

HOW PARLIAMENT, & THE EU, **SHOULD REACT** TO THE QATAR CORRUPTION SCANDAL



The worst corruption scandal in the history of the EU has rocked the European Parliament. Six arrested, bags of cash found in MEP homes, countless citizens disillusioned. The noxious impact of corruption is clear. Dirty money cannot be allowed to buy our democratic institutions ever again.

Here's how Parliament can face this scandal in the immediate term, and what it must do to fight corruption in the institutions more broadly.

IMMEDIATE LEFT DEMANDS:

- MEPs should debate and vote on a resolution on the scandal, including clear commitments on a strong ethics, transparency & anti-corruption regime;
- The European Parliament should set up a committee of inquiry into this scandal to establish the full facts of the affair;
- European Parliament Vice-President Eva Kaili should resign her position while investigations continue. All MEPs and staff under investigation should be suspended while the case continues. A replacement Vice-President should be found and selected via an open transparent process. That new office holder should have a mandate for the fight against corruption with the holder charged with implementing and advancing the highest standards of ethics and transparency of any democratic institution;
- Suspension of access passes for Qatari embassy to EU institutions;
- The resolution on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar must be renegotiated and a new text put to the vote again in plenary;
- The postponement of the planned vote on Qatar visa liberalisation in plenary in view of the ongoing investigation.

MEASURES TO TACKLE CORRUPTION IN EU INSTITUTIONS:

- The creation of an independent ethics authority for the European institutions with investigative and enforcement powers;
- The reinforcement of existing rules on transparency, conflicts of interest and revolving doors in the European institutions in line with the demands of the European Ombudsman & transparency advocacy groups;
- The strengthening of the European transparency register, its mandatory and legally-binding character, with oversight and tough sanctions for non-compliance;
- This should include a compulsory reporting of all meetings between staff and external lobbies and the obligation to pro-actively register meetings with all staff and assistants in the European Parliament
- It should also include mandatory registration for all lobbyists representing the interests of third countries
- Mandatory legislative footprint - MEPs drafting reports or opinions must be obliged to attach a legislative footprint to their reports that shows the opinions the rapporteur has received and enables public oversight on who the rapporteur has heard from ahead of the final vote by the whole Parliament.
- A revised code of conduct for MEPs, especially on gifts and benefits, where rules should be tightened;
- Rules governing former members' access to the European Parliament should be revised from the perspective of ethics and transparency.