

## ITCO PRESS STATEMENT Wednesday 7 October 2015

### ITCO intergroup pressures the European Parliament to ban salaried side jobs

**The intergroup on *Integrity, Transparency, Corruption and Organised crime* calls for a revision of the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament, in order to ban side jobs for MEPs. Under the current rules, MEPs can have various paid side jobs. The Volkswagen emission scandal, about which a debate in the European Parliament was held yesterday, illustrates that it is exactly the close bonds between the automobile industry and the European institutions that has enabled the widespread fraud with emissions.**

The emission fraud scandal in the automobile industry should trigger a sharper focus on the tight relation between the car-industry and European institutions. So far, MEPs have been allowed to have side jobs, as long as they register these through their declarations of interest.

The code of conduct has a provision on conflicts of interest, which are defined as follows: a conflict of interest arises when *a Member of the European Parliament has a personal interest that could improperly influence the performance of his or her duties as a Member*. The Code of Conduct obliges members to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest before speaking/voting in the plenary or when proposed as a rapporteur. Apart from that, MEPs can have as many side jobs as they want. This leads to the current situation that some MEP's are involved in the car-industry. Currently the EP is revising its internal rules and, therefore, the ITCO intergroup proposes to ban paid salaried side jobs as soon as possible.

Dennis de Jong states in his capacity as co-chair of the intergroup: "There is an urgent need to end the ties between the industry and members of the EP. We should start by implementing a ban on paid side jobs. This is the best possible guarantee against conflicts of interest arising". Benedek Jávor as vice-chair of the intergroup highlights that: "Without transparent rules concerning the functioning of MEP-industry forums and a ban on paid side jobs for MEPs, European legislation will continue to be governed by industry priorities, even at the expense of the health of European citizens."