

**Question for written answer E-000695/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Tomáš Zdechovský (PPE)

Subject: Ensuring impartiality and conflict of interest prevention in Commission-hired consultancies

The Commission and its agencies increasingly award public tenders to consultancies tasked with providing independent assessments of policy areas. While participants must sign general and specific declarations of honour and submit staff CVs, this does not prevent cases where a consultancy holds a clear position on a certain policy option but leaves out counter-evidence, thus undermining the neutrality of the outcome.

Several such instances have arisen in recent years, for example in relation to a study on EU merger decisions¹, to a study on environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives² and to services to support the implementation and further development of a tobacco control policy³.

Given these concerns:

1. How does the Commission ensure that consultants hired for external support are free from conflicts of interest and provide unbiased analysis?
2. Beyond the declarations of honour and the assessment of CVs of staff members, what measures does the Commission implement to exclude consultants with vested interests at an early stage?
3. Does the Commission plan to introduce additional safeguards to prevent such situations and conflicts in the future?

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¹ <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/article/rbb-economics-loses-eu-merger-review-contract-over-perceived-biases>.

² <https://reclaimfinance.org/site/en/2021/06/30/blackrocks-lobbying-machine-vs-eu-green-finance-rules/>.

³ <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/stakeholders-bicker-over-eu-tender-on-tobacco-control-policy/>.