



Association européenne pour la
défense des droits et des libertés

ASSEDEL's view on the introduction of a transparency register to regulate the lobbying activities the Assembly

ASSEDEL strongly believes that the participation of interest groups in parliamentary activities is fundamental. A pluralist dialogue is necessary to make legislation coherent with the needs of all people. However, we understand that, due to the lack of information, lobbying activities tend to have a poor public image. Indeed, if people are not able to know which interests are represented at the Parliament and on whose behalf, they will lose their trust in the decision-making process. In this sense, introducing a transparency register at the Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe would help rebuild this relationship. ASSEDEL is registered at the European Parliament which is a mandatory condition to be authorised to perform its activities within the institution. We understand the usefulness of having such a register. We consider that it amounts to a legitimate exchange of services. Interest groups must provide certain essential information, such as identity, mission, and interests, to be able to conduct activities influencing the parliamentary mechanism. ASSEDEL believes that having a transparency register could improve the image of lobbying activities in the collective consciousness.

ASSEDEL's view on the introduction of a code of conduct for lobbying activities in the Assembly

ASSEDEL considers it necessary to introduce a code of conduct for the lobbying activities carried out at the Assembly. First, they have an influence on the decisions adopted by the institution. Therefore, it appears that no one should be able to interfere at will with the laws of the people. In this sense, a code of conduct would reduce the risk of abuses. Then, a code of conduct would legitimate the status of lobbyist individuals or groups. A code based on honesty, transparency, and good faith would help restoring the confidence in lobbying. Indeed, it would provide accountability. Indeed, along with the transparency register that facilitate identification, having a code of conduct would ensure the people that individuals or groups that disrespect the rules of lobbying would not go unpunished. Finally, a code of conduct would establish equality among the individuals and groups carrying out lobbying. They would all be submitted to the same obligation and enjoy the same rights. Then, ASSEDEL support the idea that adopting a code of conduct would harmonize the regulation of the lobbying activities performed at the Assembly.

ASSEDEL's view on the meaningful participation of the civil society and the NGO's access to the Assembly

ASSEDEL believes that the meaningful participation of the civil society is a fundamental element of a democratic system. It is necessary that all interests have the opportunity to be represented before the institutions in charge of the decision-making process. In this sense, ASSEDEL considers that the Assembly should strengthen its relationship with the civil society to respect this principle. Indeed, such a participation is meaningful only if the civil society can have a concrete impact on the decision taken by the institution. For instance, the European Parliament authorises the registered organisations to intervene in the work of the MPs. Interest groups can submit amendments to the legislation discussed with the assembly. It is also possible to obtain the patronage of certain projects of the Parliament and organise events directly with the members of the assembly. Another example is the Human Rights Council. The Resolution E/Res/1996/31 provides an example of equal and meaningful participation in the work of international institution. The Resolution is based on the regular consultation of NGOs and allows them to submit written statement, make oral interventions during sessions, and participate in debates and interactive dialogues directly with the Council. ASSEDEL supports this specific idea of participation. It considers that the Assembly should engage with this type of consultation and open its doors to the civil society both literally and figuratively.