

03/18/2021

New debate about lobby register - Kugelmann: Mandatory register strengthens trust in parliamentary

democracy After the processes surrounding the procurement of masks, which affect individual members of the German

Bundestag, the debate about a lobby register at federal level has picked up speed in recent weeks. Professor Dieter

Kugelmann explains this , the State Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (LfDI)

Rhineland-Palatinate: "Rhineland-Palatinate was a pioneer in terms of freedom of information: A lobbyist register was

introduced at the state parliament at an early stage and an extensive transparency platform was established; it has been fully

available since the beginning of this year. The published information strengthens trust in government action. Corresponding

transparency also makes sense with a view to the influence of third parties on political decisions and legislative projects. After

all, a mandatory register listing information on interest representatives can make it easier for citizens to understand the actions

of the executive. A mandatory register can thus strengthen trust in parliamentary democracy."

Kugelmann points out that the Conference of Freedom of Information Officers (IFK) in Germany called for the introduction of a

mandatory lobby register at federal level as early as 2019. One application states unequivocally: "In view of the complexity of

social and economic reality and the regulatory matters, it can often be helpful in the democratic decision-making process to be

able to draw on the expertise of different people, groups and participants from society and business. However, the manner in

which such influence is exercised must be transparent. Citizens should know who was involved in the drafting of a bill during

the development process and who is trying to influence political decisions on whose behalf and by what means.

Interdependencies, especially between politics and business, must be made recognizable so that hidden influence is made

more difficult and public control is made possible."

Kugelmann emphasizes: "There is a good reason why the legislator has to decide which individual pieces of information should

be included in a lobby register. The ideas on this vary widely - from a list of interest groups to an "executive or legislative

footprint" that indicates who has been involved in what form of a legislative text. As the Commissioner for Freedom of

Information, I will continue to promote extensive transparency in the future. The many inquiries from citizens to my agency

show that more and more people want to know and understand exactly what information governments and agencies use to

make decisions."

The resolution of the 37th Conference of the Freedom of Information Officers (IFK) in Germany on June 12, 2019 in Saarbrücken on the lobby register can be found [here](#).

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