on the doorstep of the Berlaymont at 223 Rue de la Loi. This lobby group represents the European animal feed industry and its main priority in recent years has been to get rid of the EU's zero-tolerance policy for non-authorised genetically modified organisms (GMOs) – which just might be found in animal feed. The group claims this policy is causing major delays and disruptions in the animal food supply – although according to research by Friends of the Earth Europe very few supplies of feed are affected by contamination.

FEFAC enjoys a close relationship with its neighbours at the Commission – with internal newsletters revealing how the then director general at the Commission's department for health and consumers, Robert

Madelin suggested that FEFAC might need to “bloody” its data a bit if it wanted to persuade politicians of its case. FEFAC subsequently did just that. Companies involved in food and agribusiness also come together under the **European Agri-Food Network** to lobby on common positions.

European Food Information Council, rue Paul Emile Janson 6

The **European Food Information Council, EUFIC**, provides “science-based information” on food issues “in a way that consumers can understand”. Based at 19 Rue Guimard, it claims to be the voice of credible, science-based expertise, while accepting support from the European food and drinks industries. Coca-Cola, Danone, Cargill, Kraft Foods, Mars, McDonald's, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever are all members – but EUFIC states that it will only promote individual companies' views that are based on peer-reviewed science.

Food and Drink Europe, Avenue des Arts 43

Previously known as the Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the EU (CIAA), **Food and Drink Europe (FDE)** is based on the edge of the EU quarter at 43 Avenue des Arts. This influential lobby group represents the big food companies, including Unilever, Kraft Foods, Nestlé, Coca Cola, Mars, Cargill and Danone. It shares its building with the European Breakfast Cereal Association (CEEREAL).

The FDE was a key player in the 2009-10 lobby battle over food-labelling, fighting to block consumer-friendly ‘traffic light’ labels which give colour-coded warnings for products containing high amounts of salt, sugar and fats. Instead, the FDE persuaded MEPs that a voluntary approach based on Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs) would

The EU's Technology Platforms – a platform for industry

There are 36 European Technology Platforms (ETPs), set up by the European Commission under the Lisbon Strategy to identify and advise on industry priorities for the EU research programme. These platforms are intended to provide industry experts with an opportunity to influence how some of the EU's research budget is spent. They do not attempt to achieve balance.

The **European Biofuel Technology Platform (EBFTP)** was set up to provide strategic

advice on research into agrofuels, drawing almost all of its working group membership from industry. The EBTFP proposed the EU should adopt a target of using 25% agrofuel by 2030, despite widespread sustainability concerns about the Commission's proposed target of 10%.

CEO has filed a complaint with the European Ombudsman concerning this biased approach in favour of industry.

be more practical – especially for manufacturers of high sugar, high fat products who didn't want to scare away prospective customers. FDE denies being a lobbying organisation.



European Seed Association,

Rue du Luxembourg 23

The **European Seed Association (ESA)**, based at 23 Rue du Luxembourg, represents seed companies operating in the EU. In practice, its political agenda mostly represents the interests of the large seed multinationals, with priorities including Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) on plant varieties, and the acceptance of genetically modified (GM) seeds.

ESA claims that the EU's 10 years of "inaction" on the issue of a GM threshold (allowing the contamination of non-GM material with unauthorised GM seeds) have harmed the competitiveness of European seed companies, which they say is "financially and legally intolerable".

Opponents of contamination (via the introduction of a threshold) argue that the technically lowest feasible level of purity should be maintained. Save our Seeds (an



European Liaison Committee for the Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade, Rue du Trône 98

More commonly known as CELCAA, the **European Liaison Committee for the Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade** represents sectoral trade associations involved in retail and wholesale agricultural and agri-food products, such as the EU Wholesale Trade for Milk and Dairy Products (EUCOLAIT) and the European Association of Sugar Traders (ASSUC).

Based at 98 Rue du Trône, CELCAA lobbies on trade issues (WTO and bilateral), the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and issues around pesticide regulation. It also makes sure that industry "experts" are heard in policy debates, with representatives on 30 of the advisory groups of DG Agriculture and participation in working groups of DG Health and Consumers."

Ending corporate capture of EU decision-making

This guide is intended as an introduction to the ways in which big business shapes EU decision-making. We hope that this information will not leave you in despair, but motivate you to take action. Despite the excessive corporate influence over EU decision-making, those with the largest lobbying budgets do not always win! NGOs, increasingly well-organised at the EU level, and more frequently grassroots' action, including online, can throw spanners in the wheels of corporate lobby campaigns.

There is also growing pressure for the EU institutions to curb corporate power. Much of this pressure comes from the nearly 200 groups united in the Alliance for Lobby Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU). The Alliance, launched in 2005, campaigns for ending lobbying secrecy, halting industry's privileged access to decision makers, industry capture of advisory groups and for blocking Commissioners, officials and MEPs going through the revolving door into industry lobbying. For more information see www.alter-eu.org.

Support for measures to curb excessive corporate influence has also increased significantly among some MEPs, not least following the cash-for-influence scandal in spring 2011.

At the same time, resistance to change is deeply rooted, both among the lobbyists, a substantial number of MEPs, and particularly in the European Commission. In 2010, no less than six out of 13 departing ex-Commissioners went into private sector

jobs that were likely to involve lobbying. Following public outcry about these scandals, the Commission was forced to present a new Code of Conduct, but changes were insufficient to effectively prevent Commissioners from taking lobbying jobs and other jobs with conflicts of interest.

Ending corporate capture of EU decision-making will require far stronger public pressure. The key, no doubt, lies in people across Europe refusing to accept that so many major decisions affecting their daily lives – and those of billions of people elsewhere – are controlled by powerful corporate interests.

Guided Tours of the EU quarter

CEO regularly conducts guided tours of the EU quarter, providing either an introduction to the general lobbying scene or a thematic tour looking at specific lobbying interests. Anyone wanting to join a tour should contact ceo@corporateeurope.org for more information.

Support our work

You can find background reading on all of the issues mentioned in this guide on our website at www.corporateeurope.org or you can subscribe to our newsletter by mailing ceo@corporateeurope.org

Corporate Europe Observatory relies on donations to carry out its research work – you can support our work by making a donation via our website – www.corporateeurope.org





This guide, focused on the EU quarter, provides an insight into the power politics at play in the European Union. Corporate offices, lobby consultancies, think tanks, PR firms and industry lobby groups line the streets, all with a brief and a budget to influence the bureaucrats and politicians responsible for decision making in the EU.

Complete with maps and clear directions, this new updated full colour edition of the Lobby Planet, provides you with the tools to discover the hidden secrets of the EU.

Take the carbon tour and seek out the offices of the climate lobbyists, intent on undermining climate legislation in Europe.

Follow the finance tour and find the lobby groups which obstruct effective regulations in Europe's financial markets.

Or find the agribusiness lobbyists, pressurising the EU to authorise genetically modified crops, or the food and drink lobbyists, anxious to block regulations for the food we eat.



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