WHO WE ARE
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.

In 2018, CEO worked for stricter EU lobbying rules and more transparency in decision-making. We exposed corporate lobbying that worsens social and economic inequality, aggravates climate change, harms the environment, and puts public health on the line.

WHAT WE DO
Corporate lobbies like to act in secrecy - so we expose what they do, increase public awareness, and build momentum to curb corporate influence over EU policy-making by:

- Revealing the tactics, financial firepower, privileged access and connections of corporate lobby actors – and their negative impact on public-interest policy-making.
- Exposing revolving door scandals, which see (former) EU politicians joining the private sector as lobbyists – and vice versa.
- Promoting lobbying transparency at the EU level and empowering citizens to partake in EU politics through petitions, public consultations, citizens’ initiatives.
- Highlighting the common dominance of corporate interests in European Commission advisory groups, which set the direction for many EU policies.
- Campaigning for stricter EU lobby regulation, also with our partner the Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU, a coalition of more than 200 NGOs and trade unions, in which CEO is involved in the steering committee).
- Campaigning with allied NGOs and civil society coalitions against (proposed/ draft) EU policies skewed in favour of corporate interests.
“One treaty to rule them all”, namely the Energy Charter Treaty, which gives companies the power to halt the energy transition - and which is now being aggressively extended.

“UnFairBnB”, or more precisely the lobbying activities of online rental platforms in Brussels, which seek to defeat cities’ affordable housing measures.

“A dangerous distraction: renewable gas”, exposing the gas industry’s lobby tactics, networks and financial firepower, and busting the myths used to promote its product.
“Accounting for Influence”, and how the Big Four accounting firms are embedded in EU policy-making on tax avoidance while selling tax avoidance schemes to corporate clients.

“Corporate Capture in Europe”, a case study collection underlining the threat to democracy posed by excessive corporate influence over policy-making, across Europe & at the EU level.

“Plastic pressure, plastic promises”, a three-part investigation into the plastics and packaging industries’ attempts to blame consumers for increasing plastic pollution and to undermine the EU Single-Use Plastics Strategy at every turn.
2018 IN RESEARCH

SELECTED ARTICLES

Climate

Coal is king at UN climate talks in Poland
Concerns about corporate co-option at the upcoming climate meeting COP24 in Poland are growing as the sponsors are revealed. Many are dirty energy companies, among them several from Poland's state-owned coal

Chemicals

Beyond the pale on Titanium Dioxide
Industry lobbyists are spending millions of euros to influence an upcoming EU decision on labelling titanium dioxide – found in everyday products like sunscreen – a “suspected carcinogen”.

Lobby “deluge” on titanium dioxide, while labelling is postponed
To classify as strongly and widely as possible, or not to – that is the EU’s question on titanium dioxide right now. The chemical is found in many everyday items including sunscreen and paint and is a “suspected
2018 IN RESEARCH

SELECTED ARTICLES

Food, agriculture & biodiversity

What the Monsanto Papers tell us about corporate science
The Monsanto Papers are a trove of internal documents slowly released since March 2017 in a US lawsuit by cancer victims against Monsanto over its ubiquitous herbicide, Roundup.

Biosafety in Danger
Documents released to Corporate Europe Observatory following a Freedom of Information request reveal how pro-biotech lobby platform Public Research Regulation Initiative (PRRI) unites industry, researchers and

Will a food industry lobbyist again be appointed to EFSA's Management Board?
Wouldn't it be time that the EU stops allowing a direct representation of the food industry's interests on the Board of the EU Food Safety Authority (EFSA)?

Conflict of interest policy and caution on gene drives at UN biodiversity talks
Climate change and biodiversity losses loom large on the list of global environmental concerns. Both UN processes for addressing these issues – the UNFCCC for climate change and the UN CBD for biodiversity – are
Copyright & online privacy

Copyright Directive: how competing big business lobbies drowned out critical voices
Lobbying around the EU Copyright Directive has been intense: big-budget tech platforms led by Google as well as tech industry trade associations on one side, historically important collecting societies, the creative industries and publishers on the other. The effort to improve the Directive has been hampered by the intense lobbying efforts of these competing interests.

Lobbyists target Member States on ePrivacy
EU Member States
Advertisers
Publishers
Telecoms
Big Data

The breadth of lobbying has been staggering. 99 per cent of the lobbying is from industry. The highest amount of lobbying ever seen.

Shutting down ePrivacy: lobby bandwagon targets Council
Industry lobbyists who want to continue monetising users’ online data are battling against new ePrivacy regulations, targeting EU member states in the Council. And some member state governments are only too happy to.

Finance

ECB President Draghi’s membership of mega-bankers’ club is “maladministration”
The decision of the European Ombudsman to ask the European Central Bank President to end his membership of an opaque and exclusive club...

How the financial lobby won the battle in Brussels
Corporate Europe Observatory shows how the past ten years of financial lobbying have left us vulnerable...
Trade

Brexit trade deal: finance lobby allowed to work in secret

All eyes may be on the ‘Brexit’ process, but far more attention needs to be given to the way in which post-Brexit EU-UK trade negotiations are being conducted...

Local Democracy

Bolkestein returns: EU Commission power grab for services

The EU institutions are currently negotiating new single market rules that could have a severe and distinctly negative impact on decision-making in...

EU Commission ethics

Selmayrgate: Or why the Secretary-General job matters

The appointment of Martin Selmayr as new Secretary-General of the European Commission took almost everybody by surprise. This new role makes Selmayr...
The revolving door & privileged access

Lobbying at Permanent Representations of Member States

Check out who lobbies the Permanent Representations of Romania, the Netherlands, and Ireland by viewing...

Financial regulators and the private sector: permanent revolving door at DG FISMA

One third of the people who occupied top positions in the Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (DG...

Corporate Capture

EU tax officials: open door for tobacco lobbyists

New research by the Tobacco Investigations Desk shows that tobacco industry lobbyists worked hard to weaken the European Commission’s stance on...
THE FIGURES

6 IN-DEPTH REPORTS

42 RESEARCH ARTICLES

+450 MEDIA HITS
**CEO IN THE MEDIA**

**SELECTED COVERAGE**

**Süddeutsche Zeitung** on the double role of ‘Big Four’ accounting firms:

**Die Fragwürdige Doppeltolle der Wirtschaftsprüfer**


**The Guardian** about Jonathan Hill’s revolving door moves:

**Call for Inquiry into ex-EU commissioner’s jobs with six firms**

Campaigners want investigation into posts taken up by Lord Hill since quitting as commissioner in 2016.

**France TV Info’s** flagship programme Cash Investigation about lobbying by the plastics and packaging industries:

**Plastique : la grande intox -**

**PLASTIQUEN LA GRANDE INTOX**
**CEO IN THE MEDIA**

**SELECTED COVERAGE**

**Euronews** about AirBnB lobbying in Brussels:

*Airbnb se conforme aux règles de l'UE*
La plateforme de location de biens immobiliers s'engage à suivre l'ensemble de la réglementation européenne sur la transparence des prix et sur les...

*Aljazeera* reporting about EU cities fighting water privatisation:

*Up to the Last Drop: The Secret Water War in Europe*
Is water a commodity or a human right? Cities across Europe are fighting water privatisation.

**CNBC** reporting ex-EU Commission President Barroso’s revolving door move to Goldman Sachs:

*Goldman Sachs executive Jose Manuel Barroso, a former top EU chief, in row over...*
Jose Manuel Barroso, a non-executive chairman of Goldman Sachs, has been criticized for allegedly trying to lobby members of the European Commission.

**Les Echos** about the leaked BusinessEurope climate strategy on 'business as usual':

*Négociations sur le climat : la stratégie secrète du patronat européen*
Une note secrète révèle la stratégie de Business Europe pour lutter contre une réduction trop drastique

**France 24** about the corporate sponsorship of UN Climate Conference COP24:

*Mention of 'fossil fuels' cut from videos at UN climate talks*
**CEO IN THE MEDIA**

**SELECTED COVERAGE**

**Le Monde** about the ‘innovation principle’:

*Un « principe d’innovation » porté par l’Industrie chimique pourrait entrer dans l...*

En apparence anodin, le concept a été imaginé pour neutraliser le principe de précaution par un think tank issu de la pétrochimie et du tabac.

**Pravda** looking at the weak reform of ethics rules for former EU Commissioners:

Európska komisári príjala nový etický kódex, definuje konflikt záujmov

Európski komisári teraz prvýkrát presne vedia, čo presne pre nich znamená termín “konflikt záujmov”.

**The New York Times** about the EU plans to ban certain single-use plastic products:

The proposal would ban many single-use plastic items, like straws and disposable cutlery, that litter Europe’s beaches and seas.

**Westdeutsche Zeitung** about e-Privacy:

**Auf die DSGVO folgt die ePrivacy-Verordnung**

Die EU-weite Datenschutz-Grundverordnung (DSGVO) ist im Mai in Kraft getreten. Der darauf folgende Ansturm auf die Behörden zeigt, dass zahlreiche...

**Spiegel Online** on a German MEP’s 2nd jobs:

**Zusatzverdienste im EU-Parlament: Nebulöse Nebenjobs - SPIEGEL ONLINE ...**

Angelika Niebler ist Chefin der CSU-Gruppe im EU-Parlament. Nur wenige Abgeordnete sind bei Zusatzverdiensten umtriebiger - und die inhaltliche...
## FUNDING

### WHO FUNDS CEO

We receive donations from individual supporters as well as grants from a number of trusts and grant-making foundations. Our funding policy rejects funding from the EU, governments, political parties and corporations in order to maintain the independence of our research. In 2018, our work received financial support from the following trusts and foundations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of foundation</th>
<th>Mission statement</th>
<th>CEO activities funded</th>
<th>Financial year 2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ivara Foundation</td>
<td>The Ivara Foundation was established in 2007 and is fully funded by a donation from founder Ayman Jallad. It is &quot;a progressive trust that awards grants to civil society organisations working to halt the unsustainable and socially destructive neo-liberal policies that characterize the currently dominant process of corporate-led globalisation.&quot;</td>
<td>Investigating corporate influence &amp; strengthening EU lobbying regulation</td>
<td>€ 191,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adessium Foundation</td>
<td>&quot;Adessium Foundation was established in 2005 by the Van Vliet family, which has a background in asset management.&quot;  “The Foundation works to achieve a balanced society characterized by integrity, a balance between people and nature, and social harmony.&quot;</td>
<td>Investigating corporate influence &amp; strengthening EU lobbying regulation</td>
<td>€ 143,250.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Society Initiative for Europe</td>
<td>The Open Society Foundations were set up in 1979 by George Soros. “The Open Society Initiative for Europe aims to contribute to more vibrant and legitimate democracies in the European Union by supporting the activists and civil society organizations confronting Europe’s many challenges.”</td>
<td>Investigating corporate influence &amp; strengthening EU lobbying regulation</td>
<td>€ 94,446.00</td>
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| Schöpflin Foundation     | The Schöpflin Foundation, established by Hans Schöpflin in 2001, and "is committed to a more liveable world for all. We want a fairer world and a better future for the younger and future generations."

| Olin Foundation          | The Olin Foundation “is committed to the protection of natural habitats. The focus of Olin is the temporary support of smaller organizations and projects.” “Olin gGmbH was founded in May 2012 by Alexander Szlovák. It receives its financial resources from his private foundation.” | Investigating corporate influence (EU food and agriculture policies) & strengthening EU lobbying regulation | € 60,000.00         |
We also receive private donations from individual supporters. Thanks so much for your contributions, which boost our independence and help us expose and challenge corporate power. We are particularly grateful for the very generous financial backing of Ms Karde-Marie Wirtz, who in 2018 supported our work with a total of €44,120.
To support CEO's work, you can donate online at corporateeurope.org/donate, or make a bank transfer. Thanks very much!