



Plenary sitting

B9-0152/2023

14.2.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on following up on measures requested by Parliament to strengthen the
integrity of the European institutions
(2023/2571(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on following up on measures requested by Parliament to strengthen the integrity of the European institutions (2023/2571(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the measures on strengthening integrity, independence and accountability as adopted by its Conference of Presidents on 8 February 2023,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2022 on suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 September 2021 on strengthening transparency and integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body²,
 - having regard to its decision of 27 April 2021 on the conclusion of an interinstitutional agreement between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 September 2017 on transparency, accountability and integrity in the EU institutions⁴,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the EU institutions and their officials must protect the integrity of the EU's democratic principles and values and serve as an example to follow for citizens and officials alike;
- B. whereas it is necessary to ensure that Members of the European Parliament act without any undue influence from representatives of interests; whereas providing paid activities to Members of the European Parliament, offering them gifts or travel invitations, creating expectations about future employment following the end of their mandate or an official's termination of service and undue use of information or contacts should all be strictly regulated;
- C. whereas the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament with respect to financial interests and conflicts of interest is monitored by an Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members composed of five MEPs, which has proved to be insufficient;
- D. whereas it is key to ensure that democratic processes are not captured by private

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0448.

² OJ C 117, 11.3.2022, p. 159.

³ OJ C 506, 15.12.2021, p. 127.

⁴ OJ C 337, 20.9.2018, p. 120.

interests and that citizens' rights are fully respected;

- E. whereas the measures recently introduced under the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register require Parliament to show greater ambition in ensuring proper implementation of all transparency standards;
 - F. whereas transparency and accountability are a precondition for citizens' trust in EU institutions and whereas, therefore, corruption constitutes a serious attack on European democracy;
1. Reiterates its deep shock and condemnation of the recent allegations of corruption against current and former Members of the European Parliament and reaffirms its zero-tolerance policy on corruption in any shape and at any level; insists that the magnitude of the ongoing investigations require Parliament and the EU institutions to react with robust and immediate measures;
 2. Is committed to working at all levels to strengthen a culture of genuine integrity, transparency and accountability in Parliament and calls for stronger measures and political ambition in addressing all potential conflicts of interest, including a thorough assessment of their implementation;
 3. Is determined to prevent future criminal acts, curb damaging influence and stop corruptive political interference by improving accountability, boosting transparency and tightening controls;
 4. Is fully committed to undertaking serious and ambitious reforms in Parliament and in the EU institutions to regain citizens' trust and protect European democracy;
 5. Welcomes the measures on strengthening integrity, independence and accountability as adopted by its Conference of Presidents on 8 February 2023 and the concrete actions for their implementation; considers the measures to be only a first step and to fall short, in some cases, of the ambition currently needed to ensure the highest standards of transparency;
 6. Considers it of the utmost importance to ensure that the current transparency and accountability rules are fully implemented, including the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament; reaffirms its commitment to closing all possible loopholes by strengthening current measures and introducing robust sanctions to guarantee proper enforcement;
 7. Insists on the urgent and immediate setting up of an ethics body with a mandate to scrutinise the EU institutions and agencies, with the necessary financial means and staff to fully carry out its tasks before the end of the parliamentary term;
 8. Considers that a new ethics body should assess possible incompatibilities as well as put forward proposals to improve transparency and accountability regarding MEPs' side jobs during their mandate in order to prevent conflicts of interest; is of the opinion that self-regulation cannot be an option;
 9. Believes that until the ethics body takes on its formal role it is imperative to reform,

upgrade and strengthen Parliament's Advisory Committee on the Code of Conduct for Members in order to ensure a more effective and transparent system of stricter sanctions against Members and former Members working for outside interests where they have been found not to comply with ethics, rules and obligations;

10. Calls for stronger action to enhance whistleblower protection for staff and accredited parliamentary assistants in line with the protection provided for in the Whistleblower Directive; considers that at the same time, Article 22c of the Staff Regulations should be urgently revised in order to align it with the standards of the Whistleblower Directive;
11. Calls for the much stricter implementation of the current provisions of the Interinstitutional Agreement on the transparency register within Parliament, in particular by ensuring that all meetings between Members of the European Parliament, accredited parliamentary assistants, staff members and third-party representatives can only take place in accordance with these provisions;
12. Considers that publishing all scheduled meetings with lobbies and interest groups should be made compulsory for all MEPs, accredited parliamentary assistants, political group staff and Parliament staff; calls for the establishment of a mandatory legislative and non-legislative footprint;
13. Calls for the urgent introduction of mandatory zero-tolerance policy training on anti-corruption and transparency for MEPs, accredited parliamentary assistants and staff members;
14. Recalls its proposal to withdraw the parliamentary badges of lobbyists and third-country representatives whose organisations and countries are under investigation;
15. Asks for the regular verification of funding streams to and from organisations that are listed on the transparency register;
16. Is convinced of the need to unconditionally ban friendship groups with third countries;
17. Suggests reviewing and assessing the functioning of intergroups in Parliament and requires their full financial transparency, including the annual disclosure of financial contributions to intergroups;
18. Considers that trips undertaken by MEPs, accredited parliamentary assistants and staff members paid for by third countries or by the private sector should be prohibited;
19. Suggests forbidding Members of the European Parliament from accepting gifts worth more than EUR 100;
20. Requests that the Members' Statute be amended in order to create a verifiable, searchable and detailed mandatory public register of annual financial declarations on wealth and income;
21. Considers the introduction of a cooling-off period for MEPs at the end of their respective mandates to be essential and believes that this period should be set at 24 months for an MEP taking up lobbying activities and for the duration of the payment of

the transitional allowance for an MEP taking up new employment;

22. Calls for a serious review of all accreditation procedures for accessing Parliament premises and proposes creating a public entry log for entering the premises, with information on the reason for the visit, interlocutors and purpose of the visit;
23. Demands that all former MEPs who become lobbyists have their privileges linked to administrative support revoked, such as permanent badges;
24. Instructs its President to send this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.