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Central case: The development of the European quarter
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'Behind closed doors? The excuse of safety!' The development of the European capital in Brussels'

The paper is presented in following workshop:

The Development of Postmetropolis and Globalization
Chairs: Prof. Dr. Edward Soja (UCLA), Prof. Dr. B. Werlen (Jena)



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1. Office stock Brussels: Cross section of the current situation

The total office stock of Brussels is comparable to for instance Milano or Stockholm. According to CODEMER, about one third of all offices in and around Brussels Capital Region is situated in the Central Business Districts (Leopold Quarter, Avenue Louise, Space North, Centre of Brussels and around the South station). About one third of offices is situated in decentralised zones which are still within the administrative borders of Brussels Capital Region. The last third then is situated at the periphery of Brussels. There is a clear division of office users in Brussels. 92% of all public administrations in and around Brussels – whether European, Belgian or Regional – are for instance located in the central business districts. The other two percent of this sector can be found in the decentralised office spaces within Brussels. Decentralised offices within Brussels are mainly occupied by multinational businesses. The offices in the periphery are mainly used from private companies with commercial activities and the necessity to be easily accessible for cars (Bertiau, 2002). With this concentration of administrative functions and public users, Brussels risks to lose a share of dynamism as it can not be considered multifunctional in its use of office spaces. Bertiau argues that private offices bring more dynamism into town as they would not only use public and individual transport facilities in rush hours at nine and five but have more flexibility and other needs. Decisive factors for the urban development of the Leopold quarter are situated in the social-economical evolution.

- increase of employment in tertiary sector,
- working nearby good infrastructure and mobility,
- increase of scale in the urban development
- increase of scale in economy

The vacancy rate for Brussels is about 8% of the existing offices. The current stock in the Leopold quarter comprises about 3.220.000 m² with a vacancy rate of about 3.5% according to Jones Lang Lasalle (May 2002).

With an average of about 250 € euro per m² (net renting price), Brussels is comparably cheap on the European market. It is also a rather low risk and stable market with a small gradient in renting prices. There is a potential for growth in prime locations as for instance the Leopold Quarter, although it is a rather 'defensive' market. Important investors for the Real estate market in Brussels are for instance German Funds (both open and closed ended), SICAFIS (real estate cooperation), local Belgian Institutions and Pan European Investor Funds (directly and indirectly). From the source of capital, it can be said that real estate in Brussels is a rather locally driven market.



2. Overview of central buildings for the European Institutions

Along the Wetstraat (Municipality Brussels town): Map with overview buildings



Illustration: Excerpt from map in the study 'Directives Brussels-Europe' with indication of buildings in use for the European Commission (orange) and the Council of Ministers (red) along the Wetstraat

Next to the Leopold Park (municipality Elsenne): Map with overview buildings

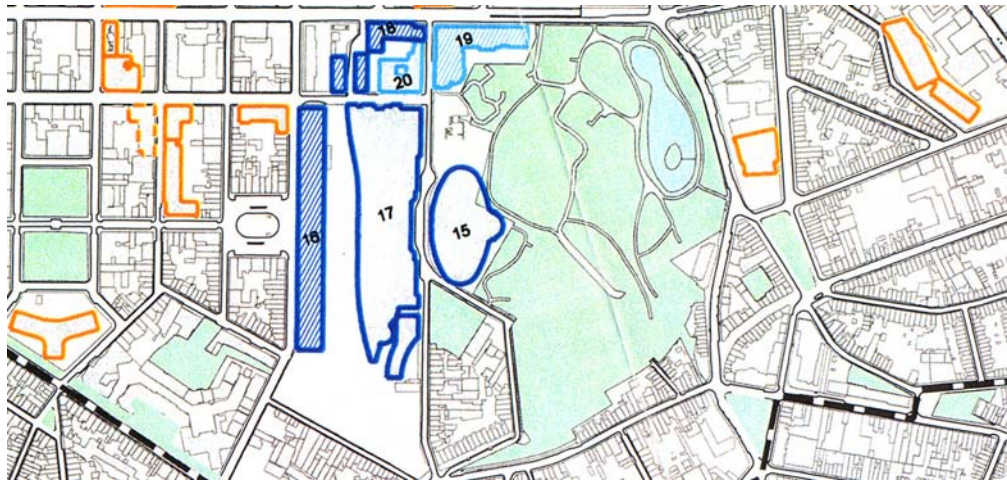


Illustration: Excerpt from map in the study 'Directives Brussels-Europe' with indication of buildings in use for the European Commission (orange) and the European Parliament (dark blue) next to the Leopold Park



Along the Wetstraat (Municipality Brussels town): Table with overview buildings

| <i>Building (Name and Location)</i> | <i>Surface (in m²) and costs</i> | <i>Owners, developers, design</i> | <i>Users</i> |
|--|---|---|--|
| Justus Lipsiusgebouw Wetstraat 175 | 160.000 m ² extension costs 14 billion BEF | Monster consort EGC (about 15 development companies together), The terrain is owned from the Belgian state and is at the disposal of the European Community for free (the state had bought a part of the terrain from Blaton and the Generale Maatschappij in 1979), | Council of Ministers of the European Union |
| Charlemagne (Karel de Grote Building) Wetstraat 170 | 65.000 m ² | Built by the group Blaton, owned by EII EII (Etudes et Investissements Immobiliers), | First used for the secretary-general of the Council of Ministers, then from the commission |
| Archimedes (Between Berlaymont and Kortenberglaan) | 17.000 m ² | | Administration, Translation services, Educational centre with variety of courses |
| Kortenberglaan, Wetstraat and Blijde Inkomstlaan Residence Palace | 79.000 m ² | Partly constructed by Royale Belge | European Commission Currently in use by the Belgian government, planned to be an extension for the Council of Ministers |
| Berlaymont Wetstraat 200 | 130.000 m ² , after the renovation about 30% extra | Built by Nobels-Pelman and Blaton, owned from a consortium (with BAC), later owned mainly by the Belgium state (70% directorate of buildings, 10% BAC, 10% Citybank and 10% ASLK) and in ground lease for the NV Berlaymont | Seat of the European Commission until December 1991, presumably back in use by the end of 2003 |
| Rue de la Loi 86-130 New building on the corner of the Wetstraat and the Etterbeekse steenweg | 43.000 m ² | Financed from the BAC, built by Maurice Delens, Batiments et Ponts and CFE, the terrain with a value of about 1.4 billion BEF was given from the Belgian ministry of public works, Now owned by the EU | European Commission (agriculture and fisheries) |
| Breydelblok, on the corner of the Oudergemse laan and the Belliardstraat | 55.000m ² | Financed from the BAC, built by Maurice Delens, Batiments et Ponts and CFE, the terrain was partly owned by the BAC, the building is now owned by the European Community, Architects were Jean and André Polak and Marc Vandenbossche | President of the European Commission, press centre for the Commission and departments for budgeting |
| Borschette Centrum, Next to the Jourdanplein (also Borchette II) | 24.000 m ² (+8.000 m ²) | Built from the Consortium Immobilier and now owned by Epic | Infrastructure for congresses and meetings, European Commission |
| Van Maerlant I | 24.000 m ² | Designed by groep Planning, the Belgian government is the owner, the construction was done by CFE, the construction was financed from BAC, An-Hyp, ASLK and the Gemeentekrediet | Parliamentarians |
| Van Maerlant II (along the Belliardstraat tegenover het park) | 17.000 m ² | Land owned by the Regie der Gebouwen (can be used for free from the EU) | European Commission |
| Van Maerlantklooster | | Owner is CFE (the building was left for verkrotting for speculative reasons) | European visitors and informationcentre |

Table: Overview of administrative functions along the Wetstraat (based on the article 'Het Brussel van de Europese Unie' from Joris Sleebuis and the research 'Richtlijnen Brussel-Europa' from Brussels Capital Region



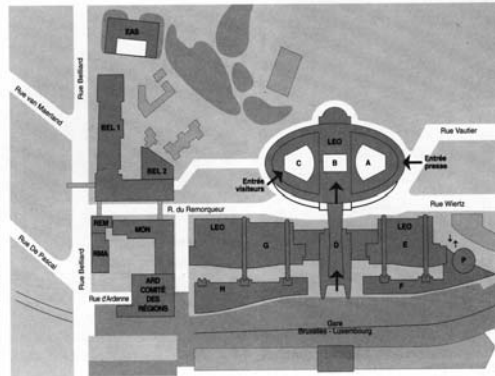
Next to the Leopold Park (municipality Elsene): Table with overview buildings

| <i>Building (Name and Location)</i> | <i>Surface (in m²) and costs</i> | <i>Owners, developers, design</i> | <i>Users</i> |
|---|--|---|--|
| 'Caprice des dieux' ICC I International Congrescentre Wiertzstraat (first part of the Space Brussels-Europe building P.H. Spaak and Antonio Spinelli) | 250.000 m ² (35.000 m ² offices, 20 conference rooms, a hemisphere with 750 seats, a language centre) | Built by NV Ruimte Europe (Generale and BAC as financiers), built from the contractors CFE, Maurice Delens and Batiments & Ponts (gathered in NV Promotion Europe) | Parlementary hemisphere for the European Parliament (750 seats, translators centre for 12 languages, 30 conference rooms, 160 offices). Extra conferences and meetings from the parlementarian commissions take place in Brussels, while monthly, plenary meetings from the parliament are organised in Straatsburg. The member of the parliament represent 375 million of citizens and are elected along universal suffrage. |
| ICCII | | Will be built from two Belgian Constructors (the Belgische Beton- maatschappij and R. Maes), both also included in the NV Promotion Europe | European Parliament |
| ICC I en II together | 35.000 m ² | | 20 conference rooms (from 80 til 320 seats) |
| House of parliamentarians in the Belliardstraat, next to the park Leopold | 39.000 m ² | Architects Jean and André Polak, built by batiments et ponts, financed from the Generale Maatschappij, owned by the EII, rented from the directorate of construction then rented to the EU | |
| Hotel Aubecq, Hoek van de Etterbeekse steenweg en de Jozef-II straat | | Gesloopt in 1951, wordt heropgebouwd | Ambtswoning voor de voorzitter van het Europees Parlement |
| Solvaybibliotheek in het Leopoldspark | | Restoration done by the GOWM, a regional organisation for development | Clubhouse for members of the Parliament |
| Eastmanbuilding In the Leopoldpark | | Owned by the OCMW, rented to parliamentarians | Offices and conference rooms for members of the Parliament |

Table: Overview of administrative functions next to the Leopold Park (based on the article 'Het Brussel van de Europese Unie' from Joris Sleebuis and the research 'Richtlijnen Brussel-Europa' from Brussels Capital Region



3. Visual illustration for the construction of the European Parliament (Pictures taken by E. Lagrou)





4. Structure of the urban arena for the European quarter

Political level

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Federal Level: Belgium | Elected officials | Federal Government Prime Minister (Guy Verhofstadt) Ministry of Mobility and Public Transport (Isabelle Durant) |
| | | Parliament |
| Appointed officials: Administration on federal level | | |
| Regional Level: Brussels Capital Region | Elected officials | Regional Government (Le gouvernement de la Région) Francois Xavier de Donnée (Frédéric Dauw and Arlette Verkruyssen, members of the cabinet) |
| | | (Le Conseil Régional) |
| Appointed officials: Administration on the regional level (l'administration régionale) | | |
| Municipal Level: Brussels Town | Elected officials | Mayor Freddy Thielemans (PS) and Aldermen |
| | | Town council |
| Appointed officials: Administration on the municipal level | | |
| Municipal Level: Etterbeek | Elected officials | Mayor Vincent De Wolf (PRL) and Aldermen |
| | | Town council |
| Appointed officials: Administration on the municipal level | | |
| Municipal Level: Ixelles | Elected officials | Mayor Willy Decourty (PS) and Aldermen |
| | | Town council |
| Appointed officials: Administration on the municipal level | | |

Societal level

| | |
|------------|---|
| In society | Interest groups |
| | <p><i>Umbrella-organisations:</i></p> <p>BRAL Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu (support for European coördination) IEB Interenvironnement Bruxelles (support for European coördination) ARAU Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaine, Brukselbinnenstebuiten Comité de suivi Europe habitants</p> <p><i>Neighbourhood associations</i></p> <p>AQL Association Quartier Leopold (Henri Bernard), GAQ Groupe d'animation Quartier Nord-Est Association Riverains Jourdan (Christine Goyens), Associations Riverains Loi (E. De Keuleneer) Comité Pascale Toulouse, Comité Stevin</p> |
| | <p>Economic groups</p> <p>Project developers and Real Estate groups (Investimmo, Codemer, Jones Land Lasalle, etc.) (NV Berlaymont 2000, NV Espace Léopold, NV Promotion Europe, NV Promotion Europe, etc.) Constructors (CFE, Maurice Delens, Batiments & Ponts, etc.) Financers (BAC, Société générale de Belgique, Gemeentekrediet, ASLK, ANHYP, Dexia, etc.) Owners (Regie der Gebouwen, EII Etudes Investissements Immobiliers, OCMW Brussel, etc.)</p> |
| | <p>Users/Clients</p> <p>European Commission, European Parliament, Council of Ministers</p> <p>Designers, Architects</p> <p><i>Montois Architecten, M. & J-M. Jaspers- & Partners, J. Eyers & Partners, Spazio architectenbureau, EO Design Partners, Luc Schuiten</i></p> |



| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Research Organisations Private offices (Agora, Richard Ellis Research, Healey & Baker, Ernst & Young, Bureau espace-mobilité, Iris-consulting) Public Offices (BRAT, Bureau de recherches en aménagement du territoire, part of the GOMB, Gewestelijke ontwikkelings-maatschappij Brussel) Universities and Colleges (Université Libre de Bruxelles - IGEAT Institution de gestion de l'Environnement et d'Aménagement du Territoire, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Katholieke Universiteit Brussel, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, ...)</p> |
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TABLE: Classification of political actors for urban planning in the European Quarter, based on Howlett and Ramesh (1995, p. 52)

5. List of Names and Locations in French and Dutch

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