



NEWS RELEASE

Brussels, 4 May, 2006 - The European Commission agreed yesterday to a green paper on the European Transparency Initiative (ETI), which will be the subject of consultation with stakeholders for the next several months. Edith Mastebroek, member of the European Parliament and chairwoman of the European Chapter of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) welcomes this progress towards making EU institutions more transparent.

"I expect that the Commission will receive constructive feedback from stakeholders on this proposal. We should be careful not to choose voluntary measures, only because they are the easiest to gain agreement on. I have my doubts whether voluntary registration of lobbying and NGO activities will improve the current lack of transparency, and I explicitly do not exclude the possibility for mandatory registration," said MEP Edith Mastebroek.

Commissioner Siim Kallas has come up with other ideas as part of the ETI, which will use a different, less open, procedure than the green paper for gaining feedback on the proposals. Some of these ideas include boosting the transparency of the European Parliament, by improving MEPs' statements of interests.

Mastebroek: "We welcome this open process for some of the aspects of the ETI, and I feel that such open approaches are necessary to increase trust in public administration. But a small point of criticism is that the same open approach could have been used for all the issues to be covered by this initiative, whereby citizens, the press and other stakeholders would be able to give their input. This is a missed opportunity for the European Commission."

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