

MEPs Block Interinstitutional Ethics Body

Thomas Wahl

News

On 14 May 2025, the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) **voted against** the European Parliament's participation in the **interinstitutional ethics body**.

This had been proposed following the bribery scandal involving the then Vice-President of the European Parliament (EP), *Eva Kaili* (formerly S&D), which concerned the involvement of MEPs and EU officials in corruption, money laundering and organised crime under the influence of the governments of Qatar, Morocco and Mauritania (Qatargate →[eucrim 4/2022, 242-243](#)).

The aim was to create an independent, external ethics committee to which the Commission, the EP and other institutions would be accountable. In May 2024, the institutions signed the agreement that sets up the ethics body (→[eucrim 2/2024, 111-112](#)). It would be mandated to promote a common culture of ethics and transparency amongst the parties, in particular by developing common minimum standards and by fostering the exchange of best practices on the matter. The European Council and the Council of the EU already said no to their participation.

In order for the EP to participate in the ethics body, an amendment to the Rules of Procedure would have been necessary. This has now been rejected by a majority of conservative and right-wing MEPs. **They opposed** "the creation of a new external body to regulate the internal functioning of the European Parliament" or argued that the body "would violate the presumption of innocence and publicly stigmatize politicians". MEPs also said that, instead of new structures, existing law enforcement agencies, such as OLAF and the EPPO should be strengthened, alongside national judiciaries.

As an alternative to the ethics body, a proposal for an internal parliamentary disciplinary body, without the participation of the other EU institutions, is being drawn up. If this reform of the internal procedure receives a majority, the EP will make a final decision on the termination of the interinstitutional agreement that was to create the ethics body.

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