

# EP Reaction to “Qatargate”

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## News

On 15 December 2022, MEPs adopted a [resolution](#) calling for the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions. The resolution lays down the consequences that the EP would draw following allegations of bribes paid by the states of Qatar and Morocco to MEPs, former MEPs and EP staff in exchange for influence at the EP. This scandal, which is also dubbed “[Qatargate](#)”, was revealed after the Belgian police had carried out [raids against the suspects](#) on 9 December 2022. They resulted, *inter alia*, in the arrest of Greek MEP *Eva Kaili* who served Vice-President of the EP.

In the resolution, MEPs note “with concern that internal monitoring and alert mechanisms of the EU institutions have dramatically failed to detect ongoing corruption”. They denounce the alleged corruption attempts by Qatar, which would constitute serious foreign interference in European democracy. As an immediate measure, MEPs decided to suspend all work on legislative files relating to Qatar, particularly concerning visa liberalisation and the EU aviation agreement with Qatar.

They also call for both a special committee and an inquiry committee. The special committee should be tasked with identifying potential flaws in the EP’s rules on transparency, integrity and corruption and making proposals for reforms, building on the work of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and best practices in other parliaments. Other measures should include the following:

- Putting one EP vice-president in charge of integrity and fighting corruption and foreign interference in Parliament;
- Adopting legislation on an ethics body;
- Introducing a cooling-off period for former MEPs to avoid the negative effects of the so-called phenomenon of revolving doors;
- Establishing a ban at EU level on donations from third countries to MEPs and political parties;
- Strengthening the EU transparency register by increasing the budget and the number of staff and by expanding it to representatives of non-EU countries;
- Strengthened monitoring of friendship groups;
- Aligning the [EU staff regulation](#) with the [Whistleblowers Directive](#).

Ultimately, the resolution emphasises the role of the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO), the EU Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), Europol and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in the fight against corruption. It calls for the capacities of and cooperation between the EPPO and OLAF to be strengthened further as well as for common anti-corruption rules applicable to MEPs and staff of EU bodies.

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