### **European Parliament**

2019-2024



#### Committee on Constitutional Affairs

2021/0381(COD)

18.10.2022

### **OPINION**

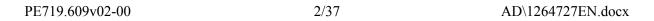
of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

for the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the transparency and targeting of political advertising (COM(2021)0731 – C9-0433/2021 – 2021/0381(COD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Daniel Freund

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#### SHORT JUSTIFICATION

In the sensitive context of political advertising, the rapporteur for opinion believes that it is necessary to enhance transparency of the rules and clarify their scope while reinforcing safeguard mechanisms and reducing uncertainties with regard to compliance.

The draft report proposes a creation of a single European political advertisement repository, set up and managed by the Commission, of which the costs are covered by a fee that is proportionate to its use and to income generated from political advertising while exempting SMEs. This should both reduce compliance costs and enhance transparency of the market for the political advertising, including for researchers.

A majority of Member States have provisions allowing the candidates or parties to have free and proportionate access to traditional media during electoral campaigns. Given the shift to non-linear media such as social platforms, the rapporteur for opinion believes that during the elections to the European Parliament, very large online platforms should be required to display a limited amount of political ads free of charge. This should be based on the principle of equal access and give proportionate visibility to electoral entities duly registered for such elections.

The legislative text should also clarify the scope of activities which constitute political advertising – therefore both advertisement generated and promoted by the same actor as well as commercial advertising which is liable to have an impact in particular on regulatory, legislative and voting behaviour should qualify as political advertising and be subjected to regulation. On the other hand, it should be clarified that only those activities which aim exclusively at informing the citizens about the given election, should be exempted.

The complex context of political advertising requires further safeguards. In addition to general provisions in the Digital Services Act regarding risk assessment and mitigation, specific due diligence measures should therefore be reinforced. Similar consideration applies to data protection rules in particular as far as use of targeting and amplification techniques is concerned, but also with regard to tracking of the user's interaction with political ads. It should also be clarified that the actors monitoring and ensuring compliance with those rules need to be provided with sufficient resources to discharge their duties efficiently.

#### **AMENDMENTS**

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs calls on the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, as the committee responsible, to take into account the following amendments:

**Amendment 1** 

Proposal for a regulation Recital 4

### The need to ensure transparency is (4) a legitimate public goal, in conformity with the values shared by the EU and its Member States pursuant to Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union ('TEU'). It is not always easy for citizens to recognise political advertisements and exercise their democratic rights in an informed manner. A high level of transparency is necessary, among others, to support an open and fair political debate and free and fair elections or referendums and to combat disinformation and unlawful interference including from abroad. Political advertising can be a vector of disinformation in particular where the advertising does not disclose its political nature, and where it is targeted. Transparency of political advertising contributes to enabling voters to better understand when they are being presented with a political advertisement on whose behalf that advertisement is being made, and how they are being targeted by an advertising service provider, so that voters are better placed to make informed choices.

#### Amendment

**(4)** 

The need to ensure transparency is a legitimate public goal as also highlighted in the 'Report on the final outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe' released on 9 May 2022, in conformity with the values shared by the EU and its Member States pursuant to Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union ('TEU'), which remain subject to rights recognised in particular in Article 16 TFEU and Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('Charter') entitling everyone to the protection of personal data concerning them. It is not always easy for citizens to recognise political advertisements and exercise their democratic rights in an informed manner. A high level of transparency and due diligence is necessary, among others, to support an open and fair political debate and free and fair elections or referendums and to combat disinformation and unlawful interference including from abroad. Political advertising can be a vector of disinformation in particular where the advertising does not disclose its political nature, and where it is targeted. Transparency of political advertising contributes to enabling voters to better understand when they are being presented with a political advertisement on whose behalf that advertisement is being made. and how they are being targeted by an advertising service provider, so that voters are better placed to make informed choices. In implementing those transparency requirements, public authorities should at all times observe fundamental rights, including the freedom of expression of the institutional and societal political actors concerned.

#### Amendment 2

#### Proposal for a regulation

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#### Recital 5

### Text proposed by the Commission

(5) In the context of political advertising, targeting techniques are frequently used. Targeting or amplification techniques should be understood as techniques that are used either to address a tailored political advertisement only to a specific person or group of persons or to increase the circulation, reach or visibility of a political advertisement. Given the power and the potential for the misuse of personal data of targeting, including through microtargeting and other advanced techniques, such techniques may present particular threats to legitimate public interests, such as fairness, equal opportunities and transparency in the electoral process and the fundamental right to be informed in an objective, transparent and pluralistic way.

#### Amendment

(5) In the context of political advertising, targeting techniques are frequently used. Targeting or amplification techniques should be understood as techniques that are used either to address a tailored political advertisement only to a specific person or group of persons or to increase the circulation, reach or visibility of a political advertisement. Given the power and the potential for the misuse of personal data of targeting, including through microtargeting and other advanced techniques, such techniques may present particular threats to legitimate public interests, such as fairness, freedom of expression, protection of EU nationals living abroad, equal opportunities and transparency in the electoral process and the fundamental right to be informed in an objective, transparent and pluralistic way.

#### Amendment 3

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 6

#### Text proposed by the Commission

(6) Political advertising is currently regulated heterogeneously in the Member States, which in many cases tends to focus on traditional media forms. Specific restrictions exist including on cross-border provisions of political advertising services. Some Member States prohibit EU service providers established in other Member States from providing services of a political nature or with a political purpose during electoral periods. At the same time, gaps and loopholes in national legislation are likely to exist in some Member States resulting in political advertising sometimes being disseminated without regard to

#### Amendment

Political advertising is currently (6) regulated heterogeneously in the Member States, which in many cases tends to focus on traditional media forms. Specific restrictions exist including on cross-border provisions of political advertising services affecting directly the capacity to conduct cross-border and pan-European political campaigns. Some Member States prohibit EU service providers established in other Member States from providing services of a political nature or with a political purpose during electoral periods. At the same time, gaps and loopholes are likely to exist in the national legislation of some Member

relevant national rules and thus risking undermining the objective of transparency regulation for political advertising. States, as well as in Union legislation, resulting in political advertising sometimes being disseminated without regard to relevant national rules and thus risking undermining the objective of transparency regulation for political advertising.

#### Amendment 4

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 9

Text proposed by the Commission

(9) In this context, providers of political advertising services are likely to be discouraged from providing their political advertising services in crossborder situations. This is particularly true for microenterprises and SMEs, which often do not have the resources to absorb or pass on the high compliance costs connected to the preparation, placement, publication or dissemination of political advertising in more than one Member State. This limits the availability of services and negatively impacts the possibility for service providers to innovate and offer multi-medium and multi-national campaigns within the internal market.

#### Amendment

(9) In this context, providers of political advertising services are likely to be discouraged from providing their political advertising services in crossborder situations. This is particularly true for microenterprises and SMEs, which often do not have the resources to absorb or pass on the high compliance costs connected to the preparation, placement, publication or dissemination of political advertising in more than one Member State. This limits the availability of services and negatively impacts the possibility for service providers to innovate and offer multi-medium and multi-national campaigns within the internal market, and represents an obstacle to the creation of a true pan-European public sphere.

#### Amendment 5

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 10

Text proposed by the Commission

(10) A consistent and high level of transparency of political advertising throughout the Union should therefore be ensured when political advertising services are provided, while divergences hampering the free circulation of related services within the internal market should be

#### Amendment

(10) A consistent and high level of transparency of political advertising throughout the Union should therefore be ensured when political advertising services are provided, while divergences hampering the free circulation of related services within the internal market should be

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prevented, by laying down uniform transparency obligations for providers of political advertising services guaranteeing the uniform protection of rights of persons and supervision throughout the internal market based on Article 114 of the TFEU.

prevented, by laying down uniform transparency and due diligence obligations for providers of political advertising services guaranteeing the uniform protection of rights of persons and supervision throughout the internal market based on Article 114 of the TFEU. Such obligations should also include a consistent set of due diligence requirements relevant to the context of political advertising.

#### Amendment 6

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 11

Text proposed by the Commission

(11) Member States should not maintain or introduce, in their national laws, provisions diverging from those laid down in this Regulation, in particular more or less stringent provisions to ensure a different level of transparency in political advertising. Full harmonisation of the transparency requirements linked to political advertisement increases legal certainty and reduces the fragmentation of the obligations that service providers meet in the context of political advertising.

#### Amendment

(11) Member States should not maintain or introduce, in their national laws, provisions diverging from those laid down in this Regulation, in particular more or less stringent provisions to ensure a different level of transparency *and due diligence* in political advertising. Full harmonisation of the transparency requirements linked to political advertisement increases legal certainty and reduces the fragmentation of the obligations that service providers meet in the context of political advertising.

#### Amendment 7

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 14

Text proposed by the Commission

(14) The Regulation should provide for harmonised transparency *requirement* applicable to economic actors providing political advertising and related services (i.e. activities that are normally provided for remuneration); those services consist in particular of the preparation, placement,

#### Amendment

(14) The Regulation should provide for harmonised transparency *and due diligence requirements* applicable to economic actors providing political advertising and related services (i.e. activities that are normally provided for remuneration); those services consist in

promotion, publication and dissemination of political advertising. The rules of this Regulation that provide for a high level of transparency of political advertising services are based on Article 114 of the TFEU. This Regulation should also address the use of targeting and amplification techniques in the context of the publication, dissemination or promotion of political advertising that involve the processing of personal data. The rules of this Regulation that address the use of targeting and amplification are based on Article 16 of the TFEU. Political advertising directed to individuals in a Member State *should include* advertising entirely prepared, placed or published by service providers established outside the Union but disseminated to individuals in the Union. To determine whether a political advertisement is directed to individuals in a Member State, account should be taken of factors linking it to that Member State, including language, context, objective of the advertisement and its means of dissemination

particular of the preparation, placement, promotion, publication and dissemination of political advertising. The rules of this Regulation that provide for a high level of transparency of political advertising services are based on Article 114 of the TFEU. This Regulation should also address the use of targeting and amplification techniques in the context of the publication, dissemination or promotion of political advertising that involve the processing of personal data. The rules of this Regulation that address the use of targeting and amplification are based on Article 16 of the TFEU. Those transparency and due diligence requirements should apply without prejudice to Regulation (EU) 2016/679, but it should be possible to provide for stricter conditions and rules in this Regulation for the processing of personal data in the specific context of political advertising. Political advertising directed to individuals in a Member State includes advertising entirely prepared, placed or published by service providers established outside the Union but disseminated to individuals in the Union. To determine whether a political advertisement is directed to individuals in a Member State, account should be taken of factors linking it to that Member State, including language, context, objective of the advertisement and its means of dissemination

#### **Amendment 8**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 15

Text proposed by the Commission

(15) There is no existing definition of political advertising or political advertisement at Union level. A common definition is needed to establish the scope of application of the harmonised

#### Amendment

(15) There is no existing definition of political advertising or political advertisement at Union level. A common definition is needed to establish the scope of application of the harmonised

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transparency obligations and rules on targeting and amplification. This definition should cover the many forms that political advertising can take and any means and mode of publication or dissemination within the Union, regardless of whether the *source is located* within the Union or in a third country.

transparency obligations and rules on targeting and amplification. This definition should cover the many forms that political advertising can take and any means and mode of publication or dissemination within the Union, regardless of whether the *service provider or sponsor is established* within the Union or in a third country.

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#### Amendment 9

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 16

Text proposed by the Commission

(16) The definition of political advertising should include advertising published or disseminated directly or indirectly by or published or disseminated directly or indirectly for or on behalf of a political actor. Since advertisements by, for or on behalf of a political actor cannot be detached from their activity in their role as political actor, they can be presumed to be liable to influence the political debate, except for messages of purely private or purely commercial nature.

#### Amendment

(16) The definition of political advertising should include advertising published, *promoted* or disseminated directly or indirectly by or published or disseminated directly or indirectly for or on behalf of a political actor. Since advertisements by, for or on behalf of a political actor cannot be detached from their activity in their role as political actor, they can be presumed to be liable to influence the political debate, except for messages of purely private or purely commercial nature.

#### **Amendment 10**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 17

Text proposed by the Commission

(17) The publication or dissemination by other actors of a message that is liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour should also constitute political advertising. In order to determine whether the publication or dissemination of a message is liable to

#### Amendment

(17) The publication, promotion or dissemination by other actors, such as non-governmental organisations, associations or companies, of a message that is liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour at local, national and Union level should

influence the outcome of an election or referendum, a legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour, account should be taken of all relevant factors such as the content of the message, the language used to convey the message, the context in which the message is conveyed, the objective of the message and the means by which the message is published or disseminated. Messages on societal or controversial issues may, as the case may be, be liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, a legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour.

also constitute political advertising. *This* should also apply in cases where political advertising publishers act as sponsors of a content they generate themselves or in case of commercial advertising that is liable to produce the same effect. Commercial advertising, although generally outside the scope of this Regulation, is also liable to affect the legislative or regulatory process or the voting behaviour of individuals in specific situations and should also constitute political advertising. In order to determine whether the publication or dissemination of a message is liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, a legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour, account should be taken of all relevant factors such as the content of the message, the sponsor, the origin of the *sponsor*, the language used to convey the message, the context in which the message is conveyed, the objective of the message and the means by which the message is published or disseminated. Messages on societal or controversial issues may, as the case may be, be liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, a legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour

#### **Amendment 11**

Proposal for a regulation Recital 17 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(17a) Where commercial advertising may be designed and is liable to influence the outcome of an election or referendum, a legislative or regulatory process or voting behaviour, this Regulation should apply.

#### Proposal for a regulation Recital 18

Text proposed by the Commission

(18) Practical information from official sources regarding the organisation and modalities for participation in the elections or referendums should not constitute political advertising.

#### Amendment

(18) Practical information from official sources regarding the organisation and modalities for participation in the elections or referendums should not constitute political advertising *if that information only concerns the organisation of and participation in elections or referendums*.

#### **Amendment 13**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 19

Text proposed by the Commission

(19) Political views expressed in the programmes of audiovisual linear broadcasts or published in printed media without direct payment or equivalent remuneration should not be covered by this Regulation.

#### Amendment

The media contribute to the wellfunctioning of democratic processes and play an essential role in the freedom of expression and right to information, particularly during election periods. They provide a space for public debate and contribute to public opinion-forming. This Regulation should therefore not affect the media's editorial freedom. Political views expressed in literary works in the programmes of audiovisual media, including linear and non-linear broadcasts, or published in printed media without direct payment or equivalent remuneration should not be covered by this Regulation.

#### Amendment 14

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 26

Text proposed by the Commission

(26) In order to cover the broad range of

Amendment

(26) In order to cover the broad range of

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relevant service providers connected to political advertising services, *providers* of political advertising services should be understood as *comprising providers* involved in the preparation, placement, promotion, publication and dissemination of political advertising.

relevant service providers connected to political advertising services, the provider of political advertising services should be understood as any supplier involved in the preparation, placement, promotion, publication and dissemination of political advertising. The recipient of the political advertisement should be able to trace the whole chain of distribution of the message in order to discover the precise origin of the message, its author and the intermediaries through which it has passed.

#### **Amendment 15**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 29

Text proposed by the Commission

(29) The rules on transparency laid down in this Regulation should only apply to political advertising services, i.e. political advertising that is normally provided against remuneration, which may include a benefit in kind. The transparency requirements should not apply to content uploaded by a user of an online intermediary service, such as an online platform, and disseminated by the online intermediary service without consideration for the placement, publication or dissemination for the specific message, unless the user has been remunerated by a third party for the political advertisement.

#### Amendment

The rules on transparency and due (29)diligence laid down in this Regulation should only apply to political advertising services, i.e. political advertising that is normally provided against remuneration, which may include a benefit in kind. The transparency requirements should not apply to content uploaded by a user of an online intermediary service, such as an online platform, and disseminated by the online intermediary service without consideration for the placement, publication or dissemination for the specific message, unless the user has been remunerated by a third party for the political advertisement.

### **Amendment 16**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 30

Text proposed by the Commission

(30) The transparency requirements should also not apply to the sharing of

Amendment

(30) The transparency requirements should also not apply to the sharing of

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information through electronic communication services such as electronic message services or telephone calls, as long as no political advertising service is involved. information through electronic communication services such as electronic message services or telephone calls, as long as no political advertising service is involved. Where a message is sent by or on behalf of a political actor, for example via the sending of electronic messages or the use of telephone calling techniques, such as voicemail, it should also be possible to apply transparency requirements.

#### Amendment 17

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 34

Text proposed by the Commission

In view of the importance of guaranteeing in particular the effectiveness of the transparency requirements including to ease their oversight, providers of political advertising services should ensure that the relevant information they collect in the provision of their services, including the indication that an advertisement is political, is provided to the political advertising publisher which brings the political advertisement to the public. In order to support the efficient implementation of this requirement, and the timely and accurate provision of this information, providers of political advertising services should consider and support automating the transmission of information among providers of political advertising services.

#### Amendment

In view of the importance of guaranteeing in particular the effectiveness of the transparency and due diligence requirements including to ease their oversight, providers of political advertising services should ensure that the relevant information they collect in the provision of their services, including the indication that an advertisement is political, is provided to the political advertising publisher which brings the political advertisement to the public. In order to support the efficient implementation of this requirement, and the timely and accurate provision of this information, providers of political advertising services should consider and support automating the transmission of information among providers of political advertising services.

#### Amendment 18

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 39

Text proposed by the Commission

(39) This information should be

Amendment

(39) This information should be

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provided in a transparency notice which should also include the identity of the sponsor, in order to support accountability in the political process. The place of establishment of the sponsor and whether the sponsor is a natural or legal person should be clearly indicated. Personal data concerning individuals involved in political advertising, unrelated to the sponsor or other involved political actor should not be provided in the transparency notice. The transparency notice should also contain information on the dissemination period, any linked election, the amount spent for and the value of other benefits received in part or full exchange for the specific advertisement as well for the entire advertising campaign, the source of the funds used and other information to ensure the fairness of the dissemination of the political advertisement. Information on the source of the funds used concerns for instance its public or private origin, the fact that it originates from inside or outside the European Union. Information concerning linked elections or referendums should include, when possible, a link to information from official sources regarding the organisation and modalities for participation or for promoting participation in those elections or referendums. The transparency notice should further include information on how to flag political advertisements in accordance with the procedure established in this Regulation. This requirement should be without prejudice to provisions on notification according to Article 14, 15 and 19 of Regulation (EU) 2021/XXX [Digital Services Act].

provided in a transparency notice which should also include the identity of the sponsor, in order to support accountability in the political process. The place of establishment of the sponsor and whether the sponsor is a natural or legal person should be clearly indicated. Personal data concerning individuals involved in political advertising, unrelated to the sponsor or other involved political actor should not be provided in the transparency notice. The transparency notice should also contain information on the dissemination period, any linked election, the amount spent for and the value of other benefits received in part or full exchange for the specific advertisement as well for the entire advertising campaign, the source of the funds used and other information to ensure the fairness of the dissemination of the political advertisement. Information on the source of the funds used concerns for instance its public or private origin, the fact that it originates from inside or outside the European Union. Information concerning linked elections or referendums should include, when possible, a link to information from official sources regarding the organisation and modalities for participation or for promoting participation in those elections or referendums. **During** electoral or referendum periods, such a transparency notice should be made available as soon as the advertising is published or disseminated. Specific rules in that regard, in particular on due diligence requirements and availability of such a transparency notice, should apply to very large online platforms within the meaning of Regulation (EU) 2021/XXX [Digital Services Act]. Those very large online platforms should make the information included in the transparency notice available and update it, in real time and in a machine-readable format that permits analysis of data by all relevant industry players through the single European repository for transparency notices established by this Regulation.

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The transparency notice should further include information on how to flag political advertisements in accordance with the procedure established in this Regulation. This requirement should be without prejudice to provisions on notification according to Article 14, 15 and 19 of Regulation (EU) 2021/XXX [Digital Services Act]. The power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be delegated to the Commission in order to define the rights and obligations of registered political entities and very large online platforms regarding the display of randomised political advertisements.

#### **Amendment 19**

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 40

Text proposed by the Commission

(40)The information to be included in the transparency notice should be provided in the advertisement itself or be easily retrievable on the basis of an indication *provided* in the advertisement. The requirement that the information about the transparency notice is to be inter alia clearly visible should entail that it features prominently in or with the advertisement. The requirement that information published in the transparency notice is to be easily accessible, machine readable where technically possible, and user friendly should entail that it addresses the needs of people with disabilities. Annex I of Directive 2019/882 (European Accessibility Act) contains accessibility requirements for information, including digital information that should be used to render political information accessible for persons with disabilities.

#### Amendment

(40)Political advertising publishers should ensure that each political advertisement contains a clear indication of where the transparency notice could be easily retrieved. The requirement that the information about the transparency notice is to be clearly visible means that it should feature prominently in the advertisement. In this respect, it should be possible to use, for example, a dedicated webpage link, a Quick Response code (or "QRcode"), or equivalent clear and userfriendly technical means. The requirement that the information about the transparency notice is to be inter alia clearly visible should entail that it features prominently in or with the advertisement. The requirement that information published in the transparency notice is to be easily accessible, machine readable where technically possible, and user friendly should entail that it addresses the needs of people with disabilities. Annex I of

Directive 2019/882 (European Accessibility Act) contains accessibility requirements for information, including digital information that should be used to render political information accessible for persons with disabilities.

**Amendment 20** 

Proposal for a regulation Recital 41 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(41a) In order to ensure a harmonised approach to the publication of the transparency notices, increase overall transparency, further facilitate crossborder political advertising, and reduce the publication costs for the political advertising publishers, a single European repository for transparency notices should be developed, updated and maintained by the Commission, in broad consultation with relevant stakeholders, in particular with the European Cooperation Network on Elections. The repository should also include a list of all electoral periods, which would be communicated by the Member States, as well as a unified mechanism for reporting political advertisements in accordance with the procedure established in this Regulation. The costs for developing, updating and maintaining the repository should be covered by a fee based on a portion of the revenue generated by political advertisements to the benefit of political advertising publishers. In order to establish a fair level of contributions, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be delegated to the Commission in respect of the scale of such contributions.

### Proposal for a regulation Recital 45

Text proposed by the Commission

Political advertising publishers providing political advertising services should put in place mechanisms to enable individuals to report to them that a particular political advertisement which they have published does not comply with this Regulation. The mechanisms to report such advertisement should be easy to access and use, and should be adapted to the form of advertising distributed by the advertising publisher. As far as possible, these mechanisms should be accessible from the advertisement itself, for instance on the advertising publisher's website. Political advertising publishers should be able to rely on existing mechanisms where appropriate. Where political advertising publishers are online hosting services providers within the meaning of the Digital Services Act, with regards to the political advertisements hosted at the request of the recipients of their services, the provisions of Article 14 of the Digital Services Act continue to apply for notifications concerning non-compliance of such advertisements with this Regulation.

#### Amendment

Political advertising publishers providing political advertising services should put in place mechanisms to enable individuals to report to them that a particular political advertisement which they have published does not comply with this Regulation. The mechanisms to report such advertisement should be easy to access and use, and should be adapted to the form of advertising distributed by the advertising publisher. As far as possible, these mechanisms should be accessible from the advertisement itself, for instance on the advertising publisher's website. Political advertising publishers should be able to rely on existing mechanisms where appropriate. Where political advertising publishers are online hosting services providers within the meaning of the Digital Services Act, with regards to the political advertisements hosted at the request of the recipients of their services, the provisions of Article 14 of the Digital Services Act continue to apply for notifications concerning non-compliance of such advertisements with this Regulation. Due diligence mechanisms should be strengthened in particular in the context of elections or referendums, whereby the political advertising publishers should notify the relevant sponsors or service providers acting on their behalf of any such reporting, request feedback, and proceed to the correction or removal specific items within 48 hours.

**Amendment 22** 

Proposal for a regulation Recital 49

### Text proposed by the Commission

In order to ensure enhanced transparency and accountability, when making use of targeting and amplification techniques in the context of political advertising involving the processing of personal data, controllers should implement additional safeguards. They should adopt and implement a policy describing the use of such techniques to target individuals or amplify their content and keep record of their relevant activities. When publishing, promoting or disseminating a political advertisement making use of targeting and amplification techniques, controllers should provide, together with the political advertisement, meaningful information to allow the concerned individual to understand the logic involved and main parameters of the targeting used, and the use of third-party data and additional analytical techniques, including whether the targeting of the advertisement was further optimised during delivery.

#### Amendment 23

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 55 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

#### Amendment

(49)In order to ensure enhanced transparency and accountability, when making use of targeting and amplification techniques in the context of political advertising involving the processing of personal data, controllers should implement additional safeguards. They should adopt, implement and publish a policy describing the use of such techniques to target individuals or amplify their content and keep *a public* record of their relevant activities. When publishing, promoting or disseminating a political advertisement making use of targeting and amplification techniques, controllers should provide, together with the political advertisement, meaningful information to allow the concerned individual to understand the logic involved and main parameters of the targeting used, and the use of third-party data and additional analytical techniques, including whether the targeting of the advertisement was further optimised during delivery.

#### Amendment

(55a) Where a particular advertisement does not comply with this Regulation, mechanisms provided by the publisher should enable individuals to flag the advertisement concerned. Where those mechanisms are not available, individuals should be able to report such political advertisement directly to the competent authorities in accordance with this Regulation.

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 56

Text proposed by the Commission

(56) In the interest of the effective supervision of this Regulation, it is necessary to entrust oversight authorities with the competence to monitor and enforce the relevant rules. Depending on the legal system of each Member State and in line with existing Union law including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Regulation (EU) 2021/xxx [Digital Services Act], different national judicial or administrative authorities may be designated to that effect.

#### Amendment

In the interest of the effective

(56)

supervision of this Regulation, it is necessary to entrust oversight authorities with the competence to monitor and enforce the relevant rules *and endow those authorities with resources commensurate with such additional competences*.

Depending on the legal system of each Member State and in line with existing Union law including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Regulation (EU) 2021/xxx [Digital Services Act], different national judicial or administrative authorities may be designated to that effect.

#### Amendment 25

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 58

Text proposed by the Commission

For the oversight of those aspects of this Regulation that do not fall within the competence of the supervisory authorities under Regulation (EU) 2016/679, Regulation (EU) 2018/725 Member States should designate competent authorities. To support the upholding of fundamental rights and freedoms, the rule of law, democratic principles and public confidence in the oversight of political advertising it is necessary that such authorities are structurally independent from external intervention or political pressure and are appropriately empowered effectively monitor and take the measures necessary to ensure compliance with this Regulation, in particular the obligations laid down in Article 7. Member States may designate, in particular, the national

#### Amendment

For the oversight of those aspects (58)of this Regulation that do not fall within the competence of the supervisory authorities under Regulation (EU) 2016/679, Regulation (EU) 2018/725 Member States should designate competent authorities to monitor and enforce relevant rules and endow those authorities with resources commensurate with such tasks. To support the upholding of fundamental rights and freedoms, the rule of law, democratic principles and public confidence in the oversight of political advertising it is necessary that such authorities are structurally independent from external intervention or political pressure and are appropriately empowered effectively monitor and take the measures necessary to ensure compliance with this

regulatory authorities or bodies under Article 30 of Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>13</sup>.

Regulation, in particular the obligations laid down in Article 7. Member States may designate, in particular, the national regulatory authorities or bodies under Article 30 of Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>13</sup>.

#### Amendment 26

## Proposal for a regulation Recital 62

Text proposed by the Commission

(62) Member States should designate a contact point at Union level for the purpose of this Regulation. The contact point should, *if possible*, be a member of the European Cooperation Network on Elections. The contact point should facilitate cooperation among competent authorities between Member States in their supervision and enforcement tasks, in particular by intermediating with the contact points in other Member States and with the competent authorities in their own.

#### Amendment

(62) Member States should designate a contact point at Union level for the purpose of this Regulation. The contact point should be a member of the European Cooperation Network on Elections. The contact point should facilitate cooperation among competent authorities between Member States in their supervision and enforcement tasks, in particular by intermediating with the contact points in other Member States and with the competent authorities in their own.

### **Amendment 27**

### Proposal for a regulation Article 1 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. This Regulation shall apply to

Amendment

2. This Regulation shall apply to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive (OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) (OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1).

political advertising prepared, placed, promoted, published or disseminated in *the* Union, or directed to individuals in one or *several* Member States, irrespective of the place of establishment of the advertising services provider, and irrespective of the means used.

political advertising prepared, placed, promoted, published or disseminated in *one or more Member States or at* Union *level*, or directed to individuals in one or *more* Member States *or at Union level*, irrespective of the place of establishment of the advertising services provider, and irrespective of the means used.

#### **Amendment 28**

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 – paragraph 3 – point b

Text proposed by the Commission

(b) to protect natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data.

#### Amendment

(b) to protect natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and their fundamental rights provided for in Union law, including those enshrined in the Charter.

#### Amendment 29

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 – paragraph 4 – point g a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(ga) Regulation (EU) 2016/679;

#### **Amendment 30**

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 – paragraph 4 – point g b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(gb) Regulation (EU) 2018/1725;

#### Amendment 31

Proposal for a regulation Article 2 – paragraph 1 – point 10

### Text proposed by the Commission

10. 'relevant electorate' means the body of individuals eligible to vote in the election or referendum being contested *in the* Member State in which a political advertisement circulates, which may be the entire electorate of a Member State:

#### Amendment

10. 'relevant electorate' means the body of individuals eligible to vote in the election or referendum being contested *at the Union level or in a* Member State in which a political advertisement circulates, which may be the entire electorate of *the Union or of* a Member State;

#### **Amendment 32**

### Proposal for a regulation Article 2 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

For the purposes of the first paragraph, point (2) messages from official sources *regarding* the organisation and modalities for participation in elections or referendums or for promoting participation in elections or referendums shall not constitute political advertising.

#### Amendment

For the purposes of the first paragraph, point (2), messages from official sources *that concern exclusively* the organisation and modalities for participation in elections or referendums or for promoting participation in elections or referendums shall not constitute political advertising.

### **Amendment 33**

### Proposal for a regulation Chapter II – title

Text proposed by the Commission

TRANSPARENCY OBLIGATIONS FOR POLITICAL ADVERTISING SERVICES

Amendment

TRANSPARENCY *AND DUE DILIGENCE* OBLIGATIONS FOR
POLITICAL ADVERTISING SERVICES

#### **Amendment 34**

## Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – title

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Transparency Transparency and due diligence

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### Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – paragraph 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Political advertising services shall be available only to a sponsor, or to a service provider acting on behalf of a sponsor, who is a citizen of the Union, or to a natural or legal person residing or established in the Union.

#### Amendment 36

### Proposal for a regulation Article 5 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. Providers of political advertising services shall ensure that the contractual arrangements concluded for the provision of a political advertising service specify how the relevant provisions of this Regulation are complied with.

#### Amendment

Providers of political advertising services shall ensure that the contractual arrangements concluded for the provision of a political advertising service specify how the relevant provisions of this Regulation, including the provisions on due diligence, are complied with and allow them to fulfil effectively their due diligence obligations. Such arrangements shall in particular require providers of political advertising services acting on behalf of sponsors to provide the information referred to in Article 6(1), ensuring that it is accurate and complete, to update it regularly and to correct any information that is erroneous without undue delay.

#### **Amendment 37**

Proposal for a regulation Article 6 – paragraph 1 – point a

*Text proposed by the Commission* 

(a) the political advertisement or

Amendment

(a) the political advertisement or

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political advertising campaign to which the service or services are connected;

political advertising campaign *and*, *where applicable*, *the corresponding election or referendum* to which the service or services are connected;

#### **Amendment 38**

Proposal for a regulation Article 6 – paragraph 1 – point b a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(ba) information on the targeting techniques used in the provision of the service;

#### **Amendment 39**

## Proposal for a regulation Article 6 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. The information referred to in paragraph 1 shall be in writing and *may* be in electronic form. Such information shall be retained for a period of five years from the date of the last preparation, placement, publication or dissemination, as the case may be.

#### Amendment

2. The information referred to in paragraph 1 shall be in writing and in electronic form. Such information shall be retained for a period of *at least* five years from the date of the last preparation, placement, publication or dissemination, as the case may be.

#### **Amendment 40**

Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 1 – subparagraph 1 – point b

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(b) the identity of the sponsor of the political advertisement and the entity ultimately controlling the sponsor;

(b) the identity of the sponsor of the political advertisement *including*, *where* appropriate, in the case of European or national parties, the logo of the corresponding European political entity, and the entity ultimately controlling the sponsor;

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### Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 1 – subparagraph 1 – point c

Text proposed by the Commission

(c) a transparency notice to enable the wider context of the political advertisement and its aims to be understood, or a clear indication of where it can be easily retrieved.

#### Amendment

(c) a transparency notice to enable the wider context of the political advertisement and its aims to be understood, or a clear indication of where it can be easily retrieved *online*.

#### Amendment 42

### Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 2 – point a

Text proposed by the Commission

(a) the identity of the sponsor *and contact details*:

#### Amendment

(a) the identity of the sponsor;

### **Amendment 43**

### Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 2 – point c

Text proposed by the Commission

(c) based among others on information received in line with Article 6(3), information on the aggregated amounts spent or other benefits received in part or full exchange for the preparation, placement, promotion, publication and dissemination of *the* relevant advertisement, and of the political advertising campaign where relevant, and their sources;

#### Amendment

(c) based among others on information received in line with Article 6(3), information on the aggregated amounts spent or other benefits received in part or full exchange for the preparation, placement, promotion, publication and dissemination of *each* relevant advertisement, and of the political advertising campaign where relevant, and their sources;

Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 2 – point e a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(ea) where applicable, all criteria of targeting and amplification techniques that are used;

#### **Amendment 45**

Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 2 – point e b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(eb) where applicable, the number of views and engagements;

#### **Amendment 46**

Proposal for a regulation Article 7 – paragraph 6

Text proposed by the Commission

6. Political advertising publishers which are very large online platforms within the meaning of Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2021/xxx [the DSA] shall ensure that the repositories that they make available pursuant to Article 30 of that regulation [Digital Services Act] make available for each political advertisement in the repository the information referred to in paragraph 2.

Amendment

6. Political advertising publishers which are very large online platforms within the meaning of Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2021/xxx [the DSA] shall ensure that *the information referred to in paragraph 2 is made* available for each political advertisement in the *single European political advertising* repository.

Amendment 47

Proposal for a regulation Article 7 a (new)

#### Article 7a

## Single European political advertising repository

- 1. A single European political advertising repository, comprising all political advertisements, irrespective of the electoral periods, shall be created, developed, updated and maintained by the Commission in order to publish the transparency notices in accordance with Article 6.
- 2. That repository shall include a list of the campaigns and electoral periods communicated by the Member States in accordance with Article 17. It shall allow, where applicable, each transparency notice to be directly linked to each relevant election, referendum or campaign as well as the possibility to systematically download transparency notices in form of a user-friendly data set.

#### **Amendment 48**

### Proposal for a regulation Article 9 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

1. Where they provide political advertising services, advertising publishers shall put in place mechanisms to enable individuals to notify them, free of charge, that a particular advertisement which they have published does not comply with this Regulation.

### **Amendment 49**

Proposal for a regulation Article 9 – paragraph 4 a (new)

#### Amendment

1. Where they provide political advertising services, advertising publishers shall put in place mechanisms to enable individuals to notify them, free of charge *and anonymously*, that a particular advertisement which they have published does not comply with this Regulation.

### Text proposed by the Commission

#### Amendment

4a. Where the mechanisms stipulated in paragraph 1 are not available, the competent authorities of the Member States shall enable individuals to notify them, directly and free of charge, that a particular advertisement does not comply with this Regulation. Member States shall designate a single authority competent to receive and process such notifications.

#### **Amendment 50**

## Proposal for a regulation Article 11 – paragraph 5

Text proposed by the Commission

5. Where requests pursuant to paragraph 1 are manifestly unfounded, unclear or excessive, in particular because of their lack of clarity, the service provider may refuse to respond. In this case, the relevant service provider shall send a reasoned response to the interested entity making the request.

#### **Amendment 51**

## Proposal for a regulation Article 11 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

#### Amendment

5. Where requests pursuant to paragraph 1 are manifestly unfounded, unclear or excessive, in particular because of their lack of clarity, *or where those requests are repeated*, the service provider may refuse to respond. In this case, the relevant service provider shall send a reasoned response to the interested entity making the request.

#### Amendment

#### Article 11a

Publication of a randomised set of standardised political advertisements of political entities by very large online platforms during the elections to the European Parliament

1. Very large online platforms within the meaning of Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2021/XXXX [the DSA] that engage in providing political advertising services

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- in the context of the elections to the European Parliament, shall display randomised political advertisements in a dedicated, immediately visible and easily accessible section, in accordance with the principle of equal access. This service shall be provided at a fee not exceeding the cost incurred by the providers.
- The political advertisements referred to in this Article shall be submitted by registered political entities in a standardised format, defined by each very large online platform in accordance with specific criteria based on their rules for the display of political advertisements, and shall include a reference to the transparency notice in accordance with the criteria established in Article 11 as well as statistics on the amount of submissions referred to in paragraph 1 together with the corresponding political advertisement that each submission refers to. Such advertisements shall be stored in the single European political advertising repository established by Article 7a.
- 3. Only registered political entities complying with the rules for registration for the elections to the European Parliament in their respective constituency and European political parties, as defined in Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014, shall be entitled to submit the political advertisements referred to in this Article to the relevant very large online platforms.
- 4. Targeting criteria used in this context by very large online platforms shall be limited to the criteria that are strictly necessary to identify users with their potential electoral constituency and shall include only the place of residence and the language.
- 5. Other targeting or amplification techniques in the context of the publication of a randomised set of standardised political advertisements of political entities shall be prohibited.

- 6. The political advertisements referred to in this Article may only be displayed during the 15 days preceding the elections.
- 7. The online platforms shall not collect any data concerning the users to whom the political advertisements referred to in this Article are displayed or users' engagement with such ads.
- 8. A reasonable minimum visibility shall be ensured for each registered political entity. Electoral entities may be given more visibility depending on their results in the last and penultimate elections to the European Parliament and their representation at Union, national, regional and local levels. The ratio in visibility between the registered political entities must not be higher than 1:5.
- 9. The Commission shall adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 19 supplementing this Regulation by defining the rights and obligations of registered political entities and very large online platforms regarding the implementation of this Article on the display of randomised political advertisements.

Proposal for a regulation Article 13 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

#### Article 13a

Risk assessment, mitigation measures and independent audit

1. Political advertising publishers which are very large online platforms within the meaning of Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2022/xxx [the DSA], shall identify, from the date of application of this Regulation referred to in Article

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- 20(2), and at least once a year, any significant systemic risks stemming from their internal policies regarding political advertising, including the use of targeting and amplification techniques. This risk assessment shall be specific to the services they provide and cover the following risks:
- (a) the risk of verification systems in place for the identification of genuine sponsors and providers of advertising services acting on behalf of sponsors placing or issuing political advertisements;
- (b) risks of both misinformation and disinformation, including prohibited manipulative behaviours and practices, risks of foreign information manipulation and interference across their services, that are liable to impact the integrity of electoral processes;
- (c) risks related to the creation and use of accounts that participate in coordinated inauthentic behaviour and user conduct aimed at artificially amplifying the reach of or perceived public support for disinformation;
- (d) risks for the exercise of the fundamental rights to respect for private and family life, the protection of personal data, freedom of expression and information and prohibition of any discrimination as enshrined in Articles 7, 8, 11, and 21 of the Charter, respectively;
- 2. Very large online platforms shall put reasonable, proportionate and effective mitigation measures in place, tailored to the specific systemic risks identified pursuant to paragraph 1. Such measures, in addition to those listed in Article 27 of Regulation (EU) 2022/xxx [the DSA] may include, where applicable, reinforcement of their due diligence processes with regard to advertising published or disseminated in particular during the election periods, in order to ensure that any misleading or erroneous

information in the transparency notices is promptly and fully corrected or the publication or dissemination of the concerned political advertisement is suspended.

3. Very large online platforms shall be subject, at their own expense and at least once a year, to audits to assess compliance with the obligations stemming from paragraphs 1 and 2. Article 28(2), (3) and (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/xxx [the DSA] shall apply to the characteristics of the organisations performing the audit, the structure of the report and the implementation of the recommendations contained therein.

#### Amendment 53

### Proposal for a regulation Article 14 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

1. Service providers that provide political advertising services in the Union but do not have an establishment in the Union shall designate, in writing, a natural or legal person as their legal representative in one of the Member States where the provider offers its services.

#### Amendment

1. Service providers that provide political advertising services in the Union but do not have an establishment in the Union shall designate, in writing, a natural or legal person as their legal representative in one of the Member States where the provider offers its services. They shall transmit the identity and contact details of their legal representative to the European Cooperation Network on Elections.

Member States shall keep publicly available registers of all legal representatives registered on their territory under this Regulation.

### **Amendment 54**

Proposal for a regulation Article 15 – paragraph 7 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

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7a. The contact point shall prepare an inventory and post-election analysis of political advertisements made during the election period. The publication of these elements shall be made within six months after the election date.

#### **Amendment 55**

### Proposal for a regulation Article 17 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Member States shall publish the dates of their national electoral periods in an easily accessible place, with an appropriate reference to this Regulation.

#### Amendment

Member States shall publish the dates of their national electoral periods in an easily accessible place, with an appropriate reference to this Regulation. They shall transmit such information to the Commission, which shall publish it in the single European political advertising repository.

#### **Amendment 56**

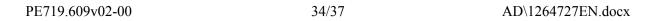
## Proposal for a regulation Article 19 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. The power to adopt delegated acts referred to in Article 7(8) and Article 12(8) shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of [until the application of this regulation is evaluated, two years after the next European Parliamentary elections].

#### Amendment

2. The power to adopt delegated acts referred to in Article 7(8), *Article 7a(5)*, 11a(9), and Article 12(8) shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of [until the application of this regulation is evaluated, two years after the next European Parliamentary elections].



## ANNEX: LIST OF ENTITIES OR PERSONS FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT

The following list is drawn up on a purely voluntary basis under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur. The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the opinion, until the adoption thereof in committee:

### Entity and/or person

Transparency International Liaison Office to the European Union (TR 501222919-71)

Meta Platforms Ireland Limited and its subsidiaries (TR 28666427835-74)

### PROCEDURE - COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Title	Transparency and targeting of political advertising
References	COM(2021)0731 – C9-0433/2021 – 2021/0381(COD)
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	IMCO 13.12.2021
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	AFCO 13.12.2021
Rapporteur for the opinion Date appointed	Daniel Freund 20.6.2022
Discussed in committee	1.9.2022
Date adopted	17.10.2022
Result of final vote	+: 22 -: 6 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Gerolf Annemans, Gabriele Bischoff, Damian Boeselager, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Salvatore De Meo, Pascal Durand, Daniel Freund, Sandro Gozi, Laura Huhtasaari, Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Victor Negrescu, Giuliano Pisapia, Paulo Rangel, Antonio Maria Rinaldi, Helmut Scholz, Sven Simon, László Trócsányi, Guy Verhofstadt, Loránt Vincze
Substitutes present for the final vote	Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, Alin Mituţa
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Isabel García Muñoz, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Petros Kokkalis, Nicola Procaccini, Nacho Sánchez Amor

### FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

22	+
PPE	Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Colin Oesterlé, Salvatore De Meo, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Paulo Rangel, Sven Simon, Loránt Vincze
Renew	Pascal Durand, Sandro Gozi, Alin Mituţa, Guy Verhofstadt
S&D	Gabriele Bischoff, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Isabel García Muñoz, Victor Negrescu, Giuliano Pisapia, Nacho Sánchez Amor
The Left	Petros Kokkalis, Helmut Scholz
Verts/ALE	Damian Boeselager, Gwendoline Delbos Corfield, Daniel Freund

6	-
ECR	Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Nicola Procaccini

ID	Gerolf Annemans, Laura Huhtasaari, Antonio Maria Rinaldi
NI	László Trócsányi

0	0
xx	xx

# Key to symbols: + : in favour

+ : in favour - : against 0 : abstention