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Press release: European Parliament to end secret lobby meetings

Alessandro · Thursday, January 31st, 2019

Brussels, 31 January 2019 – Today, the European Parliament voted in favour of MEPs publishing their meetings with lobbyists. This is the first mandatory lobby transparency measure to apply to EU parliamentarians and a huge step forward for transparency.

“Transparency needs to be a cornerstone of EU policy making, so we are glad to see that the Parliament has delivered concrete results today,” said Vitor Teixeira, Policy Officer at Transparency International EU. “This is a strong signal ahead of the European elections that the Parliament is serious about being transparent about the influence of lobbyists.”

The European Commission, which has been publishing its meetings since 2014, should now accept this as a good signal from the Parliament and use it to reignite the negotiations on the mandatory lobby register. In recent months these negotiations hit a stalemate and the Commission warned it would stop the discussions if there was no meaningful commitment by either the Parliament or the Council.

“We now urgently need to resume the negotiations for the mandatory lobby register to adopt it before the elections,” continued Mr Teixeira. “We now need a similar signal from the governments of member states in the Council to bring about more transparency on which lobbyists are influencing decisions.”

Although the vote was ultimately successful, it was not an easy fight. Centre-right members of the European People’s Party (EPP) requested that the ballot was held in secret – thereby omitting which MEPs voted against. Nonetheless, the result achieved today is a big accomplishment.

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