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MEPs vote for new rules on lobbying in major victory for transparency

Transparency

The European Parliament has just voted for binding rules for more transparency around MEPs' meetings with lobbyists and seized the opportunity to the amended Rules of Procedure through the "Corbett Report". The report calls for stricter rules around rapporteurs and other MEPs in other official positions to disclose their meetings with interest representatives on the Transparency Register. In an extremely unusual steps the EPP group had pushed through a secret ballot on the new transparency rules.

The Corbett report also contains new measures on anti-harassment declarations for Members. Changes to the rules around the make-up of political groups did not pass.

Max Andersson, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the 'Corbett report', comments:

"It's great that MEPs finally recognise the need for more transparency around who they meet. Time after time we see how corporate interests water down crucial EU legislation on issues such as climate change, copyright and labour rights. This report is supposed to help to level the playing field and build a more transparent parliament and EU decision making.

"It is a shame that certain MEPs were desperate to hide what they are up to in Parliament. Thankfully their efforts failed and I hope voters take note that right-wing EPP representatives are too afraid to let voters see how they are voting on crucial issues. Europeans deserve to know what their representatives are up to, they deserve to know that MEPs are working in the interests of citizens and the common good and not just the interests of lobbyists from large multinationals.

"It is absolutely abhorrent that certain members voted against measures to prevent sexual harassment in the Parliament. These people are completely out of touch with the world. This is simply unacceptable in the 21st century and the Greens/EFA group will not stop fighting for an end to harassment of any kind in the Parliament and beyond."

Sven Giegold, rapporteur on the 'transparency, accountability and integrity the EU institutions report', comments:

"After years of fighting the Parliament has finally voted for more transparency around lobbying. Transparency is the antidote to rising Euroscepticism, it takes the wind out of the sails of populists who seek to

undermine the European project. Transparency is vital if the Parliament wants to build trust and accountability in the decision-making process. If the EU is to survive its current challenges, then it must be built on transparency, accountability and democracy, not secrecy, shady interests and underhand deals.

"Manfred Weber and the EPP may make grandiose public statements about transparency, but they are so desperate to hide what they're up to they have forced a secret ballot. It seems the EPP will go to incredible lengths to hide behind procedural tricks so that they can say one thing in public and vote the other way in secret. The EPP may wrap themselves up in blue and gold and pretend to be pro-European, but they only foster public distrust in the EU with their murky methods and prop-up the very populists they are supposedly against."

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Responsible MEPs



Max Andersson

Member



Sven Giegold

Member

Contact person



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

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