



CEMR and the European Parliament resolution on the activities of lobbyists in the European institutions

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) as the European umbrella organisation of national associations representing local and regional government understands that the topic is a sensitive issue and shares the Commission and Parliament's view that there is a need and an interest to regulate to some extent the activities of interest representatives.

However, CEMR is concerned about paragraph 8, on the treatment of lobbyists. As the paragraph stands today, it considers representatives of regional and local government as being of the same nature as professional lobbyist, companies, NGOs, etc.

CEMR would like to draw attention to the fact that local and regional authorities and their elected representatives are in line with democratic principles, they are organised in a transparent and accountable way and thus dispose of a legitimacy, which CEMR believes distinguishes them from other lobbyists that follow purely or mainly commercial, financial, professional or single-issue interests.

CEMR is aware that an amendment has been tabled on this issue (Amendment 43) and that a compromise text is being proposed for paragraph 8, both of which CEMR supports. Therefore, CEMR asks to support the following compromise amendment on paragraph 8:

8. 'Emphasises that all actors, both public and private interest representatives, outside the European institutions falling within that definition and regularly influencing the institutions should be considered as lobbyists and treated in the same way: professional lobbyists, companies' in-house lobbyists, NGOs, think-tanks, trade associations, trade unions and employers' organisations, profit-making and non-profit organisations and lawyers when their purpose is to influence policy rather than case-law or to give legal advice; stresses also, however, that regions and municipalities of the Member States, as well as political parties at national and European level and those bodies which have a legal status in the Treaties do not fall within the scope of these rules when they are acting according to the role and the tasks of the represented bodies foreseen in the Treaties;'

CEMR strongly welcomes the reference to regions and municipalities in amendment 43 and the new compromise amendment. CEMR still feels, however, that there is a potential ambiguity concerning the status of European and national associations of local and regional government.

CEMR's preference would therefore be for the final sentence to read (modification is underlined):

'...stresses also, however, that regions and municipalities of the Member States, and their representative associations, as well as political parties at national and European level and those bodies which have a legal status in the Treaties do not fall within the scope of these rules when they are acting according to the role and the tasks of the represented bodies foreseen in the Treaties;'