



Plenary sitting

B9-0153/2023

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))

Katalin Cseh

on behalf of the Renew 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 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 register¹,
 - 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 resolution of 9 March 2022 on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation³,
 - 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 institutions⁴,
 - having regard to Rules 10 and 11 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Parliament has expressed its dismay and serious concern about revelations that came to light in December 2022 of alleged acts of corruption, money laundering and participation in a criminal organisation by Members, former Members and staff of the European Parliament;
- B. whereas Parliament is committed to fully cooperating with the ongoing criminal investigation; whereas the findings of the investigators have led to additional arrests and law enforcement interventions in recent weeks;
- C. whereas the internal monitoring and alert mechanisms of the EU institutions have dramatically failed to detect ongoing corruption; whereas the existing safeguards and sanction mechanisms have proven insufficiently effective in deterring the aforementioned criminal behaviour;
- D. whereas trust in Parliament's integrity and the rule of law is paramount for the functioning of European democracy; whereas it is key to ensure that democratic processes are not captured by private and external interests and that citizens' rights are

¹ OJ C 506, 15.12.2021, p. 127.

² OJ C 117, 11.3.2022, p. 159.

³ OJ C 347, 9.9.2022, p. 61.

⁴ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0448.

fully respected;

- E. whereas in the wake of the December 2022 revelations, Parliament called for the EU institutions to adopt and implement a series of reforms and measures to bolster the resilience of their respective decision-making processes against both internal corruption and undue external influence; whereas any reform should be proportionate, properly thought through and offer long-term and effective solutions;
1. Believes that the gravity and magnitude of the ongoing investigations require Parliament and the EU institutions to react with unequivocal unity and unwavering resolve in an interinstitutional and non-partisan manner;
 2. Reiterates its full support for the proposals it put forward to restore transparency, integrity and accountability, as set out in its resolution of 15 December 2022; supports urgent action and a full revision of the rules on ethics before the summer;
 3. Welcomes the swift first steps adopted unanimously by the Conference of Presidents and commits not only to follow through on them, but also to adopt additional measures, in line with the proposals contained in its resolutions;
 4. Believes, in particular, that more detailed information about Members' activities, stronger checks on all interest representatives, the mandatory declaration of meetings, a ban on friendship groups with third countries, the prevention of conflicts of interest, increased transparency on financial declarations and compliance, and whistleblowing training are key to strengthening the EU institutions' integrity;
 5. Charges the Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including Disinformation and the Strengthening of Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in the European Parliament (ING3) with the task of identifying potential flaws in Parliament's rules and of making proposals for reforms, building on the work of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and best practices in other parliaments; commits to undertaking an extensive and in-depth evaluation of the functioning of its own bodies in order to identify structural loopholes and weaknesses that could jeopardise the integrity of its decision-making processes;
 6. Reiterates, in particular, its long-standing call for the Commission to put forward a proposal to set up an independent and effective ethics body as soon as possible, in line with Parliament's resolution of 16 September 2021;
 7. Reiterates its call for the Transparency Register to be made mandatory for all Members, accredited parliamentary assistants and staff; further believes the register should be strengthened by increasing the budget and the number of staff, so that it is able to verify the information provided by applicants and registrants more thoroughly; believes, moreover, that its scope should be expanded to include former Members and representatives of non-EU countries;
 8. Proposes the introduction of a cooling-off period for former MEPs, no longer than the duration of the transitional allowance, to avoid the negative effects of the so-called revolving doors phenomenon and calls for all EU institutions to follow suit for senior EU officials;

9. Underlines that additional safeguards against corruption, such as a declaration of assets by Members at the beginning and the end of each mandate, should be considered;
10. Recommends additional vetting for parliamentary assistants and staff working on sensitive policy fields, particularly in foreign affairs; is of the opinion that the staff working in such fields could be considered as politically exposed persons according to the definition in the Anti-Money Laundering Directive;
11. Is of the opinion that trips paid for by third countries should be subject to prior approval by Parliament;
12. Commits to ensuring the full transparency of MEPs' side income by detailing the exact amount involved and prohibiting any external financing of MEPs' and groups' staff; commits to establishing a ban at EU level on donations from third countries to Members and political parties, in order to close the loopholes in Member States; requests that the Commission urgently put forward a proposal on this matter;
13. Recommends a revision of the Staff Regulations, in particular Article 22(c) thereof, in order to align it with the standards of the Whistleblower Directive; calls on the Bureau, in the meantime, to immediately revise Parliament's Internal Rules Implementing Article 22(c) of the Staff Regulations to bring them into line with the protections provided for in the Whistleblower Directive; recalls that accredited parliamentary assistants do not enjoy the same level of protection as other officials; calls, therefore, for the revision of the rules on whistleblowing applicable to assistants;
14. Commits to continuing its fight against human rights violations around the world by means of urgency resolutions;
15. Reiterates its full cooperation with the Belgian authorities and other investigative bodies of Member States; believes that appropriate measures should apply to all third countries concerned by the investigations, including on related files and access to Parliament;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.