

# Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

## Transparency International EU calls for an independent inquiry into European Commission Qatargate links

Michiel van Hulten · Thursday, December 22nd, 2022

Transparency International EU, the Brussels office of the global anti-corruption movement, has called for an independent inquiry into the European Commission's handling of its relations with Qatar and other issues brought to light by the current European Parliament bribery and corruption scandal.

In the view of Transparency International EU, this investigation should examine the full extent of relations between the European Commission and Qatar since at least the start of the current mandate, including a thorough analysis of all meeting records, internal documents including text messages, correspondence, and social media statements relating to Qatar to consider whether Qatar was involved in an influence operation aimed at European Commissioners and/or officials, as is alleged to have happened at the European Parliament. It should also examine whether Commissioners or officials received any favourable treatment from Qatar or Qatari companies and/or their representatives, including any gifts, hospitality, travel perks, or other forms of inducement.

The inquiry should also investigate the conditions surrounding the approval given by the Commission for the appointment of former Commissioner Avramopoulos to the "Honorary Board" of Fight Impunity, the NGO that is allegedly at the centre of the bribery and corruption scandal that has rocked the European Parliament. In particular, the inquiry should consider why the European Commission gave the **green light** despite the fact that, as **noted** by the Commission itself in its decision, Fight Impunity was not registered in the EU transparency register, despite being engaged in activities covered by the EU transparency register. The inquiry should also examine the number and nature of the meetings between Mr. Avramopoulos and current Commissioners and officials since requesting permission for his appointment, as well as any meetings that may have taken place before his request was submitted, as well as the topics discussed during those meetings.

Finally, the inquiry should examine the nature and extent of the relationship between the Commission and the NGO Fight Impunity.

Michiel van Hulten, Director of Transparency International EU, said: "The credibility of the EU institutions is at stake. Only a full independent inquiry can provide credible answers to the many questions and concerns that have been raised in the last two weeks."

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