

To the Secretary-General of the European Parliament Alessandro Chiocchetti
To the College of Quaestors

Open letter to ask for a comprehensive, transparent, and effective ban on Amazon lobbying in the European Parliament

Dear Mr Chiocchetti,
Dear College of Quaestors,

On Tuesday, 27 February 2024, the College of Quaestors, at the request of the EMPL Committee, adopted the decision to withdraw Amazon's lobbying badges following the company's repeated refusal to attend parliamentary hearings. In particular, Amazon refused to attend a parliamentary hearing on working conditions in its warehouses on 23 January 2024, [calling](#) the hearing "one-sided" (after initially saying it was a scheduling problem).

We welcome this important decision from the Parliament. While Amazon refuses to allow parliamentary scrutiny of its harmful and exploitative activities, it has been actively seeking to influence the political process. Since 2013 the company [has spent](#) €18.8 million towards lobbying the EU institutions. According to data from the website Parltrack, Amazon had nine meetings with MEPs in January alone, including a meeting the day after the parliamentary hearing it refused to attend on 23 January.

At the same time, Amazon has shown a lack of transparency on its lobbying activities. The Secretariat of the EU Transparency Register is currently investigating Amazon for failing to report on its affiliations to several think tanks and declaring a lobbying budget that is seemingly too low.

Amazon's track record, marred by allegations of exploitative labour practices, antitrust violations, tax dodging, and environmental negligence, has drawn sharp criticism from advocacy groups worldwide. On the same day of the parliamentary hearing, Amazon was fined €32 million by the French data protection agency CNIL for ["overly intrusive" surveillance of its workers](#) in Amazon's warehouses. In 2021, Amazon was hit with a [then record fine](#) of €746 million for failure to comply with the GDPR. It remains to be seen if Amazon fully complies with the gatekeeper obligations in the EU's Digital Markets Act (DMA).

The impact of the decision to trigger Rule 123 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament will depend on a comprehensive, transparent, and effective implementation.

We know that Amazon's voice extends far further than just its accredited lobbyists. The transparency register shows that, in 2023 alone, Amazon spent between €2,090,000-€3.099.982 on 20 consultancies that lobby on behalf of the company.

The lobby firms which declared Amazon as a client in 2022 include:

- FleishmanHillard (paid between €400,000 - €499,999)
- KREAB (paid between €400,000 – €499,999)
- FTI Consulting Belgium (paid between €400,000 – €499,999)
- Edelman Public Relations Worldwide (paid between €200,000 - €299,999)
- Flint Europe (paid between €100,000 – €199,999)
- Concilius (paid between €100,000 – €199,999)
- Deloitte (paid between €100,000 - €199,999)
- Hanbury strategy and Communications (paid between €100,000 - €199,999)
- APCO Worldwide (paid between €50,000 – €99,999)

- Concilius AG (paid between €50,000 - €99,999)
- Latham & Watkins LLP (paid between €50,000 - €99,999)
- Sec Newgate EU (paid between €50,000 - €99,999)
- Strand Partners (paid between €50,000 - €99,999)
- Clifford Chance LLP (paid between €25,000 - €49,999)
- Vulcan Consulting Limited (paid between €25,000 - €49,999)
- Anna Klissouras Solutions (paid between €10,000 - 24,999)
- The Health Policy Partnership (paid between €10,000 - €24,999)
- Leading Edge Global Communications (paid between €10,000 - €24,999)
- Telage (paid less than €10,000)
- NOVE (paid less than €10,000)

To give real effect to the decision to restrict Amazon's access to the European Parliament access should also be denied to all those seeking to lobby MEPs on behalf of Amazon. In practice that would mean that MEPs refuse to meet with the above-listed organisations if they seek to represent Amazon or its interests.

We urge you to publicly support a comprehensive and effective application of the ban on Amazon lobbyists which should encompass:

- Refusal of meetings with organisations that seek to influence decision-making processes on behalf of Amazon;
- Exclusion of Amazon representatives from the European Parliament building as guests;
- Refusal by MEPs to attend lobby meetings with Amazon off the premises of the European Parliament;
- Report and/or make public any attempts by Amazon lobbyists, or third parties acting on behalf of Amazon, to lobby MEPs following the ban.

These measures should only be lifted if Amazon (1) attends a hearing on working conditions in its warehouses in a similar setup as the hearing on 23 January and (2) accepts a visit from the EMPL Committee and workers' representatives to its warehouses in Poland and Germany once Committee missions are again allowed following the [election time barring period for travel](#).

Yours sincerely,

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Attac France

Balanced Economy ProjectBits of Freedom

Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)

Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)

Cyber Rights Organization (CRO)

Defend Democracy

LobbyControl

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP)

industriAll European Trade Union

European Federation of Food, Agriculture, and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT)

European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)

European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
Goliathwatch
Open Markets Institute (Europe)
Politiscope
UNI Europa
World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED)
Xnet, Institute for Democratic Digitalisation