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## Brochure 2026

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LDR is Flanders' largest lawyer firm active in the field of environmental and spatial planning law, together referred to as environmental law.

LDR is characterized by a specific combination of a practice-oriented and scientific approach of the most varied themes relating to environmental law. From its induction in 1997, the law firm has gained a reputation for its prag-matic approach to various types of legal proceedings and extrajudicial procedures, but also thanks to its scientific activities in close collaboration with several university in-stitutions as well as its scientific publications, legislation projects and policy-supporting studies.

Throughout the years, LDR received many awards in recognition of its groundbreaking pioneering work in the subject of environmental law.

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# Approach

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## **Scientific approach**

LDR acts in close association with several university institutions. Almost all partners and staff members of LDR are (or have been) attached to the University of Ghent, Centre for Environmental and Energy Law, either as teaching assistants or as scientific assistants. They owe much of their know-how to their many years of cooperation with Prof. Dr. Hubert BOCKEN, Prof. Dr. Luc LAVRYSEN and Prof. Dr. Frank MAES. They are now scientifically active through scientific publications, legislation projects and policy-supporting studies.

## **Interdisciplinary approach**

As environmental law (a combination of environmental, climate, energy and spatial planning law) is a particularly technical legal discipline, LDR calls upon experts from numerous branches of science. This co-operation guarantees that the legal and technical aspects of environmental law go hand in hand when providing solutions to problems and giving advice.

## **A pro-active approach, aiming at avoiding legal proceedings**

LDR opts for a specific approach to legal files by placing them in a broader social context and by trying in the first place to find alternatives that aim at avoiding legal proceedings in consultation with the client. Such an approach is only successful if negotiations and discussions can be conducted with the different parties involved, in particular with the authorities. Although the latter are very often the opposite party in legal proceedings, LDR has an excellent relationship, based on mutual respect with the different officials responsible for environmental, climate, energy and spatial planning matters. Within the context of general consultancy, LDR spends a lot of time providing legal and strategic assistance to both small- and large-scale environmental and spatial planning projects and drawing up due diligence reports for company takeovers. Within the high-risk matter of environmental law, LDR contributes to the promotion of a pro-active approach, aiming at avoiding legal proceedings.

### **Attention to environmental law as a functional branch of law**

LDR knows that environmental law is a functional branch of law, the scope of which is linked to environmental, climate, energy and spatial planning issues. Environmental law cannot be categorized under one of the standard branches of law: it is not only administrative law, but also European law, tax law, civil law, criminal law, consumer law, law of property and economic law. LDR deals with the most diverse issues relating to the environment and having to do with administrative law (administrative appeal procedures with the authorities, legal proceedings before the Council of State and the Court of Arbitration), civil or criminal law (legal proceedings before civil courts and courts dealing with minor offences as well as with courts of appeal), tax law (administrative appeal procedures with the authorities and legal proceedings before tax sections of courts and courts of appeal) and European law (legal proceedings before the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights).

### **Attention to the role of the lawyer as 'environmental policy actor'**

The development of an environmental policy requires a broad basis of support. The input from lawyers with practical experience is therefore of vital importance. LDR shares its knowledge and expertise through many forums that focus on the development environmental, climate, energy and spatial planning policy and legislation. In this respect, the non-profit organization 'Flemish Environmental Law Association' (VVOR) has been established by Isabelle Larmuseau on 18 May 2006, in order to encourage the debate on all legal matters that concern the planning and protection of the human living environment (see [www.omgevingsrecht.be](http://www.omgevingsrecht.be)).

### **Attention to Europe and the world**

LDR does not restrict itself to federal and regional environmental issues, but permanently pays attention to environmental (legal) developments in the European Union and in the world. This knowledge of European and international environmental law is highly valuable in dealing with local environmental files.

### **Attention to ongoing acquisition and transfer of knowledge**

LDR has developed its own digital environmental data base, which is updated on a daily basis with information about legislation, administration of justice, legal doctrine and environmental issues. These permanent updates of knowledge and expertise are implemented immediately and communicated to the parties concerned. LDR shares the knowledge and expertise it has acquired through practical experience with students, colleagues, magistrates and persons dealing with legal matters in general via lectures at several university institutions and colleges and via discourses at workshops. In 2007 LDR took the initiative to

organize its own LDR-training courses. It concerns a series of training courses whereby an update is given of all relevant environmental law topics five times a year.

#### **Attention to high-quality services**

LDR has at least two lawyers, one of which is always a partner in the law firm, deal with each case. The second lawyer is designated in order to optimize the contact with the client and to ensure a timely and quick settlement. Depending on the specific know-how required for the case, the second lawyer is entrusted with general supporting activities or with thorough assistance regarding the specific matter that is dealt with.

#### **Attention to professional deontology**

All cases are carefully screened before they are accepted by the law firm. LDR develops a durable strategy in close consultation with the client. Furthermore, LDR charges reasonable and justifiable fees, so as to enable everyone to have his/her interests as regards the environment, climate, energy and spatial planning defended by specialists

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## Specialisation

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The environmental law subdivision of the environmental team is led by Peter De Smedt, Tom Malfait and Stijn Vandamme. The spatial planning law subdivision of the environmental team is led by Pieter-Jan Defoort, Laurent Proot, Robin Slabbinck, Eva De Witte and Karolien Beké.

They deal with the most diverse issues relating to the environment and having to do with administrative law (administrative appeal procedures with the authorities, legal proceedings before the Council of State and the Constitutional Court), civil or criminal law (legal proceedings before civil courts and courts dealing with minor offences as well as with courts of appeal), tax law (administrative appeal procedures with the authorities and legal proceedings before tax sections of courts and courts of appeal) and European law (legal proceedings before the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights).

Next to providing support to individuals for specific problems and projects, the firm also realizes legislation projects and policy-supporting studies. In addition, it provides assistance for the drawing up of due diligence reports within the context of company take-overs. In the same context, the firm offers all possible facilities for the use of its office spaces and infrastructure as a data room.

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## Fees and costs

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LDR is in favour of coming to clear and transparent agreements, including in respect of our fees and costs;

As regards the rates, a distinction is made between fees and costs.

The fees are remuneration for the legal work carried out by the lawyer or lawyers handling your file. This is expressed in a rate per hour. Depending on the specialism and experience of the file handler, this rate is between € 115 and € 235 exclusive of VAT. From 1 January 2014, lawyers are VAT registered and 21% VAT will be added to our services. Rates may be subject to indexations.

The costs are broken down into two parts: the office costs and third party costs.

The office costs have a fixed rate and are payment for our administration costs. These are set out in detail below (exclusive of VAT).

- one-off file cost of € 100
- letters: € 10 per unit
- recorded deliveries: € 15 per unit
- photocopies: € 0.35 per unit
- colour copies: € 0.70 per unit

The third party costs are file-related costs which the office advances and subsequently charges on. This includes items such as translations costs, expert fees or bailiffs fees etc.

It is important to know that fees are charged from the first consultation. The time spent on the work is carefully recorded and forms the basis of the calculation of the fee.

If you have any further questions relating to fees or costs, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## General terms and conditions

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### **1. Instruction**

1.1. These general terms and conditions (in accordance with the latest version) and any special conditions for the instruction (the "Instruction") apply to every agreement with cvba LDR Advocaten (the "Office"), regardless whether the Client (the "Client") is a company, trader or consumer. The applicability of any conditions of the Client is excluded.

1.2. The Office assumes that all the information provided by the Client is complete and correct and may be relied on.

1.3. The Instruction is accepted and carried out by the Office which is exclusively responsible for the performance of this instruction, even if a Client has granted an Instruction with a view of it being carried out by a particular person.

### **2. General**

2.1. All the (results of the) work carried out in the context of the Instruction remain at all time the exclusive property of the Office and may not be transferred by the Client to third parties. Third parties may in any event not rely on such, nor assert any claim on this against the Office.

2.2. The Client-legal entity shall impose these conditions on its directors, shareholders, intermediaries, managers, personnel, subcontractors and other employees so that they are equally bound to them.

2.3. The Instruction is accepted and carried out by the company cvba LDR Advocaten. Only the company is liable and responsible for the performance of the Instruction. This even if the Client has granted the Instruction expressly or tacitly for performance by a particular lawyer or agent/employee of the company. No single lawyer, employee or any other agent of the office whatsoever can be held personally liable. Any liability for whatever disadvantage suffered by the Client is limited to the amount covered by the professional liability insurance policy of the lawyers, Amlin Europe NV and must be commenced within the year after discovery of the error or the disadvantage at the time the client reasonably became, or should have become, aware of it.

### **3. Termination of the collaboration**

The Client and the Office - the latter taking into account the deontological obligations - can terminate the agreement at any time by notifying the other party of this in writing.

### **4. Erelonen**

4.1. The Client will regularly receive a statement of fees and costs incurred in the performance of the work in the past period.

4.2. The fees are calculated on the basis of hourly rates which are regularly reviewed by the Office and are applicable from the date of change, unless expressly agreed otherwise.

The fees do not include (legal) costs and expenses. The Client can at all times request an overview of the applicable hourly rates and fixed Office costs.

### **5. Agreement regarding payment**

5.1. Invoices from the Office are payable within 30 days from the invoicedate. Each invoice unpaid on the due date incurs, by operation of law and without any notice of default being required, a conventional default interest of 10%. In addition and on top of this conventional default interest, the Client shall pay for each, even partially, unpaid invoice, compensation of 10% over the outstanding amount with a minimum of 75 euros, even if terms of respite are granted. This amount shall be payable in addition to any legal costs and costs of performance.

5.2. In the event of payment arrears, the Office is entitled to suspend the further performance of the Instruction without any prior notice of default being required. In the event of non-payment of a part or the total of the invoices on the set due date, the balance of all other (even not due invoices) shall also become immediately due and payable by operation of law.

### **6. Applicable law - competent court**

All agreements with the Office are governed by Belgian law. For the Office in Ghent, only the Courts of Appeal and the District Courts of the legal district of Ghent have jurisdiction. For the Office in Oostkamp, only the Courts of Appeal and the District Courts of the legal district of Bruges have jurisdiction.

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## Privacy statement

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LDR Advocaten bv, Kasteellaan 141, 9000 Ghent, is the controller of your personal data in the context of our activities.

This is always done in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, also known as the GDPR Regulation), which came into force on May 25, 2018.

Only persons who are connected to us through an employment relationship have access to your personal data. This access is limited to the extent that the persons concerned need this data for the performance of their duties and/or assignment.

The user has the right to be informed of:

- the processing of their personal data
- the specific purposes of this processing
- the data to which this processing relates
- the recipients to whom the data is provided

The user may request the data that has been processed about them, as well as information about the origin of that data.

Personal data is processed and stored for as long as necessary for the purpose for which it was collected.

All data necessary for the proper legal service we provide as a law firm is stored in a database that is strictly secured and only accessible to the person(s) handling your file. This data is processed exclusively in the context of legal services and in accordance with the applicable code of ethics.

The email address and/or address may be used for marketing purposes, to keep you informed of our activities or to inform you about topics that may be of interest to you. With each newsletter, you have the opportunity to unsubscribe by clicking on the link at the bottom of the newsletter.

The user has the right to make corrections to all

personal data relating to him or her. You may also object to the processing of the personal data in question. To do so, you must prove your identity.

If you have any questions or comments about the processing of your personal data, please contact Debbie De Groote by email at [debbie.degroot@ldr.be](mailto:debbie.degroot@ldr.be).

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## Contact

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Closed on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays