

## NEW TRANSPARENCY TOOLS FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### CLOSING THE LOOPHOLES - PARLIAMENT PROPOSALS ON CONDITIONALITY

*Parliament is committed to **achieving a substantial tripartite agreement.***

*An IIA cannot impinge upon the independent mandate of MEPs. This is why the EP's rules of procedures include the following recommendation, which we propose to reflect in the IIA (Rule 11 (2):*

***"Members of the European Parliament should adopt the systematic practice of only meeting with registered interest representatives. They can also draw up a list of their interactions with interest representatives in a legislative footprint, annexed to their reports"***

*Concerning a specific reference to office holders such as committee chairs, rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs, it should be noted that such a change would require an absolute majority plenary vote and that previously, only a very tight majority of Members supported such an idea (EP resolution on integrity, transparency, and accountability of the EU institutions, adopted in September 2017).*

**Parliament is committed to making access to Parliament and its Members, in practical terms, impossible without any registration, reaching therefore equivalence to a "no registration, no meeting" provision.**

Therefore, and in addition to what Parliament has already implemented (Rule 11 (2) recommending MEPs to meet only registered interest representatives and the possibility of the legislative footprint for rapporteurs', for example), Parliament proposes to close the loopholes with the following proposals for which registration would be required:

#### **1/ Legislative footprint**

Rapporteurs already have the option of annexing a legislative footprint to their published reports, listing stakeholders they have heard from. We propose to also create a direct interactive link between the footprint and the Transparency Register.

#### **2/ Meetings with EU Officials** (from the level of Head of Unit to Secretaries General)

We believe it would significantly strengthen our Joint Transparency Register if all three institutions have one rule in common: making meetings between all staff (from the level of Head of Unit to Secretaries General) and interest representatives conditional upon registration.

#### **3/ Meetings with EP Officials**

In line with the above proposal, the Parliament can introduce a recommendation that all staff meet only registered interest representatives.

**4/ MEPs' individual guests**

Guests of MEPs would be asked to make a declaration of honour that they are not meeting with the MEP for interest representation purposes. This provision would close an existing loophole.

**5/ Speakers at EP Committee meetings**

The current rule, whereby invitations to interest representatives to speak at Committee hearings require registration only applies to public hearings at Committees. We propose to include ALL other Committee public events, such as workshops or seminars.

With some 26 Committees meeting regularly, we believe extending our existing rules would create a significant increase in transparency.

**6/ Speakers at other Parliamentary bodies' meetings**

We propose to further extend this rule to other parliamentary bodies holding public meetings or events, such as delegations with third countries (44), and require that interest representatives invited to speak there need to be registered.

This adds significantly to the policy of only having registered interest representatives appear at the dozens of meetings organised in a House that is and must be open to all.

**7/ Participating in cross-party intergroups**

Although cross-party intergroups are not official bodies of the Parliament, participation by interest representatives would become conditional, e.g. when the interest representatives participate in meetings or events, or when they offer to support to or co-host events of the intergroup;

Parliament's current 28 intergroups with dozens of Members are also subject to rules whereby financial interests need to be reported, not least where third parties support them.

**8/ Co-hosting of events on EP premises**

Similarly, whenever interest representatives co-host events taking place on Parliament premises, prior registration would be required, making the existing incentive stronger.

**9/ Long-term access to EP premises for interest representatives**

Parliament recently closed one loophole. Since March 2018, the validity of passes is directly linked to the status of the registration. Representatives of suspended entities can no longer enter the building until their suspension from the Transparency Register is lifted. Approximately 8 000 access authorisations for individuals were granted in 2017 by the Parliament, for representatives of approximately 2 500 organisations in the Register (either as a new request or a renewal).

**10/ Meetings of MEPs**

Members, who want to show citizens whom they are meeting with, would be able to commit through a voluntary declaration to adopt the systematic practice of only meeting with registered interest representatives and publish their meetings with

interest representatives on the Parliament's website. This would be particularly relevant for committee chairs, rapporteurs, or shadow rapporteurs.