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News | 18.04.2018

We need more transparency and accountability for MEP spending

Every year, almost 40 million euros is spent by MEPs without any accountability, oversight or control. This General Expenditure Allowance (GEA) adds up to almost 200 million euros in one Parliamentary term.

Every MEP receives over €4,400 a month for their office and admin costs but are under no obligation to report on how they spend it.

The Greens/EFA group has consistently pushed for improvements to the system, to make it harder for Members to treat the money as a top-up to their salaries.

The group has also adopted its own [internal policy on the transparency of the GEA](#).

Thanks to the added pressure of NGOs and journalists, who have taken the European Parliament to the ECJ over its lack of transparency and accountability in the spending of the various allowances, and launched public petitions, the European Parliament finally decided to reform the rules. These are supposed to enter into force for the next Parliamentary term.

We are calling for obligations to:

- receive money in a separate bank account (strict prohibition of receiving this money where you receive your salary)
- keep all receipts of all spending
- return unspent money at the end of the mandate
- publish information about how the GEA is spent, by categories of spending

In addition, spot checks of the spending by the European Parliament administration to ensure that it is being done correctly.

These demands have been put to the European Parliament Bureau ad-hoc Working Group on the General Expenditure Allowance - [see letter from Greens/EFA MEP Heidi Hautala](#).

All debates on how to reform the system have been held behind closed doors in an ad hoc working group. Two options on how to reform the system were presented on Monday to the European Parliament bureau, again, in an in camera meeting. The first was to split the lump sum into two and have a part of that checked by the EP services, the second – which gained majority support in the first exchange of views - was to keep the lump sum intact but to introduce greater transparency, but no checks on the spending.

But we are now seeing that the EPP group is on a crusade against transparency and democracy and is threatening to undo even the limited progress so far (the first 3 points have already been adopted by the Parliament plenary in previous resolutions). We're delighted to have defeated [their amendments to the discharge of the parliament's budget](#), but this fight is not over yet.

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