



# Ethical framework for Members of the European Commission

SG.C.2 – Ethics, Good Administration and  
Relations with the European Ombudsman



## General principles

Obligations directly derived from the Treaties – further clarified in the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission

- Members have to behave and perform their duties with complete **independence** – they must not seek instructions from any Government or other institution, body, office or entity.
- Integrity, dignity, loyalty and discretion.
- Members promote the general interest of the Union.
- Members have to observe the highest standards of ethical conduct.

# Independence

1. Declaration of interests.
2. Obligation to notify potential conflicts of interest during mandate.
3. No paid or unpaid activities during the mandate (exceptions: honorary functions in foundations or similar bodies, unpaid articles/ books/ courses/ speeches and conferences).
4. Rules on gifts ( $\leq$ EUR 150), hospitality, no free travel, awards.

## Participation in politics

- Members can participate in politics as members of political parties.
- But: no executive functions.
- Different rules for participation in national and European politics (e.g. participation in campaigns).

# Transparency

- Only meet interest representatives whose organisations are registered ('EU Transparency Register').
- Publication of all meetings with interest representatives.
- Publication of missions and mission expenses.

# Collegiality, discretion, integrity

1. Loyalty towards the Commission and Commission decisions
2. No disclosure of what is said in College meetings
3. Discretion with regard to internal information
4. Use of Commission resources for the performance of the duties

## Application of the Code

- The President ensures the proper application of the Code.
- The President is assisted by the Commission's Independent Ethical Committee.

*In case of doubt, Commissioners/Cabinets should ask the President, her Cabinet or the Secretariat-General (Secretary-General or Unit SG.C.2).*

## Useful links

### My Intracomm

- <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/DG/Cabinet/human-resources/Pages/Ethics.aspx>

### Europa

- [https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/service-standards-and-principles/ethics-and-good-administration/commissioners-and-ethics\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/service-standards-and-principles/ethics-and-good-administration/commissioners-and-ethics_en)