



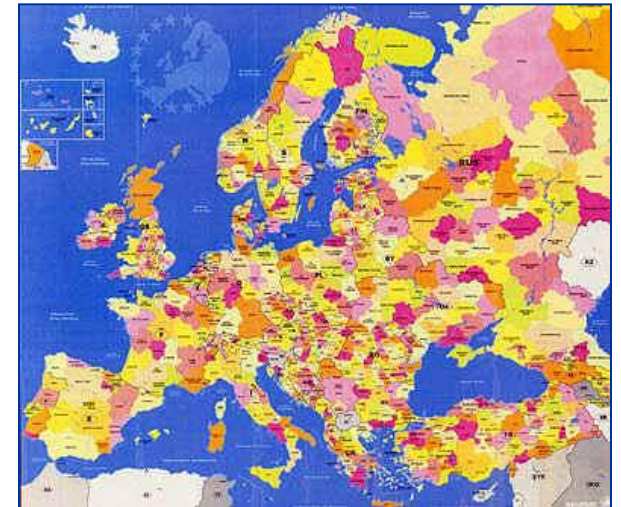
Information Meeting – Kenniscentrum Vlaamse steden

Brussels – 27 September 2011

How to lobby the EU in Brussels ?

by Dr Pascal Goergen

Diplomatic Representative of the Brussels-Capital Region to the EU





Content

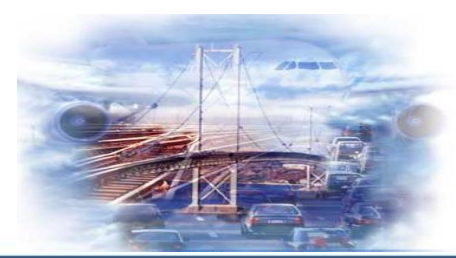


Introduction

1. **Definition of Lobbying**
2. **Techniques of Lobbying**
3. **Influencing Tools for local/regional authorities and networks in the EU Decision Making Process**
4. **A concrete Lobby success story**



Introduction

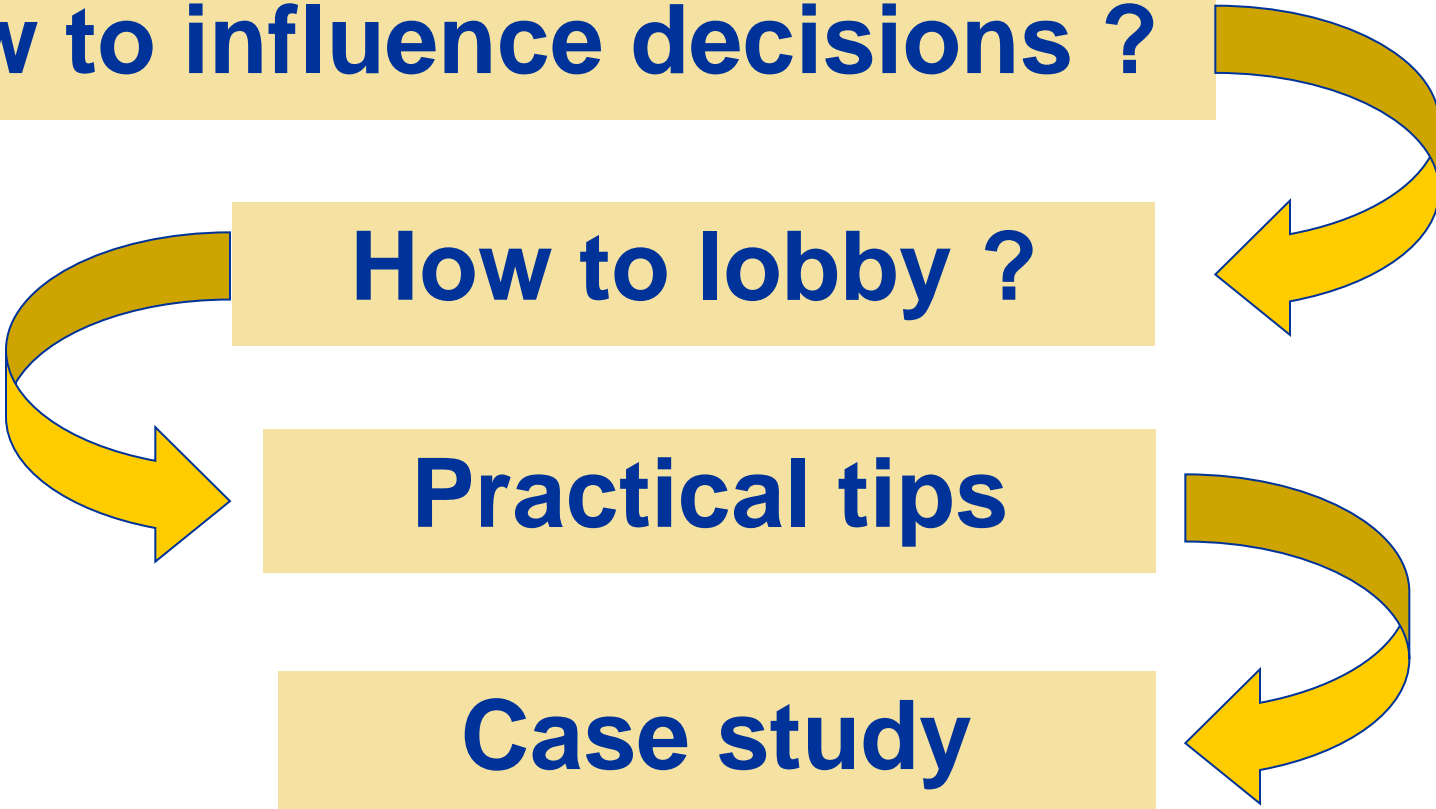


How to influence decisions ?

How to lobby ?

Practical tips

Case study



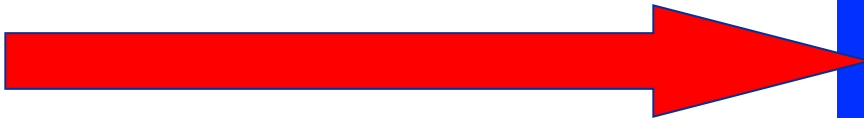


Introduction



- Diplomatic representative of the Brussels Capital Region to the EU within the Belgian PermRep

- PhD in Political Science (University of Louvain-la-Neuve)

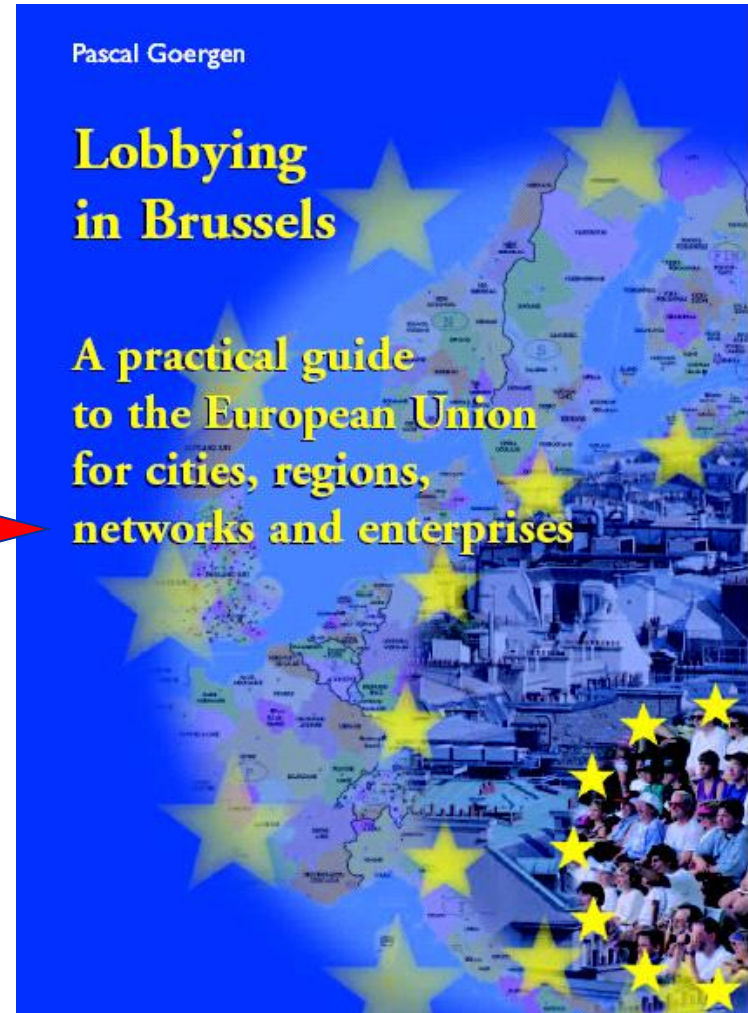


- Lecturer and author in the field of European institutions
- Present in the meeting rooms and in the corridors of the EU institutions for 10 years

Pascal Goergen

Lobbying in Brussels

A practical guide to the European Union for cities, regions, networks and enterprises





1. Definition and Origins of Lobbying (II)



Lobbying

There are lots of definitions of the word «lobbying» :

« *Lobbying is about trying to influence directly or indirectly the process of making, applying or interpreting legislative measures, norms, regulations or indeed any kind of activity by public authorities.* »

« *Lobbying is not only about working in the waiting room, it is about analysing and understanding a problem, in order to explain its meaning and consequence to those who hold the power to decide. »*



1. Definition and Origins of Lobbying (III)



« *Like an instrument of strategic communication, seeking to put into perspective management objectives and political decisions on the basis of technical information.* »

Some experts consider «*a lobbyist like a merchant of information*»...



2. Techniques of Lobbying (I)



Step 1 : Identification of the Objectives

- reducing costs that will result from a specific regulation or a regional law dealing with your activities
- maximising the advantages of a decision or minimising its consequences on your well-being
- anticipating decisions that might be made about the implementation of rules in your sector
- taking part in the preparation of actions through thematic networks and with other partners (lobby actions concerning the regional/local authorities & the European Neighbourhood Policy)





2. Techniques of Lobbying (II)



Step 2 : Monitoring & Observation

- **Monitoring/observation includes:**

 **the identification of information providers and decision makers in order to gather, organise and use relevant information**
(political decisions at local level about SME's, urban planning for scientific parcs, sending information about the 7th FP R&D to the regional Development agencies,...)

 **the most useful tool to use in this perspective is to network networks** (in order to maximise the number of your contacts that may be able to provide you the relevant information and support your initiative, inviting experts/politicians,...)



2. Techniques of Lobbying (III)



Step 2 : Monitoring & Observation

- **Good monitoring practice consists in :**

- **information gathering:** scanning generalised and specialist press, newspapers, reports and memos on a daily basis once objectives are set. Attending meetings relevant to the issue and get back the useful information.
- **analysing information:** checking, analysing and matching the information gathered. Networking with people that are likely to have key information.
- **perspective:** setting into a wider context the information gathered and analysed to take into account all the different stakeholders, the technical details, the political context might be likely to affect the subject.



drafting clear arguments for those involved: translating the information in order to ensure that the individuals receiving it are able to understand its key messages quickly and easily.



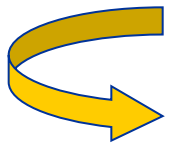
2. Techniques of Lobbying (IV)



- **Step 3 : Developing a strategy**

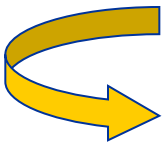
4 questions :

- **What arguments should be used? (clear arguments !)**



What can be done to resolve the existing problems to bring forward objectives and the strength of these to construct an argument and identify the tools that are required.

- **Who are the individuals to exchange and engage with?**



Distinguishing between individuals who decide, people who have the power to make final decision or sign and those who constitute a body of allies and who are close to the real decision makers.

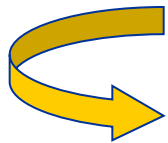


2. Techniques of Lobbying (V)



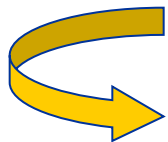
- **Step 3 : Developing a strategy**

- **When is the most relevant moment to act?**



The earlier the lobbying begins, the earlier it has a chance of succeeding! The best moment to get involved is during the preparation of the regulation/law or for instance before the first draft of the annual budget of the regional council...

- **What tactics should be used with which tools?**



Press conferences, electronic newsletter, events, opinion polling and public relations. Different methods can be used at different times according to the aim.



2. Techniques of Lobbying (VI)



- **Step 4 : What tactics shall we use ?**

There are lots of strategic approaches to consider :

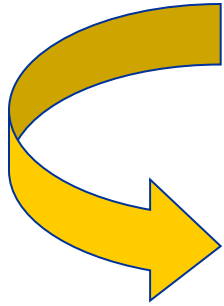
- ***Consensual strategies*** : taking part in preliminary debates about decisions, getting the agreement of decision makers and looking for the best solution for everyone concerned.
- ***Conflictual strategies*** : opposing harmful arguments and devaluing cases presented by the other side.
- ***Confidential or public strategies*** : depending on the communication channels that are used in the lobbying activity and on the way in which communication is managed.
- ***Direct or indirect strategies*** : numerous contacts, personal communication, formal or informal meetings and presentations or no large scale activity at all, letter campaigns either individually or through third parties such as interest groups, campaigns, speeches, articles in the media, protest marches. Involve someone of the administration or local authorities in the activities of your structure.



2. Techniques of Lobbying (VII)

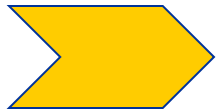


- **Step 5 : the follow up**



Was the lobby action we set up successfull ?
What was wrong in our approach ?

Evaluation of the lobby action



Be aware of the fact that a lobby action takes time!



Do not give up at your first failure, it is a matter of persuasion!



3. Tools for effective Lobbying in Brussels



Introduction : the EU Context

3.1. The Institutional Triangle and the 5 main targets

3.2. Influencing Tools

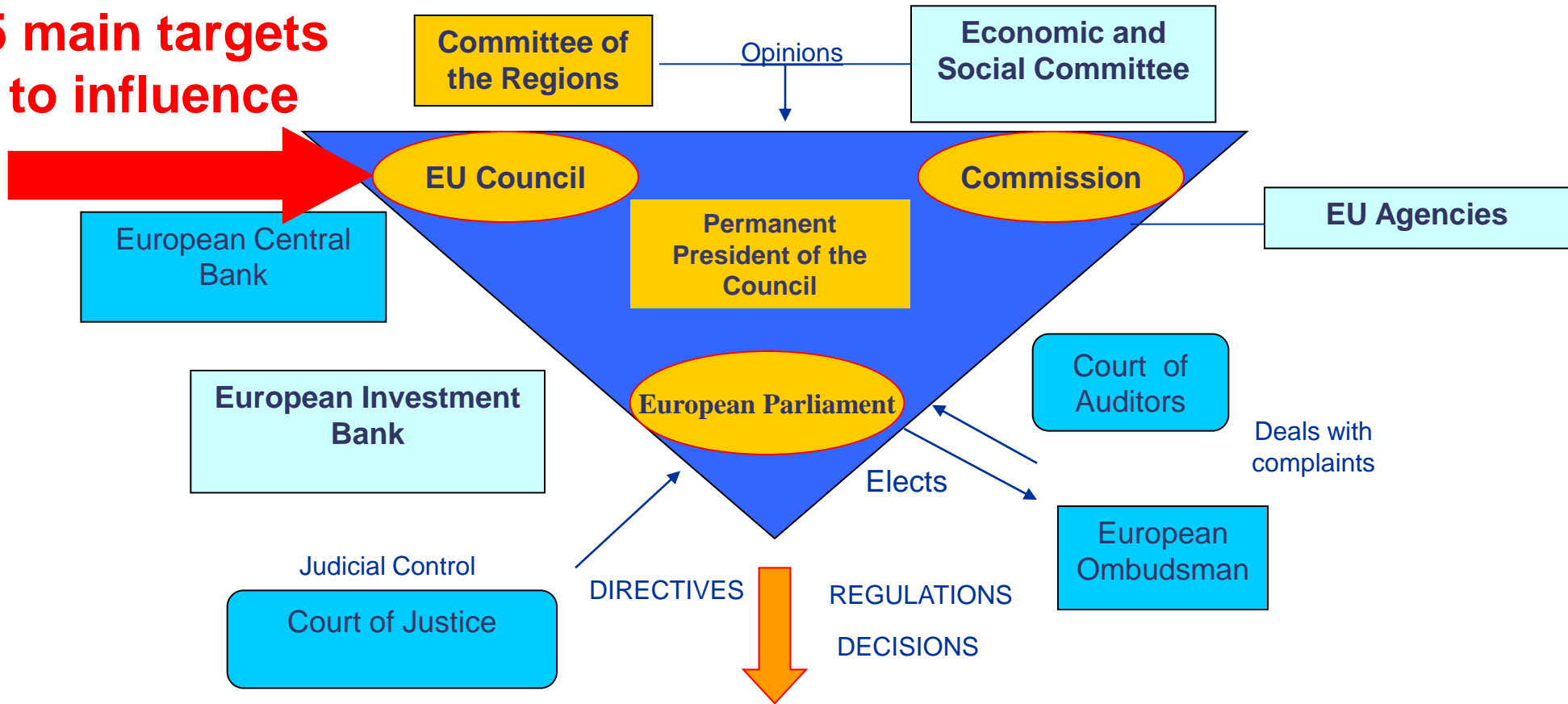
- ✓ **Regional offices in Brussels**
- ✓ **Brussels based Networks or how to use these networks to lobby the EU institutions ?**
- ✓ **Political representation**

3.3. A concrete lobby success story



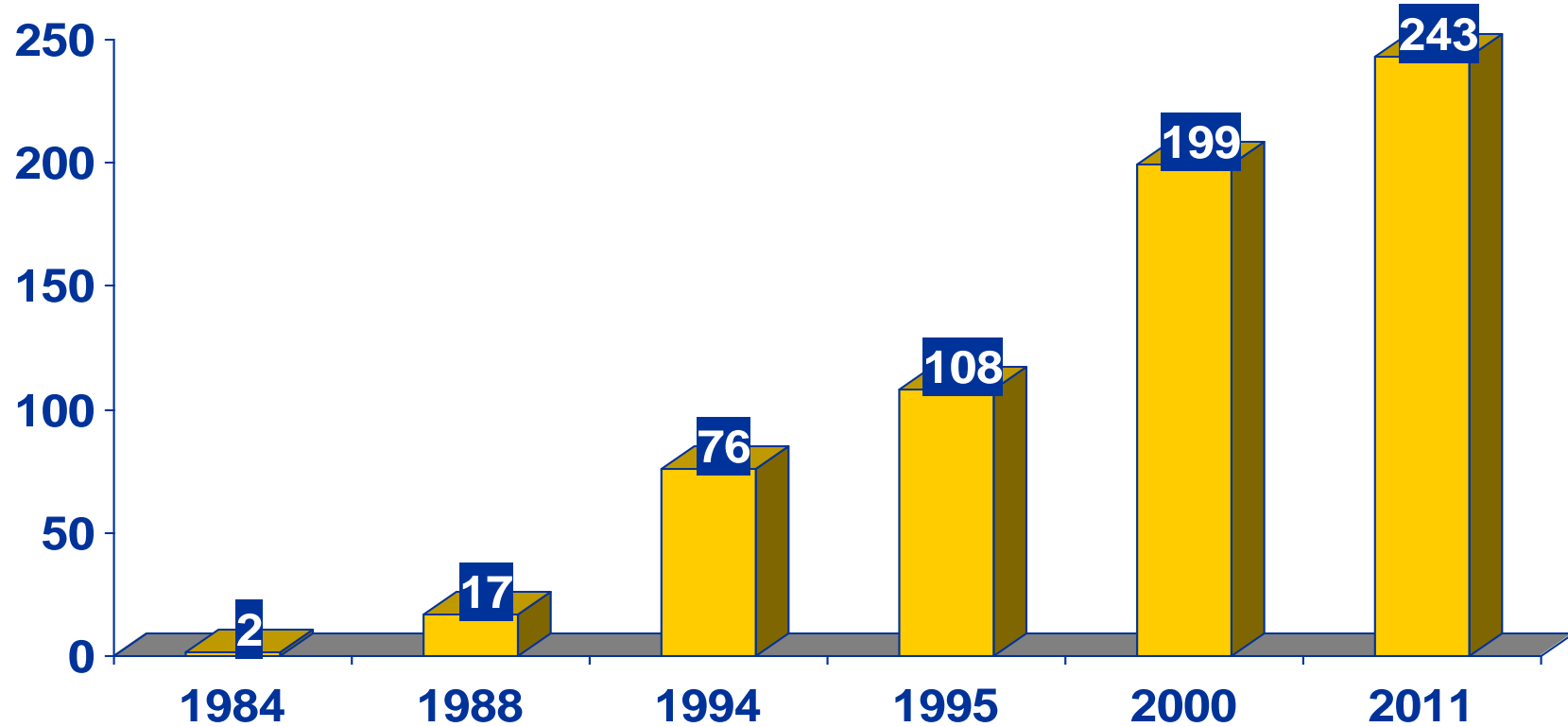
3.1. The Triangle and the 4 main lobbytargets

**5 main targets
to influence**





3.2. Influencing tool 1 : the representation offices



Number of regional offices in Brussels between 1984 and 2011



3.2. Influencing tool 1 : the representation offices

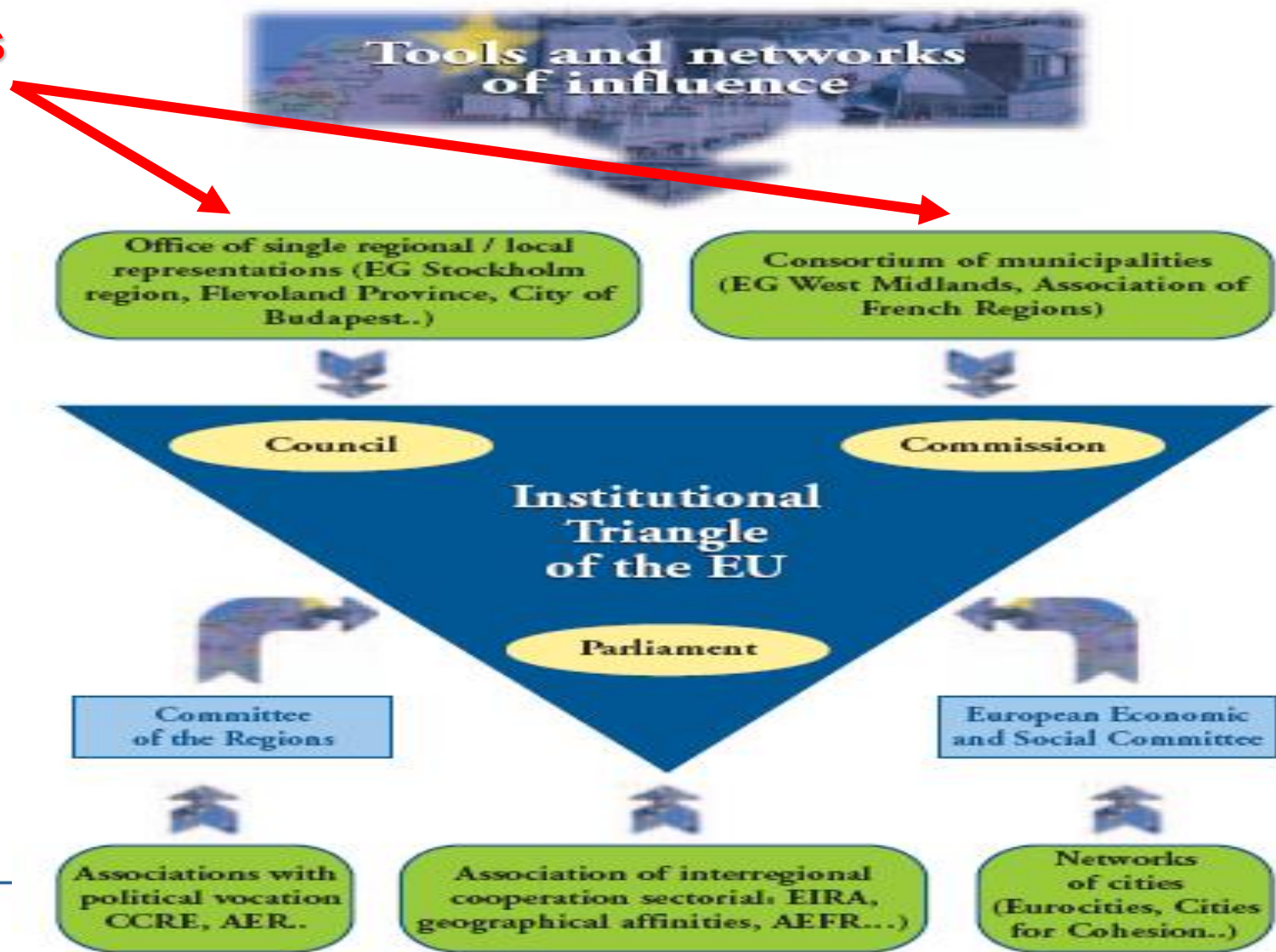
Main missions of the representation offices

- Representing and defending regional/local interests in the European decision-making process
- Following the work of the European institutions in close collaboration with the Member State Permanent Representation
- Analysing the proposals for regulations and Community programmes
- Handling and exchanging useful information with Ministerial Cabinets and regional/local administrations
- Anticipating the decisions
- Coordinating the implementation of directives
- Offering an opinion and assistance on European affairs for the benefit of the regional/local economic actors
- Developing relationships and partnerships with other regional representations in Brussels



4.2. Influencing tool 1 : the representation offices

Offices types





3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks

The Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and for sustainable Resource management (ACR+)



ACR+ is an international network of more than 70 local and regional authorities with the shared aim to promote the sustainable management of waste and resources, encouraging prevention at source, reuse, recycling and all forms of recovery. The Association was created in Pamplona in May 1994 by a group of cities and regions leaded by the Brussels-Capital Region. The Association's

name evolved from Association of Cities for Recycling (ACR-AVR) to current "Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and for sustainable Resource management" reflecting the evolution :



3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks

The POLIS network



Founded in 1989 the POLIS network includes 65 members from 18 countries and can be considered as a tool for better transport management in Europe.

Aims

The network aims to unite European cities and regions that want to work together **on questions of transport and the environment** and on the development of technological innovation and local transport policies. The main objective of this network is to support cities and regions in the improvement of the quality of life of their citizens, through innovative techniques that seek to reduce barriers, improve security, reduce pollution and allow for more equal access to transport services.



3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks

Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)



The idea to create a European association that was a “Union for Border Regions” came about in 1965, in Bale at the “International Congress for Regional Planners”. The formal foundation was in Bonn in September 1971 and among the 115 border and cross border regions of the EU, 90 are members of the AEBR.

Aims

To successfully lead programmes and projects, seek financial means, bring them together and make use of them :

- **To organise** meetings on cross border issues and contribute to the solution of border issues by supporting specific activities
- **To prepare** and carrying out common actions
- **To set up** the “European centre of border and cross border regions” in collaboration with the European Union and the Council of Europe.
- **To inform** the political world and public opinion in Europe on cross-border issues.



3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks





3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks





3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks



HELSINKI EU OFFICE

Activities within the network

- General Meetings on research and innovation issues
 - Annual General Events
 - Updates and early warning in form of regular briefings, website, ...
 - Regular contacts with EU Institutions and regions
 - Support regions to develop and deliver inter-regional seminars
 - Devise and update of regional profiles
 - Partner search
 - Produce and update a calendar of events
 - Working groups on projects, lobbying and funding issues
 - Provide a single voice for regions in lobbying
- 



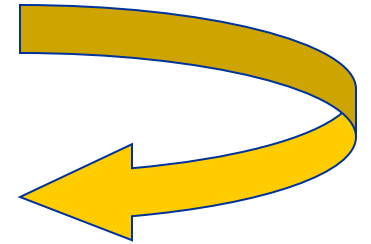
3.2. Influencing tool 2 : the Brussels based networks



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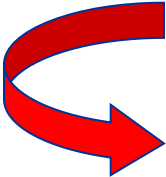
Direct or indirect results

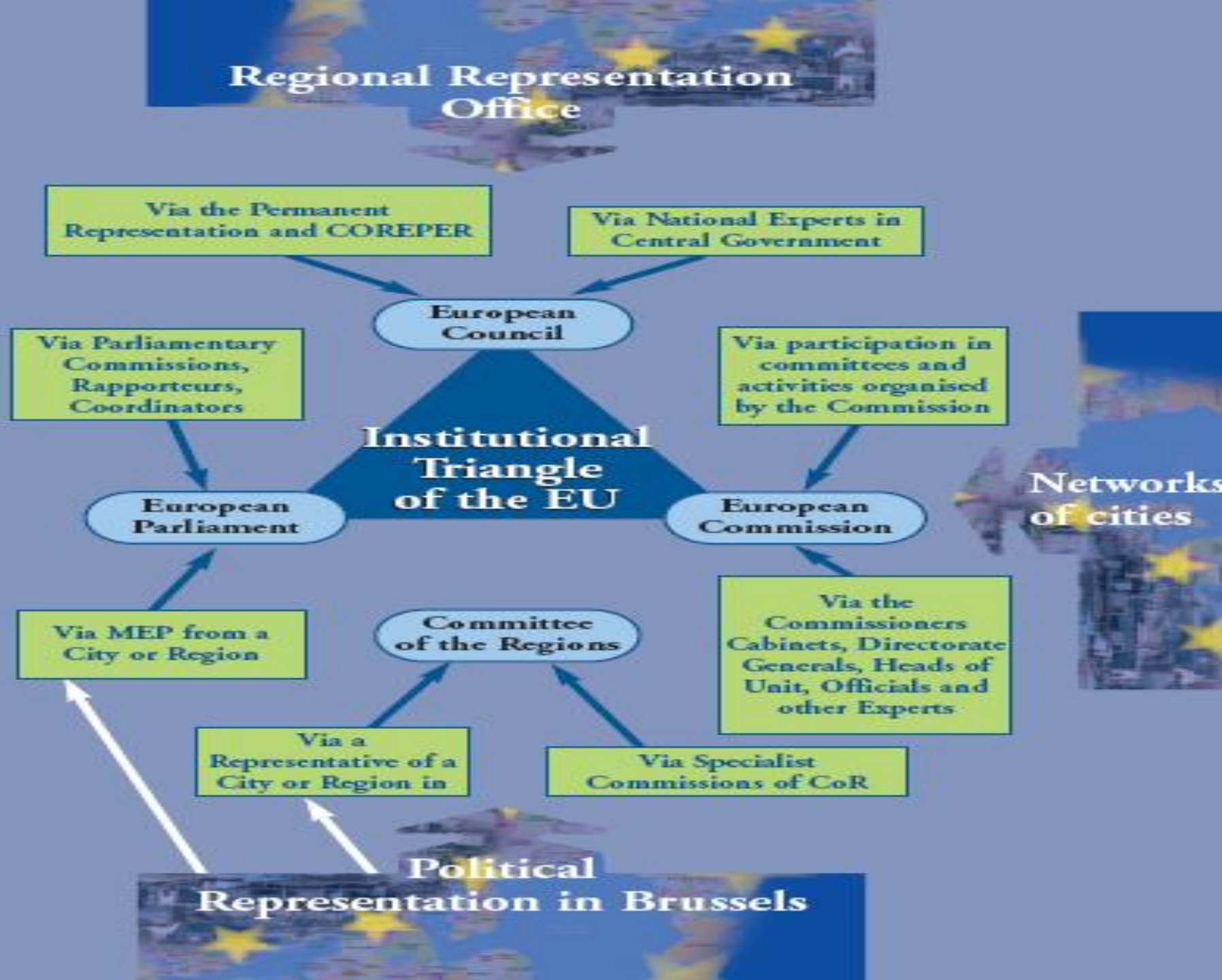
- ✓ Knowledge Sharing at the EU level
- ✓ Inter-regional exchanges
- ✓ Practitioner development
- ✓ Policy and thematic developments
- ✓ Working with other Networks and Organisations





3.3. Influencing tool 3 : the political representation

1. A MEP from your region
 2. A representative of your region/municipality in the Committee of the Region
 3. And why not ? The Commissioner
-  Very important to anticipate this crucial point before the local/regional/national elections !





4. A concrete lobby success story : the ERRIN Network



ERRIN was created in March 2002 by
8 regional offices based in Brussels,
of which Brussels-Capital :

ERRIN European Regions
Research and Innovation Network



UUSIMAA REGIONAL COUNCIL
HELSINKI REGION





4. A concrete lobby success story

- **FUNCTIONING :**

- ERRIN has been cofinanced by DG Research as pilot project of the initiative « Regions of Knowledge » (FP 6) and by the 8 initial regions.
 - The network started its numerous activities in April 2004.
 - ERRIN had 150 membres from the 240 regional representation offices present in Brussels at this time.
 - The 8 initial representations composed its Administrative Council. Its secretariat was based in Brussels, and the network had an internet website :
www.errin-brussels.org



4. A concrete lobby success story

- 2006 : QUID ?

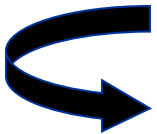
- The cofinancement from DG Research in the framework of the FP6 ends in March 2006.
 - To stop there or to continue alone?
 - ERRIN decided to carry on. For this, the network needed:
 - A financial support.
 - A legal status (belgian ASBL).
- The agreement of all the political authorities of the regions members of the network.



4. A concrete lobby success story

- 2007-2011 : WHAT'S UP ?

- The network is composed by 52 full members that bring their financial support to the network.
 - Since the 1st of january 2007, ERRIN is an ASBL (Belgian law).
- Regional political authorities are members of the Management Board of the network.
- Recent activities : Election of the new management board 2008. On the agenda : contribution of the network to the Green Book in the framework of the ERA – European Research Area)



From nothing (except the political will) in 2002 to a very good working and lobbying tool in 2006. Now : very good results.



Question time

Thank you for your attention !

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