

The upcoming EU anti-corruption strategy

2026/2790(RSP) - 08/10/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the upcoming EU anti-corruption strategy.

Parliament stressed that corruption diverts public resources from essential services and imposes a significant economic burden on society. According to the 2025 Special Eurobarometer, 69% of EU citizens considered corruption to be widespread in their country, while 73% believed it existed in national public institutions and 70% in local or regional institutions. Such findings demonstrate the persistence of a significant trust deficit between citizens and public authorities. The resolution also highlighted the cross-border impact of corruption on democracy and the integrity, independence and legitimacy of decision-making at national and EU level, stressing the need for robust transparency and accountability standards for political financing to protect democracy, the rule of law and public trust. The Commission is preparing the first comprehensive EU anti-corruption strategy, planned for adoption by the end of 2026.

Strengthening preventive measures, transparency and integrity

Parliament stressed that **prevention** must be a central pillar of an effective anti-corruption policy, addressing vulnerabilities before criminal conduct occurs. It called for the strategy to strengthen preventive measures alongside the repressive approach of the current Directive on combating corruption, provide regular, practical and adequately funded anti-corruption training for public administrations, and ensure evidence-based assessments of corruption risks across Member States to target resources, training and monitoring where they are most needed. It also called for stronger commitments to address integrity, transparency and accountability within EU institutions, including measures applicable to representatives of Member States.

Parliament called for **preventive measures and legislative proposals** to strengthen the EU anti-corruption framework, particularly regarding public procurement, grants, transparency, as well as on the definition of misappropriation and safeguards against clemency measures in corruption cases. It stressed the need to address corruption within EU institutions through clear rules on conflicts of interest, asset declarations and **revolving doors**, applicable to Members and staff, and highlighted the shared responsibility of public authorities, the private sector, civil society, whistleblowers and independent media.

Parliament called for stricter, harmonised rules on **revolving doors**, including **cooling-off periods**, transparency requirements for Members paid outside activities, and clearer rules on **lobbying** and the representation of **private interests**. It also urged the Commission to reinstate questions on perceptions of corruption within EU institutions in the Eurobarometer and called for common rules on **political financing**, greater transparency of political foundations and intermediaries, and the auditing and disclosure of political party funding.

Enhancing detection, investigation and prosecution

Parliament called for enhanced cooperation and data sharing between Member States and EU bodies, including Europol, Eurojust, the EPPO and OLAF, to combat corruption and organised crime, protect the EU's financial interests and safeguard the integrity of EU institutions, while respecting fundamental rights and EU data-protection rules. It called for the involvement of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority (AMLA) and, where relevant, the future EU Customs Authority, particularly in tracing, freezing, confiscating and recovering assets linked to corruption, fraud, money laundering and the misuse of EU funds.

Parliament urged the Commission to promote innovative digital tools, including data analytics and artificial intelligence, to detect and prevent corruption, while addressing risks associated with crypto-assets and opaque ownership structures. It also called for additional resources and strengthened capacity for the EPPO to tackle serious cross-border corruption affecting the EU's interests.

Cross-border and international dimensions of corruption

Parliament stressed that corruption is increasingly linked to organised crime and digital technologies, which facilitate illicit financial flows and concealment of illicit activities. It called on the Commission to integrate anti-corruption measures into the EU's broader response to organised crime and to address the links between corruption, money laundering and asset concealment through a coordinated European approach. It highlighted the misuse of crypto-assets, encrypted communication tools, artificial intelligence and complex digital financial systems to conceal beneficial ownership and evade detection. Parliament called for stronger cooperation to trace, freeze, confiscate and recover the proceeds of corruption, returning illicit assets for public-interest or social purposes where appropriate.

Parliament also called for the next **multiannual financial framework** (MFF) to strengthen rule of law conditionality to protect the EU budget, reinforcing the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation and the annual rule of law cycle. It urged the Commission to include dedicated anti-corruption milestones and targets, where relevant, in future national and regional programmes to improve the prevention and detection of corruption and ensure accountability in the use of EU funds.

The resolution stressed the need to strengthen international cooperation in combating corruption, including fighting corruption abroad and establishing anti-corruption frameworks for acts committed by EU nationals for the benefit of private companies in non-EU countries and for acts committed abroad for the benefit of private companies in the EU. The EU should define its key priorities regarding the EU enlargement policy and international cooperation in anti-corruption, especially in the context of preparations by candidate countries for EU accession.

Members called for civil society and anti-corruption watchdogs to be involved in all phases of the strategy, stronger protection for whistleblowers and investigative journalists, and independent judicial and anti-corruption authorities. Parliament also called for full EU membership of the Council of Europe's "Group of States against Corruption" (GRECO), so that EU institutions face the same scrutiny as national authorities.

Implementation and strategic framework

Parliament called on the Commission to strengthen the implementation of the anti-corruption strategy through, where possible, binding measures and clear guidelines. It stressed the need for adequate financial and human resources, appropriate digital tools and effective legal instruments to prevent and combat corruption, while safeguarding the independence of competent authorities and upholding the EU's personal data protection rules.

Parliament urged the Commission to improve coordination with EU bodies responsible for protecting the Union's financial interests, notably the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), including in the context of the revision of their mandates. It also called on Member States that have not yet joined the EPPO to do so without delay.