Transparency register: second political meeting opens way for negotiations

Representatives from Parliament, Council and the EC met on Tuesday and agreed that negotiations on a mandatory EU Transparency Register can start early in 2018.

Following the Council’s approval of its negotiating mandate on 6 December, the three institutions reiterated their full commitment to increase the transparency of the activities of interest representatives at EU level. At a second political meeting, which closed the pre-negotiation phase, they also stressed the importance of conducting the upcoming interinstitutional talks in an open and inclusive manner.

The meeting was organised at the initiative of the Estonian Presidency of the Council, which highlighted the main aspects of Council’s negotiating mandate. The Parliament and Commission welcomed the Council's readiness to enter negotiations, and the three institutions agreed to start talks as soon as possible.

Quotes

“I congratulate the Estonian Presidency for achieving Council's negotiating mandate. I welcome the fact that at our second political meeting, we had a first presentation of the Council's approach, and I look forward to starting negotiations early next year. We will need to be ambitious if we want to achieve a strong result, showing the importance of transparency of our dealings with interest representatives”, said Ms. Sylvie Guillaume (S&D, FR).

“We need to be transparent about these negotiations if we want to be credible and have the support of all affected by a stronger transparency register. This is why we proposed a number of concrete actions to coordinate our communications at interinstitutional level, which will make it easier to follow our progress”, said Ms. Danuta Hübner (EPP, PL).

Background

The European Commission presented its proposal for a new interinstitutional agreement on a mandatory Transparency Register for lobbyists covering the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission and on 28 September 2016. The proposal aims to strengthen the framework for a transparent and ethical interaction between interest representatives and the three institutions participating in the new scheme, the European
Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. Since 2011, the Parliament and the Commission have jointly operated a public register for interest representatives aiming to increase the transparency and accountability of the EU decision-making process. The Council has been an observer to the current scheme since 2014.

On 15 June 2017, the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament, bringing together the Parliament’s President and political group leaders, approved the Parliament’s negotiating mandate, following endorsement by a Parliament contact group made up of representatives of all the political groups. The Parliament's mandate underlines the need for a strong transparency message from the three institutions and a meaningful outcome of the negotiations.

Council adopted its negotiating mandate on 6 December 2017 and also decided to make it public.

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