2016 Work Plan for the Transparency and Democracy Greens/EFA Priority

The Transparency and Democracy Priority is structured in 3 pillars:

1. Anti-corruption
2. Lobby transparency
3. Participation in decision-making

The following T&D campaigns were prioritised during the working group meeting of 9th March 2016 following extensive consultation with NGOs and within the Greens/EFA group.

This is without prejudice to the ongoing work by advisors, MEPs and staff at committee level, which the T&D WG will support with specific actions as required.

Pillar 1: Anti-corruption

Whistle-blower (WB) protection:

- Commission a draft Directive on Whistle-blower protection for public and private institutions across Europe, consult with key experts on legal basis and plan public launch for 4 May.
- Public-facing campaign to call on EC to present legislative proposal: photo opps, using whistles, potential “do it yourself” photo exhibition featuring case studies of prominent whistle-blowers and why they need protection, etc. Event gathering together whistle-blowers in 2nd half of the year to ensure sustained attention.
- Social media outreach using the share-pic on whistle-blowing (on the right) to call for a Directive, e.g. at the start of Antoine Deltour's trial on 26 April 2016.
- Whistle-blower cloud: The bureau has approved the project. A budget decision to contribute €10,000 from T&D budget is still pending. Launch date is planned for end of April/beginning of May.

Corruption risks in cohesion policy:

- A study has been commissioned, due to be launched in the second half of May, perhaps at an ITCO event (intergroup on Integrity, Transparency, Corruption and Organised crime)

Transparency of MEP allowances and spending, particularly the General Allowance:

- Do an audit of the best practice within our group
- Develop internal rules and investigate reporting tools that might make transparency easier
- Public-facing campaign e.g. Using share-pic on the right
- Campaign on reform of Code of Conduct for MEPs and EP discharge
Controlling Conflicts of Interest

- Party financing: Commission a study to root out examples of conflicts of interest. Also, ensure that the new Authority to control party financing in the EU is truly independent.
- Targeted press work in case conflicts of interest (e.g. in MEP side-jobs) are revealed.

Strategic focus on Baltic to Balkans: Anti-corruption is a key issue in the region and we want our work on anti-corruption to be relevant for them and to support them in their national campaigning. Preliminary feedback from national partners suggests that there is a need for information-sharing (e.g. a seminar) and capacity-building so that national groups are able to react quickly to emerging scandals. It was agreed that we would work to define a campaign strategy in cooperation with local groups and then take a decision.

Pillar 2: Lobbying transparency

Lobbycal: https://lobbycal.greens-efa-service.eu/all/
- More work to be done to promote it, in particular via the EGP to spread it to other green groups.
- If we have more widespread use of the tool within our group we can start shaming others for lagging behind
- Analyze data on our meetings after one year.
- Periodic tweeting by our MEPs, for example one a month “See my list of #lobby meetings here: LINK #transparency”

Lobbycloud: https://lobbycloud.eu/
- Test new features, write user and installation manual and spread around Green/EFA group. Analyse legal risks.
- Present lobbycloud to the EGP and get them to promote the tools amongst national groups
- Further develop lobbycloud so there is synergy with lobbycal e.g. so that both meetings and documents can be published using the same email address. Explore other technical developments.
- Use lobbycloud to track the documents during the VW inquiry committee as a test case
- Check feasibility of improving lobbycloud further to compare lobby docs with EC proposals or MEP amendments, to see if there are connections between amendments and biased drafts on one hand and conflicts of interest on the other.

Independent expertise/capture of decision-making:
- Show concrete problems with the capture of science in EU decision-making, using GMOs/pesticides as an example. Request documents on glyphosate approvals and appeal against lack of transparency.
- Do research on power of the tax lobby, with tax justice working group
- Translate Helga’s infographic on expert groups and use in different countries
- Work with CONT on another budget freeze

IIA on lobby register:
- Campaign for strong review of lobby register, to include also the Council
- Work with key NGOS to develop campaign plan
- Show the real-life impacts of shady lobbying: continue with car lobby research (also to criticize comitology decision-making process). Pick out examples of excessive influence in list of Commissioners’ meetings, etc.
Pillar 3: Participation

Realising real access to documents for citizens (Open Data)
- Handbook, or app, on access to documents (“A book that would give an overview of the historical development and the factual situation today, giving guidance for journalists, NGOs and the general public on access to documents on the EU level”)
- Use International Right to Know Day, 28 September 2016, to draw attention to need to reform EU rules on access to documents

Defending freedom of information against policies that seek to lock down information (e.g. copyright, trade secrets)
- Use World Press Freedom Day (3rd May) to send a message out about the importance of press freedom and access to information, protection for whistle-blowers etc.
- We have a trade secrets share-pic for use on social media and will campaign before the plenary vote.
- Will use VW inquiry committee to raise issues with company secrets, copyright, and lack of protection for whistle-blowers and NGOs

Council transparency / transparency of trilogues
- Minutes of Working Party meetings to be taken, and made public
- Group position on transparency of trilogues
- Launch public facing campaign on decision-making transparency using share-pic

Aarhus convention
- Organise a training on the Aarhus Convention to ensure that all staff members know about the procedural rights and obligations provided.

European Citizens’ Initiative:
- Push commission for proposal on ECI/AFCO legislative INI report on ECI/ Push NL presidency or Slovakian to act (allies in Council are Germany, Luxembourg and Austria)
- Raise public awareness of ECI
- Work on improvements that don't need legal change in the meantime
- Get ECI onto EC WP 2017 (plus other key issues)
About the work plan 2016

On 3rd February 2016, the Greens/EFA Transparency and Democracy working group met to discuss the full list of goals and campaign activities that had been proposed to us by MEP offices, group advisors and key civil society organisations during the open consultation. During the meeting an initial short list of the activities to prioritise in 2016 was decided upon.

MEP offices and NGOs were then invited to make additional proposals, and to further define the campaign activities by 4 March 2016 at noon. The final version of the 2016 work plan was then adopted at the Transparency and Democracy working group of 9 March 2016.

Criteria for prioritising campaign activities
We decided that the following criteria were the most important when it came to prioritising the various actions proposed during the open consultation on the work programme for 2016.

- **Leadership from the office of an MEP**: This is key if the activities are to succeed
- **Possibility of having an impact**: Since resources are limited, it makes sense to focus more on areas in which we are likely to achieve improvements
- **Visibility**: We would like to focus on activities that will capture media and public attention
- **Synergies**: We should work to create synergies between the various priorities and the actions of other priorities, committees and MEP offices
- **Added-value**: We should coordinate efficiently to avoid duplications of efforts and to reinforce initiatives that follow our line