**Question for written answer E-003961/2018**

**to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Kostadinka Kuneva (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Relations between the tax avoidance 'Big Four' and the EU institutions

According to the study ‘Accounting for Influence’,[[1]](#footnote-1) the EU loses up to EUR 190 billion each year in tax revenue through the global tax avoidance industry, and in particular the Big Four (KPMG, PwC, Deloitte and EY), the four largest chartered accountancy firms.

An abundance of data from leaks, reports and tax scandals (Panama Papers, Paradise Papers and Luxleaks) reveals the decisive part they play in corporate tax evasion, using wide-ranging strategies (placing funds off-shore in tax havens or countries with a high level of secrecy, etc.), and ensuring that there is a veil of secrecy concerning the firms’ structures, their financial data, their staff and the countries in which they operate.

Despite all this, the Big Four continue to be treated by the institutions of the EU as legitimate and neutral partners in shaping tax policy. They earn millions of euros by providing the Commission with advisory services or expertise, they are awarded public contracts for studies and evaluations, they participate in advisory teams, and they enjoy confidential relations with the institutions of the EU.

Could the Commission say what public contracts have been awarded to the Big Four, and state the total cost of these contracts?

What measures will it take to tackle the conflict of interests, so that tax intermediaries are excluded from policy-making processes to combat tax avoidance?

1. https://corporateeurope.org/power-lobbies/2018/07/accounting-influence [↑](#footnote-ref-1)