

# Investigating EU lobbying

**Dataharvest**  
**24 May 2025**





# About Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)

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.

We work on areas including:

- Climate Justice
- Food and agriculture
- Chemicals
- Big Tech
- Economic Justice
- Democracy, transparency, and accountability





# The EU lobby transparency register

- Biggest lobby register in the world
- You can find information on:

1) Money spent on lobbying

2) Numbers of lobbyists (lobbying employees and EP badges)

3) Topics lobbied on

4) Meetings with commissioners, cabinets, directors-general (not all Commission lobby meetings)

- Anyone lobbying or trying to influence EU decision-making should register

[https://transparency-register.europa.eu/searchregister-or-update\\_en](https://transparency-register.europa.eu/searchregister-or-update_en)

# That sounds great! But...

## The EU lobby register data is not perfect

- ✗ voluntary
- ✗ not legally-binding
- ✗ sanctions are weak

This means that:

- There is some lobbying going on in Brussels which is **not captured** by the register.
- There is some **unreliable** or **implausible** data.

THE EU GETS  
TOUGH ON LOBBYING



@CARTOONRALPH

\*All data is self-declared (except for EP badges and Commission lobby meetings)

# The case of MCC Brussels

- MCC Brussels, a far-right 'think tank', fails to disclose financial information, including its funding sources and operated without being registered in the transparency register.
- It recently co-hosted far-right propaganda events at the European Parliament, attacking 'gender ideology' and civil society.
- CEO complained to the EU transparency register Secretariat and they opened an investigation.



# Despite the imperfect data, you can still find some good stories

## The Brussels Times

An investigation by the EU Transparency Register has revealed that Amazon Europe updated its lobbying spending figures to over €5 million back in August. The new figures were published after a civil society complaint exposed two think tanks and two lobbies on the US multinational's payroll that were not properly registered.

## POLITICO

## Defense industry spends big on lobbying Brussels

With Brussels increasingly taking charge of Europe's defense agenda, arms-makers are beefing up their influence in EU institutions.



## Public affairs firms in Europe enable pollution by lobbying for big oil, says analysis

Exclusive: EU Transparency Register shows law firms also among lobbyists working for fossil fuel companies





*LobbyFacts is a database co-hosted by CEO & LobbyControl that allows journalists, researchers, and activists to **search**, **sort**, **filter**, and **analyse** data from the official EU Transparency Register, tracking lobbyists and their influence at the EU level over time.*

- LobbyFacts takes the data from the EU lobby register and makes it more user-friendly
- LobbyFacts does not change the data but does do simple ‘curation’
- LobbyFacts **presents EU lobby data from 2012**
- Different search functions
- Fully downloadable data

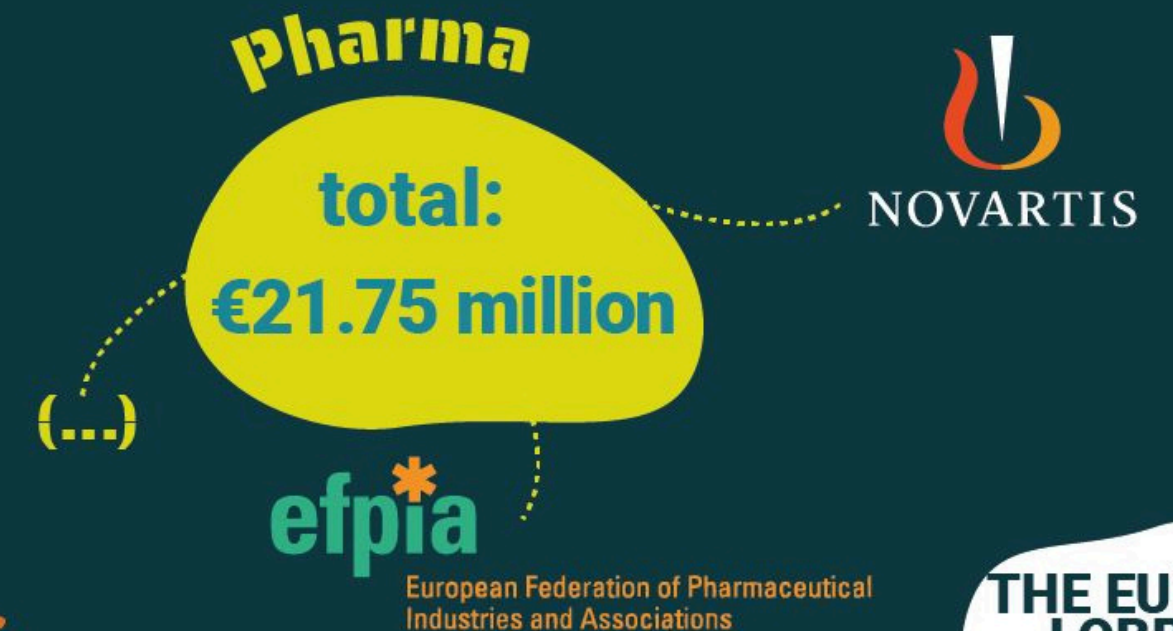
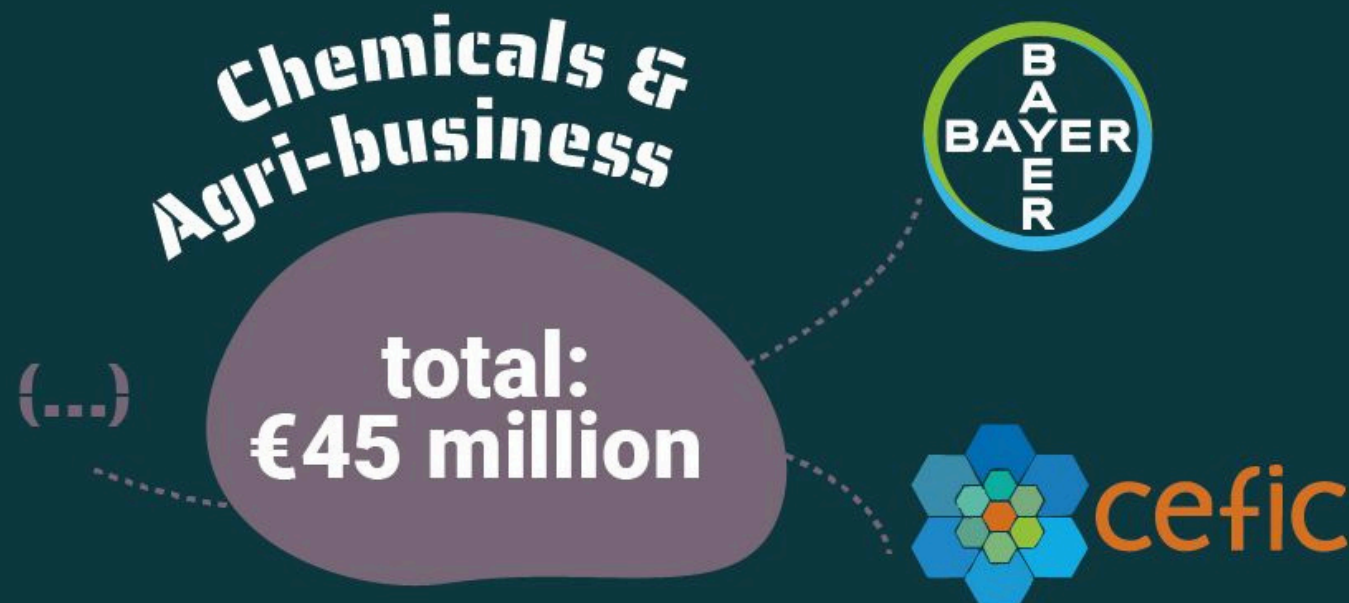
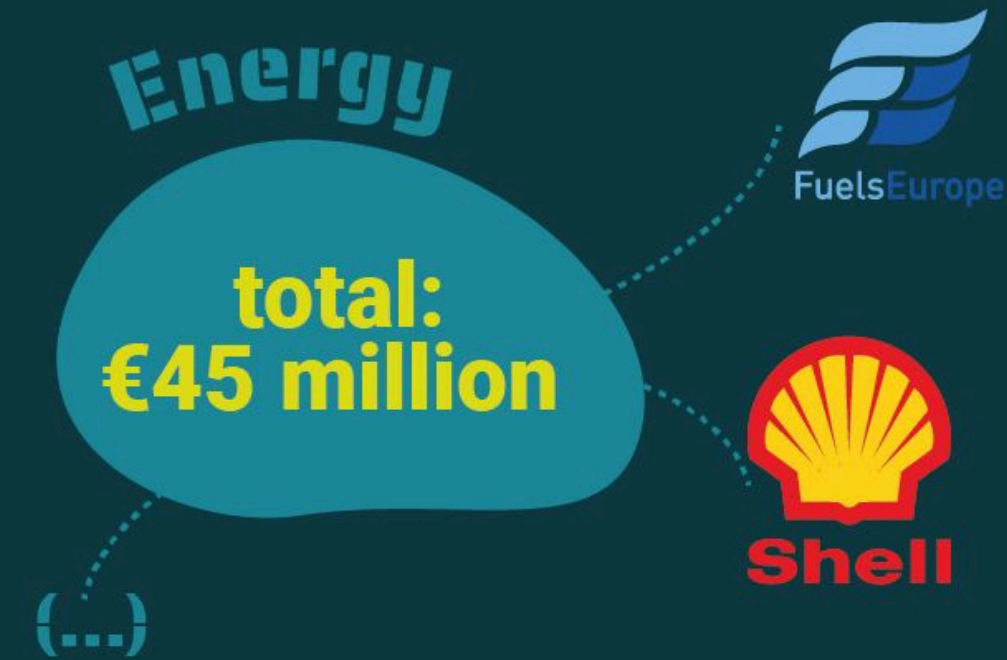
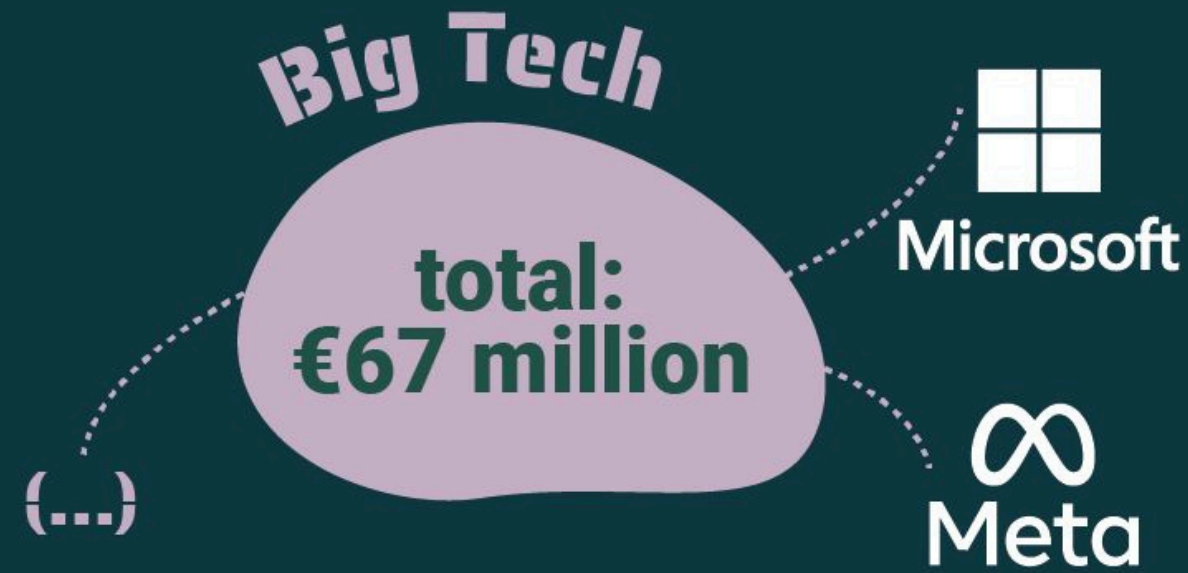
\*LobbyFacts synchronises with the EU lobby register once a day but ... lobbyists often only update registrations annually

<https://lobbyfacts.eu/>

A screenshot of the LobbyFacts search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with six tabs: 'GET STARTED' (highlighted in grey), 'LOBBY ORGANISATION BY NAME', 'ACCREDITED PERSONS BY NAME', 'LOBBY CLIENTS BY NAME', 'TOPIC SEARCH', and 'MEETINGS SEARCH'. Below the navigation bar is a search form with several dropdown menus and buttons. The form includes: 'Lobby register category' (dropdown with '-- select --'), 'Country of origin' (dropdown with '-- select --'), 'On date' (calendar icon and 'dd-mm-yyyy' text), 'Belgian office' (dropdown with 'Either'), 'European Parliament passholder' (dropdown with 'Either'), 'High-level European Commission meetings' (dropdown with 'Either'), and 'Lobby register financial category' (dropdown with 'any'). At the bottom of the form are three red buttons: 'Search', 'Reset', and 'Download'.



# HIGHEST DECLARING SECTORS





# Big spender **#1**

## BIG TECH

### HIGH-LEVEL COMMISSION MEETINGS:

235



€9 million +

+148.31%\*

Lobbyists: 18\*\*

215



€7 million +

+36.59%\*

Lobbyists: 7\*\*

112



€6.5 million +

+205,88%\*

Lobbyists: 8\*\*

- Tech firms weaponised the US Government against the EU's digital regulation
- The EU's competitiveness frenzy opened the door to weakening digital regulation
- Draghi report singled out the GDPR and AI Act as barriers to competitiveness
- Facebook launched misleading campaign EUneedsAI to create the impression that European companies are asking for weaker data protection rules.

# In a nutshell

## With LobbyFacts you can:

- Look at declared lobby footprints from today and the past
- Explore an individual lobbyist's career moves
- Investigate clients of lobby and law firms
- Research lobbying on a specific topic or file
- Analyse lobby organisations from a specific country
- Avoid dodgy or implausible data

## - BASF Profile





# For most effective searches

- Make sure your search term is correctly spelled
- Watch out for unexpected issues in organisation names eg. it is ExxonMobil and not Exxon Mobil; also, it is JPMorgan and not JP Morgan
- Try searching for the full name as well as the acronym of an organisation if it does not show up immediately
- If you want to find the biggest or most active lobbies, use the filters (registrants with/without a Brussels office; with/without European Parliament access passes; or those who have/have not held high-level meetings with the European Commission) on the Search and 'Get started' page.

# For most effective searches

- To search for a particular lobby topic, try all relevant terms and acronyms. For example some registrants may refer to "Green Deal", "European Green Deal", "EGD", other variations, or individual elements of the Green Deal. Others may just make vague references to 'climate'.
- Try using " if you are searching for a phrase rather than single word ie. "digital market"

Please note that LobbyFacts is only as good as the data on the official register and there is little consistency in how registrants provide information on, for example, the issues they lobby on.



# Some tips

- Searches can be downloaded
- We have (limited) capacity for bespoke data requests so get in touch if you need help
- There is more detail in our how to guide:

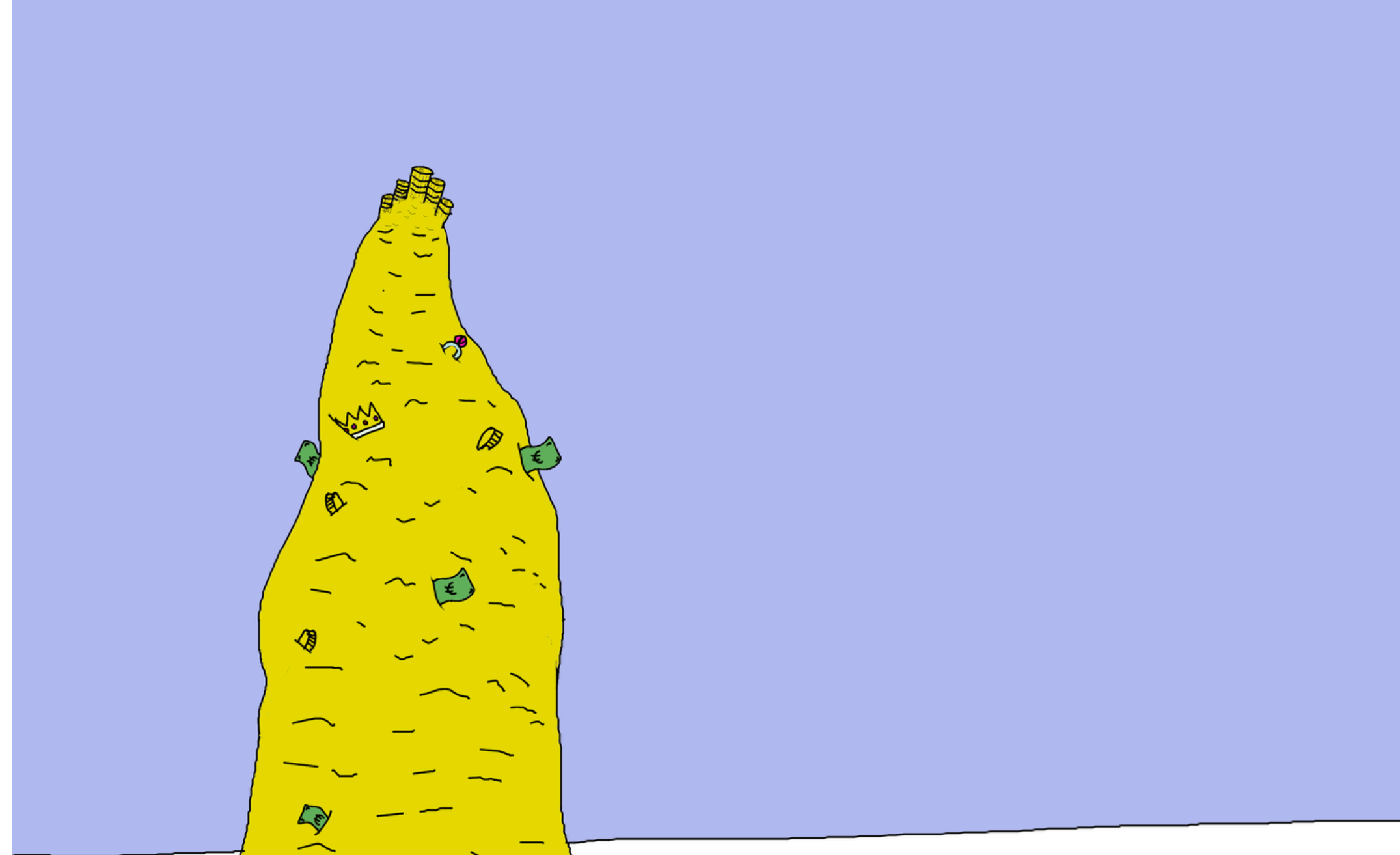
<https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/how-to>

- Check out our disclaimer:

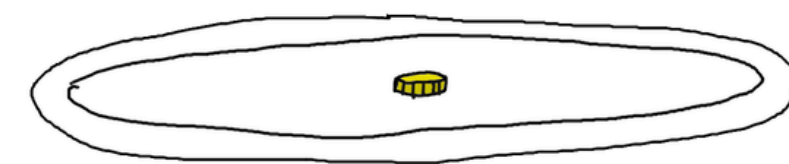
<https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/disclaimer>

- And if you publish using LobbyFacts data, let us know:

<https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/latest-stories>  
<https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/latest-stories>



Corporate appetite for  
tax payers money



Corporate appetite for  
paying taxes

# NotificationTracker

## New tool

### What you find here



**Notifications**  
**10062**



**Organisations & People**  
**1724**



**Comments**  
**2391**

It tracks and analyses new draft technical regulations that are notified to the EU Commission and displayed on the Technical Regulation Information System (TRIS).

It combines this publicly available data with information from the EU Transparency Register and [Lobbyfacts](#).

NotificationTracker allows you to:

- 🔍 Explore ongoing and past notifications to see what regulations are being proposed.
- 📢 Identify corporate influence by revealing which companies and lobby groups are intervening.
- ⚖️ Compare draft and final laws to track changes made to the legislation.
- 🏛️ Follow key sectors such as public health, environmental policy, and digital regulations.

[notificationtracker.eu](https://notificationtracker.eu)

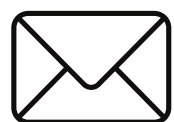




# Thank you!



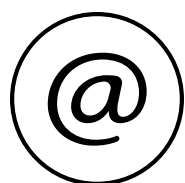
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