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Transparency International: European Parliament's failure to tighten lobby rules is scandalous

Alessandro · Tuesday, April 27th, 2021

Transparency International EU has today voiced its dissatisfaction with the outcome of a vote and preceding [negotiations](#) for better lobby transparency in the European Parliament. The result of today's decision by Members of the European Parliament means that new rules, which could have opened up EU policy making to the public, are merely cosmetic and disappointingly unambitious.

“It is scandalous that the European Parliament has decided not to protect rule making from undue influence and has opted to keep citizens in the dark on matters concerning EU policy making. Today, MEPs have failed to adopt crucial rules that would prevent them from meeting unregistered lobbyists and would oblige them to publish their lobby meetings.” said Vitor Teixeira, Political Integrity Coordinator at Transparency International EU.

This decision is the culmination of five years of negotiations for an inter-institutional agreement on a mandatory EU transparency register that covers all three institutions. The vote today was to ratify that agreement and to decide on lobby transparency measures specific to the European Parliament. These new rules will keep the public mostly in the dark, since the Parliament failed to adopt blanket obligations for MEPs, Assistants or Policy Advisors.

Transparency International EU's [own analysis](#) found that 50% of MEPs currently publish their lobby meetings online. While this is a step in the right direction, a staggering 15,500 interactions with lobbyists have been published since September 2019.

“Since only half of MEPs share their lobby meetings with the public, we can only assume that the same number of meetings are taking place under the radar away from scrutiny. This is unacceptable; citizens have the right to know which interests are shaping the policies that affect them.” Continued Teixeira *“We are calling on the European Parliament to stop adopting half-hearted measures when it comes to greater transparency and really put accountability and the interests of citizens at the forefront of their work.”*

Notes

See how MEPs voted:

- [Amendment 1 result](#): “introducing a rule for Members to publish all meetings with interest representatives”
- [Amendment 2 result](#): “introducing a rule for Members to commit to only meeting registered interest representatives”

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