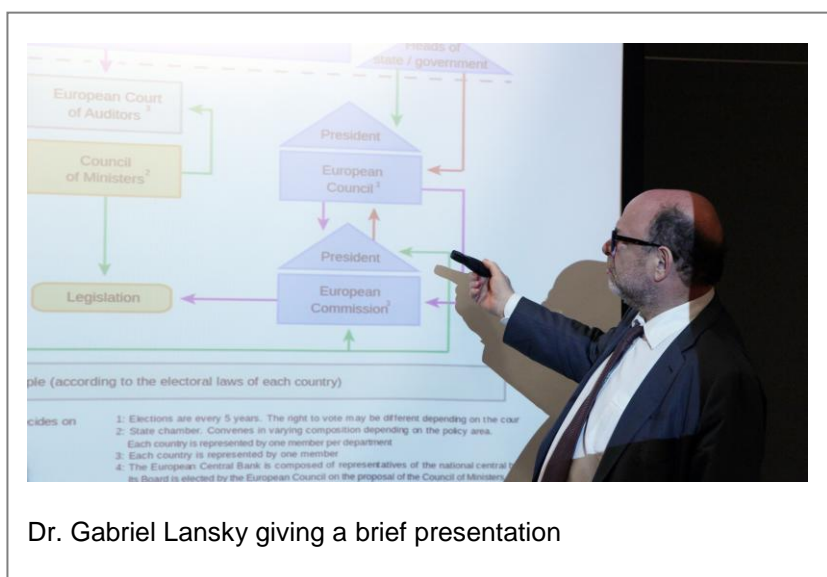


Talking to the ‘Machinery of Brussels’

On 14 February 2014, the EUAP offered a seminar on lobbying in the European Union. Guest speaker Dr. Gabriel Lansky, Senior Partner of the Vienna law firm Lansky, Ganzger and Partner, presented a specialist audience of legal experts, students and academics with an overview of the legal and regulatory processes in the European Union and discussed case studies of influencing them through lobbying.



There are currently over 2,500 lobby organizations, employing over 15,000 ‘lobbyists’, in Brussels (which makes the city the second-most intensive lobbying concentration in the world after Washington).

Their work focuses mainly on

four (sets of) institutions: the European Commission, the European Parliament and its committees, the Council of Ministers and national governments of the 28 EU member states. Successful large-scale lobbying addresses all four of them, as they are – uniquely in the world – ‘integratively responsible’ for European legislation. The ensuing complexity of decision-making presently favours the private sector (including law firms), which can afford

long-term presence, while many non-governmental organizations have markedly less lobbying power. EU lobbying is regulated by a code (and register) of transparency, although the rules are for the time being less strict than in the US. The opaqueness of Brussels lobbying has been criticized frequently. In recent years (and despite the Lisbon Treaty), the political power of individual (big) member states has been increasing and apparently can override due processes within the 'EU machinery' itself. Similarly, the political lobbying of 'big' powers outside the EU has been growing.

Dr. Lansky gave numerous examples involving Chinese firms (and the Chinese government) as well as the current 'battle' over new data protection legislation in the wake of the NSA scandal. Participants also learned about appropriate methods to 'deliver messages of clients' in the multi-layered decision-making processes of Brussels.

