

Die Antworten von Violetta Tomic (Europäische Linke)

1. How will you ensure that citizens' interests are prioritised over corporate interests?

The citizens must be in charge in any democracy. The public interest must come first before any other concerns. A key way to ensure this is by opening up institutions to the public, guaranteeing transparency, and tackling corporate capture in decision-making. The European Ombudsman as well as several NGOs have made strong and practical recommendations that will do a lot to ensure we deal with these problems. Conflicts of interest must be swiftly tackled and policy-making protected from the influence of those acting under a profit, rather than public interest motive.

2. Will you enforce the guideline for commissioners to balance the numbers of their stakeholder meetings with corporate interest representatives and non-profit entities (incl NGOs, trade unions, academic institutions, etc)?

Yes.

If yes, how will you enforce it? If no, why not?

An independent ethics body would examine my team of Commissioners' meetings at the end of each year and where imbalances are found; those Commissioners would be required to demonstrate a plan by which imbalances would be corrected. The following year those Commissioners would need to report a balanced outcome for their stakeholder meetings. If not, I would begin the necessary procedures to ensure that those prioritising one set of stakeholders interests over another would be removed from office. The corporate capture of institutions is a major threat to democracy and public trust. Public representatives cannot afford to be apathetic about tackling it.

3. Will you a) prioritise the establishment of a strong and actually mandatory Transparency Register that covers all three institutions, b) ensure sufficient financial and staff resources for its maintenance, and c) support a sanctions regime for non-compliance with the register's rules?

A - Yes.

B - Yes.

C - Yes.

4. Will you extend the ban on meetings with unregistered lobbyists to all levels of the European Commission?

Yes.

5. Are you going to introduce a legislative footprint that traces any input received by lobbyists during the drafting of proposals?

Yes.

6. Will you implement the [recommendation by European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly](#) that all dealings with tobacco lobbyists should be fully transparent, in an effort to ensure the EU's full compliance with Article 5.3 of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and its accompanying guidelines?

Yes.

7. Will you replace the current self-policing system for the prevention of ex-Commissioners' conflicts of interests in new roles (including but not limited to revolving door moves) with a fully independent ethics body which consists of members external to the European Commission, has the power to initiate its own investigations, implement its decisions and has sufficient financial resources to effectively do its work??

Yes.

8. Do you have any other comments you would like to make in the context of this Spitzenkandidaten survey?

Transparency in public institutions is crucial to ensuring that those institutions work in the public interest, not in the interest of the powerful or the wealthy. My Commission will, from its first day in office, be 100% clear that we are there to serve the citizens, not corporations. This will require a massive culture shift within the Berlaymont building and beyond, but it must happen. There are simply too many urgent issues to tackle - social inequality, climate change, gender discrimination and many more - that delaying over half-measures cannot be tolerated. The citizens expect, deserve and demand radical change.

Die Antworten von Nico Cué (Europäische Linke)

1. How will you ensure that citizens' interests are prioritised over corporate interests?

Public services and institutions guarantee and expand the rights and freedoms of citizens and form the backbone of democracy. Recovering sovereignty of the people in these domains and promoting real cooperation and solidarity amongst the different countries are crucial steps to promote a new social order, fairer and sustainable for the people.

2. Will you enforce the guideline for commissioners to balance the numbers of their stakeholder meetings with corporate interest representatives and non-profit entities (incl NGOs, trade unions, academic institutions, etc)?

If yes, how will you enforce it? If no, why not?

YES. The impression of the dominance of lobbying interests in politics has intensified due to recent scandals in the population. Doubts about the autonomy of political decisions have grown considerably. The various party donations and sponsorship scandals in recent years have severely

damaged the credibility of politics. Complete transparency on the part of politicians and lobbyists is necessary as well as a restriction of lobbying.

3. Will you a) prioritise the establishment of a strong and actually mandatory Transparency Register that covers all three institutions, b) ensure sufficient financial and staff resources for its maintenance, and c) support a sanctions regime for non-compliance with the register's rules?

YES. We demand the transparency register on the European level should be made legally binding. At present, a large proportion of Commission and Council officials still face unregistered lobbyists.

4. Will you extend the ban on meetings with unregistered lobbyists to all levels of the European Commission?

Commissioners and Directors-General must disclose their meetings, but not department heads, heads of unit and their staff. The Permanent Representations of the Member States in Brussels (COREPER) are still not required to participate in the Register, nor is the Council of the European Union. Thus, the influence on national government officials remains incomprehensible. Also, the logging of such meetings seems necessary to us in the sense of transparency and the recovery of confidence in the policy and should be self-evident.

5. Are you going to introduce a legislative footprint that traces any input received by lobbyists during the drafting of proposals?

YES.

6. Will you implement the [recommendation by European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly](#) that all dealings with tobacco lobbyists should be fully transparent, in an effort to ensure the EU's full compliance with Article 5.3 of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and its accompanying guidelines?

[The European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly found that the Commission has failed to properly implement the provisions set out in said Framework Convention's Article 5.3.]

YES.

7. Will you replace the current self-policing system for the prevention of ex-Commissioners' conflicts of interests in new roles (including but not limited to revolving door moves) with a fully independent ethics body which consists of members external to the European Commission, has the power to initiate its own investigations, implement its decisions and has sufficient financial resources to effectively do its work??

YES.

8. Do you have any other comments you would like to make in the context of this Spitzenkandidaten survey?

We are not only for more transparency regarding the political space with the lobbies, we have also the proposal to close Tax heavens. We propose therefore a public "country by country reporting" defining obligations of full transparency for the strategies of the big companies acting in Europe.