Public Consultation on a proposal for a mandatory Transparency Register

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Public Consultation on a proposal for a mandatory Transparency Register

The European Commission seeks the views of all interested parties on the performance of the current Transparency Register for organisations and self-employed individuals engaged in EU policy-making and policy implementation and on its future evolution towards a mandatory scheme covering the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission.

QUESTIONNAIRE

*

Are you responding as:

- ○ An individual in my personal capacity
- ● The representative of an organisation registered in the [Transparency Register](#)
- ○ The representative of an organisation not registered in the Transparency Register

*

Please provide your Register ID no:

> 68057486299-01

*

Name of the organisation:

> European Emergency Number Association

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The organisation's head office is in:

- ○ Austria
- ● Belgium
- ○ Bulgaria
- ○ Cyprus
- ○ Czech Republic
- ○ Germany
- ○ Denmark
- ○ Estonia
- ○ Greece
- ○ Spain
- ○ Finland
- ○ France
- ○ Hungary
- ○ Croatia
- ○ Ireland
- ○ Italy
- ○ Lithuania
- ○ Luxembourg
- ○ Latvia
- ○ Malta
- ○ Netherlands
- ○ Poland
- ○ Portugal
- ○ Romania
- ○ Sweden
- ○ Slovenia
- ○ Slovak Republic
- ○ United Kingdom
- ○ Other country

*

*Your organisation belongs to the following type:

- ○ Professional consultancies
- ○ Law-firms
- ○ Self-employed consultants
- ○ Companies and groups
- ○ Trade and business associations
- ○ Trade unions and professional associations
- ○ Other organisations including: event-organising entities (profit or non- profit making); interest-related media or research oriented entities linked to private profit making interests; ad-hoc coalitions and temporary structures (with profit-making membership)
- ● Non-governmental organisations, platforms, networks, ad-hoc coalitions, temporary structures and other similar organisations
- ○ Think tanks and research institutions
- ○ Academic institutions
- ○ Organisations representing churches and religious communities
- ○ Regional structures
- ○ Other sub-national public authorities
- ○ Transnational associations and networks of public regional or other sub-national authorities
- ○ Other public or mixed entities, created by law whose purpose is to act in the public interest

Contact for this public consultation:

*

Name

> Benoit

*

Surname

> Vivier

*Email address (this information will not be published)

> bv@eena.org

A. GENERAL PART (7 questions)

1. Transparency and the EU

1.1 The EU institutions interact with a wide range of groups and organisations representing specific interests. This is a legitimate and necessary part of the decision-making process to make sure that EU policies reflect the interests of citizens, businesses and other stakeholders. The decision-making process must be transparent to allow for proper scrutiny and to ensure that the Union's institutions are accountable.

*

a) Do you agree that ethical and transparent lobbying helps policy development?

- ⦿ Fully agree
- ○ Partially agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> Expertise from stakeholders may be needed or required to ensure good regulations. However, this should not prevent transparency on lobbying activities.

*

b) It is often said that achieving appropriate lobbying regulation is not just about transparency, i.e. shedding light on the way in which lobbyists and policy-makers are operating. Which of the below other principles do you also consider important for achieving a sound framework for relations with interest representatives?

More than one answer possible

- ☑ Integrity
- ☑ Equality of access
- ☐ Other (please elaborate in the comments box below)
- ☐ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

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c) In your opinion, how transparent are the European institutions as public institutions?

- ◯ They are highly transparent
- ◉ They are relatively transparent
- ◯ They are not transparent at all
- ◯ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> EENA recognises the benefits of the Transparency Register but laments that
> not-registered organisations enjoy equally an access to EU civil servants and
> representatives. Furthermore, some important meetings between stakeholders and
> EU officials remain unknown. Rules should be stricter on bodies that are not
> (correctly) registered.

*

1.2 The Transparency Register provides information to politicians and public officials about those who
approach them with a view to influencing the decision-making and policy formulation and
implementation process. The Register also allows for public scrutiny; giving citizens and other interest
groups the possibility to track the activities and potential influence of lobbyists.

Do you consider the Transparency Register a useful tool for regulating lobbying?

- ◉ Very useful
- ◯ Somewhat useful
- ◯ Not useful at all
- ◯ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> More than useful, the Transparency Register is necessary for regulating
> lobbying. We believe it should therefore be mandatory rather than optional.

2. Scope of the Register

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2.1 Activities covered by the Register include lobbying, interest representation and advocacy. It covers all activities carried out to influence - directly or indirectly - policymaking, policy implementation and decision-making in the European Parliament and the European Commission, no matter where they are carried out or which channel or method of communication is used.
This definition is appropriate:

- ◉ Fully agree
- ○ Partially agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> The definition should be as wide as possible.

*

2.2 The Register does not apply to certain entities, for example, churches and religious communities, political parties, Member States' government services, third countries' governments, international intergovernmental organisations and their diplomatic missions. Regional public authorities and their representative offices do not have to register but can register if they wish to do so. On the other hand, the Register applies to local, municipal authorities and cities as well as to associations and networks created to represent them.
The scope of the Register should be:

- ○ Changed to exclude certain types of entities (please elaborate in the comments box below)
- ◉ Changed to include certain types of entities (please elaborate in the comments box below)
- ○ Preserved the same as currently
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> All bodies having activities defined as in question 2.1 should be included to the Transparency Register.

3. Register website

3.1 What is your impression of the Register [website](#)?

	Good	Average	Poor	No opinion
*Design and structure	○	◉	○	○
*Availability of information / documents	○	◉	○	○
*Ease of search function	◉	○	○	○
*Accessibility (e.g. features for visually impaired persons, ease of reading page)	○	○	○	◉
*Access via mobile devices	○	○	○	◉

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

4.Additional comments

Final comments or ideas on any additional subjects that you consider important in the context of this public consultation (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> A registry of the meetings between stakeholders and EU civil servants and representatives should also be included to the Transparency Register. A good example is the Transparency Lobby Calendar set up by the Greens/EFA Group at the European Parliament. See here: https://lobbycal.greens-efa-service.eu/all/

If you wish you may provide additional information (position papers, reports, etc) in support of your answers to this public consultation. Please upload no more than three files of up to 1Mb each. Attachments above this number willl not be considered.

Attach files

End of Part A

Part B includes questions that require a certain knowledge of the Transparency Register. Proceed to Part B (optional).

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Do you want to proceed to Part B ?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

B. SPECIFIC PART (13 questions)

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1. Structure of the Register

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1.1 The Register invites organisations to sign up under a particular section, for example, professional consultancies, NGOs, trade associations, etc (Annex I of the Interinstitutional Agreement).
Have you encountered any difficulties with this categorisation?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

2. Data disclosure and quality

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2.1 Entities joining the Register are asked to provide certain information (contact details, goals and remit of the organisation, legislative dossiers followed, fields of interest, membership, financial data, etc) in order to identify the profile, the capacity of the entity and the interest represented (Annex I of the [Interinstitutional Agreement](#)).

The right type of information is required from the registrant:

- ○ Fully agree
- ○ Too much is asked
- ● Too little is asked
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> The transparency register is covering a good amount of information.
> Nevertheless, there are 2 important improvements to be made: the amount of
> lobbyists does not necessarily correspond to the amount of European Parliament
> badges held by the organisation. As many European associations hold events and
> meetings in the European Parliament, requesting badges on a case by case
> scenario can be burdensome for many. On the other hand, having a badge does
> not necessarily mean active lobbying activities on behalf of the holder. More
> explicit information regarding purely lobbying activities should be included
> to tackle transparency issues.

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2.2 It is easy to provide the information required:

- ○ Fully agree
- ● Partially agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> The documentation is easy to provide and necessary for the purposes of the
> register. Nevertheless, there is no concrete separation between the general
> activities covered by the register (including for instance European projects)
> and the purely lobbying activities. The articulation of the questions can lead
> to important information being left out (e.g. concrete information can be
> provided in section 9 part "Complementary information" which is left to the
> respondent to interpret).

*

2.3 Do you see any room for simplification as regards the data disclosure requirements?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ● No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

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2.4 What is your impression of the overall data quality in the Register:

- ○ Good
- ● Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> The overall data quality in the Register looks good onto the paper. However,
> some stakeholders tend to exaggerate or do not display the right information.
> More control should be done.

3. Code of Conduct and procedure for Alerts and Complaints

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3.1 The Code of Conduct sets out the rules for all those who register and establishes the underlying principles for standards of behaviour in all relations with the EU institutions (Annex III of the [Interinstituti onal Agreement](#)).
The Code is based on a sound set of rules and principles:

- ○ Fully agree
- ○ Partially agree
- ○ Disagree
- ● No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

3.2 Anyone may trigger an alert or make a complaint about possible breaches of the Code of Conduct. Alerts concern factual errors and complaints relate to more serious breaches of behavioural nature (Annex IV of the Interinstitutional Agreement).

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a) The present procedure for dealing with alerts and complaints is adequate:

- ○ Fully agree
- ○ Partially agree
- ○ Disagree
- ● No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

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b) Do you think that the names of organisations that are suspended under the alerts and complaints procedure should be made public?

- ● Yes
- ○ No
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

4. Register website – registration and updating

4.1 How user-friendly is in your opinion the Register website in relation to registration and updating?

	Straightforward	Satisfactory but can be improved	Cumbersome	No opinion
*Registration process	○	⦿	○	○
*Updating process (annual & partial)	○	⦿	○	○

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

Overall, both the registration and update processes are user-friendly and simple enough. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, there is not enough clarity as to what information is requested in some fields. This can lead to either a small manipulation of the data or some confusion as to what the registrant is requested to fill in. Examples are the activities covered by the register (vague term open to interpretation) and section 10 ("Number of persons involved in the activities described under heading 9") which can mean from pure lobbyists to anyone involved in any activity the European Parliament is involved in. Lack of concrete definitions can lead to unreliable data, unreliable comparisons between registrants and, perhaps ultimately, an extreme decrease of added-value provided by the register.

5. Current advantages linked to registration

5.1 The European Parliament and the European Commission currently offer certain practical advantages (incentives) linked to being on the Register. The Commission has also announced its intention to soon amend its rules on Expert groups to link membership to registration.
Which of these advantages are important to you?

In the European Parliament (EP)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	No opinion
*Access to Parliament buildings: long-term access passes to the EP's premises are only issued to individuals representing, or working for registered organisations	◉	○	○	○
*Committee public hearings: guests invited to speak at a hearing need to be registered	◉	○	○	○
*Patronage: Parliament does not grant its patronage to relevant organisations that are not registered	◉	○	○	○

In the European Commission

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	No opinion
*Meetings: organisations or self-employed individuals engaged in relevant activities must be registered in order to hold meetings with Commissioners, Cabinet members and Directors-General	●	○	○	○
*Public consultations: the Commission sends automatic alerts to registered entities about consultations in areas of interest indicated by them; it differentiates between registered and non-registered entities when publishing the results	●	○	○	○
*Patronage: Commissioners do not grant their patronage to relevant organisations that are not registered	●	○	○	○
*Mailing lists: organisations featuring on any mailing lists set up to alert them about certain Commission activities are asked to register	●	○	○	○
*Expert groups: registration in the Transparency Register is required in order for members to be appointed (refers to organisations and individuals appointed to represent a common interest shared by stakeholders in a particular policy area)	●	○	○	○

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

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6. Features of a future mandatory system

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6.1 Do you believe that there are further interactions between the EU institutions and interest groups that could be made conditional upon prior registration (e. g. access to MEPs and EU officials, events, premises, or featuring on specific mailing lists)?

- ● Yes
- ○ No
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> EENA firmly believes that any organisation with advocacy/lobbying activities
> should mandatorily be a registrant. Although we understand the difficulties of
> every action requiring a prior registration (for instance a large event with
> attendees from Europe cannot require all participants having registered) we
> support any additional interaction requiring a prior registration. We urge the
> institutions to make sure that the maximum activities and interactions
> possible require a prior registration to the extent possible.

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6.2 Do you agree with the Commission's view that the Council of the EU should participate in the new Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory Register?

- ● Yes
- ○ No
- ○ No opinion

Comments or suggestions (Optional)

3000 character(s) maximum

> All institutions having legislative powers in the European Union should
> participate in a mandatory Register, i.e. the European Commission, the
> European Parliament, the Council of the EU (extended to the Permanent
> Representations of the Member States), the European Council, the Committee of
> the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee.

7. Looking beyond Brussels

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7.1 How does the Transparency Register compare overall to 'lobby registers' at the EU Member State level?

- ⦿ It is better
- ○ It is worse
- ○ It is neither better, nor worse
- ○ No opinion

Good practices or lessons learned at the EU Member State level to be considered, or pitfalls to be avoided. (Optional)

4000 character(s) maximum

8. Additional comments

Final comments or ideas on any additional subjects that you consider important in the context of this public consultation (Optional)

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-        The Transparency Register should apply to all the European
institutions having legislative powers (see question 6.2).
-        Not all the burden should be put on stakeholders. Civil servants and
representatives should also take part in efforts to bring more transparency
and should be held responsible.
-        All meetings between stakeholders and EU officials should be
published.
-        Data on the Transparency Register should be correctly checked.
-        There should be hard sanctions to prevent non-respect of the
mandatory Transparency Register. Those sanctions should apply to both
stakeholders that have been in contact with EU officials without being
(correctly) registered and EU civil servants or representatives that have met
with non-registered stakeholders.
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*Publication of your consultation

- ◉ I agree to my contribution being published.
- ○ I do not agree to my contribution being published.

[Specific privacy statement](#)

Useful links

[Read more on the public consultation homepage (http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/public_consultation_en.htm)](http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/public_consultation_en.htm)

Contact

SG-TRANSPARENCY-REGISTER-PUBLIC-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu