

ALTER-EU holding European Commission accountable on expert panels

ALTER-EU on August 8 wrote to Commission President Barroso and Vice-President Kallas and five other Commissioners enquiring about the progress made on the publication of the names of people advising the Commission in expert groups. The Commission had promised to publish the names by the summer. ALTER-EU demands that consistent membership criteria and a transparent selection process is set up for all expert groups. Only by doing so can privileged access for certain interests be avoided.

Read the letter to Barroso and Kallas on

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Barroso&Kallas-August-2008.pdf>

ALTER-EU also wrote to Commissioners Verheugen, Potocnik, Piebalgs, Vassiliou and Dimas. Find the letters below:

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Verheugen-August-2008.pdf>

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Potocnik-August-2008.pdf>

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Piebalgs-August-2008.pdf>

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Vassiliou-August-2008.pdf>

<http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/expertgroups/Letter-to-Dimas-August-2008.pdf>

Find a report by ALTER-EU on the composition and transparency of experts groups in the European Commission on

<http://www.alter-eu.org/en/system/files/publications/expertgroupsreport.pdf>

Irish considerations on future of Lisbon Treaty

The Irish press at the end of July wrote about government's considerations concerning a way forward on the Lisbon Treaty. According to two newspapers the following options are being discussed as precondition to hold a second vote:

- guarantee that every member state has a permanent European Commissioner
- delay the appointment of the new Commission until after the second Irish referendum
- written assurances on sensitive issues such as taxation, neutrality and abortion
- further reduction of the number of some member state's European Parliamentarians, but not for Ireland

It seems not likely that a second referendum will be held before the European elections in June 2009. A poll carried out by the UK based eurosceptic think-tank Open Europe shows that 71% of Irish voters are not in favour of a second referendum on the Lisbon Treaty.

Read about the poll on <http://euobserver.com/843/26549> and <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/poll-reveals-irish-animosity-referendum-rerun/article-174554>

Find the results in statistic tables on <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/research/redc.pdf>

Read about the options on <http://euobserver.com/18/26565> and <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/ireland-eyes-full-time-commissioner-treaty-rescue-plan/article-174650>

Read an article about ratification by the Czech Republic on <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/czech-president-digs-heels-eu-treaty/article-174511> and a comment on <http://euobserver.com/9/26579/?rk=1>

Controversial discussions to generate interest in European elections

Monica Frassoni, co-president of the Greens/European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament, in an interview with euractiv, identifies the "common lack of understanding that there is a power at the EU level where one can have an impact as a voter" as main reason for low turnout in European elections. She blames national governments and media for not informing citizens adequately about European politics. Frassoni calls for controversial debates on concrete issues in order to generate interest on European politics and elections.

Read the interview on <http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/frassoni-european-elections-need-big-fight/article-174532>

Read a summary on <http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/interview-eu-needs-big-fight-2009-election/article-174536>

Parties shall nominate their candidate as Commission president before European elections in June 2009.

She demands a campaign supported by among others the European Federalists and the European Movements. If you support the following

- "The President of the European Commission should no longer be chosen behind closed doors in the European Council.
- Instead the President of the European Commission should be chosen by the European Parliament, and by implication us the voters, as hinted in articles 9A and 9D of the Lisbon Treaty.
- Therefore, the political parties in the European Parliament should, in good time before the June 2009 parliament elections, answer the question: Who's Your Candidate?"

Go to www.elect-your-president.eu <<http://www.elect-your-president.eu/>> to sign.

European Training Institute seeking cooperation with NGOs

The European Training Institute (ETI), offering training in European public affairs, under its new managing director Stéphane Vanderveken, has initiated a strategic reflection on how to play a role in bringing together representatives of public interest organisations, business and governments/EU institutions. As a first initiative the ETI in autumn lunches a first training module specifically for the non-profit sector. The one-day program focuses on new features of EU decision making and the Comitology. The ETI recently introduced special NGO tariffs for all its other trainings. The ETI is interested to develop its offers in partnership with public interest organisations.

If you are interested to discuss potential cooperation you are welcome to contact the Managing Director Stéphane Vanderveken at sva@e-t-i.be

Find further information about the NGO training module on http://www.e-t-i.be/course_upgrading_ngo_lobbying.asp

Find the ETI homepage at www.e-t-i.be <<http://www.e-t-i.be/>>