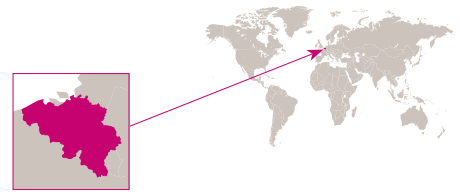


Belgium

Linklaters Belgium's Corporate Responsibility approach is based on a strong commitment to achieving long-term and sustainable results. Year after year we continue our efforts to deepen our client relationships, to develop our people's potentials, to improve our environmental footprint and to invest in the community we live in.



Clients and markets

Local/ global balance

While some international firms have concentrated on either the global or the local market, Linklaters has shown that in Belgium it is possible to have a strong international legal practice with in-depth local knowledge.

Understanding client needs

We endeavour to get closer to our clients and to understand better their specific needs and strategies, and the markets in which they operate to help us provide solutions to their problems and add value to their businesses.

The last year has been quite challenging for our clients and we have taken different steps to ensure that they were kept abreast of specific legal changes and new regulations in their sector.

Monitoring regulatory changes

Our lawyers have invested a substantial amount of time in 2009, monitoring legislation changes, the increase in regulation, and analysing the impact on our clients and their respective sectors. We have, for example, closely monitored the impact of the AIFM legislation on the finance industry.

For our corporate clients, we have dedicated special attention to new governance issues and the increased responsibilities of directors in publicly listed companies. Particular focus has been placed on the guidance of banks in the area of commercial and retail product liability.

Celebrating entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is very important in our society, especially in economically challenging times. The building hosting our Brussels office has been the cradle to many of the country's leading international companies. In celebration of the building's 100th anniversary in 2009 we held a special exhibition tracing the history of 30 of these companies.

People

Developing excellence

The attraction, management and retention of the best people is at the heart of our strategy. The leadership team is constantly working on the entrepreneurial dynamics of the Belgian office, allowing people to go the extra mile for their clients. Our people receive a regular stream of knowledge and learning opportunities to help them deliver the best advice.

Knowledge and learning

As we want our people to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to operate at the top of their profession, we have increased our learning offering to our people within the framework of our Linklaters Law and Business School programme.

The programme provides access to a comprehensive range of learning activities. There are global courses and three local learning programmes to help lawyers and staff improve their technical and business skills. In total, our 132 lawyers spent 16,682 hours in training during 2009, an average of 126 hours per lawyer.

Facts

242
people

Contacts



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Local highlights

35%
of our people are committed to volunteering in one of our three CI pillars

100
items of IT equipment donated to schools

4,000
hours spent working on pro bono cases

207
attendees at client seminars

16,682
hours of know-how, and training

Engaging with our people

Linklaters in Belgium involves its people at all levels in its most strategic thinking and decision-making. We believe that responsibility and commitment can only be achieved and expected in a fully transparent and inclusive environment. We hold regular regional strategy highlights meetings involving both lawyers and business services staff and we invest heavily in career management, with discussions on personal development and future contribution with our lawyers at all levels, culminating in individual plans that are used to support their future growth and development.

Fostering a global mindset

Fostering a global mindset is a key differentiator in the service we can offer clients and in attracting and retaining the best talent. We host and place people not only in Linklaters offices worldwide but also on secondment to clients. These enriching experiences strengthen our attachment to the rest of Linklaters' global organisation and benefit our clients. During the year, 11 secondees went out from the Belgium office to other offices, and we hosted 14 from other offices.

Flexibility and diversity

We aim to host a satisfied workforce in a healthy environment. Work/life balance is a challenge, given the demands of our clients and our people's determination to exceed those demands, but we are continually exploring ways to offer colleagues the flexibility they need.

A diverse team benefits our team and benefits our clients. We are determined to further foster diversity to ensure we attract and retain top class talent regardless of ethnicity, gender or belief. These considerations form the focus of our Diversity Committee, which meets quarterly.

Community investment

Giving back to the community

At Linklaters Belgium we are committed to giving back to the community and involving our people in our various community projects and activities.

In 2009 we paid extra attention to increasing volunteering levels among our people. To this end we have developed an approach which gives people more accountability for their own projects. These projects have to support our overall goals and one of the three pillars of our community investment approach: promoting entrepreneurship, supporting the arts and culture, and supporting social and environmental activity.

90 of our people have committed themselves to volunteering in one or more of the above pillars. We support organisations with a mixture of volunteering and direct investment according to their needs.

Environment

Managing our impact

As a responsible firm, we believe that we need to act where we can to reduce our impact on the environment. We focus on reducing our carbon footprint, improving energy efficiency and recycling as much as possible.

Awareness campaigns, an optimised waste management system including improved recycling facilities and special events have improved our colleagues knowledge and awareness of our impact, while enhanced management information has helped us focus on where we can reduce consumption and save cost.

Green committee

This year we introduced a number of new policies and tools to reduce further our environmental impact. The Belgium Green Committee was launched this year and has begun drawing up an action plan.

Case studies



Haiti fund raising

Our people in the Brussels and Antwerp offices were deeply touched and shocked by the natural disaster that struck the island of Haiti and the suffering of the Haitians. Within hours people volunteered to organise fund raising within the office. The firm then supplemented the funds raised. Our colleagues showed creativity in mobilising people to contribute, for example with a 'High tea for Haiti' event.



Museum awards

For the fourth year in a row, Linklaters Belgium has sponsored the "Museum Awards". These special financial prizes go to museums in the three Belgian regions which stand out for their investment in making their collections and buildings more accessible to disabled people and disadvantaged groups in our society.



Red Cross

Our Brussels office has developed a relationship with the Red Cross to organise regular blood collections.



Colleague fund raising

Our people have continued their participation in special fund raising activities for United Funds, Beyond the Moon and other not for profit organisations.

Further information

Find out more about Linklaters' global approach to CR: www.linklaters.com/responsibility