













Procedure file

Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2015/2319(INI)
Procedure completed	
Control of the Register and composition of the Commission's expert groups	
Subject	
8.40.03 European Commission	
8.40.10 Interinstitutional relations, subsidiarity, proportionality, comitology	
8.70.03 Budgetary control and discharge, implementation of the budget	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Budgetary Control	Shadow rapporteur	
		 GRÄSSLE Ingeborg	
		 VAUGHAN Derek	
		 DLABAJOVÁ Martina	
		 THEURER Michael	
		 VALLI Marco	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	 Budgets		03/12/2015
		 TRÜPEL Helga	
	 Legal Affairs (Associated committee)		15/03/2016
		 KAUFMANN Sylvia-Yvonne	
European Commission	Commission DG Secretariat-General	Commissioner TIMMERMANS Frans	

Key events			
26/11/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
26/11/2015	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
09/01/2017	Vote in committee		

12/01/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0002/2017	Summary
13/02/2017	Debate in Parliament		
14/02/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/02/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0021/2017	Summary
14/02/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2015/2319(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/8/05053

Documentation gateway

Committee opinion	BUDG	PE576.859	27/04/2016	EP	
Committee draft report		PE575.223	05/07/2016	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE589.101	09/09/2016	EP	
Committee opinion	JURI	PE589.119	29/11/2016	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0002/2017	12/01/2017	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0021/2017	14/02/2017	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2017)358	31/08/2017	EC	

Control of the Register and composition of the Commission's expert groups

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the own-initiative report by Dennis de JONG (GUE/NGL, NL) on control of the Register and composition of the Commissions expert groups.

The Committee on Legal Affairs, exercising its prerogative as an associated committee in accordance with [Article 54 of the Rules of Procedure](#), also gave its opinion on the report.

Members welcomed the [Commission Decision](#) of 30 May 2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commissions expert groups.

Through the adoption of the new horizontal rules, many concerns previously expressed by Parliament have seemingly been met, in particular those concerning the need for public calls for applications for the selection of the members of expert groups and concerning the revision of the Register of Commission expert groups and the creation of synergy between this Register, the Transparency Register of the Commission and Parliament, and those rules relating to the need to avoid conflicts of interest.

Reform of the system: Members considered that the effective reform of the Commission's expert groups system, based on clear principles of transparency and balanced composition, will improve the availability and reliability of data, which will in turn help increase people's trust in the EU. They reiterated the importance of reviving forms of involvement of representatives of civil society and the social partners in crucial areas such as the transparency and the functioning of the European institutions.

Selection of experts: noting that transparency and coordination of interinstitutional activities are of paramount importance, Members welcomed the fact that the selection process is now taking place publicly. They stressed that it needs to be clearly visible what practical experience and qualifications the experts possess.

Moreover, new rules should apply strictly and equally to all Commission expert groups, irrespective of their title to ensure a balanced representation through participation of representatives of all stakeholders.

According to the report, the Commission is asked to:

- make progress towards a more balanced composition of the expert groups;
- when creating new expert groups, state clearly in the public call for applications how it defines a balanced composition, which interests it seeks to be represented, and why;
- investigate whether a new complaints mechanism is required, if the definition of balanced composition is contested by interested stakeholders or whether current arrangements are adequate, Parliament should be associated in this control mechanism;
- explore ways to facilitate and encourage the participation of underrepresented organisations or social groups in expert groups (e.g. experts representing SMEs, consumers, trade unions);
- assess the development of an allowance system that supports underrepresented groups in acquiring the necessary expertise;
- make it possible for European non-governmental organisations to be represented in the expert groups by representatives of their national member organisations, when provided with a clear mandate from the European organisations;
- provide for the meetings and minutes to be made public;
- develop specific guidelines explaining how it interprets the provision that the minutes of the expert groups should be meaningful and complete;
- devote sufficient resources to the activities relating to the Register.

Lastly, Members noted that the Commission has stated that by the end of 2016, the new framework for Commission expert groups will have to be implemented by all Directorates-General. They requested the Commission to submit to Parliament a report on the implementation and evaluation at the latest one year after the adoption of the Decision, i.e. before 1 June 2017.

Control of the Register and composition of the Commission's expert groups

The European Parliament adopted by 663 votes to 16, with 13 abstentions, a resolution on control of the Register and composition of the Commissions expert groups.

Parliament welcomed the [Commission Decision](#) of 30 May 2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commissions expert groups. It reiterated the importance of reviving forms of involvement of representatives of civil society and the social partners in crucial areas.

Reform of the system: Parliament recalled that a lack of transparency has a negative effect on the trust that EU citizens have in the EU institutions. In this regard, it called for the effective reform of the Commissions expert group system, based on clear principles of transparency and balanced composition.

Selection of experts: Parliament took the view that the entire selection process should guarantee a high level of transparency and should be governed by clearer, more concise criteria, with particular emphasis on candidates practical experience, alongside their academic qualifications, and on possible conflicts of interest the experts might have. It also welcomed the fact that a connection has already been established between the Register of Commission Expert Groups and the Transparency Register, thus ensuring improved transparency.

The Commission is asked to:

- make progress towards a more balanced composition of the expert groups and make it clear, in the public call for application, how it defines a balanced composition and which interests (economic and non-economic) it seeks to be represented when the expert groups are established;
- investigate whether a new complaints mechanism is required, if the definition of balanced composition is contested by interested stakeholders or whether current arrangements are adequate, Parliament should be associated in this control mechanism;
- explore ways to facilitate and encourage the participation of underrepresented organisations or social groups in expert groups (e.g. experts representing SMEs, consumers, trade unions);
- assess the development of an allowance system that supports underrepresented groups in acquiring the necessary expertise;
- make it possible for European non-governmental organisations to be represented in the expert groups by representatives of their national member organisations, when provided with a clear mandate from the European organisations;
- provide for the meetings and minutes to be made public;
- develop specific guidelines explaining how it interprets the provision that the minutes of the expert groups should be meaningful and complete;
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