

LOBBYING IN THE EU

Like in its Member States, lobbying is allowed in the European Union and its “heart” Brussels. But it is regulated!



WHAT IS LOBBYING?

Lobbying, also called **public advocacy**, is when **organizations try to persuade lawmakers** to make laws that benefit their interests.

Lobbyists are more than “Big Pharma” etc, they represent **Civil Society in all its diversity**:

- Businesses & Industries
- Professional Associations
- NGOs like environmental organizations
- Trade Unions
- Academic & Research institutions

Lobbying - done in an ethical way, so not bribery! - is **allowed worldwide** because:

- > It would happen in the shadows if banned, with no way to monitor it;
- > Lawmakers need the **expertise from the private sector and civil society to write good laws** based on real-life data.



The EU Transparency Register helps “democracy’s watchdogs”!

NGOs like Transparency International use it to monitor lobbying in Brussels. That’s how we know:

12 000+ organizations are registered as lobbies

48 000 people work for them in Brussels

€1.8 billion is what they spend in total yearly



HOW IS IT REGULATED?

In 2011, an official **EU Transparency Register** was created to keep track of lobbying activities in Brussels.

It is shared by the **European Commission**, the **European Parliament** and the **Council of the EU**.

Lobbyists who register must provide information like:

- What interests they represent
- What topics they are following
- How much they spend each year
- Who and how many people work for them

The Register is voluntary but some typical lobbying activities require it like:

- > Getting an **access badge to the EP**;
- > Being invited as speakers by parliamentary committees who need “expertise from the field” to write laws.

LEADING THE WAY!



A **minority of EU countries have their own laws on lobbying** (7 in 2016).

Half of these adopted laws after the 2014 EU Register of Transparency was created.