at the top
reputation for excellence

truly global community
diversity

best of both worlds

unique chance

Brussels
ture team spirit

real sense of energy and enthusiasm

great place to work

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A world of opportunities
Welcome to Clifford Chance, the world’s largest integrated law firm. We take great pleasure in inviting you to find out more about our Brussels office, our people, our culture, and discover why it is such a great place to work. We hope you enjoy learning more about us and how you can become part of our continuing success.
Today, multinational clients call for multilingual, multi-talented teams working across a wide geographical spread. Clifford Chance’s international talents enable us to call on a bigger pool of expertise and share a greater wealth of knowledge than many, if not all, of our competitors.

Working in the Brussels office brings you the best of both worlds: the practice and clients of a leading international law firm, and the collegiality and flexibility of a smaller office where the atmosphere is professional and friendly. Over 50 lawyers from 15 different nationalities work closely in our two main practice groups - the European Competition and Regulation group and the Belgian group.

The best of both worlds
The Belgian group

The Belgian group is a friendly and dynamic team that is involved in high-profile deals in banking, capital markets, corporate, real estate, tax and litigation. Our lawyers offer clients a powerful combination of local and international expertise on a wide variety of projects and advise on a broad range of legal subjects. Clients as well as market-leading commentators acknowledge our established position.

At Clifford Chance Brussels, there are no formal departments and lawyers become involved in all aspects of a deal from a very early stage. From the outset they form part of a close-knit team, working on major matters for a world player with incredible reach and resources.

Maximilien van de Werve

2002 - Graduated in Law, UCL; joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the Belgian group
2007 - Seconded for six months to Clifford Chance London
2008 - On a three-months secondment to Goldman

Katrien Lindemans

2004 - Graduated in Law, K.U.Leuven
2005 - Master in International and European Trade law, University of Nice
2009 - LL.M, Stanford Law School; joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the Belgian group
2010 - Seconded on a part-time basis to Baxter Belgium

An established position at the top
AN INTERVIEW WITH NINETTE DODOO

What’s it like working in the Brussels office?
The work is interesting, intellectually stimulating, and the atmosphere is friendly.

How would you describe the office culture?
Clifford Chance Brussels has an open-door, non-hierarchical culture. Colleagues are supportive of each other.

What kind of work do you do?
I advise on the antitrust aspects of M&A deals and behavioural matters, such as cartels and the abuse of market power. I also represent clients before the European Commission, as well as the national courts.

What’s surprised you most since working here?
The level of professionalism even under pressure and the friendly atmosphere.

A word on your personal development at Clifford Chance?
I was given the opportunity to manage large, often complex cases at an early stage in my career. The highlights of my career to date have been my involvement in the GE/Honeywell and Microsoft cases.

How rewarding is your work?
Knowing that you have met the client’s needs and expectations.

The European Competition and Regulation group

The European Competition and Regulation (ECR) group has a reputation for excellence. Working as part of an integrated network - comprising more than 150 antitrust and competition lawyers across Europe, the US and Asia - experts in Brussels represent clients before the European Commission and national competition authorities, as well as the EU and national courts.

The ECR group has been at the forefront of the leading EC competition law cases in recent years. Our numerous behavioural cases include the Microsoft investigation, where we represented key players before both the European Commission and the Court of First Instance. Our merger cases include representing the notifying parties in the majority of the most important EC merger decisions including GE/Honeywell and Oracle/Sun Microsystems. These few examples demonstrate that we work on the competition/antitrust aspects of the world’s most high-profile cases and that we are at the forefront of the development of competition law itself.

Reputation for excellence

Ninette Dodoo

1991: Graduated in Law, University of Exeter (Exon, LLB Hons)
1996: Admitted to the Brussels Bar
1999: Joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the ECR group
2001: Admitted to the Bar of England and Wales
2007: Appointed Counsel in the ECR group
2009: On secondment to Clifford Chance Beijing
The Clifford Chance way

Our approach, or what we call the ‘Clifford Chance way’, is key to our success. We want to recruit, train and retain the best talent available, and to do that means building a progressive working environment that not only respects diversity, but uses it as a driving force.

We have never been afraid of being the first to respond to new developments in the legal market; to anticipate the cross-border nature of business today; to take ideas that worked in one part of the world into new territories.

Our working environment - the people who work here, the work that we do, the facilities we enjoy and the way we behave - reflects these international aspirations and makes the most of our multicultural strengths.

Recruits are often surprised by the down-to-earth and open atmosphere of a firm with more top tier global practices than any other law firm (Chambers Global 2008).

Everyone has a role to play in achieving and exceeding the levels of service that our clients expect, and the work that we do challenges our people to think commercially. Put simply, clients come to Clifford Chance not for the letter for the law, but for how the law can be applied in the context of helping them to further their business objectives. So we work together as one team to make the most of our skills and experience, and to do all that we can to achieve more - for our clients, for each other, for our communities and for ourselves.

Diversity as a driving force

«Being a good lawyer is not only about knowing the law. The best way to solve a problem for a client, is to know the client inside out. At Clifford Chance we put our clients at the centre of everything we do. We seek to gain an understanding of their business and their objectives. That way, the service we deliver is different and unique.»

Bert De Maeyer,
Partner in the Belgian group

Bert De Maeyer
1999 - Graduated in Law, KU Leuven
2000 - LL.M, University of California Los Angeles; joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the Belgian group
2008 - Appointed Counsel in the Belgian group
2010 - Made Partner in the Belgian group
Many of our associates have the opportunity to spend six months on secondment to one of our international offices. This will allow you to gain valuable experience abroad and share working life with your foreign colleagues, thereby deepening relationships and strengthening bonds. You will be involved in their everyday work and discover the elements of another jurisdiction. It is an extremely rich experience that will bring you the inside view on how we develop local expertise and international standards. Moreover, it is a unique chance to enjoy half a year in another country.

You will get every opportunity to enjoy the international mobility that’s established Clifford Chance as one of the world’s leading law firms. At any one time, around 250 members of the firm are on secondments to other offices - building the international teamwork and perspectives that set us apart from our more domestic competitors.
At Clifford Chance, we combine commitment and quality with a true team spirit: everyone pulls together to help each other out where necessary. At the same time, the atmosphere at work is positive, social and informal.

Of course, we work hard to serve our clients as best we possibly can, but we also know when to slow the pace down. We get together at the end of every week for our Friday evening drinks, and we have office parties at least twice a year. We have a solid team participating in the Brulex indoor soccer competition, and our office also takes part in Clifford Chance’s annual inter-office sailing regatta and the Clifford Chance annual mixed football and hockey tournament.

As Bart Vanderstraete, a counsel in the Belgian group explains: «The sailing regatta involves ten yachts, manned by teams from various Clifford Chance offices, racing around the Isle of Wight in the English Channel. Last year, we even had two crews from our Brussels office entering the race! Whilst our end-of-race placings may not always be the best, we more than make up for that on the dancefloor during the traditional Saturday evening gala at the Royal London Yacht Club!»

«It’s not all law and no play. Yes, I certainly want to stand out as a ‘go to’ lawyer for all of my clients, but a career at Clifford Chance also means a range of exciting opportunities to bring the social and work side of things together.»

Wim Aerts, associate in the Belgian group

Life at Clifford Chance

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Our approach to training isn’t simply about teaching lawyers to provide legal advice - we believe that the right balance between formal training and practical experience enables everyone to provide an exceptional level of service to our clients.

The Clifford Chance Academy is our in-house training and development programme. It provides a broad range of integrated training and development methods for our lawyers: legal and business skills training courses, and skills development centres, taught by both professionals from the firm and academics from leading universities like Harvard Business School, INSEAD and Oxford University.

The Academy

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Klaas Thibaut

2005: Graduated in Law, K.U.Leuven, joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the Belgian group
2011: On secondment to Clifford Chance London

"A lot of very clever and interesting people work here, so office life is always stimulating and engaging."

Never stop learning

AN INTERVIEW WITH KLAAS THIBAUT

You joined Clifford Chance five years ago. Can you say something about these five years? You never stop growing at Clifford Chance. The learning opportunities you get here are immense. What most impressed me since I joined Clifford Chance is how well people work together, despite being spread around 20 different countries. And as well as this international face to the work, as part of one of the smaller offices in the firm you get to know everyone and share experiences with people with a wide range of expertise.

What’s it like to be a junior lawyer in the Brussels office?

Our open-door policy means that you can always step into a colleague’s or partner’s room to ask questions or brainstorm over a case, while our fortnightly practice group meetings offer the chance to keep up with the latest legal developments. At the same time, being part of Clifford Chance means that you have access to global resources such as the firm’s impressive international online know-how database, and significant support and opportunities.

How about The Academy?

I have travelled to Budapest, Amsterdam, Paris and Frankfurt for various training courses, including one on acquisitions and another one on private equity. I enjoyed these courses tremendously, not only for their content. I have also learned a lot from the group discussions with people from other offices. And of course I had fun too!

www.cliffordchance.com
Choosing where you want to start your career is a big decision. We also offer summer placements so you can get an insight into what working here is really like before making any commitments. Our summer schemes are open to law students of all universities. In selecting candidates, we’re most interested in personal qualities, ambition and potential, but we also expect you to have an excellent academic record.

**Summer placements**

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**Summer at Clifford Chance**

**Thibault Verdickt**

2008 - Completed a summer internship at Clifford Chance’s Brussels office

2009 - Graduated in Law, UCL; joined Clifford Chance as an associate in the Belgian group

**Thibault Verdickt**

completed his summer placement in July 2008 and joined our firm in October 2009 after successfully completing his second master at the UCL.

«Taking part in the summer scheme was a big factor in deciding that Clifford Chance was the right place for me as well as a great opportunity to help me choose the right career path. Before the placement, I was undecided between completing an LL.M immediately after my studies, or joining a law firm and completing my LL.M after gaining some first-hand experience. After my summer placement I was offered a job at Clifford Chance and I was really pleased to accept it. During my summer placement I have been given the opportunity to work on important transactions with a large number of associates and partners. For instance, I worked on the Christian Dior bond issue, together with Yves Herincx. My role was tohelp drafting the prospectus to be issued to prospective investors. I was able to make a real contribution to the transaction. My experience was very positive, and I really enjoyed it.»
Our success depends on the quality of our people

We need professionals who can offer a service beyond simply knowing the law; people who can be creative, anticipate issues and deliver pragmatic solutions.

Recruitment process
In addition to her everyday responsibilities, Partner Lounia Czupper handles graduate recruitment. Who better to provide an insight into what we’re looking for?

We’re looking for people who stand out, who have a little bit of a spark, lawyers who have an outstanding academic record, but who are also fun to work with. Clifford Chance wants intelligent, articulate graduates capable of contributing and communicating their own ideas and opinions, ambitious, enthusiastic people who will enjoy getting to know clients and colleagues, and who understand that working at the forefront of commercial law often requires hard work.

Can you describe the recruitment process?
We give serious consideration to every CV we receive. Candidates chosen for interviews will be asked to come twice, and meet with different people each time. A partner and an associate usually conduct the interviews. We generally know within a few days if we are able to extend an offer; if so, we confirm by telephone.

Why should a candidate join Clifford Chance?
Our working style is characterised by a real sense of energy and enthusiasm. Our environment is international and diverse, and it is not hierarchical. A candidate who joins Clifford Chance will have the opportunity to work alongside colleagues who are leaders in their field. But it is not all about learning on the job; we have an extensive internal training and development programme too. At every stage in a lawyer’s career, Clifford Chance is there to help them achieve their personal goals.

Lounia’s top five interview tips
1. Be yourself. We are genuinely trying to get to know you.
2. Be enthusiastic. We are looking for people who want to do the job.
3. If you put something on your CV, be prepared to talk about it.
4. Don’t be afraid to let the conversation drift.
5. You are not in competition with anyone.
Come and join our team

Contact

If you are interested in a career with Clifford Chance, please send your CV and cover letter to Emily Roos at Clifford Chance, Avenue Louise 65, Box 2 - 1050 Brussels - Belgium or at Emily.Roos@CliffordChance.com

www.cliffordchance.com

«It is a beautiful profession: the kick of a successful closing, the thrill of high stake litigation, the intellectual challenge of complex legal questions, the subtlety of tense negotiations... Hard work indeed, but fascinating!»

Yves Herinckx,
Partner in the Belgian group

«Working at Clifford Chance gives young lawyers an opportunity to work on some of the most challenging and important cases of our age, including the Microsoft Article 82 case.»

Thomas Vinje,
Partner in the ECR group

«Whilst I enjoy working on large multi-jurisdictional deals, I also enjoy thoroughly researching complex legal questions. Working at Clifford Chance means I can do both»

Anne Chamberod,
associate in the Belgian group