

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REGARDING INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Article 1

Guiding principles

In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament:

- (a) are guided by and observe the following general principles of conduct: disinterest, integrity, openness, diligence, honesty, accountability and respect for Parliament's dignity and reputation,
- (b) act solely in the public interest and refrain from obtaining or seeking to obtain any direct or indirect benefit or other reward.

Article 2

Main duties of Members

In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament shall:

- (a) not enter into any agreement to act or vote in the interest of any other legal or natural person that would compromise their voting freedom, as enshrined in Article 6 of the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage and Article 2 of the Statute for Members of the European Parliament,
- (b) not solicit, accept or receive any direct or indirect benefit or other reward, including in cash or in kind, in exchange for specific behaviour in the scope of the Member's parliamentary work, and shall consciously seek to avoid any situation which might imply bribery, corruption, or undue influence,
- (c) not engage in paid lobbying activities directly linked to the Union decision-making process.

Article 3

Conflicts of interest

1. A conflict of interest exists where the exercise of the mandate of a Member of the European Parliament in the public interest may be improperly influenced for reasons involving his or her family, emotional life or economic interest, or any other direct or indirect private interest.

A conflict of interest does not exist where a Member benefits only as a member of the general public or of a broad class of persons.

2. Members shall make every reasonable effort to detect conflicts of interest.

A Member who becomes aware of having a conflict of interest shall immediately endeavour to resolve it. If unable to resolve it, the Member shall make sure that the private interest concerned is declared in accordance with Article 4.

3. Without prejudice to paragraph 2, Members shall disclose, before speaking or voting in plenary or in one of Parliament's bodies, any conflict of interest in relation to the matter under consideration, where such conflict is not evident from the information declared pursuant to Article 4. Such disclosure shall be made orally by intervening in the sitting or meeting concerned.

4. Before taking up the office of Vice-President, Quaestor, Chair or Vice-Chair of a committee or delegation, the Member shall submit a declaration indicating whether or not he or she is aware of having a conflict of interest in relation to the responsibilities of that office.

If the Member is aware of having such a conflict of interest, he or she shall describe the conflict in that declaration. In that case, he or she may only take up the office if the respective body decides that the conflict of interest does not prevent the Member from exercising his or her mandate in the public interest.

When such a conflict of interest arises during the exercise of the office in question, the Member shall submit a declaration describing that conflict and shall refrain from exercising the responsibilities with regard to this situation of conflict, unless the respective body decides that the conflict of interest does not prevent the Member from exercising his or her mandate in the public interest.

5. A Member who is proposed as a rapporteur or shadow rapporteur or as a participant in an official delegation or in interinstitutional negotiations shall submit a declaration indicating whether or not he or she is aware of having a conflict of interest in relation to, respectively, the report or opinion or the delegation or negotiations in question. If the Member is aware of having such a conflict of interest, he or she shall describe the conflict in that declaration.

Where the Member who has been proposed as a rapporteur declares that he or she has a conflict of interest, the respective committee may decide by a majority of the votes cast that the Member may nevertheless be appointed as a rapporteur on the ground that the conflict does not prevent the Member from exercising his or her mandate in the public interest.

Where the Member who has been proposed as a shadow rapporteur or as a participant in an official delegation or in interinstitutional negotiations declares that he or she has a conflict of interest, the respective political group may decide that the Member may nevertheless be designated as a shadow rapporteur or as a participant in an official delegation or in interinstitutional negotiations on the ground that the conflict does not prevent the Member from exercising his or her mandate in the public interest. The respective body may, however, oppose this designation by a majority of two thirds of the votes cast.

6. The Bureau shall draw up the form for the declarations mentioned in paragraphs 4 and 5 of this Article, pursuant to Article 12. Such declarations shall be published on Members' online page on Parliament's website.

Article 4

Declaration of private interests

1. For reasons of transparency and accountability, Members of the European Parliament shall submit a declaration of private interests to the President by the end of the first part-session after

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elections to the European Parliament (or within 30 calendar days of taking up office with the Parliament in the course of a parliamentary term), in accordance with a form drawn up by the Bureau pursuant to Article 12. They shall notify the President of any changes that have an influence on their declaration by the end of the month following each change occurring.

2. The declaration of private interests shall contain the following information, which shall be provided in a detailed and precise manner:

- (a) the Member's occupation or occupations during the three-year period before taking up office with the Parliament, and membership during that period of any boards or committees of companies, non-governmental organisations, associations or other bodies established in law,
- (b) any remunerated activity undertaken alongside the exercise of the Member's office, including the name of the entity as well as the field and the nature of the activity, where the total remuneration of all the Member's outside activities exceeds EUR 5 000 gross in a calendar year,
- (c) membership of any boards or committees of companies, non-governmental organisations, associations or other bodies established in law, or any other relevant outside activity that the Member undertakes,
- (d) any holding in any company or partnership, where there are potential public policy implications or where that holding gives the Member significant influence over the affairs of the body in question,
- (e) any support, whether financial or in terms of staff or material, additional to that provided by Parliament and granted to the Member in connection with his or her political activities by third parties, whose identity shall be disclosed,
- (f) any direct or indirect private interests within the meaning of Article 3(1) which might influence the performance of the Member's duties and which are not referred to in points (a) to (e).

3. For any item to be declared in accordance with paragraph 2, Members shall, where appropriate, indicate whether it generates income or other benefits or not.

If it generates income, Members shall indicate for each separate item the respective amount of that income and, where relevant, its periodicity. Other benefits shall be described in nature.

4. The information provided to the President in accordance with paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 shall be published on Parliament's website in an easily accessible manner.

5. Members may not be elected as office-holders of Parliament or of one of its bodies, be appointed as a rapporteur or be designated as a shadow rapporteur or participate in an official delegation or interinstitutional negotiations, if they have not submitted their declaration of private interests.

6. If the President receives information, which leads him or her to believe that the declaration of private interests of a Member is substantially incorrect or out of date, the President shall request clarification from the Member. In the absence of a satisfactory clarification, the President shall consult the Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members, established under Article 10. If the Advisory Committee concludes that the declaration does not comply with this Code of Conduct, it shall recommend to the President that he or she request the Member to correct his or her

declaration. If, taking into account that recommendation, the President concludes that the Member has breached this Code of Conduct, he or she shall request the Member to correct the declaration within 15 calendar days. If the Member does not comply with this correction request, the President shall adopt a reasoned decision in accordance with Article 11(3). The internal appeal procedures defined in Rule 177 of the Rules of Procedure shall be available to the Member concerned.

Article 5

Declaration of assets

Members shall declare their assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of every term of office. The Bureau shall lay down the list of categories of assets and liabilities to be declared and shall draw up the form for the declaration. Such declarations shall be submitted to the President and shall be accessible only to the relevant authorities, without prejudice to national law.

Article 6

Gifts or similar benefits

1. Members of the European Parliament shall refrain from accepting, in their capacity as Members, any gifts or similar benefits, other than those with an approximate value of less than EUR 150 given in accordance with courtesy usage or those given to them in accordance with courtesy usage when they are representing Parliament in an official capacity.

2. Any gifts with an approximate value of more than EUR 150 presented to a Member in accordance with paragraph 1 when he or she is representing Parliament in an official capacity shall be handed over to the President and dealt with in accordance with implementing measures to be laid down by the Bureau pursuant to Article 12.

3. The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 shall not apply to the reimbursement of travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses of Members, or to the direct payment of such expenses by third parties, in full or in part, when Members attend, pursuant to an invitation and in the performance of their duties, any events organised by third parties. Members shall declare to the President their attendance at such events and the required information in accordance with implementing measures laid down by the Bureau pursuant to Article 12.

Article 7

Publication of meetings

1. Members should only meet interest representatives that are entered in the transparency register established by means of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register⁵⁷.

2. Members shall publish online all scheduled meetings relating to parliamentary business:

- (a) with interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register; or

⁵⁷ Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register (OJ L 207, 11.6.2021, p. 1).

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- (b) with representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies.

3. The obligation laid down in paragraph 2 shall apply to meetings attended by the Member or by the Member's parliamentary assistants on his or her behalf.

4. By way of derogation from paragraph 2, Members shall not publish a meeting the disclosure of which would endanger the life, physical integrity or liberty of an individual or may decide not to publish a meeting where there are other compelling reasons for maintaining confidentiality. Such meetings shall instead be declared to the President, who shall keep this declaration confidential or shall decide on an anonymised or delayed publication. The Bureau shall lay down the conditions under which the President may disclose such a declaration.

5. The Bureau shall provide for the necessary infrastructure on Parliament's website.

6. Article 4(6) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 8

Declaration of input

Without prejudice to the requirement to publish meetings pursuant to Article 7, rapporteurs shall list the entities or persons from whom they received input on matters pertaining to the subject of the file in an annex to their report or opinion. Article 7(4) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 9

Activities of former Members

Former Members of the European Parliament who engage in professional lobbying or representational activities directly linked to the European Union decision-making process should inform the European Parliament thereof and may not, throughout the period in which they engage in those activities, benefit from the facilities granted to former Members under the rules laid down by the Bureau to that effect⁵⁸.

Members shall not engage with former Members whose mandate ended less than six months earlier and who fall under the categories of persons mentioned in Article 7(2) in any activity which could allow the former Members to influence the formulation or implementation of policy or legislation, or the decision-making processes of Parliament.

Article 10

Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members

1. An Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members ('the Advisory Committee') is hereby established.

2. The Advisory Committee shall be composed of eight current Members of the European Parliament, appointed by the President at the beginning of his or her term of office, taking due account of the Members' experience and of political and gender balance.

The office of chair shall rotate every six months among the members of the Advisory Committee.

⁵⁸ Bureau Decision of 17 April 2023 on former Members of the European Parliament.

3. The President shall also, at the beginning of his or her term of office, appoint reserve members for the Advisory Committee, one for each political group not represented in the Advisory Committee.

In the event of an alleged breach of this Code of Conduct by a member of a political group not represented in the Advisory Committee or in the event of a request pursuant to paragraph 5 concerning such a member, the relevant reserve member shall serve as a ninth full member of the Advisory Committee.

4. In the event of an alleged breach of this Code of Conduct by a permanent member or by a reserve member of the Advisory Committee, the permanent member or reserve member concerned shall not take part in the proceedings of the Advisory Committee on that alleged breach.

5. At the request of a Member, the Advisory Committee shall give him or her guidance, in confidence and within 30 calendar days, on the interpretation and implementation of the provisions of this Code of Conduct, in particular with regard to conflicts of interest. The Member in question shall be entitled to rely on such guidance.

At the request of the President, the Advisory Committee shall also assess alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct and advise the President on possible action to be taken.

The Advisory Committee shall proactively monitor compliance by Members with this Code of Conduct and its implementing measures. It shall signal to the President any possible breaches of those provisions.

Alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct may be signalled directly to the Advisory Committee, which may assess them and advise the President on possible action to be taken. The Bureau may adopt rules on the procedure for the signalling of alleged breaches.

6. The Advisory Committee may seek advice from outside experts, in full confidentiality.

7. The Advisory Committee shall publish an annual report of its work and raise Members' awareness of this Code of Conduct and its implementing measures on a regular basis.

Article 11

Procedure in the event of alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct

1. Where there is reason to believe that a Member of the European Parliament may have breached this Code of Conduct, the President shall refer the matter to the Advisory Committee.

2. The Advisory Committee shall examine the circumstances of the alleged breach, and may hear the Member concerned. Based on its findings, it shall make a recommendation to the President comprising, where appropriate, a penalty, which may consist of one or more of the measures listed in Rule 176(5), (6) and (7) of the Rules of Procedure.

3. If, taking into account that recommendation, and having invited the Member concerned to submit written observations, the President concludes that the Member concerned has breached this Code of Conduct, he or she shall adopt a reasoned decision imposing a penalty. The President shall notify that Member of the reasoned decision.

The penalty may consist of one or more of the measures listed in Rule 176(5), (6) and (7) of the Rules of Procedure.

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4. The internal appeal procedures defined in Rule 177 of the Rules of Procedure shall be available to the Member concerned.

5. The President shall also refer to the Advisory Committee systematic, severe or repetitive failures to comply with disclosure obligations laid down in this Code of Conduct.

Article 12

Implementation

The Bureau shall lay down implementing measures for this Code of Conduct, including a compliance monitoring procedure and training for Members.

The Bureau may bring forward proposals for the revision of this Code of Conduct.