

Public Affairs Insights and Best Practices from Across the World

Global Public Affairs Masterclass, Public Affairs Council

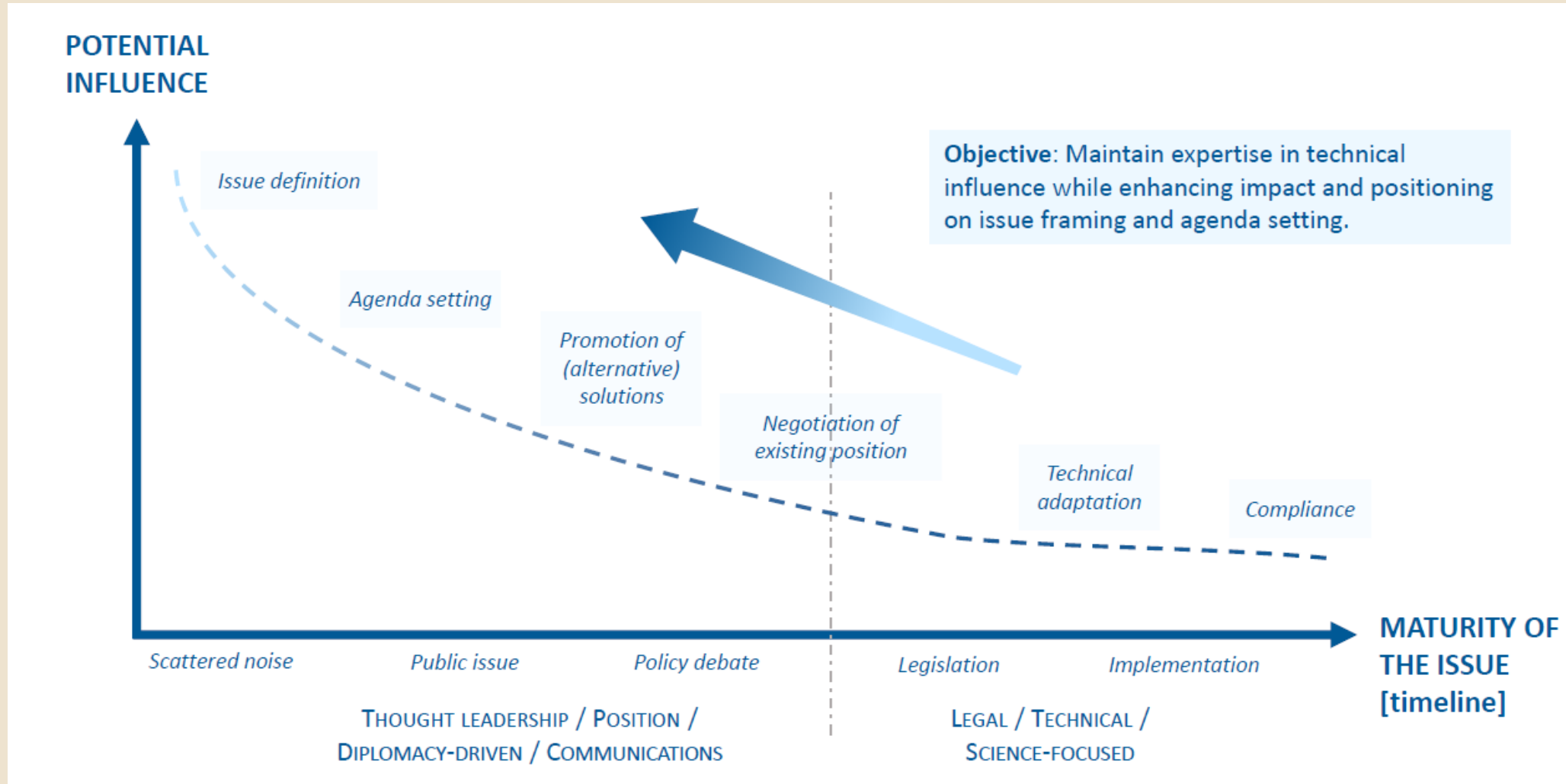
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Brussels insights and best practices

How influence is built in Brussels



How influence has evolved in Brussels

Evolution Over the Past 20 Years

Expansion and Professionalization

Growth in Lobbyists: The number of lobbyists in Brussels has increased from approximately 10,000 in 2005 to around 25,000 today, indicating a significant expansion in the industry.

Professional Standards:

Organizations such as the Society of European Affairs Professionals (SEAP) and the European Public Affairs Consultancies' Association (EPACA) have been established to promote ethical standards and best practices within the lobbying community.

Technological Advancements

Digital Lobbying: The rise of digital communication tools has transformed traditional lobbying methods, enabling virtual meetings and online advocacy campaigns. This shift has been accelerated by events like the COVID-19 pandemic, making virtual engagement a norm.

Increased Transparency and Regulation

Transparency Initiatives: The introduction of the EU Transparency Register in 2011 marked a significant step towards monitoring lobbying activities, requiring lobbyists to disclose their engagements and expenditures.

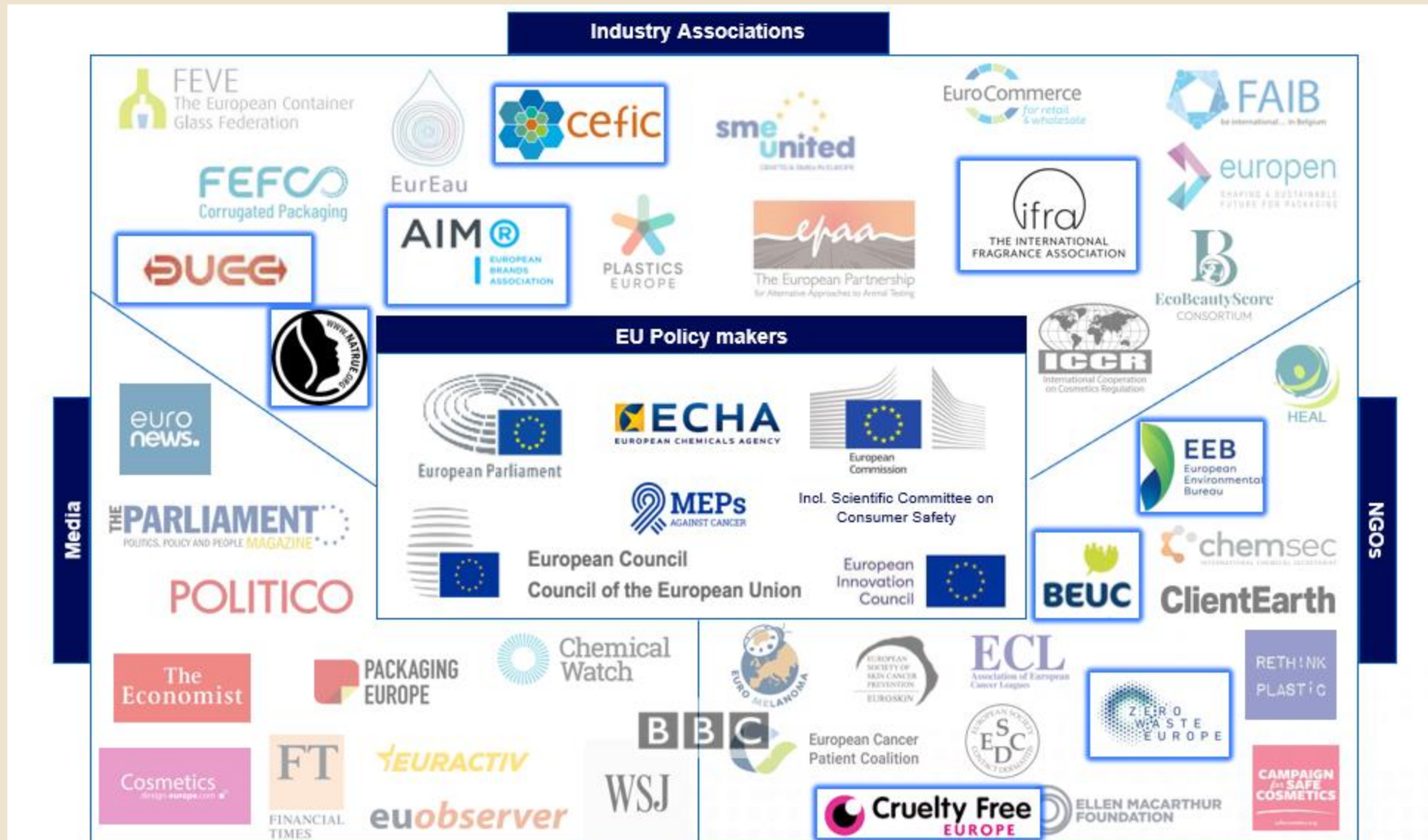
Ethical Scrutiny: Scandals, such as the 2023 Qatari bribery incident involving a European Parliament Vice-President, have heightened awareness and led to calls for stricter regulations and ethical standards in lobbying practices.

Diversification of Actors

Emergence of New Sectors:

Industries like technology and defense have become more active in lobbying efforts. Notably, defense companies increased their lobbying budgets by approximately 40% between 2022 and 2023, reflecting a response to geopolitical developments.

EU Landscape: the Cosmetics Industry Example



Do and Don'ts

DOs

Understanding the EU's Institutional Framework

The European Union's intricate structure, comprising multiple institutions with distinct roles, requires a deep understanding to engage effectively.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Brussels' multicultural environment necessitates cultural sensitivity and adaptability to various communication styles.

Building and Maintaining Networks

Establishing relationships within the "EU bubble" is crucial but can be challenging for newcomers unfamiliar with local dynamics.

Adapting to EU-Specific Processes

The EU's policy-making procedures differ from national systems, requiring tailored strategies for effective engagement.

DON'TS

Underestimating the EU Complexity

Assuming the EU operates like national governments can lead to ineffective strategies.

Neglecting Cultural Nuances

Lack of cultural awareness can hinder relationship-building and communication.

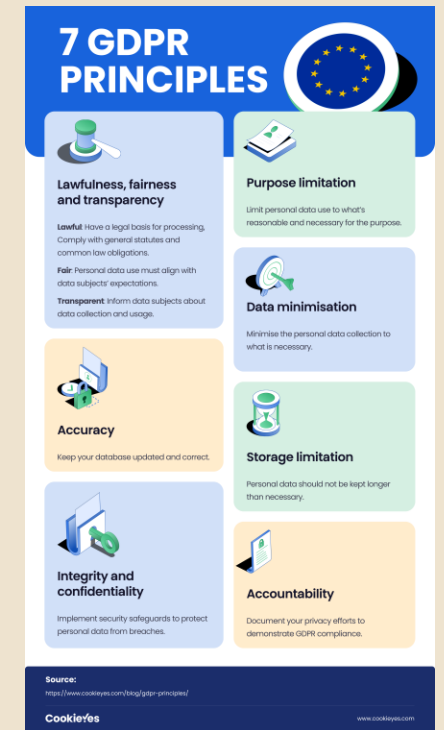
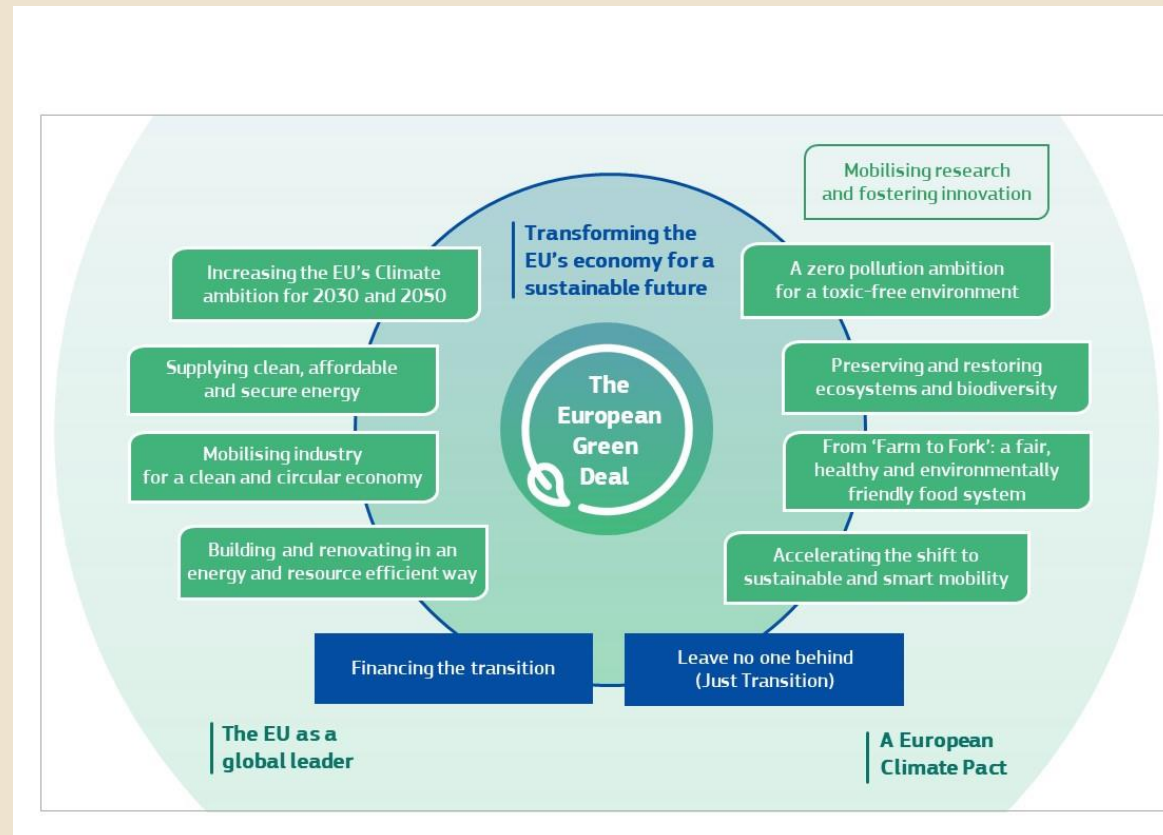
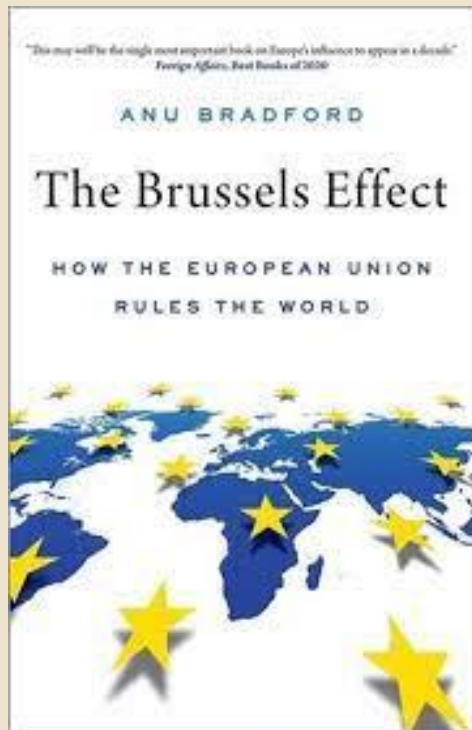
Introducing yourself and your problem at the same time

Failing to invest in building a robust network can limit access to crucial information and opportunities.

Overlooking Transparency Compliance

Not adhering to the EU's transparency and ethical standards can damage reputations and hinder advocacy efforts.

How EU policymaking shapes markets, investment, and corporate reputation



A photograph of Earth from space, showing the horizon and city lights at night.

Thank you

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