Press release | 01.12.2011

EP transparency and anti-corruption reform

New MEP code an important step forward

The European Parliaments adopted a new MEP code of conduct, which was drafted in response to the recent MEP cash-for-amendments scandal (1). The Greens were to the fore in pushing for these reforms and welcomed today's vote, with **Claude Turmes** MEP, who was the Green representative on the working group tasked with preparing the code, stating:

"This new code of conduct is an important step towards more transparency and addressing potential conflict of interests in the European Parliament, and, as such, reducing the possibilities for corruption. It establishes far-reaching transparency rules for legislators, including detailed declarations of financial interest and steps to prevent conflicts of interest, going beyond most international standards (2).

"The code of conduct cannot simply be left to sit on a shelf. It needs to now be rigorously applied. This means ensuring sufficient human and other resources are allocated to providing meaningful oversight. The incoming EP president must prioritise the strict application and observance of these new rules."

Green constitutional affairs spokesperson **Gerald Häfner** added:

"The code is a success for the European Parliament and especially for the Greens who have been demanding such rules for many years. Above all, it is a success for European democracy, It will help to prevent misuse of office and unethical lobbying. MEPs should serve their voters and not lobbyists and this code should help restore the confidence of citizens in their elected representatives."

(1) A working group set up by EP president Buzek to draft a new code of conduct finalised its work in June. Today's vote marks the final adoption.

(2) MEPs will no longer be able to hold second jobs that involve lobbying on EU policies: this is an important measure, which directly addresses one of the key problems raised earlier this year. MEPs will have to provide details of all their secondary activities, outlining not just where/for whom the activities are carried out but also the level of financial income accrued. The incomes are to be listed in four categories, starting from €500 per month and rising to €10,000 - similar to the system in the German Bundestag. Infringements by MEPs will result in clear sanctions ranging from exclusion from certain parliamentary activities to withdrawal of functions.

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Claude Turmes

Member

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