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New allegations of far-right Patriots group misspending EU funds: TI EU reaction

Pia Engelbrecht-Bogdanov · Tuesday, June 23rd, 2026

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In the latest instance of EU funds misuse by far-right groups in the European Parliament, the Patriots for Europe (PfE) group, chaired by Jordan Bardella MEP, has now reportedly been found by the Parliament to have misspent almost €280,000 in 2024, according to Politico. This involved allegedly donating to non-EU-level organisations and breaches of procurement rules, with the Patriots awarding contracts to companies with ties to their national party members.

Given the group's predecessor, the Identity and Democracy (ID) group in the European Parliament, is being criminally investigated by the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) for misspending some €4.3m in taxpayer money, and the PfE has retained the ID group's Secretary-General, Philip Claeys, these revelations can come as no surprise. What is astonishing however is that the PfE appears to be paying back the money it misspent from a reserve fund constituted of the European Parliament funds it receives.

Nick Aiossa, Director at Transparency International EU, said:

> "The Patriots for Europe group foolishly thinks its taxpayer-funded slush fund to repay the money it misused will allow it to avoid accountability. The European Parliament must immediately take control of the group's finances, open disciplinary procedures against the Patriots' Secretary General, and refer the matter to the European Public Prosecutor."

Transparency International EU had previously submitted a complaint to the EU's Anti-Fraud

Office (OLAF) on Philip Claeys, arguing his stint overseeing the ID group's budget and his continued authority over that of the PfE group warranted an administrative investigation, as Mr Claeys is an employee of the European Parliament.

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