



**Friends of
the Earth
Europe**



Bringing the voice of people to EU decision makers

**A guide to help Friends of the Earth groups to
campaign more effectively on EU issues**

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Bringing the voice of people to EU decision makers

A guide to help Friends of the Earth groups campaign more effectively on EU issues

Introduction

This guide has been written to help Friends of the Earth groups, and other groups working on environmental and social issues, to understand how and when to engage with EU institutions, in order to make campaigning activities more effective.

Understanding how institutions of the European Union work, and which powers they have, is a first step to understanding how you can influence EU decision making. This guide looks at how the main EU institutions function, and the routes that civil society groups have to influence them, as well as looking at the realities of advocacy work in the “Brussels Bubble”- a scene dominated by corporate influence, and informal contacts.

- Throughout the text, you will find some tips highlighted on how to influence the EU institutions.

Case studies

There are short case studies from successful activities aimed at influencing the EU. There are many other case studies at: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/influencingtheeu/examples>

The guide ends with 2 pages of general advice on advocacy work. This advice is relevant to a wide range of decision-makers, not just at the EU level.

There are a number of other good sources in the internet which will help you understand the EU institutions and how you can influence them. In particular, check out the guide to influencing the EU from NCVO in the UK: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/influencingtheeu>

For official info on the European Union, visit the website: http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/index_en.htm

Please note: Many of the rules governing the functioning of the EU changed following the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty at the end of 2009. The information in this guide, and the links it contains, reflect these changes. Some websites (including a number of EU websites!) are not yet up to date.

This guide focuses on advocacy work, please get in touch if you would like information on organising actions, movement building, or doing communications work- all of which can be used alongside advocacy work to support your campaigns.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions related to this guide, or the information it contains, please feel free to get in touch via: david.heller@foeeurope.org

European Parliament



The European Parliament is made up of 736 MEPs (Members of the European Parliament), directly elected every 5 years.

- **As they are directly elected by members of the public, MEPs may be more receptive to campaigns which involve members of the public.**

The Parliament meets in Strasbourg for plenary sessions (12 times each year), and in Brussels for additional plenary and committee meetings. See the [calendar](#). The Secretariat of the parliament is located in Luxembourg.

In most policy areas, the European Parliament is responsible, along with the Council, for approving legislation proposed by the Commission.

- **Developing a personal relationship with MEPs, through face-to-face meetings and regular direct contact with them and their assistants, is an important way of influencing European decision-making.**

MEPs also have the right to pose questions to other EU institutions (see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do> to search questions)

- **Asking friendly MEPs to pose questions can be an important way to hold the institutions to account, gather information, and also build a relationship with MEPs.**

The Parliament is responsible, with the Council, for agreeing the EU's annual and multi-year budget (known as the Multiannual Financial Framework or MFF). The budget will have a major impact on issues as diverse as funding for renewable energy and energy savings projects in new member states, and sustainable agriculture and fisheries. More information: <http://www.foeeurope.org/billions/index.htm>

The majority of MEPs are part of one of the political groups (of which the “European People’s Party” is currently the largest). See the [MEPs sorted by country and groups](#), and [by alphabetical list, with assistants](#). As the European Parliament tends to seek consensus, rather than conflict on many issues, it can be important to work with a wide range of political groups.

- **Reaching the MEPs within a political group who are active on a particular issue can be a way of bringing more of their group on board.**

MEPs sit on a number of Committees which play a key role in influencing policy. See the [list of committees](#). One of these Committees will be given the “lead” role in amending, commenting on and voting on legislative proposals before the proposal passes to the plenary for a vote of all MEPs.

For each proposal, a Rapporteur draws up a report on the proposal on behalf of the lead committee. The Rapporteur is appointed following agreement between the political groups.

Committee members from other political groups than that of the Rapporteur act as “shadow rapporteurs” or spokespeople for their political groups on the legislative proposal.

- **Contact with the Rapporteur, and shadows, as well as the chair of the committee is important if you are going to have an impact on the report, as well as in supporting or rejecting possible amendments.**

Proposals may also be dealt with by other committees before going to vote at the lead committee.

- **If the lead committee is likely to be less favourable to your position, gains can sometimes be made in the other committees.**

Committees can also produce reports relevant to their competence, without being directly related to the legislative process. These are called “Own-Initiative Reports”, and are used to submit a motion for a resolution.

- **Although they are not legally binding, “Own-Initiative Reports” and resolutions can give a strong signal to other EU institutions and member states.**

Case study: Power struggle around 2008 Climate and Energy Package

The climate and energy package, adopted in 2008 under the French presidency, was the EU’s largest climate legislation in recent years. It included four different pieces of legislation: the ETS directive; the decision on Effort Sharing, the renewables directive and a directive on Carbon Capture and Storage. The directive on CO₂ and cars was also adopted.

A strong, co-ordinated, campaign involving FoEE and allies, achieved a relatively strong position on the package from the European Parliament. In particular, FoEE pushed for financial penalties to be paid by Member States that do not reduce their emissions in the agriculture, housing and transport sectors on a yearly basis until 2020. The Parliament supported this demand, in part due to FoE Finland’s work to influence the rapporteur- a member of the Finnish Green party.

However, Council significantly watered down the Parliament’s opinion on this issue, and rejected progressive amendments in key issues related to the effort sharing decision. As a result, industry and governments can continue to emit as usual for the next decade, due to various loopholes including the carry-over and trading of emission allocations.

This example confirms a sad reality; the power of a normally relatively progressive Parliament is not comparable to the power of Member States in Council.

More information on how to influence the European Parliament: <http://ncvo-vol.org.uk/influencingtheeu/parliament>

How to lobby MEPs (UK focus): http://foe.co.uk/resource/how_tos/cyw_69_lobby_mep.pdf

Official website for the Parliament: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

Work in progress in the Parliament: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/cpc/wip_en.pdf

Council of the European Union and European Council



The Council of the European Union represents member states within the EU. It meets regularly in Brussels and Luxembourg, and is composed of twenty-seven national Ministers (one per member state). Depending on the topic being discussed, the Council will be composed of Ministers responsible for that particular topic. See the [calendar of meetings](#).

- **As the Council is made up of Ministers who are members of national (or in some cases regional) government, it is possible to influence these people via the same routes as when discussing national issues.**

Each member state has a permanent representative (known as Perm Reps) who act as ambassadors to the EU, and a number of experts on different policy areas (attachés) who meet once a week within the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CORPER), to prepare work for the Council, to look at and debate proposals and draft legislation.

- **Contact with Perm Reps and attachés can be useful to understand and potentially influencing the dynamics of the discussions, but they are representatives – rather than decision makers.**

The European Council is responsible, along with the Parliament, for approving legislation proposed by the Commission. The three EU institutions negotiate a final common position after the voting of the Commission proposal in the plenary of the European Parliament and in a Council meeting.

Voting within the council is either by unanimity, or by “Qualified Majority Voting”, which depends on achieving support from a certain number of member states, votes (divided between members states according to the size of the country) and population represented. See the [voting calculator](#). Bargaining and negotiation between countries is therefore common to achieve a majority.

- **The “Council Conclusions” form the official outcome of the meeting, and draft versions are prepared and debated weeks in advance. These drafts circulate in advance of the meeting- giving an opportunity for campaigners to comment directly on the material being discussed by Ministers.**

The Presidency of the Council of the European Union rotates among the member states every six months. The Presidency is responsible for chairing the meetings of the Council of the European Union, and also represents the EU in international negotiations (in some cases together with the relevant commissioner).

- **The Presidency is a potential source of information on the agenda of Council meetings, and the state of play in negotiations. Developing contact with key individuals working in national governments on the Presidency, and keeping an eye on the Presidency website and newsletter are important parts of getting the latest information.**

The Presidency is also responsible for finding compromises, and unifying different positions amongst the member states. This gives them a very powerful position in the decision making process.

- **The Presidency has the power to facilitate or postpone decisions, through setting the agenda for council meetings (although their power to put specific issues on the agenda is limited).**

Three successive Council presidencies, known as presidency trios, cooperate for an 18-month period to provide additional continuity by sharing common political programmes. The current (2011–2012) trio consists of Poland (which took up the position 1 July 2011), Denmark (which will take over in January 2012) and Cyprus (will take over in July 2012).

The EU Presidency, Hungary 2011

FoE Hungary's preparation for influencing the EU Presidency began 2 or 3 months before the start of the Presidency. It included developing a number of "SMART" aims for work during the Presidency period, and prioritizing areas of interest within the policy areas identified as priorities by the Hungarian government. A key area of preparation was building contacts with key decision-makers responsible for the relevant content areas- and identify where there were common areas of interest in moving issues forward during the 6 months. This has laid the ground for continuing work by NGOs on EU policies.

An alliance with NGOs and other stakeholders was able to co-operate on common activities, and divide responsibilities for particular content areas, as well as particular tasks. A communication strategy allowed each group to play to its own strengths. One of the major benefits of the work on the Presidency is the continuing functioning of these partnerships.

NGO activities included stakeholder forums before EU meetings/councils (as shadow councils/conferences), which were adopted as official events by the Presidency. The coalition also produced a position paper setting out the demands for the presidency, allowing transparency for the public and decisionmakers on what was wanted, and enabling a post-Presidency evaluation.

A more detailed presentation on FoE Hungary's activities during the Presidency is available from: david.heller@foeeurope.org

More information on how to influence the Council: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/influencingtheeu/council>

Official website for the Council of the European Union: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

Note: The Council of the European Union should not be confused with "The European Council", made up of Heads of State or Heads of Government. It is chaired by Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council. The European Council exists to define "the general political directions and priorities" of the European Union. Although it does not have any specific legislative power, it is the European Union's strategic and crisis solving body. It meets at least twice during each 6 month period, in Brussels.

- **In many cases, the European Council will simply endorse conclusions issued by the Council of the European Union, making the meeting of Ministers the most important place to have influence.**

Official website for European Council: <http://www.european-council.europa.eu/>

European Commission



The European Commission is the executive arm of the European Union.

The term “Commission” refers to the college of 27 Commissioners headed by the President of the Commission (currently José Manuel Barroso).

The President is elected by the European Parliament for a term of 5 years. Other commissioners are appointed by the President-elect, after nomination by member states, and scrutiny by the European Parliament.

The term can also refer to the 40 or so DGs (Directorates General and Services) which cover issues from “Agriculture and Rural Development” to “Taxation” and “Translation”. Together, they employ over 12,000 officials in a number of sites across Brussels.

The Commission also regularly consults publicly on a wide range of topics, inviting contributions from all interested parties. These consultations are sometimes preceded by the publication of a “green paper” which presents a range of ideas. See the [list of green papers](#). It may be followed by a white paper, an official set of proposals that is used as a vehicle for their development into law. See the [list of white papers](#).

○ **All consultations are published on the Your voice in Europe website:**
http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/index_en.htm

The European Commission issues “Communications” to the European Parliament and Council, which are used to initiate discussion on a particular topic within the other institutions, prior to a legislative proposal.

Within the past year a number of “Roadmaps” have been launched by the Commission. They cover a broader topic than a communication, and are more forward looking. They could result in one or more legislative proposals over a longer timeframe.

The Commission initiates all EU laws or legislation and (once legislation is passed by the Parliament and Council) the Commission oversees their implementation.

○ **As the Commission proposes and drafts legislative proposals, approaching Commission officials at this first stage of the decision making process can help to make sure your concerns are addressed from the outset.**

As a legislative proposal moves through the Commission it will be looked at from various angles in a process known as “inter-service consultation”, this means that officials from a variety of DGs may be involved.

- **Contacting the officials dealing directly with the legislation from each of the DGs involved will be the most effective way of influencing the process.**

The Commission can also deal with issues regarding the implementation of legislation.

- **You can inform the Commission of your concerns by speaking to the expert in the relevant DG dealing with your issue. This may then trigger a process addressing your concern at EU level.**

“Comitology” is the complex and opaque system of committees, composed of representatives from EU countries, which are established to assist the Commission with the implement EU legislation, and take and take 3,000 to 4,000 decisions per year. See the [Comitology register](#) for a list of committees and reports.

- **Influencing the decisions taken in Comitology depends upon knowledge of the existence and membership of the relevant committee, as well as being able to provide technical details on the matter being discussed.**

A new category of “Delegated Acts” allows the Commission to amend EU legislation to take account of new scientific or technical information, without consultation with Comitology committees.

Case study: Going for a coffee

Sometimes the best way to find out useful information from the Commission (or any other institution you are trying to influence) is to call a sympathetic person you have met and ask for a meeting.

If you didn't already have contact with the institution continue calling different people from the unit or department you need until someone agrees to meet you. Don't hesitate to ask for an informal meeting, a coffee or lunch outside the building.

Don't forget that any public institution, at national or EU level, is made up of normal people. Some of them will have different opinions from the ones they need to present publicly while speaking in the name of these institutions.

“Going for a coffee” increases your chance to get the information you are looking for. In this situation, the person you meet is likely to be much more open and often tells you his own opinion versus the opinion of his employer. Your success rate might be even higher if you find a person coming from your own country.

More information on influencing the Commission: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/influencingtheeu/commission>

More information on Comitology and Committees: <http://archive.corporateeurope.org/lobbyingbycommittee.html>

Official website: <http://ec.europa.eu/>

Law making

The European Union has the power to make laws in various forms

- **regulations** become immediately enforceable as law in all member states (for example: REACH legislation on chemicals),
- **directives** must be transposed into national legislation (for example: the renewable energy directive which sets out targets for member states, without stating how they should be achieved),
- **decisions** are binding upon those individuals, organisations or member states to which they are addressed.
- **codification** refers to the process whereby one or more original pieces of legislation and subsequent amendments are brought together into a new, single, piece of legislation. **Recasting** is a similar process, but also includes the possibility to make changes to the legislation.

The ordinary legislative procedure

Although there are a number of special procedures, used in a small number of policy areas, the “Ordinary Legislative procedure” (formerly known as the [Co-decision procedure](#)), is the main legislative procedure by which legislation is adopted.

In this procedure, the Commission submits a legislative proposal to the Parliament and Council, and both bodies have the chance to amend the proposal. However, both Parliament and Council need to approve the same version of the proposal.

- **The use of various advocacy tactics, and an understanding of the balance of forces within the various institutions can ensure that progress is made when the text is being discussed by supportive (parts of) institutions, and that these gains are not rolled back when it is discussed by more obstructive bodies.**

At the **first reading** Parliament adopts its position on the Commission proposal, and passes this on to Council.

If the Council approves the Parliament's wording then the act is adopted. If not, it adopts its own position and passes this back to Parliament with explanations.

The Commission also informs Parliament of its position on the matter.

- **An increasingly large proportion of legislative proposals are being dealt with during the first reading. This is done by establishing a “trialogue” between Commission, Council and Parliament, to establish a compromise text between the different institutions.**

At the **second reading**, the Parliament may approve the Council's text, in which case it becomes law. The Parliament may reject the Council's text, leading to a failure of the law, or modify it and pass it back to the Council. Second reading amendments are only admissible if they seek to: (1) restore Parliament's first reading position; (2) reach a compromise between Council and Parliament; (3) amend a part of the Common Position which is new compared to the Commission proposal; or (4) take account of a new fact or legal situation. If Parliament fails to take a decision, then the law is also adopted.

If the proposal has been amended by Parliament, the Commission gives its opinion once more.

The Council must then take a decision on the Parliament's amended text within 3 months.

Where the Commission has rejected amendments in its opinion, the Council must act unanimously.

If Council does not take a decision within 3 months, or if it opposes the amendments, the Council President (with the agreement of the Parliament President), convenes the “**Conciliation Committee**”. This committee is composed of the Council and an equal number of MEPs (with the attendance and moderation of the Commission).

The committee draws up a joint text on the basis of the two positions. If within six weeks it fails to agree a common text, then the act has failed. If it succeeds and the committee approves the text, then the Council and Parliament (acting by majority) must then approve the text. If either fails to do so, the act is not adopted.

There are opportunities for influencing the Commission, Council or Parliament at every stage in the procedure. Key moments include:

- **the period when legislation is being drafted and consulted upon within the Commission,**
- **the first reading in Parliament (which gives a chance to introduce or block amendments as the proposal passes through the Committee stage)**
- **The first reading in Council (which gives a chance to influence via Perm Reps in Brussels, or activities at national level)**



Case study: "Stop the waste" on the waste framework directive

The European Union's 2008 Waste Framework Directive (WFD) forms the basis of member states' waste policy. During the lengthy negotiations leading up to the passing of the legislation, FoEE and EEB (European Environmental Bureau) successfully campaigned for huge improvements to the initial proposals.

These include the EU's first general recycling targets for both household waste – 50% by 2020, and construction and demolition waste – 70% by 2020, and the establishment of waste prevention objectives with the planned introduction of targets in 2014, as well as the establishment of a 5-tier waste hierarchy in EU Law (Prevention > Reuse > Recycling > Recovery > Disposal).

Whilst the work of FoEE and EEB introduced some very positive steps, a number of less positive aspects were introduced to the Directive: Recycling targets are not as strong nor as ambitious as we believe is possible and necessary; the Directive encourages greater incineration by reclassifying some incinerators as 'recovery' of waste, and moving incineration up the waste hierarchy; the re-classification of certain materials as by-products rather than waste has removed them from safety regulations.

You can follow the progress of the Directive as it passed between the European Parliament and Council, and links to the FoEE and EEB briefings and actions, by reading the press releases from 2007 and 2008:

http://www.foeeurope.org/activities/waste_management/press.htm

The photo shows a 40 meter banner unfurled by FoEE and EEB at the European Parliament, Strasbourg, prior to a vote on the Directive in February 2007.

More information on the ordinary legislative procedure: <http://ec.europa.eu/codecision>

How the Brussels Bubble really works



EU corporate lobbyists like to refer to Brussels as a harmonious village. In reality, the Brussels lobbying scene, concentrated around the EU quarter and known as the “Brussels Bubble”, is a small elitist world where a significant part of EU decision-making still happens away from public scrutiny. Anyone entering the “Bubble” to campaign for environmental or social justice issues should be aware that it is anything but a level playing field.

Recent figures suggest that Brussels hosts around 15,000 lobbyists, although the actual number is likely to be much higher, due the lack of mandatory registration of lobbyists. Corporate lobbyists vastly outnumber NGOs and public-interest groups in Brussels (a ratio of five to one has been suggested)¹. As well as company ‘in-house’ lobbyists, there are a variety of actors to support the business interests: public affairs firms and consultants², law firms, trade associations, and think tanks.

Lobbying is defined by the EU as “activities carried out with the objective of influencing the policy formulation and decision-making processes of the European institutions”, usually in return for payment.

Corporate groups often rely on a narrow definition of lobbying as direct representation activities, in order to downplay the scope of their actual influence³. A more realistic definition includes the different forms of communication and preparation activities that underpin the policy proposals made to decision makers. Lobbying seeks influence, but successful lobbying requires resources.

○ **Using this wider definition explains why money and resources matter so much in lobbying, but also why the overwhelming majority of lobbyists support corporate interests.**

The European Commission often is the starting point for lobbyists as it has the power to initiate legislation. The lack of experts on specific dossiers in its administration explains why the Commission often turns to outside experts. Currently, more than 1,000 advisory “expert groups”⁴, advise Commission officials. Out of the 30,000 “experts”, it is estimated that 21,000 are public servants, while 6,000 come from the corporate sector and only 3,000 represent civil society. Conflicts of Interest are rife, with examples such as prominent bankers taking places in the committee set up to advise the Commission on financial reform.

¹ Corporate Europe Observatory, “Academia: a partner for advancing the corporate agenda?” *Corporate Europe Observer* 12, August 2002

² ALTER-EU, Blacklist of unregistered lobbying consultancies, March 2010, <http://www.alter-eu.org/documents/briefings-info-sheets/2010/03/11/blacklist-of-unregistered-lobbying-consultancies>

³ FoEE, *Lobbying in Brussels – How much do the top 50 companies in the EU spend?* April 2010, http://www.foeeurope.org/corporates/pdf/Lobbying_in_Brussels_April2010.pdf

⁴ http://www.alter-eu.org/sites/default/files/alter-eu_workshop_11-05-2011.pdf

But industry influence does not stop in the Commission. Members of the European Parliament, who are in charge of adopting EU legislation, are flooded by corporate interests. Swedish MEP Carl Schlyter, the Greens' shadow rapporteur on the food labeling dossier explains: *"The problem with lobbying is that it sets people's mindsets to solve problems that are industry-related and not consumer-related, whereas the whole package is regarding food information for consumers" [...]* *"On the F-gases dossier, between 96% and 100% of all amendments — when you can trace the origin of the amendments from the three biggest political groups — were all from lobbyists. On REACH, it was between 50% and 75%. So this shows the enormous impact of lobbying. This is a real democratic problem because there is such an imbalance in the power of influence. If we increase transparency, then we would have a better chance to deal with this democratic problem."*⁵

Case study: FoEE cleaning the corridors of power

At first sight, there is little link between lobbying transparency and environmental debates on climate, food and agriculture or resource use. As a result, you might wonder why FoEE is working on these issues. In fact, the transparency campaign was born out of an assessment that without a level playing field, we will not be able to influence EU decision-makers on the climate or other issues, and make people's voices heard. Confronted with the overwhelming representation of corporate interests in EU, the time had come to start monitoring and regulating the "hot air" in the Brussels Bubble.

As part of the ALTER-EU coalition, FoEE is campaigning for lobbying transparency, ethics regulation and more a balanced access to European policy-makers. The campaign has focused on researching cases of unethical lobbying practices related to environment and economic justice, filing freedom of information requests, and monitoring so-called "revolving doors" where former officials use their EU experience and networks to take highly paid positions in the private sector, in Brussels or in their home country.

FoEE works to expose these cases through reports, administrative and legal complaints in order to bring the transparency and ethics issue on the agenda of EU legislators. Together with a team of dedicated "lobby cleaners", we have used creative tools such as our annual Worst EU Lobbying Awards or our recent spoof newspaper "European Noise" to make sure that corporates and politicians are in the public eye and signal that cosy relationships between business and EU decision makers are not an option.

The recent introduction of a joint lobbyists' register, together with ethics codes for Commissioners and Members of the European Parliament are a success. But more work is needed to ensure that European policies are not captured by corporate interests. That is why we will continue to collect and expose EU and national cases of deceptive or unethical corporate influence, to help our campaigns in the people's and planet's interests.

If you know of a case of intransparent or unethical lobbying at the national or EU level, contact: natacha.cingotti@foeeurope.org

⁵ Corporate Europe Observatory, Interview with Carl Schlyter, <http://blog.brusselssunshine.eu/2010/06/mep-carl-schlyter-industry-lobbying-has.html>

A rough guide to advocacy work

There are many ways to influence decision makers within the EU, and different tactics will be useful at different stages in a campaign, or to influence different institutions at different steps in the legislative process. The following tips should help you get the results you want whether you are writing, emailing, calling or visiting a decision maker.

Do your research:

Researching your topic is obviously important, but make sure you stick to your main points, and don't get distracted by complicated details. Identify the 2 or 3 key points that you want to get across, and make sure you mention them at the start of the meeting.

Written reports or briefings can help to get your message across in a clear and concise way, and can be something to leave behind with a decision-maker after a meeting.

- **FoEE regularly produces briefings and reports which can be used to back up your advocacy work.**

Become useful to the people you are trying to influence

Many of the people you are trying to influence are not experts in their field. They may be working on a wide range of issue and not have time to follow all the latest developments or do background research on the topics that you care about. You may be able to present yourself as an expert that decision makers can turn to in the future.

You may also be able to identify a common purpose with decision makers, for example to make progress on a particular piece of legislation, or to block a particular decision being pushed by other countries or other interests.

You could offer support by drafting parliamentary questions or amendments to legislative text, or providing expertise and information on specific cases that decision makers can use.

- **Tactical alliances with decision makers can be an important way to make progress, but take care that the possibility to cooperate does not weaken your demands, or your ability to be critical of decision makers on other issues.**

Think about the messenger:

Making an alliance with other environmental or campaign groups, (especially those who already have good contacts) may help to increase the power behind your demands. Ensure that increasing the number of groups involved doesn't lead to watering down or confusing the message.

Find out about the person you are trying to influence. Knowing if they have a background as an entrepreneur, in farming, or a trade union will help to decide which arguments might be effective with them. If you are approaching an elected representative, you might also decide to involve people from the constituency of the person you are trying to influence. This might be the region they represent, or their social/economic group in which they have their base.

- **FoEE has alliances with many different groups at an EU level (from farmers groups to consumer organisations), and may be able to put you in touch with allies at a national level.**

Clarify your ask:

Ensure that you have a clear request for the person you are trying to influence: do you want them to vote in a particular way on a specific piece of legislation? do you want them to make a public statement or appear at an event in support of your demands? are you asking for an appointment for a face-to-face meeting? are you asking them for their opinion, or trying to influence their opinion? Ensure you ask for a clear reply in letters you send, and don't end a meeting or phone-call until you're sure you've got your message across.

- **FoE Europe can often supply detailed voting recommendations for votes in the European Parliament, as well as drafts of lobby letters for you to translate and send.**

Share intelligence:

Make sure you take notes if possible during any phone or face-to-face meetings, and share any information gained in meetings with allies who are also working on the same topic. This will help you to develop a strategy to reinforce positive responses, and come up with new arguments to counter negative responses.

- **It's also really useful if you can send a summary of any relevant meetings to campaigners at FoEE. This will help to develop a better picture of what is happening at a national level, and how campaigners in Brussels, and maybe in other countries, can best respond to new developments.**

Involve your supporters:

There are many ways to involve supporters and members in influencing decision makers, from mass face-to-face meetings, postcard actions, media stunts, demonstrations. Asking supporters to write hand written letters may have a higher impact, and will probably be more effective than "models letters" sent all with the same text. A few well written letters might also come across as less annoying than sending hundreds of campaign postcards and cyber-actions.

- **Work out how to balance the effort needed by your supporters to take the action, and the impact this will have.**

Combining with media work and mobilization

Advocacy work on its own may not be enough to achieve the change you want to see in EU policy. Most of the time it will be necessary to combine face-to-face meetings, and letters or phone calls with a broader mobilisation (through demonstrations, street actions, cyber-actions, petitions, building coalitions, etc.) or with media work (press releases, media stunts, opinion pieces, letters to newspapers, etc.).

- **The FoE Europe "Big Action Manual" has lots of tips on organising large-scale events. The Young FoEE "Act Now" handbook is a great guide to organising smaller actions. Contact FoE Europe for a copy.**



**Friends of
the Earth
Europe**

for the people | for the planet | for the future

Friends of the Earth Europe

Member Groups

Austria	Global 2000
Belgium	Les Amis de la Terre
Belgium (Flanders)	Friends of the Earth Flanders & Brussels
Croatia	Zelena Akcija
Cyprus	Friends of the Earth
Czech Republic	Hnutí Duha
Denmark	NOAH
England/Wales	Friends of the Earth
Northern Ireland	Eesti Roheline Liikumine
Estonia	Maan Ystävät Ry
Finland	Les Amis de la Terre
France	Sakharvelos Mtsvaneta Modzraoba
Georgia	Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND)
Germany	Magyar Természetvédok Szövetsége
Hungary	Friends of the Earth
Ireland	Amici della Terra
Italy	Latvian - Vides Aizsardzibas Klubs
Latvia	Lietuvos Zaliuju Judėjimas
Lithuania	Mouvement Ecologique
Luxembourg	Dvizhenje na Ekologistite na Makedonija
Macedonia	Moviment ghall-Ambjent
Malta	Vereniging Milieudensie
The Netherlands	Norges Naturvernforbund
Norway	Polski Klub Ekologiczny
Poland	Friends of the Earth Scotland
Scotland	Priatelija Zeme - Slovensko
Slovakia	Amigos de la Tierra
Spain	Jordens Vänner
Sweden	Pro Natura
Switzerland	Zelenyi Svit
Ukraine	

Friends of the Earth Europe campaigns for sustainable and just societies and for the protection of the environment, unites 30 national organisations with thousands of local groups and is part of the world's largest grassroots environmental network, Friends of the Earth International.