GONG

Review of Ethical Rules for Officials of EU Institutions: Potential and Limitations

IMPRESSUM

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In recent years, the European Union has faced serious issues related to transparency, conflict of interest and political integrity of its institutions and officials. Especially after the Qatargate scandal, it became clear that the existing institutional framework was not strong enough to prevent corruption, disguised lobbying and abuse of political influence. While the EU formally has a number of integrity-preserving mechanisms, including transparency registers, asset declarations and cooling-off rules, their effectiveness remains limited due to fragmentation, uneven standards and poor enforcement and sanctioning mechanisms.

Qatargate demonstrated that the lack of continuous public oversight, combined with inadequate sanctions, can facilitate the development of informal networks of influence within European institutions. In December 2022, the Belgian police carried out raids in Brussels and seized more than €1.5 million in cash. At the centre of the scandal was Eva Kaili, then Vice-President of the European Parliament. The investigation involved allegations of bribery, money laundering, and participation in a criminal organisation. Qatargate is widely regarded as the largest corruption scandal in the history of the European Parliament. According to subsequent investigations, a network linked to former Member of the European Parliament Pier Antonio Panzeri allegedly received money and gifts from Qatar and Morocco over a number of years in exchange for influencing decisions of the European Parliament. Following the initial arrests, the European Parliament voted to lift the parliamentary immunity of Members Marc Tarabella and Andrea Cozzolino over suspicions of their involvement in Qatargate. The investigation has since expanded to several countries and additional lobbying networks. It remains ongoing, while disputes over lifting the parliamentary immunity of certain Members continue to complicate the proceedings. The final judicial outcome of the case has yet to be determined.

The framework for protecting the integrity of the European Union is currently failing to adequately address the challenges of conflicts of interest, corporate influence and revolving door phenomena. While formal mechanisms exist, fragmentation and weak implementation limit the actual impact. Without stronger supervision, uniform rules and independent oversight of officials' work, the risk of further reputational crises and increasing citizens' distrust for the European Union will remain high. Reforming the integrity framework is therefore not only a matter of administrative efficiency, but also a matter of democratic legitimacy of the European Union.

Fragmented and uneven system

One of the biggest problems facing EU integrity frameworks is the fact that different categories of officials are subject to different rules. Commissioners of the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament, Members of the Council of the EU and senior officials do not have a uniform regime for declaring assets, conflicts of interest or post-employment restrictions. Such fragmentation creates legal and institutional gaps to avoid liability.

For example, European Commissioners are subject to stricter cooling-off rules than Members of the European Parliament, while the rules for Council members are largely left to national systems. This creates a situation where integrity depends on the institution and not on the function or level of political influence. For a comprehensive overview of the various ethical rules to which respective officials and institutions are subject, see Annex 1.

Asset disclosure: formal transparency without effective supervision

The EU's asset disclosure system is often criticised as too general and insufficiently binding. Officials generally declare categories of interest rather than the precise value of assets or detailed financial relations. There are significant deficiencies in relation to:

- the lack of standardised templates;
- failure to report the assets of the partner or family members;
- weak verification of reported data;
- limited sanctions for incorrect or incomplete reports.

Comparisons with national systems further underline weaknesses in the EU model. In Croatia, for example, asset disclosure rules, especially after EU accession, are stricter in certain respects than at European level. Croatian officials must report the exact values of real estate and movable property, all income as well as the property of their spouses, while the EU system often allows the concealment of real economic interest through family members or related persons.

Another problem is that European officials are institutionally “more distant” from the public and media surveillance than national politicians. While national actors are subject to ongoing supervision by domestic media, civil society and the opposition, European institutions operate in a complex multilevel system where political accountability differs.

A negative message is also being sent to the European public regarding corruption and the integrity of European officials by the fact that attempts to introduce a comprehensive and systematic oversight system, such as the creation of the Interinstitutional Body for Ethical Standards, are being blocked by MEPs and members of the institutions. This behaviour further undermines trust in their commitment to transparency and in the possibility of civic or any other form of independent oversight of their work.

The "revolving door" practice as the biggest integrity issue for European Union officials.

The biggest challenge of the European framework for the integrity of officials is the revolving door phenomenon, i.e.the transition of senior officials from public functions to the private sector and lobbying positions. This segment shows the biggest gap between formal rules and actual political practice.

The case of José Manuel Barroso is particularly illustrative. After the end of his mandate as President of the European Commission, he moved to Goldman Sachs Investment Bank, which sparked strong criticism about the potential use of political contacts and inside information acquired during the public service. Although he did not formally violate the existing rules, the case showed how weak and easily circumvented cooling-off mechanisms are.

In the context of employment within EU institutions (such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Central Bank), a "cooling-off period" refers to a mandatory waiting period following the end of a term of office, during which former officeholders and senior officials are strictly prohibited from lobbying their former institutions. The primary purpose of this rule is to prevent the "revolving door" phenomenon, situations where former high-ranking EU officials move into the private sector (e.g., lobbying firms or corporations) immediately after leaving public service and leverage their contacts and confidential information to influence EU decision-making.

Similar criticism pertained to Mario Monti, whose numerous links with the financial sector and international corporations raised the issue of the boundary between public interest and private influence. More recent is the case of Nick Clegg, while research from 2022 shows that 79% of Google's lobbyists and 71% of Meta's lobbyists previously worked for public authorities at the EU or member state level.

Emily O'Reilly, the European Ombudsman for two terms from 2013 to 2025, also warns of the culture of silence of the European Commission, in which information is hidden from citizens on the basis of which information European legislative proposals are adopted, and the recommendations of the European Ombudsman are not respected nor implemented.

EU institutions formally have cooling-off periods, but they are often too short and limited. Ex-Commissioners are banned for a certain period of time, but there is almost no control over their actual activities after the end of the period. In addition, the rules mainly focus on formal lobbying, while “strategic advice”, committee membership or informal influence often remain out of regulatory reach.

Lobbying and limitations of theTransparency Register

The EU Transparency Register is an important step towards greater lobbying transparency, but still has serious practical limitations. The Transparency register is a database listing ‘interest representatives’ (organisations, associations, groups and self-employed individuals) who carry out activities to influence the EU policy and decision-making process. It is designed to show the public which interests are being represented at EU level, by whom and on whose behalf, as well as the resources devoted to these activities (including financial support, donations, sponsorship, etc.). The register has the following key features:

- public website where interest representatives register up to date information about their activities at EU level
- Code of conduct governing how interest representatives should interact with the EU institutions
- complaints mechanism to enable anyone to trigger an administrative inquiry into alleged cases where registered interest representatives have failed to observe the code.

Registration was long optional for all institutions and sanctions for undeclared activities remained weak. Furthermore, many actors exercise influence through think tanks, consulting firms or legal offices that do not formally act as classic lobbyists. A special report of the European Court of Auditors on the EU Transparency Register from 2024 confirms that in practice there are deficiencies and gaps in the information that is published, which reduces the transparency of the lobbying activities that take place in the three signatory institutions.

The problem is further exacerbated by the high concentration of corporate influence in Brussels. Organisations with higher financial capacity have considerably easier access to European institutions than civil society or smaller actors, creating a perception of regulatory imbalances and the phenomenon of capture, although the current attention of the European public is more focused on associations and civil society and their relationship with European institutions.

Furthermore, the system of penalties for breaching EU transparency rules is divided into administrative measures for lobbyists and internal disciplinary procedures for officials within the institutions. Since the 2021 interinstitutional agreement defining the Register is not a law, it does not provide for criminal or financial sanctions. In cases of serious violations (such as corruption), the matter falls within the scope of the criminal law of Member States and the jurisdiction of the EPPO (European Public Prosecutor's Office).

New European ethical body: potential and limitations

Following the above cases, the European Union has in recent years tried to respond to criticism by establishing a new Interinstitutional body on ethical standards for members of EU institutions and advisory bodies, on the initiative of the Greens (EFA). Eight institutions and advisory bodies will participate in the Interinstitutional Ethics body:

- European Parliament
- Council of the EU
- European Commission
- EU Court of Justice
- European Central Bank

- European Court of Auditors
- European Economic and Social Committee
- European Committee of the Regions

However, already at the negotiation stage there were criticisms that the Authority would not have sufficient powers, investigative mechanisms or the possibility of imposing sanctions. Although its establishment has been under way since June 2023, in April 2026 MEPs again voted to force the institutions to start implementation. Namely because, although European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Parliament President Roberta Metsola signed an agreement to create a new ethics body, their political family, the European People's Party (EPP), along with the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) and Patriots for Europe (PfE), have been stalling the body's establishment in subsequent negotiations; consequently, it has not yet begun operations, even with such limited powers.

The problem is not only in the absence of rules, but in the absence of an independent enforcement mechanism. Without the possibility of conducting investigations, verifying asset declarations and sanctioning violations of the rules, the new body risks remaining a symbolic institution without actually influencing the political culture of the European Union, even if its work begins. The process of introducing a new body has been under way for two years, with a strong refusal by some MEPs to make it up of external, independent experts, claiming that existing bodies within the European Parliament, composed of MEPs, constitute a sufficiently robust oversight mechanism.

In conclusion, the EU integrity framework functions today more as a formal transparency system than as an effective mechanism for the prevention of conflicts of interest and corruption. Qatargate has shown that institutional integrity cannot rest solely on voluntary compliance with the rules, but requires a robust, independent and uniform system of supervision.

Recommendations for Strengthening the Ethical Framework of EU Institutions

In order for the European Union to increase citizens' trust and reduce the risk of corruption, a deeper institutional reform of the existing framework needs to be carried out. The current system is characterised by fragmentation, weak supervision and lack of effective sanctions, which often demands transparency in formal documents, while in reality there are no mechanisms for supervision and sanctioning.

1. Strengthen the newly established European ethical body

The new ethical body should be given effective investigative and sanctioning powers, not just a coordination mechanism between institutions. The Authority should:

- have institutional independence from the European Commission and Parliament;
- carry out checks on asset disclosures and conflicts of interest;
- be able to initiate ex officio investigations;
- impose sanctions for breaches of the rules;
- publish annual reports and audit results.

Without a mechanism to monitor, enforce and sanction unauthorised conduct, the ethical framework remains declarative and dependent on the political will of the institutions that it should supervise.

2. Unify rules for all categories of EU officials

It is necessary to establish a uniform integrity regime for all senior officials of the European Union, including:

- the Commissioners;
- the Members of the European Parliament;
- senior Commission officials;
- members of the Council of the EU
- special advisers and senior administrative officials.

Different rules for different institutions create legal gaps and uneven standards of accountability. Integrity should be related to the level of political influence, not to institutional affiliation.

3. Strengthen the asset disclosure system

The existing asset declaration system needs to be made more detailed and binding. This should include:

- mandatory reporting of the exact value of assets;
- the reporting of the assets of the partners and members of the immediate family;
- a more detailed declaration of financial interests, shares and consultative engagements;
- regular audits and random checks;
- stricter sanctions for false or incomplete reports.

In doing so, the EU could imitate certain national models, including Member States such as Croatia, where certain aspects of property declarations are stricter than at European level.

4. Extend and tighten revolving doors and cooling-off rules

Revolving doors practice represents the biggest reputational problem of European institutions and requires the strictest regulation. It is necessary to:

- extend cooling-off periods for former Commissioners and senior officials, from the existing two years for Commissioners and six months for MEP’s
- prohibit the transition to sectors related to previous regulatory competences;
- include informal advice and strategic consultancy activities in the definition of lobbying;
- impose a requirement to disclose all post-employment activities in a transparent manner at the institutions of the European Union;
- establish independent control over former officials.

Cases such as Barroso have shown that formal compliance with the rules is insufficient if the public continues to see conflicts of interest and influence peddling.

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5. Increase lobbying transparency

The Transparency Register should be transformed into a fully mandatory system for all EU institutions. In addition, it should:

- publish all meetings of senior officials with lobbyists;
- include think tanks, consulting firms and legal offices;
- increase the financial transparency of lobbying organisations;
- facilitate access to public data to investigative journalists

- strengthen the sanctions applicable to EU officials who fail to report meetings with interest representatives, replacing the current limited disciplinary and political consequences provided for in their respective institutions' Codes of conduct.

6. Strengthen democratic and public oversight of European officials

The European institutions often operate outside intensive public scrutiny to which national governments are exposed. For this reason, it is necessary to:

- increase the availability of data and documents;
- strengthen the role of European investigative media;
- enable greater participation of civil society in the monitoring of ethical standards;
- develop stronger European political accountability to citizens.

Annex 1.

Overview of existing integrity rules that apply to different categories of EU officials (in particular MEPs and Commissioners)

Category	Mechanism	Description	Sanctions	Links
Members of the European Parliament	Rules of procedure of the European Parliament	**Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament** (Rule 11 - Declaration of financial interests, Rule 11a - Conduct of Members) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/lastrules/RULE-011_EN.html Overview: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/about/meps	Rule 183(5), (6) and (7) of the Rules of Procedure The penalty imposed shall be effective, proportionate and dissuasive. The penalty may consist of one or more of the following measures: (a) a reprimand; (b) prohibition of the Member from representing the Parliament on an interparliamentary delegation, inter-parliamentary conference or any interinstitutional forum, for up to one year; (c) in the case of a breach of confidentiality, a limitation in the rights to access confidential or	

			classified information for up to one year; (d) forfeiture of entitlement to the daily subsistence allowance for a period of between two and sixty days; (e) without prejudice to the right to vote in plenary, and subject, in this instance, to strict compliance with the Members' standards of conduct, temporary suspension from participation in all or some of the activities of Parliament for a period of between two and sixty days on which Parliament or any of its bodies, committees or delegations meet.	

Members of the European Parliament	Code of conduct	The Code specifies obligations to (1) detect, resolve or disclose conflicts of interest, (2) declare assets at the beginning and end of every term of office, (3) declare gifts received in an official capacity valued over EUR 150, (4) only meet interest representatives that are entered in the transparency register and publish online all scheduled meetings with interest representatives and representatives of public authorities of third countries.		https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-lawmakers-side-income-declarations/

Members of the European Parliament	Implementing Measures	**Implementing measures for the code of conduct** The implementing measures are detailed procedures established by the European Parliament's Bureau to operationalize the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). These measures establish **how** MEPs comply with their integrity and transparency obligations under the Code of Conduct, turning general principles into specific, actionable requirements. The implementing measures detail procedures for: 1. **Financial transparency** - How MEPs must declare their private interests, assets, and be aware of potential conflicts of interest 2. **Gift reporting** - Procedures for declaring gifts received in their official capacity 3. **Event attendance** - Requirements for disclosing when third parties cover costs for MEPs to attend events	https://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/meps/Implementing%20measures_EN.pdf	Press: Top tips for staying out of trouble in the European Parliament Press: Ethanol lobbyist helped far-right MEP write question to Commission on fuels Press: How will MEPs respond to Huawei scandal? The three D's – Deny, Diffuse, Dilute Press: The Metsola exception: The European Parliament president and her lobbyist husband

		4. **Meeting publication** - Rules about publicly disclosing meetings MEPs have 5. **Compliance monitoring** - A system to check that MEPs are following the rules, including an Advisory Committee that can review compliance, raise awareness, identify inconsistencies, and report potential breaches to the President 6. **Member training** - Educational programs to ensure MEPs understand their obligations The measures were created because Parliament committed to strengthening integrity, independence, and accountability. Rather than leaving the Code of Conduct as general principles, these implementing measures provide the specific forms, procedures, deadlines, and oversight mechanisms needed to make the rules work in practice.		

Members of the European Parliament	Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members	**Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members** Eight-member body that oversees MEP compliance with the Code of Conduct through three main functions: **1. Guidance** - Advises Members on how to interpret and implement the Code of Conduct **2. Breach Assessment** - Evaluates alleged violations when requested by the President or when contacted directly, and recommends actions to the President **3. Proactive Monitoring** - Actively checks whether Members are complying with the Code and its implementing measures Composition: The President appoints eight Members based on experience, political balance, and gender balance. The Chair position rotates every six months among Committee members. Political groups not represented on the Committee have one reserve Member. The Advisory Committee publishes each year a report of its work.		Transparency International EU is critical about the Advisory Committee Press: Lead MEP on 'simplification' omnibus hit with conflict of interest complaint The Advisory Committee suffers from a fundamental **structural flaw**: it consists entirely of MEPs supervising themselves, with **no external oversight**. **Problems are:** **1. Self-supervision** - MEPs police their own colleagues, creating an inherent conflict of interest in enforcement **2. Lack of real power** - Despite recent reforms that expanded its mandate (allowing citizen complaints and proactive monitoring), the Committee still lacks genuine investigative powers

		https://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/meps/Rules_of_Procedure_EN.pdf		**3. Ineffective in practice -** Even clear-cut cases submitted through the new complaint mechanism (including a conflict-of-interest case filed by Transparency International EU) have resulted in no meaningful action or follow-up The changes appear substantive on paper but have delivered little actual improvement in ethics enforcement Because the Committee remains composed solely of MEPs, it is "structurally incapable of enforcing ethics rules," regardless of procedural improvements. The criticism suggests that without independent, external members or oversight, the Committee cannot credibly hold MEPs accountable.

Members of the European Parliament	Verification of new MEPs	**Beginning of the mandate: Verification of new MEPs** The credentials of newly elected MEPs undergo verification to ascertain that they do not hold an office that is incompatible with being a Member of the European Parliament. The Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee checks new MEP credentials ex post, making decisions based on information Member States provide. Parliament also rules on any disputes pursuant to the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of Members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, except those based on national electoral laws.	Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament - Rule 3: Verification of credentials List of incompatibilities (see Article 7)	

Members of the European Parliament	Declaration obligations	MEPs must submit a **Declaration of Private Interests** within 30 days of taking office and update it by the end of the month following each change. The declaration must include: • Professional activities and board/committee memberships from the previous three years • Any remunerated outside activities where total remuneration exceeds €5,000 gross per calendar year • Current membership of boards, committees, or other relevant outside activities • Holdings in companies with public policy implications or where the MEP has significant influence • Any support (financial, staff, or material) from third parties for political activities • Support received by unofficial groupings in which the MEP is chair or participating member • Any other private interests that might influence performance of duties		What jobs are MEPs doing on the side? A first look into their new income declarations (TI EU) Press: MEPs accused of failing to declare travel expenses to pro-Trump gala Danish MEP is paid board member of firm registered as EU lobbyist How much income did wealthiest new MEPs declare? https://www.integritywatch.eu/mepincomes.php

Members of the European Parliament	Post-Mandate Employment Rules	The Code of Conduct prohibits former MEPs from lobbying current MEPs on behalf of their clients or employers during the period in which they are entitled to the transitional allowance (currently up to 24 months after leaving office). Former MEPs must notify the President of the European Parliament about any professional activity they intend to take up during the transitional allowance period.	The President may issue an opinion on whether the activity is compatible with the dignity of the office, though this opinion is not binding.	

Members of the European Parliament	Revolving doors and a cooling-off period for (former) MEPs	The European Parliament has introduced a formal cooling-off period to prevent conflicts of interest and undue influence. For six months after the end of their mandate, former MEPs are prohibited from lobbying within the European Parliament. After the cooling-off period, former MEPs are allowed to lobby, but under strict conditions. Article 3 of the Bureau Decision of 17 April 2023 on new rules for former Members of the European Parliament states: "Former Members shall not engage in lobbying or representational activities in the European Parliament as referred to in Article 3 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 during the first six months following the end of their mandate. Former Members who engage in lobbying or representational activities after this period may only enter Parliament's premises for the purpose of such activities using a specific badge issued on the basis of their previous registration in the Transparency Register, if they are covered by it; former Members shall wear this badge in a clearly visible place while on the premises. They shall		

		not have the access rights referred to in Articles 2(1) and 5(1)."		
European Commissioners	Independence	Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union TITLE III - PROVISIONS ON THE INSTITUTIONS Article 17 Commissioners must have **"independence beyond doubt"** as a prerequisite for appointment. This independence is both a selection criterion and an ongoing obligation. **Absolute Independence in practice**: The Commission operates with complete independence. Members are strictly prohibited from: (1) Seeking or accepting instructions from any government, institution, body, office, or entity (2) Taking any action incompatible with their duties or task performance Unlike MEPs who declare conflicts and manage them, Commissioners must maintain absolute independence - they cannot have divided loyalties or external influences of any kind during their term.	The integrity framework is enforced through: · **Selection criteria**: Members chosen based on general competence and European commitment, ensuring qualified individuals with institutional loyalty · **Collective accountability**: The entire Commission can be dismissed through Parliament's censure motion, creating institutional pressure for ethical conduct · **Presidential oversight**: The President can request any Commissioner's resignation	

		Overview integrity on members of the European Commission https://commission.europa.eu/about/service-standards-and-principles/ethics-and-good-administration/commissioners-and-ethics/code-conduct-members-european-commission_en		

European Commissioners	Duty of integrity	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Article 245) - establishes fundamental duty of integrity - TFEU Article 245 Commissioners must act with complete independence. Member States cannot seek to influence them. Restrictions during term of office: ● Cannot engage in any other occupation (paid or unpaid) ● Must refrain from actions incompatible with their duties Upon taking office, Commissioners pledge to maintain integrity and discretion both during and after their term, particularly regarding post-office appointments or benefits. (key difference from MEPs: Unlike MEPs who can have outside activities if declared, Commissioners face an absolute prohibition on any other occupation during their term)	If these obligations are breached, the Court of Justice can impose penalties at the request of the Council or Commission: · Compulsory retirement, or · Loss of pension or other benefits	Press: EU Commission looking into Mandelson's Epstein links https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/boards-policy-regulation/eu-watchdog-accuses-commission-lack-transparency-urgent-proposals-2025-11-27/

European Commissioners	Code of Conduct for Commissioners	Code of Conduct for Commissioners (latest version November 2023) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018D0221(02)	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu_2016/art_247/oj The Court of Justice may deprive former Commissioners of their rights to a pension or other benefits.	Press: Green MEPs urge action on lobbyist meetings by Croatia's top EU official Press: Commissioners' Slovenia trip sparks calls for ethics probe

European Commissioners	Declaration of Interests	Commissioners must submit comprehensive Declarations of Interests including: • **Financial interests** exceeding €10,000 (including assets, liabilities, shares, bonds) for themselves, spouses/partners, and minor children • **All activities** from the previous 10 years (board memberships, consultancies, foundations, educational institutions), distinguishing between past activities and honorary/life positions maintained during mandate • **Property owned** (except primary family residences) • **Membership** of associations, political parties, NGOs, or bodies influencing public functions • **Ongoing professional activities of spouses/partners** (nature, title, employer) Declarations are published online in machine-readable format, must be		https://www.integritywatch.eu/ https://www.integritywatch.eu/ecmeetings.php

		resubmitted annually, and updated within 2 months of any change. https://commission.europa.eu/about/service-standards-and-principles/transparency/transparency-register_en		
European Commissioners	Independent Ethical Committee	The Independent Ethical Committee advises the Commission on whether the planned activities of Commissioners after leaving office are compatible with the Treaties. The President may also seek the advice of the Independent Ethical Committee on any other ethical question relating to the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission. According to Article 13(4) of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission, the Commission publishes annually a report on the application of the Code of Conduct, including the work of the Independent Ethical Committee.	The Commission may decide, taking into account the opinion of the Independent Ethical Committee and on proposal of the President, to express a reprimand and, where appropriate, make it public. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018D0221(02)#d1e791-7-1	

EU institutions	Transparency register	The European Parliament, European Commission and Council share a common transparency register. The Transparency register is a database listing 'interest representatives' (organisations, associations, groups and self-employed individuals) who carry out activities to influence the EU policy and decision-making process. It is designed to show the public which interests are being represented at EU level, by whom and on whose behalf – as well as the resources devoted to these activities (including financial support, donations, sponsorship, etc.).	Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 Briefing on EU Transparency Register https://transparency-register.europa.eu/index_en	As of February 2024, close to 12 500 entities have been listed in the Transparency register. More than half are in-house lobbyists and trade associations and over a quarter are non-governmental organisations. For updated figures and more details, see the Transparency register statistics. Interesting: ECA report on transparency in the EU, which analyses the transparency register and provides some recommendations. European Papers. (2021). *Transparency at the expense of equality and integrity?* https://www.europeanpapers.eu/e-journal/transparency-at-expense-of-equality-and-integrity

				Complaint results in €47 million-worth of changes to EU lobby register declarations (17.07.2025) A series of updates to financial declarations in the EU lobby transparency register have been made following a complaint by Corporate Europe Observatory and LobbyControl. Press: Orbán's favorite Brussels think tank received millions from Budapest, new figures reveal Press: Ranked: The 10 most intensely lobbied EU laws https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-defense-industry-goes-big-on-lobbying-in-brussels/

EU institutions	Aftermath of 'Qatargate': stricter rules to strengthen transparency:	In the aftermath of 'Qatargate', the 2022 corruption scandal involving several Members of the European Parliament, Parliament adopted a resolution calling for stricter transparency rules. The text calls for the Transparency register to become fully mandatory and proposes setting up a special committee to identify any flaws in the European Parliament's rules on transparency, integrity and corruption.	Parliament has subsequently implemented a number of reforms to strengthen transparency.	Critical overview by TI EU – three years since Qatargate 9/12/2025: https://transparency.eu/three-years-since-qatargate-has-the-european-parliament-learned-its-lesson/ Press: MEPs adopt rules on ethics and transparency after 'Qatargate'

EU institutions	European Ethics Body	In spring 2024 eight of the institutions and advisory bodies of the EU set out in Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union validated and signed the Agreement to establish the Interinstitutional Ethics Body. Signing ceremony for the establishment of the interinstitutional Ethics Body was 15/5/2024 General information on the ethics body https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-ethics-body/ This website provides information about the negotiations on the Interinstitutional Ethics Body	https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/416e950a-7bf4-4bae-95b8-8165409c2538_en?filename=agreement_establishing_an_interinstitutional_body_for_ethical_standards_for_members_of_institutions_and_advisory_bodies_en.pdf	Evaluation TI EU: https://transparency.eu/ti-eu-statement-on-eu-ethics-body-agreement-an-ethics-body-in-name-only/ (14/3/2024) The Ethics Body should be given a proper mandate to investigate and sanction ethical violations by members of the institutions. Any breaches of the rules should be complemented by a stronger sanctions regime that would serve as a deterrent for non-compliance. In a resolution adopted in July 2023, Parliament regrets that the initial European Commission proposal on an EU ethics body lacked ambition, and called for the body to have stronger investigative powers

				https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-politician-agree-play-same-ethic-rule-election/ **Parliament's right-wing majority puts EU ethics body in the crosshairs** https://www.politico.eu/article/parliament-right-wing-majority-eu-ethics-mep-standards-qatargate-green-deal/ **MEPs slam 'unsatisfactory' ethics body plan in latest Qatargate row** https://www.euractiv.com/news/meps-slam-unsatisfactory-ethics-body-plan-in-latest-qatargate-row/