

Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

Press release: side jobs of MEPs raise ethics concerns

Raphaël Kergueno · Tuesday, July 10th, 2018

Our full report is available [here](#).

Members of the European Parliament have earned a total of at least €18 million – and possibly as much as €41 million – from side jobs since they were elected in 2014, according to new research by Transparency International EU. The numbers released today show up to 104 MEPs have earned more than 100,000 euros each over the last four years on top of their salaries as full-time members of the European Parliament.

“Large outside incomes pose a serious risk of conflicts of interest”, says Daniel Freund, Head of Advocacy EU Integrity at Transparency International EU. “Whose interests do these MEPs really represent? That of citizens or the interests of those that pay their side jobs?”

Between nine and thirty MEPs have earned more money from outside activities than from their salary as MEPs. 31% of MEPs have paid outside activities. Taken together, 1,366 side jobs have been declared – a 13% increase since the beginning of the mandate. Many of these declarations contain one-word descriptions of activities such as “Consultant”, “Freelancer” or “Lawyer”. Several MEPs have outside activities with registered lobby organisations, possibly breaching rules not to be engaged in lobbying while being an MEP.

“There are concerns that the European Parliament does not take its own Code of Conduct seriously”, says Daniel Freund, “there have been at least 24 breaches of ethics rules in the past five years – not a single one has led to sanctions. There has been only one reprimand in the last four years. The President of the European Parliament is the person responsible for making the regime work and needs to enforce the rules.”

Transparency International EU’s research also indicates that outside incomes are particularly high among members of the ENF political group. “Those far-right members most critical of the European Union are the ones with the highest outside revenues – and in many cases we have no idea who is paying them”, says Daniel Freund.

Transparency International’s recommendations:

- The European Parliament needs to fully enforce the ban on lobbying as a side job and ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. It should introduce a cooling-off period for departing MEPs
- Members need to provide more detailed information on outside activities, including on

their exact activities and the sources of income

- The European Parliament should better monitor the submitted information and cross-check it with other information available at the national level
- An independent ethics body should monitor compliance and sanction MEPs in case of false declarations or ethics violations.

See our full report [here](#).

Transparency International EU will be launching the report “Moonlighting in Brussels – side jobs and ethics concerns at the European Parliament” today in Brussels:

Press Conference & Briefing

10:30 – 11:30 (Breakfast provided)

Press Club – Rue Froissart 95, 1000 Brussels

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