EP Rules of Procedure, Rule 9 and Annexes: establishment of a joint Transparency Register between the Parliament and the Commission

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The Committee on Constitutional Affairs adopted the report by Carlo CASINI (EPP, IT) on the amendment of Parliament's Rules of Procedure following the establishment by the European Parliament and the Commission of a joint transparency register.

Following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, Parliament's powers have been strengthened and it is now co-legislator in almost all areas under the ordinary legislative procedure. As a result, it is the focus of attention of an even larger number of lobbyists.

In the light of these developments and against this constitutional background, and in keeping with their commitment to transparency, Parliament and the Commission have agreed to establish and maintain a joint register in order to keep a list of the names of and exercise scrutiny over the organisations and individuals who take part in the drafting and implementation of EU policies. The register will be established and kept on the basis of the existing arrangements introduced by Parliament in 1996 and by the Commission in June 2008.

Having regard to the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 18 November 2010, the committee proposes to amend its Rules of Procedure as shown below:

- to institute to mandatory registration of lobbyists who approach Members of the European Parliament, the European institutions and their staff. This compulsory registration procedure should also entail registration of the people who have been approached. This requirement to register conversations with lobbyists should apply in equal measure to elected representatives, European officials and other staff of the European institutions. The information should be accessible to the public;
- to take account of new rights and obligations under the register procedure of Parliament bodies and of third parties in the context of their relations with Parliament;
- to safeguard Parliament's power to lay down the rights and obligations, in the context of their relations with Parliament, of persons who, whilst in possession of a long-term access badge, do not fall within the scope of the register (representatives of political parties, churches, etc.);
- to stipulate that the Quaestors remain free to take decisions on the withdrawal of badges;
- to provide that the registration of Members' financial interests must be altered as soon as a change occurs in a Member's situation, not only every year;
- to take account of the new rights and obligations of Parliament bodies and third parties concerning the processing of complaints and the withdrawal of badges;
- to delete Annex 3 to the agreement which sets out a joint code of conduct which incorporates the provisions of this rule.