



# ALTER-EU STATEMENT

## Ending corporate privileges and secrecy around lobbying in the European Union

The undersigned organisations are deeply concerned about the growing influence of corporate lobby groups on European Union decision-making. Over 15,000 professional lobbyists now operate in Brussels, a large majority representing business interests. Yet, ethics and transparency rules around lobbying are virtually non-existent. Beyond the problem of business spending ever-increasing amounts to influence the political process, the European Commission has developed a tradition of awarding privileged access to corporate interests. The enormous influence of corporate lobbyists undermines democracy and all too frequently results in postponing, weakening or blocking urgently needed progress in EU social, environmental and consumer protections. As the first steps in addressing these problems, the Commission should take determined action to improve transparency around lobbying and ensure that no business groups are given privileged access and influence on EU policy-making.

We welcome the ‘European Transparency Initiative’ (ETI), launched in March 2005 by European Commissioner Siim Kallas, in particular, the objective to address the current lack of mandatory regulation and reporting of lobbying activities. A mandatory system for lobbying disclosure is urgently needed and must be shaped in a way that optimally enables democratic scrutiny of inputs into EU policy-making.

The undersigned organisations demand the following:

### **1. EU lobbying disclosure legislation**, which must include:

- A mandatory system of electronic registration and reporting for all lobbyists with a significant annual lobbying budget. The reports must be made available in a fully searchable, sortable and downloadable online database;
- Enforceable ethics rules for lobbyists (for instance prohibiting employment of officials or their relatives for lobbying purposes).

### **2. An improved code of conduct for European Commission officials**, including:

- Recording of formal and informal meetings between Commission officials and lobbyists and logging of correspondence (to be made available in a fully searchable online database);
- An extended ‘cooling off’ period before Commissioners and senior officials can start working for lobby groups or lobbying advisory firms;
- The European Commission should encourage the other EU institutions, particularly the European Parliament and the European Council, to develop similar rules.

### **3. The Commission must terminate cases of privileged access and undue influence granted to corporate lobbyists**, for instance:

- Joint taskforces in which corporate interests are represented while public interest NGOs are not (such as Cars 21 which consists of Commission officials, CEOs and lobbyists from the automobile industry, but no environmental NGOs);

- The privileged status accorded to business lobby groups like the European Services Forum and the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue.

These are minimum requirements if the ‘European Transparency Initiative’ is to achieve meaningful democratic progress. Vested interests are defending secrecy and privileged access by advocating “self-regulation”, voluntary codes of conduct and other pseudo-solutions that do nothing to increase democratic scrutiny of the role of lobbyists in EU policy-making. If the EU institutions would endorse such proposals instead of introducing mandatory disclosure and ethics rules, it would fundamentally undermine the ‘European Transparency Initiative’. We have formed the Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU) to prevent the failure of this important initiative.

### **List of signatories**

1. 11.11.11 - Coalition of the Flemish North-South Movement, Belgium
2. Action Consommation, France
3. Aktive Forbrugere, Denmark
4. Action Aid International
5. Adéquations, France
6. AerztInnen und Aertze fuer eine gesunde Umwelt , Austria
7. Alliance for Social and Ecological Consumer Organizations (ASECO), EU-wide network
8. Amazonia Assemblée de Solidaritat, Spain
9. Afrika Europa Netwerk, The Netherlands
10. ARTICLE 19 (Global Campaign for Free Expression)
11. A SEED Europe, EU-wide network
12. Asociación Pola Defensa da Ría (APDR), Galicia (SPAIN)
13. Association of Farmers, Malta
14. Associazione Consumatori Utenti (ACU), Italy
15. atomstopp\_atomkraftfrei leben!, Austria
16. ATTAC Austria
17. ATTAC Denmark
18. ATTAC France
19. ATTAC Germany
20. ATTAC Hungary
21. ATTAC-KonsumNetz, Germany
22. ATTAC Netherlands
23. ATTAC Spain
24. ATTAC Poland
25. ATTAC Sweden
26. ATTAC Vlaanderen, Belgium
27. Both Ends, The Netherlands
28. Breastfeeding Promotion and Protection Association of Latvia
29. BUDS (Foundation for Human and Nature Protection), Hungary
30. BUKO Pharma-Kampagne, Germany
31. CNCD, Belgium
32. Campagna per la Riforma della Banca mondiale (CRBM), Italy
33. Campagne tegen Wapenhandel, The Netherlands
34. Campaign Against Arms Trade, United Kingdom
35. Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, United Kingdom
36. CEE Bankwatch Network [with member organisations from ten countries in Central and Eastern Europe]
37. Center for Encounter and active Non-Violence, Austria
38. Centre de Recerca i Informació en Consum (CRIC), Spain

39. CLAT, The Netherlands
40. Clean Air Action Group, Hungary
41. Coalition against BAYER-dangers, Germany
42. Comite pour les droits humains "Daniel Gillard", Belgium
43. Consumer Institute for Medicines and Health (KILEN), Sweden
44. CRIIRAD, France
45. The Corner House, United Kingdom
46. Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
47. Corporate Watch, United Kingdom
48. Digicare Foundation; Art for Social Change, The Netherlands
49. Dubnica Environmental Group, Slovakia
50. Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
51. Ecologistas en Acción de Jaén, España
52. Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR), United Kingdom
53. EKPIZO - Consumers' Association "The Quality of Life", Greece
54. Environmental Law Service, Czech Republic
55. EQUIVITA, Spain
56. EU-AG ATTAC Germany
57. Euro Info Centre Network, European-wide network
58. European Centre of the International Council of Women ( ECICW-CECIF)
59. European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)
60. European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ)
61. European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
62. European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
63. EPHA Environment Network (EEN)
64. European Federation of Public Services Unions (EPSU)
65. European Forum for Freedom in Education (effe), European-wide network
66. European Network on Debt and Development [Eurodad]
67. FAIR, Italy
68. FairFood, The Netherlands
69. FERN - the EU forest campaign
70. Fondation France Liberté, France
71. Food and Water Watch Europe
72. Food Ethics Council, United Kingdom
73. Forum Voor Vredesactie, Belgium
74. Freedom of Information Project, Privacy International
75. Friends of the Earth Europe
76. Friends of the Earth, Czech Republic
77. Friends of the Earth, Slovakia
78. Friends of the Earth, Flanders (Belgium)
79. German League for the Protection of Nature and Environment, Germany
80. Germanwatch, Germany
81. Global Policy Institute - Glropolis, Czech Republic
82. GMwatch, UK
83. Greenpeace (European Unit)
84. Grup de Defensa del Garraf-Ordal, de la Vall Baixa i Delta del Llobregat (DEFGOL), Catalunya, Spain
85. Health Action International Europe
86. Humane Earth Foundation, France
87. Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, Hungary
88. Hungarian Young Greens, Hungary
89. IBFAN Europe
90. IBFAN Italia, Italy

91. IGLA (Informationsgruppe Lateinamerika), Austria
92. India Committee of the Netherlands
93. InfOGM, France
94. Initiativ Liewensufank asbl, Luxemburg
95. The International Secretariat of Africa-Europe Faith & Justice Network (AEFJN)
96. International Friends of Nature
97. International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN)
98. Kairos Europa
99. KEPKA - Consumers Protection Centre, Greece
100. KWIA vzw Support Group for Indigenous People, Belgium
101. La revue Prescrire, France
102. Les Amis de la Terre, France
103. LobbyControl, Germany
104. Mani Tese, Italy
105. Mehr Demokratie, Germany
106. Mouvement pour les Droits et le Respect des Générations Futures (MDRGF), France
107. National Group on Homeworking, United Kingdom
108. National Platform EU Research and Information Centre, Ireland
109. Nonviolent Peaceforce, global network
110. Observatorio de la Deuda en la Globalizacion (ODG), Spain
111. Oesterreichische Bergbauern und Bergbaeuerinnen Vereinigung / CPE Austria
112. Paradigm Shift, The Netherlands
113. Paz con Dignidad, Spain,
114. Pesticides Action Network Europe (PAN Europe)
115. Pesticide Action Network, Germany
116. Pesticide Action Network UK
117. Plataforma por la Defensa de los Servicios Publicos-Madrid, Spain
118. Platform Against Nuclear Dangers (PLAGE), Salzburg, Austria
119. Platform, United Kingdom
120. Platform for Consumers interests (BeVaCo), The Netherlands
121. Priatelia Zeme, Slovakia
122. Privacy International
123. Proj'art asbl, Belgium
124. Public Services International (PSI)
125. Quaker Council for European Affairs
126. Quercus (Associacao Nacional de Conservacao da Natureza), Portugal
127. Respire, Belgium
128. Rete Lilliput, Italy
129. Roba dell'Altro Mondo, Italy
130. Roba de''Altro Mondo, Malta
131. Scottish Education and Action for Development (SEAD)
132. Servas Belgium
133. Servas International
134. Sherpa, France
135. Sisyfos, Sweden
136. Social Audit Ltd, United Kingdom
137. SOMO, The Netherlands
138. SOSNA civic association, Slovakia
139. SPEAK, United Kingdom
140. SpinWatch, UK
141. StateWatch, UK
142. Sveriges Konsumenter i Samverkan, Sweden
143. Tartu Students' Nature Protection Circle, Estonia

144. Transnationale & Cie, France
145. Transnational Information Exchange, The Netherlands
146. Transnational Institute (TNI)
147. Transparency International Deutschland e.V., Germany
148. urgewald, Germany
149. Védegylet, Hungary
150. Velt vzw, Belgium
151. Vrede vzw, Belgium
152. War on Want, United Kingdom
153. WEMOS, The Netherlands
154. Wissenschaftsladen Wien, Austria
155. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Sweden
156. Women in Development Europe (WIDE)
157. Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights
158. Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF)
159. Women Working Worldwide (WWW), United Kingdom
160. World Development Movement, United Kingdom
161. World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED), Germany
162. XminusY Solidarity Fund, The Netherlands
163. Young Researchers of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
164. Za Matku Zem (For Mother Earth), Slovakia

#### **Consultancies:**

CODECO, European Affairs and Progressive Communication, Brussels  
 EurAFair Consult, Germany  
 ID's - Information Diffusion Europe Associations, Brussels  
 Michael Hindley and Associates, United Kingdom  
 mAster Institute, Netherlands  
 MortenCH Holdings Aps, Denmark  
 Nils Roseman, Human Rights and Development Consultant  
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 Total Quality Change, Netherlands  
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**Signatories from outside of the EU:**

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Centre for Corporate Policy, United States  
Center for Investigative Reporting, United States  
Center for Media and Democracy, United States  
Centro de Ecologia y Desarrollo, Mexico  
Consumer Action, United States  
Edmonds Institute, United States  
Friends of the Earth US  
Frontiers, Lebanon  
Groundwork, South Africa  
Humanitarian Group For Social Development (HGSD), Lebanon  
Information for Action, Australia  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, United States  
IATP Trade Information Project, Geneva  
LARS (Latin America Orientação em Responsabilidade Social), Brazil  
Public Citizen, United States