



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT INTERGROUP
INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY
CORRUPTION AND ORGANISED CRIME

ITCO Statement

MEPs target the Commission on ethics, whilst failing to fix their own code of conduct

Brussels, 9 November 2016

Yesterday, Members of the European Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee voted to amend the Parliament's "Rules of Procedure", including the legally binding ethics rules for MEPs – known as the Code of Conduct.

While several improvements to the transparency and functioning of the European Parliament were adopted, including important measures to control conflicts of interest of EU Commissioners, the members of the AFCCO committee were not as ambitious when it came to reforming their own code of conduct.

Commenting on today's vote, Greens/EFA MEP and member of the ITCO bureau, Benedek Jávor, highlighted the positive advances made: ***"The Parliament should now have clearer and greater powers to control conflicts of interest not only of candidate Commissioners, but also of Commissioners that are already in office. They will have to convince the legal affairs committee of their probity, or face the possibility of sanctions."***

However, several key parts of the ethics rules that apply to Members of the European Parliament were not sufficiently reformed.

Dennis de Jong, GUE MEP and ITCO Co-Chair, noted that ***"Although I would have wanted a complete ban on paid side jobs for MEPs, progressive forces were able to ensure at least a ban on paid lobbying activity directly related to the EU decision-making process. However, many of ITCO's proposals did not make it into the final text, which is very much left as it was before. I am particularly disappointed that the proposed improvements to the functioning of the Parliament's ethical advisory committee were not taken on board."***

The final stage in the process will take place in mid-December, when there will be a vote in the plenary on the new rules of procedure. At that moment, there will be a chance to table further amendments to the rules of procedure. All changes will have to be adopted by an absolute majority, so we count on all MEPs who are committed to improving ethics and integrity in the house, to support proposals the intergroup will table.