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*The Quaestors*

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28.03.2019

## NOTICE

(10/2019)

**Subject: Unofficial groupings of Members, including friendship groups**

Members are informed that following the Plenary decision of 31 January 2019 on the revision of the Rules of Procedure, revised rules have been adopted with regard to unofficial groupings, which include also so called friendship groups (Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure). The purpose of the new rules, which became applicable on 11 February 2019, is to prevent possible confusion or contradiction with official positions of the European Parliament.

In the exercise of their free mandate and while respecting the values of the European Union, Members may form or participate in unofficial groupings of Members, including friendship groups, for the purpose of holding informal exchanges of views on specific issues across different political groups, drawing on members of different parliamentary committees and of promoting contact between Members and civil society.

Such unofficial groupings must be fully transparent in their actions and must not engage in any activities that might result in confusion with the official activities of Parliament or of its bodies. In particular, they may not organise events in third countries that coincide with a mission of an official Parliament body, including an official election observation delegation.

Only interest representatives registered in the Transparency register may participate in activities of such unofficial groupings organised on Parliament's premises, for instance by attending meetings or events of an unofficial grouping, by offering support to it or by co-hosting its events.

Unofficial groupings are required to declare, by the end of the following month, any support, whether in cash or in kind, which Members have not declared individually in accordance with their obligations under the Code of Conduct for Members with respect to financial interests and conflicts of interest and the implementing measures thereof. This obligation applies individually to each Member participating in an unofficial grouping and benefiting from such a support.

Declarations shall be submitted to the Member's Administration Unit by email to [AdminMEP@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:AdminMEP@europarl.europa.eu) and the signed original returned to: Members' Administration Unit - Rue Wiertz, 60 - PHS 07B019 B - 1047 Brussels. The declaration will be published on Parliament's website.

In the event that Members fail to declare such support the procedure laid down in Article 8 of the Code of Conduct applies, which can ultimately lead to the imposing by the President on the Member concerned of sanctions pursuant to Rule 166 of the Rules of Procedure.

Members' obligation to declare any support received in relation to the activities of the unofficial grouping is additional to their general obligations under the Code of Conduct to declare any support received from third parties.

Members are also informed that the rules governing the intergroups (Rule 34 Rules of procedure) remain unchanged.

Karol KARSKI

Chair-in-Office