



VON DER LEYEN'S 2019-2024 COMMISSION

FULL-TIME REPORT

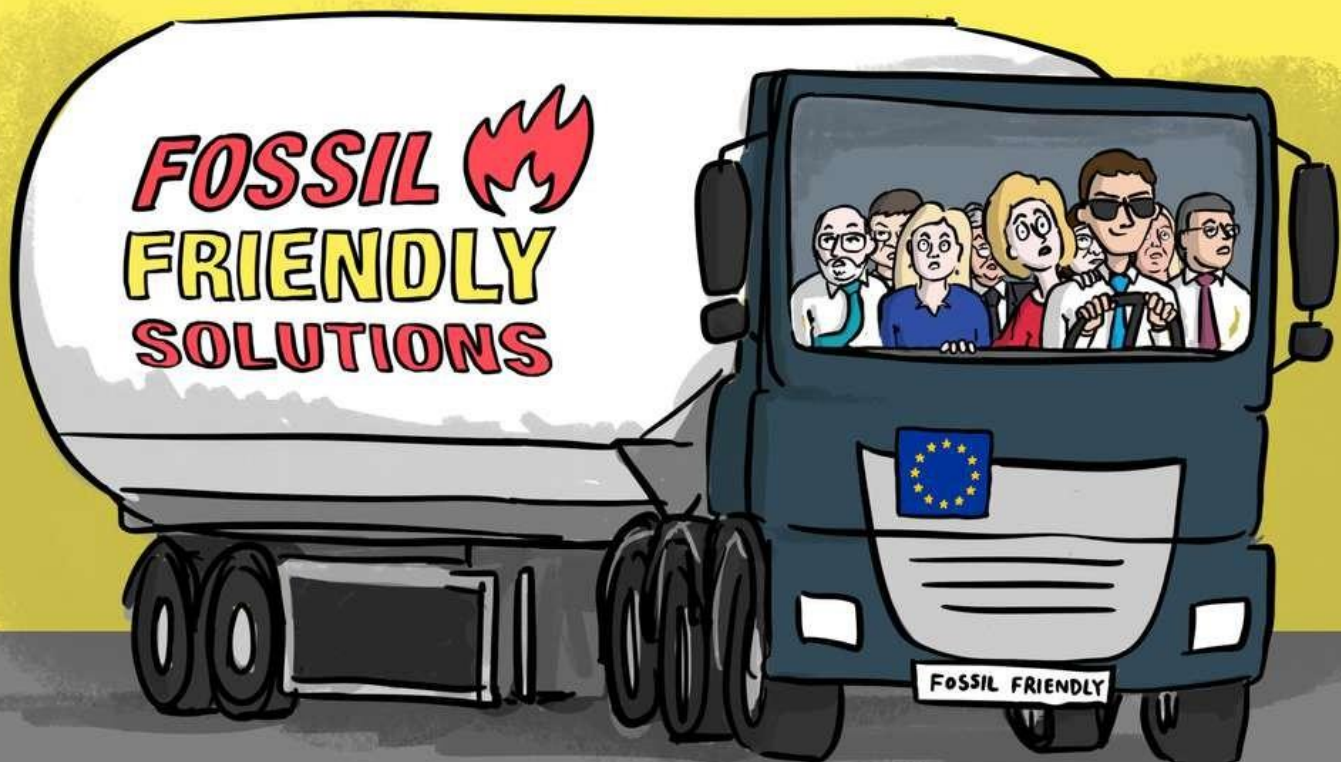


TABLE OF CONTENTS



- INTRODUCTION... **Page 2**
- WHICH EU COMMISSIONERS ARE THE MOST RECEPTIVE TO FOSSIL INDUSTRY LOBBYISTS?. **Page 4**
- ENERGY COMMISSIONER KADRI SIMSON... **Page 4**
- FORMER EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL/ CLIMATE
- ACTION COMMISSIONER FRANS TIMMERMANS.**Page 7**
- EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT/ EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL COMMISSIONER MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ.. **Page 8**
- TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER ADINA-IOANA VĂLEAN.. **Page 12**
- INTERNAL MARKET COMMISSIONER THIERRY BRETON... **Page 13**
- EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT/TRADE COMMISSIONER VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS.. **Page 15**
- INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS COMMISSIONER JUTTA URPIILAINEN... **Page 15**
- FOSSIL FREE POLITICS IS MORE URGENTLY NEEDED THAN EVER... **Page 16**
- SOURCES... **Page 17**
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS... **Page 18**

INTRODUCTION

Now the Von der Leyen Commission has reached its full-term, we analysed the number of meetings with fossil fuel lobbyists held by Commissioners and their cabinets.

The results are alarming: There have been nearly 900 meetings between Von der Leyen's Commission and fossil fuel lobbyists during its term of office. Nearly once every working day for four and a half years. And this is likely an underestimate, as explained in our methodology[1]. These results are in line with a previous, mid-term analysis done by Friends of the Earth Europe, conducted in June 2022.

That analysis of top-level meetings revealed already that meeting the fossil fuel industry was almost part of the daily routine in the Von der Leyen Commission.

In the first two and a half years of the Von der Leyen Commission – between December 2019 and May 2022 – the Commissioners and their cabinets had a total of nearly 500 meetings with fossil fuel companies or organisations with fossil fuel members.

So also in the two years since Friends of the Earth Europe's last analysis – from May 2022 to May 2024 – the Von der Leyen Commission has had nearly 400 more meetings with the fossil fuel industry, continuing its near-daily lobby meetings with the industry.



The impact of these near daily meetings – and the many other avenues of corporate capture afforded to the fossil fuel industry (see Box 1) – is once again all too clear: a boom in new gas infrastructure since the Ukraine invasion; a hollowed-out and increasingly grey Green Deal that is being remade into an ‘industrial deal’ designed to keep the fossil fuels flowing; and yet more public money and policy support to back dangerous distractions like carbon capture and hydrogen.

This open-door policy of the European Commission for big oil, gas and coal interests is in stark contrast with the increasingly frightening picture painted by climate science. It is clear that the interests of the fossil fuel industry are in direct contrast with the urgent need for climate protection.

For decades, fossil fuel companies have lobbied against effective climate action at national, EU and international levels, blocking policies to cut emissions and leave fossil fuels in the ground. The industry's successful lobbying and direct opposition to policy measures that tackle global warming have hindered the EU governments' efforts in implementing policies after the Paris Agreement that meet climate targets and keep warming below 1.5C.

Fossil Free Politics have never been more urgently needed.

BOX 1: OTHER METHODS OF INFLUENCE BY THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY

Meetings are not the only channel of fossil fuel industry influence

Lobby meetings with the Commission's highest levels are far from the fossil fuel industry's only channel of influence over EU climate and energy policy. From a revolving door between the fossil fuel industry and the EU institutions, to increasingly institutionalised corporate capture of policy-making, the result is laws that protect vested corporate interests rather than people and planet. Numerous EU-sanctioned structures are putting fossil fuel companies and lobby groups in the driving seat when it comes to shaping energy policy and distribution of public funding. These range from the EU's Industrial Alliances (such as the European Clean Hydrogen Alliance) and the EU Energy Platform Industry Advisory Group (see below) to the ICM Forum (formerly the carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) Forum, renamed after ‘industrial carbon management’ in accordance with the Commission's preferred euphemism for this fossil fuel industry-promoted technofix – see Box 4).

It is for this reason that a firewall to end fossil fuel industry access to decision-making – comparable to the restrictions to prevent the tobacco industry from influencing public health policy-making – must cover far more than just lobby meetings, as set out in Fossil Free Politics' demands.

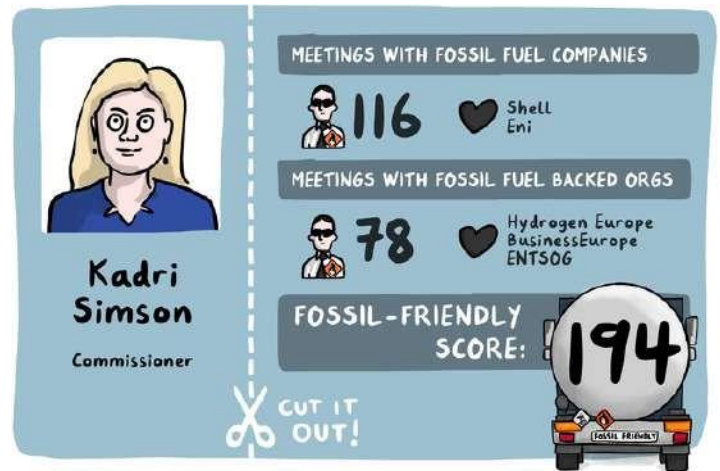
WHICH EU COMMISSIONERS ARE THE MOST RECEPTIVE TO FOSSIL INDUSTRY LOBBYISTS?

The top-scoring members of the Von der Leyen Commission, who've met oil and gas companies and their lobby organisations most frequently during the 2019-2024 mandate (and met fossil fuel companies at least ten times),^[1] are:

#1 Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson

The Commissioner for Energy and her cabinet have had a total of **116 meetings with fossil fuel companies**, companies with vested interests in the continued use of fossil fuels. Companies that lobby hard for dangerous distractions, such as CCUS, hydrogen, carbon offsets, and fossil gas as a 'transition' fuel. Distractions that prolong their business model, whilst it is delaying real climate action.

The number one fossil fuel company in Simson and her cabinet's meeting agenda was Shell, with 14 meetings, followed by Italian oil major Eni, with ten.



Shell, which spends up to €4.5 million per year lobbying the EU, has promised to keep pouring money into new oil and gas production – entirely ignoring the International Energy Agency's warnings that this will trigger disastrous levels of warming – whilst at the same time scaling back its climate commitments.

Eni, meanwhile, has been sued by NGOs and citizens over its decades of lobbying and greenwashing to delay climate action. And in response is suing them back, in an attempt to “quash activism, intimidate critics, and dodge accountability”, as reported by DeSmog.

Table 1: Top 3 of Commissioners meeting with Shell



The subjects that Simson and her cabinet most frequently discussed with fossil companies were hydrogen and gas (32 and 28 times, respectively), indicating just who is behind DG Energy's push for hydrogen, and the origin of its unwillingness to transition away from gas (see Box 4).

Notably, Simson and her cabinet had even more meetings with fossil fuel companies in the second half of the von der Leyen Commission's term than in the first: 56 in the first two and a half years followed by 60 in the subsequent two years. This means Simson's office has met even more frequently with fossil fuel companies since the mid-term analysis (and particularly since the Ukraine invasion – see Box 2).[3]

Additionally, Simson and her cabinet also had a further 78 meetings during the Von der Leyen Commission on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members.

The most popular was Hydrogen Europe (whose members include Equinor, BP, Shell, TotalEnergies, etc) with seven meetings, followed by BusinessEurope (see Box 5) and the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSOG), whose members include Enagás, Snam, Gasunie, Fluxys and GRTgaz. The influential role given to ENTSOG in predicting future gas use and proposing new gas pipelines and LNG terminals has enabled its member companies to receive public money to build the gas infrastructure they claimed was needed.

However, the vested interests of ENTSOG's member companies has consistently led to overinflated estimates of gas infrastructure needs, locking us into yet more fossil fuels whilst lining gas companies' pockets.

As Energy Commissioner, Simson has embraced the fossil fuel industry as a co-author of the EU's energy strategy through entities like the ICM Forum (see Box 1), allowing vast amounts of public funding and regulatory support to be funnelled towards false solutions that enable oil and gas companies to continue their climate-wrecking business-as-usual.

BOX 2

HOW RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE FACILITATED FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES' POLITICAL ACCESS

In June 2022, Friends of the Earth Europe reported how fossil fuel firms had ramped up their lobbying of the Energy Commissioner following Russia's invasion of Ukraine: in the two and a half months following the start of the invasion on 24th February 2022, Commissioner Simson and her cabinet met nine fossil fuel companies, including two meetings with Shell. That was double the average frequency of fossil fuel company meetings she'd had over the two and a half years since she'd been in office. At least five of those meetings related to Ukraine, fossil fuels from Russia, security of gas supply or energy prices.

Two years on, we've seen how inviting the fossil fuel lobby to advise on Europe's response to the energy crisis (see Box 1) has led to locking-in more fossil fuel imports and infrastructure, instead of improving Europe's energy security through domestic, decentralised renewable energy production, energy efficiency and savings.

Now, our full-time analysis of Commissioner Simson and her cabinet's meetings with fossil fuel companies shows that this up-tick in contacts was not short-lived: in the two and a quarter years after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Energy Commissioner and her cabinet met fossil fuel companies 50% more frequently than in the two and a quarter years before the invasion.[4]

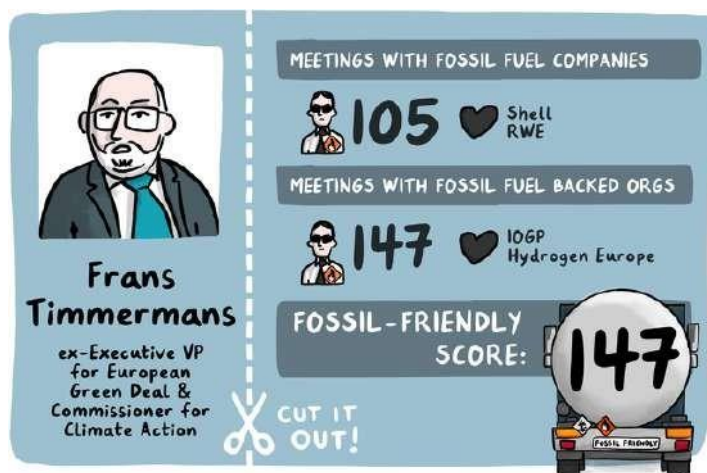
And it's not only the Energy Commissioner who started meeting fossil fuel energy companies more often: President Von der Leyen and her cabinet's meetings with fossil fuel companies have jumped up even more dramatically. Prior to the invasion, the Commission President's office had only had one such meeting, which is a sharp contrast to the seven meetings in the period since. This increase included three meetings with Shell and two with Equinor, all on topics relating to the energy crisis.[5] The increased frequency of Simson and Von der Leyen's meetings with the fossil fuel industry since the Ukraine invasion is emblematic of a wider problem of corporate influence in the European Commission.

#2 FORMER EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL/ CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSIONER FRANS TIMMERMANS

The former Executive Vice–President for the European Green Deal/Commissioner for Climate Action and his cabinet had a **total of 105 meetings with fossil fuel companies, before he resigned in August 2023.**

Timmermans and his cabinet met **most frequently with Shell**, which racked up 26 meetings, followed by German company and major fossil gas storage operator RWE, with nine.

The topics they most frequently discussed with fossil fuel companies were **hydrogen, the European Green Deal, and gas** (30, 22 and 12 times, respectively). Timmermans was one of the Commission’s most ardent supporters of hydrogen, and in his time **oversaw the so-called ‘Green Deal’ becoming increasingly grey** (see Box 4). The former Executive Vice President and his cabinet also had a further **147 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members**. The most popular two groups were the International **Association of Oil & Gas Producers** (IOGP – see Box 5) and **HydrogenEurope**, both with 11 meetings.



BOX 3: THREE CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSIONERS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE?

Executive Vice–President and Climate Action Commissioner Timmermans resigned from the Von der Leyen Commission on 22nd August 2023, and was controversially replaced as Climate Action Commissioner by former Shell executive Wopke Hoekstra on 9th October 23. In the intervening period, Executive Vice–President Maroš Šefčovič was temporarily put in charge of the Climate Action portfolio (and permanently given the role of Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal).

During the Von der Leyen Commission’s mandate, the three Commissioners responsible for Climate Action, Timmermans, Hoekstra and Šefčovič (during his period as stand–in only) together had a total of 111 meetings with fossil fuel companies. They had a combined further 158 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members.

#3 EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT/ EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL COMMISSIONER MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ

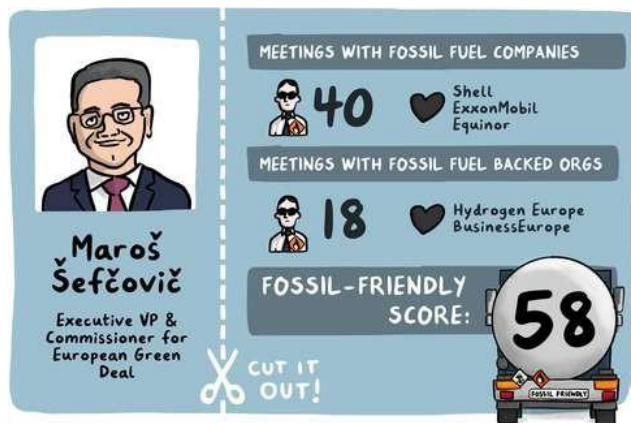
The Executive Vice-President/ Commissioner for the European Green Deal,[6] Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight and his cabinet had a total of 40 meetings with fossil fuel companies.

The three fossil fuel companies that Šefčovič and his cabinet **met most frequently were Shell, ExxonMobil and Equinor, which each had six meetings.**

ExxonMobil's well-documented history of climate denial and blocking climate action has not closed the Commission's doors to it, and the company spends up to €4 million a year lobbying Brussels. Equinor, meanwhile, spends up to €2.75 million a year lobbying Brussels, and despite its rhetoric about an energy transition, 86% of Equinor's investments went to fossil fuels in 2022.

A similar picture emerges for other oil giants who have met Commissioners (see Table 2), while the International Energy Agency estimated that globally only about 5% of oil and gas company capital expenditure went to 'clean energy' in 2022.

The subjects that Šefčovič and his cabinet most frequently discussed with fossil fuel companies were energy, the EU Energy Platform, and hydrogen (7, 6 and 5 times respectively).



The EU Energy Platform, established in response to Russia's war on Ukraine (see Box 2) to coordinate fossil gas infrastructure use and joint purchasing, includes an 'Industry Advisory Group'.

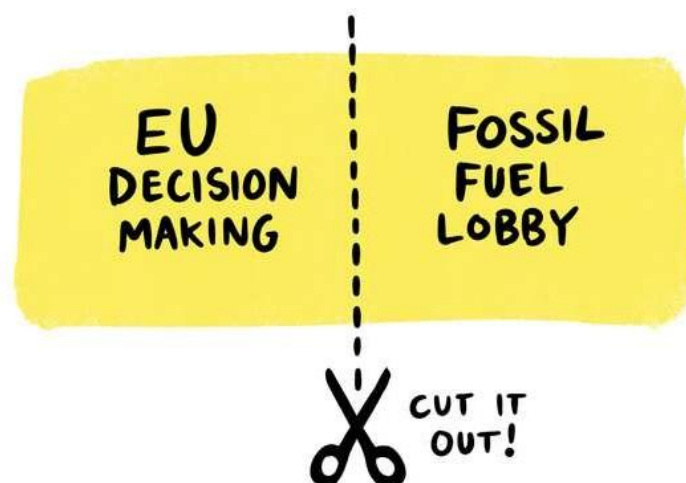
This group was set up at the request of oil and gas majors like BP, TotalEnergies and Eni – companies with a vested interest in selling gas and building new gas infrastructure – which now count among the group's industry membership dominated by fossil fuels.

Notably, Šefčovič has been leading the Commission's work around the Energy Platform (and its industry advisory group), including the push to pursue a similar approach of joint purchasing for hydrogen.

On top of these meetings with oil and gas companies, Šefčovič and his cabinet had a further 18 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members. Amongst the most popular were Hydrogen Europe and BusinessEurope, which each had three meetings.

TABLE 2: REALITY CHECK

BIG OIL FIRMS	REALITY CHECK: HOW MUCH DO FOSSIL FUELS STILL DOMINATE THEIR INVESTMENTS?
BP	Invested <u>11 times more</u> in oil and gas than in its 'low carbon' segment, in the third quarter of 2023
ENI	Invested <u>15 times more</u> in fossil fuels than in its 'Plenitude' segment that includes renewables in 2022, with 90% of its increase in capital expenditure going towards oil and gas extraction and exploration.
EQUINOR	Invested 6 times more in fossil fuels in 2022 than in 'renewables and low carbon solutions', including false solutions like CCUS and blue hydrogen. Taking renewables by themselves, Equinor actually spent over 28 times more on fossil fuels than renewables. <u>86%</u> of its investments went to fossil fuels in 2022, compared to 14% to 'renewables and low-carbon solutions' – with renewables getting just 3% and the remaining going to false solutions like CCUS and blue hydrogen.
EXXONMOBIL	Plans to invest <u>seven times</u> more in fossil fuels than in what it considers emissions reduction technologies (which are mainly false solutions like hydrogen and CCUS). Between 2010 and 2018, spent just <u>0.2%</u> of its capital expenditure on 'low-carbon' energy.
SHELL	Invested <u>five times as much</u> in oil and gas as in 'Renewables and Energy Solutions' in the third quarter of 2023 – and spent seven times more on shareholder payouts



Šefčovič has had a **meteoric rise up the most-fossil-friendly Commissioner** scoreboard, from 15th place mid-way to third place at the end. This is because there has been a huge upswing in Šefčovič and his cabinet's fossil fuel company meetings since May 2022, jumping from **just two fossil fuel** company meetings in the first two and a half years, **to 38 meetings in the following two years.** And from **zero** meetings with organisations with fossil fuel members in the first half, to **18 in the second.**

So what's behind this dramatic upswing?

As mentioned in Box 3, upon the resignation of Frans Timmermans in August 2023, Šefčovič was given the responsibility of Commissioner for Climate Action until the formal appointment of Wopke Hoekstra in October 2023. Šefčovič was also given the portfolio of Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal, a role which he has retained.

In the one-and-a-half-month period that Šefčovič was responsible for Climate Action, he or his cabinet met **four fossil fuel companies**, including ExxonMobil and Shell. But even after Hoekstra took up the Climate Action top job, Šefčovič's continued responsibility for the European Green Deal made him a **magnet for dirty energy companies, with a further 27 meetings with fossil fuel companies** held by Šefčovič and his cabinet in the next seven months.[8]

This total of more than **30 fossil fuel** company meetings since taking up Timmermans' role is a **stark contrast to the nine meetings Šefčovič and his cabinet** had with fossil fuel companies in his first two and three-quarter years in the von der Leyen Commission.[9]



BOX 4

HYDROGEN, CCUS AND AN INCREASINGLY 'GREY' GREEN DEAL

Friend of the Earth Europe's mid-term analysis of the Von der Leyen Commission noted that hydrogen was one of the main subjects of meetings with fossil fuel companies, lining hydrogen up to be the big winner of this mandate, when even just a few years ago, it was barely in the picture. Hydrogen is now a major lynchpin of the Commission's energy transition plans, with large amounts of policy support and public funding – including for 'blue' hydrogen made from fossil gas with carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) – thanks to a lobby campaign led by the fossil fuel industry. The hydrogen lobby has a strong cross-over with Big Oil and Gas and spends €75.75 million a year lobbying the EU institutions. And while the fossil fuel industry likes to promote renewable 'green' hydrogen and supposedly low-carbon 'blue' hydrogen, globally, 99% of hydrogen is 'grey' hydrogen, made from fossil gas, compared to just 0.6% blue and 0.1% green hydrogen. Hydrogen – and all the hype around it – is being used as a Trojan horse to prolong the use of fossil fuels.

Throughout the entire term of the Von der Leyen Commission, hydrogen has remained the biggest topic of conversation in the Commission's lobby meetings with fossil fuel companies.

Energy Commissioner Simson and her cabinet had 32 meetings about hydrogen, former Climate Action Commissioner Timmermans had 30, while his stand-in Šefčovič had a further five.

Through its support for hydrogen and CCUS (which was also the topic of multiple fossil fuel company meetings[10]), the Commission is effectively promising billions to the fossil fuel industry.

Meanwhile, even as the fossil fuel industry's meetings with Commissioners and their cabinets have continued nearly daily, the so-called European Green Deal promised by President Von der Leyen at the start of her Commission mandate has been increasingly eroded, going from grey to greyer. The most progressive parts, such as new restrictions on harmful (fossil-based) pesticides and chemicals, and rules on nature restoration are scrapped. At the same time, we see a shift towards a 'green' Industrial Deal, a code for business-as-usual with the false promise of CCUS – a fossil fuel industry-promoted technofix that has already failed repeatedly at vast public expense. As well as speculative and harmful technological carbon removals that rely on CCUS, including through the Net Zero Industry Act and the Industrial Carbon Management Strategy. The fossil fuel industry lobbied to provide an escape hatch that allows it to continue business-as-usual, while delaying the energy transformation and ignoring the need for deep emissions cuts now.

#4 TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER ADINA-IOANA VĂLEAN

The Transport Commissioner and her cabinet had a total of **25 meetings with fossil fuel companies**. She most frequently met oil giants **BP**, five times, and **ExxonMobil**, four times, followed by **Shell**, **TotalEnergies** and **Neste**, each three times.

BP spends up to €2.5 million annually lobbying the EU, has pushed for fossil gas to be considered by the EU as a 'sustainable investment', and is planning to invest a minimum of around \$5 million per day until 2030 in the exploitation of new oil and gas fields that are incompatible with limiting global heating to well below 2°C. TotalEnergies, which spends up to €3 million each year lobbying Brussels, is likewise using its record windfall profits to double down on new fossil fuel investments.



The most frequently discussed subjects with fossil fuel companies were **ReFuelEU** and **Clean fuels** (a subject that includes hydrogen), each three times. Vălean herself has claimed that the decarbonisation of transport requires 'clean hydrogen', a term which often includes fossil-based blue hydrogen (see Box 4).

Vălean and her cabinet also had a further 15 meetings with organisations with fossil fuel company members, such as Fuels Europe (whose members include ExxonMobil, Shell, and BP).

BOX 5: THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF LOBBY GROUPS WITH FOSSIL FUEL MEMBERS

It doesn't take a lot of effort to identify some organisations as fossil fuel lobby groups, such as the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP). With members ranging from ExxonMobil and Equinor to Chevron and Shell, IOGP has a history of pushing for false solutions like 'blue hydrogen' made from fossil gas with CCUS (see Box 4), one of the industry's main justifications for both continued gas extraction and for public support for CCUS infrastructure.

Other trade associations however, such as some cross-sectoral business lobby groups, might not have names that scream 'fossil fuels', but their memberships and lobbying records speak for themselves. BusinessEurope's partner companies, for example, include ExxonMobil, Shell, BP and TotalEnergies, and as the most powerful business lobby in Brussels, it has a long track record of blocking progressive climate policy and fighting environmental regulation.

#5 INTERNAL MARKET COMMISSIONER THIERRY BRETON

The Internal Market Commissioner and his cabinet had a total of **16 meetings with fossil fuel companies**, including **Eni** and **ExxonMobil**. Hydrogen was among the top topics of discussion.

Breton and his cabinet also had a further **43 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members**, including **BusinessEurope**, **FuelsEurope** and the **European Chemical Industry Council (CEPIC)**, whose members include TotalEnergies, BP, etc.



Breton has played a key role in helping the fossil fuel industry shape climate and energy policies, from his Green Deal Industrial Plan to his creation of Industrial Alliances that enables the industry to influence political processes and direct public spending.



VISUAL THINKERY

BOX 6

RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATIONS

There is one particular type of organisation with fossil fuel members that were counted separately and are not included in the total number of meetings by all Commissioners (see methodology [11]), but which nonetheless merits attention: renewable energy associations with one or more fossil fuel company members.

There is a risk that these groups, who embrace oil and gas company members, can take fossil-friendly positions.

Between December 2019 and May 2024, Commissioners and their cabinets met renewables associations that have one or more fossil fuel company members nearly 100 times. These meetings are additional to the 483 meetings we counted on climate/energy topics with organisations that have fossil fuel members.

Energy Commissioner Simson and her cabinet, for example, had at least 27 additional meetings with renewable energy trade associations with fossil fuel members (i.e. above and beyond the 78 meetings we counted on climate/energy topics with organisations that have fossil fuel members). Timmermans and his cabinet had an additional 24 (on top of his other 147 meetings on climate/energy topics with organisations that have fossil fuel members).[12]

Both Simson and Timmermans had 12 meetings with EPIA SolarPower Europe, whose [members include](#) Equinor, Galp, Shell and TotalEnergies. As well as eight and seven meetings, respectively, with WindEurope, whose [members include](#) Repsol, Shell, Equinor and RWE.

#6 EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT/TRADE COMMISSIONER VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS

The Executive Vice-President/Commissioner for Trade and his cabinet had a total of **11 meetings with fossil fuel companies, including oil giants ExxonMobil and Equinor.**

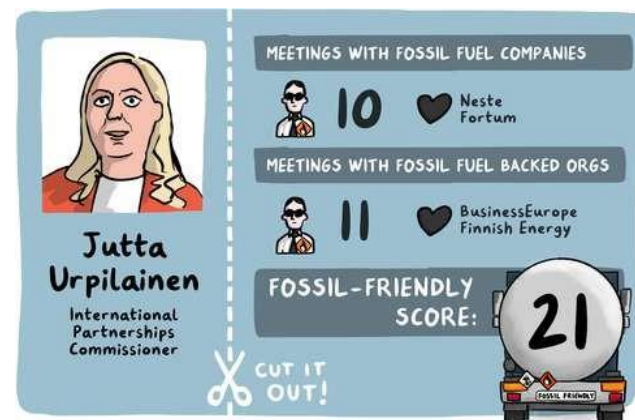
Dombrovskis and his cabinet also had a further **29 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members**, including BusinessEurope and France Industrie (whose members include TotalEnergies and gas distributor GRDF).



#7 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS COMMISSIONER JUTTA URPIILAINEN

The International Partnerships Commissioner and her cabinet had a total of 10 meetings with fossil fuel companies, including **Neste** and Finnish gas company **Fortum.**

Urpilainen and her cabinet also had a further **11 meetings on climate and energy issues with organisations that have one or more fossil fuel company members**, including BusinessEurope and Finnish Energy (whose members include gas transmission operator Gasgrid Finland and LNG terminal operator Gasum).



Urpilainen's remit includes areas of great relevance to the fossil fuel industry's push for hydrogen, including energy partnerships and programs like the Global Gateway. For the latter, [Urpilainen launched](#) a Business Advisory Group that [gives its members, including fossil fuel companies, undue influence](#) in choosing priorities for investment plans. Urpilainen's directorate, meanwhile, is [very close to Hydrogen Europe](#).

FOSSIL FREE POLITICS IS MORE URGENTLY NEEDED THAN EVER

Under Ursula Von der Leyen's leadership, Commissioners and their cabinets have had nearly **900 meetings** with fossil fuel lobbyists, keeping up the **nearly one-per-working-day record** set at the Von der Leyen Commission's mid-term mark.

Energy Commissioner Simson had the most meetings with the fossil fuel industry, while oil giant **Shell topped the list of companies being the most commonly met.** **Hydrogen**, a favourite misdirection tactic of the fossil fuel industry designed to keep it in business, was the most talked about subject. If EU decision makers want to introduce policies that benefit people and planet rather than the bottom line of Big Oil and Gas, **they must stop listening to them.**

There is a long and well-documented history of fossil fuel companies and their lobbyists **delaying, weakening and sabotaging climate action**, and subverting energy policy in their own interests. A flagrant example of this is the **erosion of an already weak European Green Deal** into a business-friendly industrial growth strategy that puts **false solutions** promoted by the fossil fuel industry at the forefront.

Problematic technofixes such as hydrogen, CCUS and carbon removals, delay real climate action while offering a lifeline to fossil fuel companies' climate-wrecking business.

That is why we need to cut fossil fuel interests out of politics.

The threat of catastrophic climate change is looming larger than ever, while the same fossil fuel companies that Commissioners are **meeting up with are expanding their oil and gas extraction plans and rolling back their climate commitments.**

The fossil fuel industry has had the Commission's ear as it formed its response to the energy crisis, and it is no surprise that the message it received was that Europe must entrench **more fossil fuel infrastructure, instead of rapidly transitioning Europe's energy systems away from dirty energy.**

To break the stronghold of the industry that profits from causing climate change, putting in place a firewall between the fossil fuel industry and decision-makers is more urgent than ever.

[We need Fossil Free politics now!](#)

SOURCES

1. SEE METHODOLOGY FOR THE FULL EXPLANATION, BUT IN BRIEF, THIS IS DUE TO THE CUT OFF POINT FOR THE ANALYSIS BEING THE 15TH MAY 2024 AND THE LAG TIME FOR MEETINGS WITH LOBBYISTS BEING ADDED TO THE COMMISSION'S ONLINE MEETINGS TRANSPARENCY DATA.

2. FROM 01/12/19 TO 15/05/24 – SEE METHODOLOGY. THE RANKING IS DONE BY FOSSIL FUEL COMPANY MEETINGS ONLY.

3. AVERAGING 0.44 MEETINGS WITH FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES PER WEEK IN THE FIRST TWO AND A HALF YEARS, AND 0.57 MEETINGS WITH FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES PER WEEK IN THE LATTER TWO YEARS.

4. FROM AN AVERAGE OF 0.4 TIMES A WEEK BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2022 TO AN AVERAGE OF 0.6 TIMES A WEEK AFTER THAT DATE.

5. SHELL MEETINGS WERE ON 'ENERGY CRISIS', 'ENERGY PRICES' AND 'PRICE CAP RUSSIAN OIL'. EQUINOR MEETINGS WERE ON 'ENERGY SITUATION IN EUROPE' AND 'ENERGY', 'SECURITY OF SUPPLY', 'PRICING' AND 'DECARBONIZATION'.

6. THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL WAS ADDED TO EVP ŠEFČOVIČ'S PORTFOLIO WHEN TIMMERMANS' RESIGNED IN AUGUST 2023.

7. RWE AG, THE GERMAN MULTINATIONAL ENERGY COMPANY, ALSO FREQUENTLY MET WITH COMMISSIONERS. NEARLY 80% OF THE ELECTRICITY IT GENERATED IN 2020 WAS FROM FOSSIL FUELS, AND IT PLANS TO EXPAND ITS GAS BUSINESS.

8. I.E. IN THE PERIOD AFTER HOEKSTRA TOOK OVER THE CLIMATE ACTION MANDATE ON 09/10/2 UNTIL 15/05/24.

9. I.E. IN THE PERIOD SINCE ŠEFČOVIČ ENTERED OFFICE ON 01/12/19 UNTIL HE WAS GIVEN TEMPORARY TENURE OVER CLIMATE ACTION AND PERMANENT TENURE OVER THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL ON 22/08/23.

10. FOR EXAMPLE, TIMMERMANS AND CABINET HAD THREE MEETINGS WITH FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES ON CCUS, AND SIMSON AND CABINET HAD TWO MEETINGS WITH FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES ON CCUS, AS DID SEFCOVIC AND CABINET.

11. METHODOLOGY; [HTTPS://FOSSILFREEPOLITICS.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2024/09/VON-DER-LEYEN-2019-2024-COMMISSION-FULL-TIME-REPORT-L-METHODOLOGY.PDF](https://fossilfreepolitics.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/von-der-leyen-2019-2024-commission-full-time-report-l-methodology.pdf)

12. THIS NUMBER RISES TO 28 MEETINGS WITH RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE FOSSIL FUEL COMPANY MEMBER IF WE ADD THE MEETINGS HELD BY TIMMERMANS INTERIM AND PERMANENT SUCCESSORS, SEFCOVIC AND HOEKSTRA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WRITING & RESEARCH: RACHEL TANSEY

ILLUSTRATIONS: VISUAL THINKERY

PUBLISHED BY FOSSIL FREE POLITICS

DATE: 25-09-2024

The ‘Fossil Free Politics’ campaign was launched in 2019 with the support of nearly 200 civil society organisations, and is calling for an official limit to the power of fossil fuel lobbyists in Europe that mirrors what’s in place for the tobacco industry. Friends of the Earth Europe, in collaboration with Corporate Europe Observatory, Food and Water Europe and Greenpeace, are coordinating this campaign.

More info: fossilfreepolitics.org



Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.