

Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

Call for MEPs to fight repressive Ukrainian law targeting civil society

Raphaël Kergueno · Tuesday, April 4th, 2017

Transparency International EU calls on the Ukrainian authorities to abolish controversial amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption that appear specifically designed to intimidate and target anti-corruption activists.

The amendments threaten the capacity of anti-corruption organisations to operate effectively in Ukraine. The original law was introduced as a vital measure to fight rampant corruption in Ukraine and ensure that public officials do not abuse their position of power. It has no relevance to civil society activists who are not paid by the state.

On Thursday, the European Parliament will vote on the visa liberalisation scheme for Ukrainian citizens. While Ukraine implemented key requirements under the visa liberalisation action plan, recent attacks on civil society organisations poses serious threats to the democratic development of the country. The planned hearings mark the perfect occasion for MEPs to raise our concerns and call for the Ukrainian government to abolish the repressive amendments.

Transparency International EU has contacted MEPs working on visa liberalisation to raise awareness of the issue during Thursday's hearings.

This was our message:

Dear Honourable Member

In light of tomorrow's debate on the exemption for Ukrainian citizens from visa requirements, Transparency International would like to draw your attention to repressive and draconian amendments to draft law no 6172 on e-declarations that will have the effect of intimidating civil society organisations and shrinking the space within which they can operate.

The amendments oblige civil society organisation and all their subcontractors to submit e-declarations on their financial interests and assets. These last minute changes to the law are a direct retaliation by legislators in return for the requirement for politicians and public officials to submit detailed e-declarations on their interests and assets.

The requirement for public officials is a matter of best practice in good governance and anti-corruption that is endorsed by the OECD, World Bank and others, as a measure which reduces the risk of the embezzlement of public funds. The requirement for civil society organisations,

on the other hand, is aimed at intimidation, tying them up in red tape and restricting their activities. It is the opposite of what good governance requires.

We would urge you to raise this issue in your comments in tomorrow's debate and to ask the Ukrainian government to immediately repeal this legislation.

You can see the Transparency International press release [here](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Transparency International EU

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