



Plenary sitting

B9-0315/2023

5.7.2023

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 the establishment of the EU Ethics Body
(2023/2741(RSP))

Daniel Freund

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the establishment of the EU Ethics Body
(2023/2741(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- 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 body¹,
 - 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 institutions²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 February 2023 on the establishment of an independent EU ethics body³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 February 2023 on following up on measures requested by Parliament to strengthen the integrity of the European institutions⁴,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 8 June 2023 entitled ‘Proposal for an interinstitutional ethics body’ (COM(2023)0311),
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Parliament broadly supported a proposal for setting up an independent ethics body in its resolution of 16 September 2021;
- B. whereas revelations of third country influence and lobbying have continued to expose the insufficient ethics frameworks within EU institutions, agencies and bodies and the failure of the current system to self-monitor the current rules;
- C. whereas in December 2022 revelations of corruption in Parliament demonstrated again the main shortcomings of the current rules on transparency, conflicts of interest, revolving door effects and corruption and of their enforcement both in Parliament and the Commission;
- D. whereas citizens’ trust in public institutions and decision-making processes is a pillar of any democratic government and requires exemplarity, integrity, transparency, accountability and the highest standards of ethical behaviour;
- E. whereas an independent EU ethics body is essential for citizens’ trust in EU institutions and ultimately for ensuring that decisions are being made in the interest of citizens;
- F. whereas not a single financial penalty has ever been imposed for a breach of the Code

¹ OJ C 117, 11.3.2022, p. 159.

² OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 109.

³ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0055.

⁴ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0054.

of Conduct of Members despite at least 26 breaches being documented in the annual reports of the Advisory Committee on the Conduct for Members;

1. Is critical of the fact that the long-awaited Commission proposal for the establishment of an interinstitutional ethics body is utterly insufficient and finds that the proposal lacks the main features and functions of an independent ethics body as envisaged in its resolution of 16 September 2021 and reiterated in its resolution of 16 February 2023;
2. Strongly regrets that the proposed body would be a curtailed body limited to setting standards of integrity, transparency and ethical rules, and would not address how such rules and standards are implemented and enforced by each institution;
3. Stresses the need for an ethics body capable of assessing and dealing with the enforcement of rules on conflicts of interest, revolving door effects, transparency of interest representation and anti-corruption within the EU institutions applicable in each institution;
4. Stresses the need for the ethics body to deal with individual cases upon request from a participating institution or upon the proposal of one or more members of the body, including its independent experts; underscores the need for the body to make public its recommendations, including on possible sanctions, together with the decision taken by the respective institution or after a deadline;
5. Welcomes the involvement of five independent experts in the proposed ethics body; considers, however, that their role should not be limited to observer status but rather they should be integrated as full members;
6. Considers that the five independent experts should be nominated - one by Parliament, one by the Commission, one by the Court of Justice of the European Union or the European Court of Auditors, one by the Council from among Member State transparency and integrity bodies and one by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO);
7. Suggests that the five independent experts deal with individual cases together with the member of the body representing the institution concerned in the individual case, who would be able to take part in the body's deliberations;
8. Considers that the ethics body should be able to receive and assess declarations of interest and assets from participating institutions when applicable;
9. Considers that transparency and integrity rules for staff of the participating institutions under the EU Staff Regulations should also be part of the scope and mandate of the ethics body and that individual cases affecting staff should also be assessed by the body; reiterates its recommendation that the ethics body should issue recommendations that can serve as precedents in identical or similar cases, as this will significantly reduce its workload, especially for staff matters if numerous similar cases arise;
10. Criticises that the resources dedicated to the secretariat of the ethics body provided for in the Commission proposal are clearly insufficient; stresses the need for staff and other resources to be commensurate with the tasks the ethics body must have in order to

credibly enforce the ethics rules of all participating institutions;

11. Calls on its Conference of Presidents to appoint its negotiators; commits to starting negotiations as soon as possible on the basis of the principle of sincere cooperation in order to finalise the negotiations by the end of this year;
12. Believes that negotiations on transparency and ethics must themselves be conducted with exemplary transparency; is of the opinion that all institution positions and written input submitted by their negotiators in meetings must be made public on the day after each meeting;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.