

METHODOLOGY

PIPELINES OF POWER: BIG OIL LOBBYING REPORT

Introduction

For this analysis, we focused on the 'Big Seven' oil and gas companies: *BP, Chevron, Eni, Equinor, ExxonMobil, Shell* and *Total*. These companies were selected based on a combination of desk research and data from *Statista*. Specifically, we used the Statista list of the "Leading Oil and Gas Companies Worldwide Based on Revenue as of 2024." While [the top 10 companies](#) on this list were considered, three companies were excluded from our analysis because they are not registered on the EU Transparency Register and therefore have no recorded meetings with the European Commission.

Data Collection from the EU Transparency Register

Data on the Big Seven and their associated networks was collected from individual entries on the EU Transparency Register. The Register provides information on organisations seeking to influence EU policy. Its co-managed by the three main EU institutions (European Commission, Parliament and Council). Organisations are required to disclose key information such as interests pursued, identification data, number of personnel involved in EU lobbying, lobbying budgets in case of for-profit organisations, public funding received, as well as any memberships of other organisations. The resulting dataset provides an overview of the resources and connections these companies can mobilise to influence EU policy.

Regarding the budget, only organisations representing commercial interests must declare a budget that pertains to their actual lobbying activities. This includes the salaries of staff members involved, office rent, publications, communications and events. Organisations declaring themselves as not representing commercial interests must declare their total operating global income. Since those figures bear no direct relationship with EU lobbying activities, they were excluded from our analysis. Such organisations are labelled as "does not represent commercial interests" in the dataset.

Affiliated organisations

Registered entities must disclose any memberships of any other organisations. These can be large business associations, think-tanks and discussion forums, among others. Membership of national entities can also be found, as well as other types of organisations that are not involved in lobbying the EU institutions. For this analysis, we collected all affiliated organisations disclosed by the Big Seven, amounting to a total of 53. Of these, we found 45 as registered on the EU Transparency Register and therefore involved in EU lobbying activities.

Board Membership and Gender Quota

We gathered data on all executive boards (or similarly titled governing bodies) of these affiliated organisations. We collected data on the company each representative belonged to as well as the gender balance. We do not directly publish the names of the representatives. Instead, we provide a link to the source page of each entity in the dataset. While we were able to obtain comprehensive data for most organisations, there were some instances where board membership details were not fully available.

Analysis of Commission Meetings

Our analysis covers the period from the start of the first von der Leyen Commission in December 2019 until May 2024, before the European Parliament elections. We collected all meetings published by the European Commission of both the Big Seven and their associated networks. Only meetings between high-ranking Commission officials (Commissioners, cabinet members, Directors-General and Secretaries-General) are proactively published. In the absence of meetings with lower-ranking officials involved in the legislative process, our analysis provides only a snapshot of the actual volume of lobbying that takes place. Commission officials must provide a subject matter for meetings. They are free to include as much or as little information as they choose, and the description may therefore be vague. We manually coded every meeting that concerned a Green Deal policy area or legislation. Furthermore, any meeting that specifically mentions carbon capture storage and/or hydrogen is also coded when this is explicitly stated in the meeting's subject matter.

Analysis of COP28 Connections

In addition to the above, we investigated the connection between the Big Seven companies and COP28, the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference. We used a dataset on official COP28 delegates provided by the "[Kick Big Polluters Out](#)" campaign as well as the [COP28 official list](#). By cross-referencing this dataset with our own, we identified overlaps and connections between the fossil fuel network and COP attendance.

Please note: Transparency International EU is not responsible for the information provided by organisations on their lobby register. All information gathered for this report is made available in the corresponding dataset. Should you have any questions, or find discrepancies with source data, we kindly ask you to get in touch with:

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