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Call to withdraw European Parliament's Digital Omnibus rapporteur appointment

Pia Engelbrecht-Bogdanov · Wednesday, February 25th, 2026

The following letter was sent by Transparency International EU and the undersigned organisations to the coordinators of the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. Access it as a PDF file [here](#).

Dear ITRE coordinator,

On Wednesday, 11 February, it was announced that the MEP Aura Salla has been appointed ITRE rapporteur on the Digital Omnibus, which aims to 'simplify' EU data rules, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the ePrivacy Directive.

A history of lobbying against EU digital rules on behalf of Meta

We, the undersigned watchdog organisations, wish to express our utmost concern regarding this appointment.

From May 2020 to April 2023, Ms Salla held an executive lobbying position at Meta Platforms, serving as Public Policy Director and Head of EU Affairs. In this role, she extensively lobbied the EU, including the European Parliament, on behalf of her then-employer, regarding EU privacy rules. Ms Salla was also responsible for Meta's whole lobbying team, with many of her then-colleagues still responsible for lobbying Members of the European Parliament.

Appointing a former Big Tech lobbyist to oversee both the revision and weakening of those same laws raises serious questions about undue influence over the legislative process.

Meta has a long and systemic history of non-compliance with the GDPR. Over the past five years, the company has been **fined seven times for GDPR non-compliance**, totalling €2.6 billion in fines.

The company has a vested interest in weakening the GDPR through the Digital Omnibus and can exploit its close ties with Ms Salla to achieve this. Ms Salla has on several instances met her former employer, including a lobby meeting in September 2024 and another one in January 2025.

Moreover, Ms Salla has a repeated history of obscuring potential conflicts of interest. In April 2025, she sold her stocks in a defence company following **reporting** by the news website Follow The Money. Ms Salla had never reported those stocks in her declaration of private interests. As far as we are aware, there was no official investigation or assessment of the troubling conflict of interest inherent to holding stock in a company while discussing a major increase in subsidies for that sector.

In her **declaration of awareness for her role as Rapporteur** of the Digital Omnibus, she failed to indicate her previous work at Meta as a potential conflict of interest as required by Article 3 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the European parliament.

Meta has a special interest in the Digital Omnibus

The Digital Omnibus has already raised significant concerns among civil society, member states, data protection authorities, and academics regarding its potential to undermine the EU's digital rulebook. **More than 130 civil society organisations and trade unions** have warned of the biggest rollback of digital rights in EU history, calling for an end to attempts to reopen the GDPR, the ePrivacy Regulation and the AI Act.

Furthermore, an **analysis** by Corporate Europe Observatory and LobbyControl reveals that the Commission's proposal for a Digital Omnibus closely aligns with the demands of Big Tech companies and their business associations. Meta, in particular, is among the most vocal companies advocating for the weakening of the EU's digital rulebook, particularly the GDPR.

Over the past year, the company has intensified its lobby campaign against the EU's digital rules. It has **called** the EU's digital rules a "hostile regulatory regime" and is deploying substantive means in Brussels to influence EU policy-making with an annual lobby budget of more than €10 million.

During this second Trump administration Meta has sought to intensify its ties to the White House,

donating \$1m to its inauguration fund and calling for opposition to EU tech legislation. Since then Trump has threatened the EU with tariffs due to the DSA and imposed travel bans on a former commissioner and anti-hate speech campaigners.

Need for procedural propriety

The Digital Omnibus process is already tainted. The Commission is rushing these Omnibus proposals through at breakneck speed, bypassing rules on inclusive and transparent decision-making, and running counter to the EU's Better Regulation rules, as stressed by the European Ombudsman in a recent inquiry.

It is then fundamental that the European Parliament scrutinises the Digital Omnibus with the utmost caution to ensure that fundamental rights protections and safeguards are not weakened at the moment they are under severe pressure from Big Tech companies and the Trump administration. This has to be done by upholding an open and transparent process that prevents potential conflicts of interest or privileged access from arising.

Therefore, the appointment of Ms Salla as the lead negotiator on behalf of ITRE is not just perplexing, it is highly misguided. We call on you to withdraw this appointment.

Signed by:

Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)

LobbyControl

BLOOM

Transparency International EU

The Good Lobby

Observatoire des multinationales

SOMO

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