

# Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

## Stand Up For Integrity – 2019 EU Elections Pledge

Elisa Sola · Tuesday, April 9th, 2019

### Putting Integrity First

Transparency International is calling on candidates for the European Parliament and the Presidency of the European Commission to commit themselves

Please join us in renewing the EU's values and ensuring that integrity is at the core of its mission.

**Transparency International wants the European Union to:**

**ENFORCE THE RULE OF LAW IN THE EU**

In recent years there has been a **steady and worrying erosion of the rule of law in the EU**. We have seen the independence of the judiciary threatened and statesponsored measures aimed at intimidating civil society. Most shockingly, two brave journalists were assassinated for investigating corruption. **The European Commission needs to take immediate and decisive steps** to restore the rule of law among its own Member States and ensure the Union's principles and values are being upheld.

First, the Commission must establish a **regular rule of law monitoring system** that would include risk assessments for all member states based on indicators such as the levels of systematic corruption, independent judiciary, free media and freedom of association. Second, **the Commission must be granted greater powers to ensure EU funds can be suspended when Member States do not fulfil their rule of law obligations**.

And thirdly, The EU should help to protect human rights and rule of law defenders and journalists in EU Member States by **putting in place strong whistleblower protection legislation** and **providing funds for CSOs and media to promote democratic values** (for example through a European Values Instrument).

#### **Specific actions would include:**

1. Ensure that the European Commission has the power to **suspend EU funding** in cases of systematic corruption or persistent and serious breaches of the rule of law
2. Publication by the European Commission of **regular risk-assessments of corruption** in Member States that would inform any sanctioning mechanism
3. Agreement on and implementation of a **whistleblower protection** directive providing a high level of minimum safeguards
4. Ensure that the whistleblower protection provisions of the **trade secrets directive**, and in the national versions of this directive, are consistent with TI's international principles

#### **PREVENT CORRUPT INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR ILLICIT MONEY FROM ENTERING THE EU**

The recently adopted 5th AML Directive was a major step towards making the EU more robust against money laundering. **When you close one route, criminals and the corrupt look for another one to take**. The sale of citizenship and residence – better known as golden visa programmes – has become a thriving business in the EU. However, we found that it has also become an easy way into the EU for the corrupt and their dirty money.

Acknowledging the EU-wide implications of such business, **we ask for the EU to take action, assess the risks and set minimum enhanced due diligence and operational integrity standards**

**for European golden visa programmes.** To prevent corrupt individuals and their money entering the EU, **we also call for the adoption of a Global Magnitsky Act type of legislation at EU level** that would ban human-rights abusers and corrupt officials worldwide from entering the EU and allow freezing their assets located in the EU.

**Specific actions would include:**

- EU-wide standards for the operation of so-called **‘Golden Visa’ programmes**
- Measures to ensure the effectiveness of **public registers of beneficial ownership**
- Targeted revisions to the **Directive on Confiscation of Criminal Assets**
- **EU-level actions** that would sanction high-level corruption worldwide

## **SUPPORT AN INDEPENDENT EU ETHICS BODY**

Over the past years we have seen issues with the lack of independent ethics oversight. Revolving door cases in the Commission are overseen by the sitting Commissioners. Ethics issues with outside jobs by MEPs are policed by MEPs. Therefore we ask for **an independent and well-resourced EU ethics body to oversee conflicts of interest, revolving doors and lobby transparency for all EU institutions.** The EU’s Anti-Fraud Agency (OLAF) could be empowered to carry out this function.

Such a body would:

- **Publish** in a timely fashion all the collected **information about MEPs, Commissioners and EU officers** in an open data format
- **Issue binding recommendations on Commissioners and MEPs**

## **SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY**

In the interests of the accessibility and transparency of EU law-making, we ask the Council of the European Union to ensure that the **positions of Member States when negotiating EU legislation are recorded and published.**

### The Spitzenkandidaten who have supported the four main policy areas above are:

- **Manfred Weber** , European People's Party;
- **Frans Timmermans**, Party of European Socialists;
- **Margrethe Vestager** , **Violeta Bulc**, **Guy Verhofstadt**, **Emma Bonino**, **Nicola Beer\***, **Katalin Cseh** and **Luis Garicano**, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party;
- **Jan Zahradil**, European Conservatives and Reformist;
- **Ska Keller** and **Bas Eickhout**, European Green Party;
- **Violeta Tomi?**, The Party of the European Left;
- **Oriol Junqueras**, European Free Alliance;
- **Yanis Varoufakis**, DiEM25/European Spring.

\*The candidate is pledging to work towards the objectives and to implement them in full compliance with the legal framework of the European Union, including the division of powers between the institutions.

### Pledge for other European Parliament Candidates

Transparency International calls on Candidates in the European Elections to pledge the following:

- To be transparent and ethical in all my parliamentary activity. I will therefore **publish details on the use of my allowances** , **only** accept **meetings with registered lobbyists** and **publish** my meetings with them **online**.
- To **'cool-off'** after leaving the European Parliament. Meaning that I will not lobby for an organisation on the EU Transparency Register while I still receive the transitional allowance.
- To support the creation of **an independent body** for ethics oversight that monitors conflicts of interest, the revolving door and lobby transparency.

If you are a Candidate for the 2019 European Elections and want to support 'Stand up for Integrity', **please click here** and fill in the form.

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Please find below who has already signed

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