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Europe**



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Public Conference

Participation, Ethics and Transparency: What citizens want from Brussels

16 November 2012, Brussels

'ALTER-Citizens project' central event

As part of the EU-funded project '*Accountability, Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation: Citizens have a right to know (ALTER-Citizens)*', Friends of the Earth Europe, Access Info Europe, Health Action International, Spinwatch, Environmental Law Service and Aitec (Association Internationale des Techniciens, Experts et Chercheurs) invite you to a half-day conference on lobbying transparency, ethics regulation, accountability and citizen participation in the European Union (EU) on Friday 16 November 2012.

The conference is the central event of the ALTER-Citizens project, which strives to create a two-way dialogue and greater trust between European public officials and European citizens, and foster enhanced citizen participation in EU decision-making. In this context, groups of citizens from each of the countries involved in the project (Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom) will come to Brussels to take part in NGO workshops and networking spaces, meetings with EU officials, and lobby tours around the Brussels EU quarter.

Please find the agenda for the public conference on 16 November 2012 below. You can register for the conference at amiando.com/alter

Location: International Press Center, Residence Palace, Rue de la Loi 155, 1050 Brussels





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Friday November 16th: Public conference

8.45 - 9.15: Registration

9.15 - 9.30: Welcome – ALTER Citizens Project partner

SESSION 1: 9.30 - 11.00

The link between ethics regulation and citizens' trust: what can be learnt from the European Parliament experience and how can it be used for enhanced citizens' participation in Brussels and Member States?

Objective: Concrete cases of lack of transparency or pro-ethics/transparency initiatives in the European Parliament and Member States are presented to trigger a broader discussion about ethics issues (revolving door, conflicts of interest) in Brussels and Member States. Care will be taken to provide both civil society and institutional perspectives on the matter in anticipation of a debate with the audience.

9.30 – 10.30: Panel discussion followed by a questions and answers session moderated by Méabh McMahon (EU journalist, Brussels)

- **Paul de Clerck** (Economic Justice Programme Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Europe)
- **Tim King** (Editor, European Voice)
- **Rainer Wieland** (European Parliament, Vice-President responsible for Transparency)
- **Isabelle Durant** (European Parliament, Vice-President)

10.30-11.00: Questions and Answers with audience

11.00 - 11.15: Coffee break





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11.15– 13.00

SESSION 2: 11.15 - 13.00

Transparency and citizen participation: openness towards trust and better dialogue

Objective: Transition from previous session. Frame the discussion around the need for transparency in EU Decision-making as well as opened communication to promote better citizen participation and stimulate interest for EU issues. Highlight that the lack of transparency and openness is linked to erosion of citizens' trust in the EU.

11.15 – 12.30: Presentations and panel discussion moderated by Raj Chari (Department of Political Science, Trinity College, Dublin)

Citizens' Questions: A team of citizens (max. 3) will ask the representatives of the European Commission, Parliament and Ombudsman concrete questions in relation to ethics, transparency and openness.

- **Christian Linder** (Member of Cabinet, Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič, European Commission)
- **Jose Luis Rufas** (Transparency Register Secretariat, European Parliament)
- **Gundi Gadesmann** (Office of the European Ombudsman)
- **Peter Facey** (Unlock Democracy, member of the UK Alliance for Lobbying Transparency)

12.30 – 12.55: Questions and Answers with audience

12.55 – 13.00: Closing – Project Partner



The project partners gratefully acknowledge financial assistance from the European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). This conference is part of the ALTER-Citizens project. The contents of this event and the event materials are the sole responsibility of the project partners and cannot be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Commission. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information provided at this event or in the event materials.

