

**Question for written answer E-4383/2010
to the Commission
Rule 117
Michail Tremopoulos (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Incentives for think tanks and other unregistered lobbyists to join the Commission's register of interest representatives

Responding to a letter from 44 NGOs, Commissioner Potočník stated the following:

‘As a think tank – and not a lobby – Friends of Europe has not signed into the European Commission’s lobby registry. We have however not considered this fact as a sufficient reason to cease collaborations with FoE, in particular as the registry remains voluntary’¹

This statement is at direct odds with a speech by Siim Kallas when he used to be Vice-President responsible for Administrative Affairs, Audit and Anti-Fraud. He then clearly said:

‘ “Friends of Europe”, like other think tanks, should register’²

According to the Commission the ‘voluntary registration system’ would provide ‘incentives for lobbyists (or interest representatives) to register’³

The incentives in place like email alerts⁴ have failed to boost transparency since the majority of Brussels-based interest representations remain unregistered.⁵

We would like to ask the European Commission:

1. Has the official position of the Commission that think tanks should join the lobby register changed?
2. Will the Commission strengthen incentives to improve transparency by making cooperation with lobby groups and think tanks in the organisation of events (including their presence in panels) conditional on their registration?

¹ <http://www.corporateeurope.org/lobbycracy/content/2010/05/corporate-sponsoring-green-week>

² <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/09/181&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/eti/docs/com_2007_127_final_en.pdf

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/docs/reg/FAQ_en.pdf

⁵ <http://www.alter-eu.org/press-releases/2009/10/28/review-of-ec-lobby-register-brings-minor-improvements>