

ALTER-EU scorecard on EU Transparency Register review recommendations



Key





No progress made










Good progress made



Some improvement, more to do

	ALTER-EU demand	What the working group recommended	ALTER-EU verdict	Score
1	Mandatory lobby register: timetable announced for transition to new register by 31.12.2014	Wieland's letter to Schultz says <i>"European Parliament [should] strongly formulate the expectation that the Commission should promote a political action ... for the introduction of a mandatory register."</i>	Parliament has reiterated its strong support for a mandatory register but it is clear that the Commission continues to block this proposal. Parliament's demand allows the Commission to postpone the move to mandatory lobbying disclosure at least until end of 2016.	
2	Incentives for registration: Commission to refuse to meet unregistered lobbyists; unregistered cannot sit on expert groups; EU decision-makers do not speak at events organised by unregistered; unregistered cannot hold events in EU premises	The draft IIA says: <i>"Incentives offered by Parliament could include authorisation to organise or co-host events on its premises; ... participation as speakers in committee hearings ... For the Commission these could include measures with regard to the transmission of information to registrants when launching public consultations, measures on expert groups and other advisory bodies, specific mailing lists or patronage by the institution."</i>	Some incentives are now included which is positive but they are very vague and are not binding on the EU institutions. The institutions must go much further if such measures are to act as a real incentive to join the register. In particular, the Commission should refuse to meet with unregistered lobbyists and not allow them to sit on expert groups.	

3	<p>Tough action to tackle non-compliance by law firms: compulsory registration; no special treatment; obligation to disclose client list</p>	<p>The Wieland letter to Schulz says: <i>"... potential incompatibilities with national legislations on confidentiality rules covering certain regulated professions (i.e. lawyers) need to be approached, taking into account that the Working Group has welcomed a transitional solution proposed by the Chair which needs further examination."</i></p>	<p>There is no new tough action proposed to tackle law firms' virtual boycott of the register, although it is positive that proposals to allow exemptions for law firms to disclose client lists have been rejected. Parliament and the Commission should never introduce such exemptions for law firms.</p>	
4	<p>Improved lobbyists' code of conduct: clarity over terms such as "inappropriate behaviour"; ban on lobbyists contracting and / or paying MEPs and assistants</p>	<p>Parliament's committee on constitutional affairs (AFCO) will be asked to further revise elements of code of conduct, including to develop a definition of "inappropriate behaviour".</p>	<p>No positive changes to the draft code of conduct. The review group should have explicitly banned funding of MEPs and their offices by external sources and developed a definition of "inappropriate behaviour".</p>	
5	<p>Improved financial disclosure: declare per client lobby expenditure in band-widths of €10,000; declare all sources of funding and the corresponding amounts</p>	<p>(See Annexe 2 of draft IIA) The IIA Annexe 2 says that NGOs, think-tanks etc should provide a <i>"breakdown of the main amounts and sources of funding"</i></p>	<p>Per client lobby expenditure band-widths have been adjusted and are now slightly narrower, although more profound changes are required. It is not clear if tiny changes to wording will mean that NGOs/ think tanks will now provide more details on their funding sources and amounts. This will need strong implementation if it is to provide useful information.</p>	
6	<p>Improved lobby issue disclosure: declare precise information on key legislative proposals worked on</p>	<p>The IIA Annexe 2 says <i>"concrete details and information should be provided on the main legislative proposals or policies covered by activities of the registrant falling within the scope of the register"</i></p>	<p>The existing IIA already asks for information on the "main legislative proposals covered", but in practice this does not always happen. It is not clear if tiny changes to wording will mean that information provided is accurate and complete; if so, it would be a positive step forward.</p>	

7	Improved staff disclosure: declare names of all staff undertaking lobby activities and revolving door history	No mention	No improvement here. The only (existing) requirement is the listing of staff with European Parliament access passes.	
8	Improved up-to-date information on fixed dates: declare lobby expenses (previous year), client lists (previous six months)	No mention	No improvement here. Only annual updates required with no fixed dates.	
9	Full transparency on all lobby work: declare law firms or lobby consultancies employed, membership of coalitions etc	The draft IIA Annexe 2 says that registrants should declare: <i>“Membership in committees, high-level groups, consultative committees, expert groups, other EU supported structures and platforms etc ... Membership or participation in European Parliament intergroups or industry forums, etc.”</i>	It is positive that registrants should now declare their links with EU institutions. Slightly stronger language reminding registrants to declare their sub-contracted lobbying activities (to law firms, lobby consultancies) may lead to greater transparency in this area.	
10	Proactive transparency: Commission to provide comprehensive information online about all meetings and contacts between Commissioners, officials and lobbyists	No mention	No improvement here.	