



Plenary sitting

B10-0423/2026

24.9.2026

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to question for oral answer B10-0000/2026

pursuant to Rule 142(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the upcoming EU anti-corruption strategy
(2026/2790(RSP))

Javier Zarzalejos

on behalf of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

**Chloé Ridel, Mariusz Kamiński, Raquel García Hermida-Van Der Walle,
Daniel Freund, Giuseppe Antoci**

**European Parliament resolution on the upcoming EU anti-corruption strategy
(2026/2790(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 3 May 2023 on the fight against corruption (JOIN(2023)0012),
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2026/1021 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2026 on combatting corruption, replacing Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA and the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union and amending Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget² (the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation),
- having regard to the anti-corruption legal frameworks of the Member States and their national anti-corruption strategies,
- having regard to Special Eurobarometer SP561 of 23 October 2025 entitled ‘Citizens’ attitudes towards corruption in the EU in 2025’,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), adopted on 31 October 2003,
- having regard to the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, adopted on 27 January 1999,
- having regard to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, adopted on 21 November 1997,
- having regard to the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), and the participation of the Member States therein,
- having regard to the question to the Commission on the upcoming EU anti-corruption strategy (O-XXXX – B10-0000/2026),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice

¹ OJ L, 2026/1021, 11.5.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2026/1021/oj>.

² OJ L 433I, 22.12.2020, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2092/oj>.

and Home Affairs,

- having regard to Rules 142(5) and 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas corruption erodes citizens’ trust, presents a serious threat to democracy, weakens the rule of law, distorts economic activity and creates opportunities for organised crime and hostile actors to exert influence;
- B. whereas corruption diverts public resources away from essential public services and imposes a significant economic burden on society; whereas corruption is estimated to cost the EU between EUR 179 billion and EUR 990 billion annually, and whereas these resources could otherwise be invested in public goods, social policies, innovation and economic development;
- C. whereas according to the 2025 Special Eurobarometer on corruption, 69 % of EU citizens believe that corruption is widespread in their country, while 73 % believe that corruption exists in national public institutions and 70 % in local or regional public institutions; whereas such findings demonstrate the persistence of a significant trust deficit between citizens and public authorities;
- D. whereas the perception that corruption goes unpunished may be as damaging to democratic legitimacy as corruption itself;
- E. whereas corrupt practices can produce effects beyond national borders, distort the democratic process within the EU and undermine the integrity, independence and legitimacy of decision-making at both Member State and EU level; whereas robust transparency and accountability standards for political financing are therefore indispensable for protecting democracy, the rule of law and citizens’ trust in public institutions;
- F. whereas the Commission has announced the preparation of the first comprehensive EU anti-corruption strategy (‘the strategy’), planned for adoption by the end of 2026;
- G. whereas, pursuant to Article 21 of Directive (EU) 2026/1021 on combating corruption, every Member State is required to publish a national strategy on preventing and combating corruption, setting out objectives, priorities and corresponding measures and the means to achieve those goals; whereas the strategy should complement national anti-corruption strategies by focusing on areas where the EU has competence and where its action provides clear added value, notably in the fields of cross-border corruption, the integrity of the EU institutions and the protection of the Union’s financial interests;
- H. whereas earlier Commission policy initiatives related to corruption, such as the Commission’s 2014 EU anti-corruption report, as followed up in 2020 by the annual rule of law cycle, do not ensure an overarching and comprehensive EU anti-corruption approach, rendering them weaker and less effective in addressing this phenomenon across the EU;
- I. whereas the recommendations issued under the annual rule of law report predominantly focus on the investigation and prosecution of corruption cases, while more specific and comprehensive recommendations covering all pillars of anti-corruption policy,

including prevention, integrity frameworks, transparency, public procurement and institutional capacity, would support a more coherent and effective anti-corruption framework across the EU;

- J. whereas the strategy aims to move towards more coherent cooperation and a European approach; whereas it aims at integrating prevention, effective implementation and enforcement, together with the enhancement of institutional integrity and international cooperation;
- K. whereas the objectives of the strategy are to strengthen and further mainstream ongoing anti-corruption efforts across the EU and across policy areas, recognising corruption as a cross-cutting challenge, to support the implementation of the Directive on Combatting Corruption and to integrate other non-legislative measures to close remaining gaps;
- L. whereas the Member States are bound by a number of international anti-corruption instruments, including the UNCAC, the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption and the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, and participate in GRECO monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; whereas the EU has committed itself to promoting and supporting the implementation of those international standards and to cooperating closely with relevant international organisations and monitoring mechanisms;
- M. whereas the strategy aims to complement other ongoing initiatives and frameworks, such as the annual rule of law cycle, the European Democracy Shield and the EU anti-fraud architecture; whereas it should also improve current EU legal frameworks, including on public procurement and grants, and transparency rules;
- N. whereas the Directive on Combating Corruption represents an important milestone, with Member States primarily responsible for enforcement and the EU having an essential supporting role in its effective implementation; whereas the effectiveness of the EU's anti-corruption framework depends not only on robust legislation but also on effective implementation, enforcement and adequate resourcing at national level; whereas significant gaps remain, particularly regarding lobbying transparency, conflicts of interest, revolving-door practices, political financing, asset disclosure, whistleblower protection and the prevention of foreign interference in democratic decision-making;
- O. whereas there is a need to address the link between corruption and organised crime, given that almost 60 % of known criminal groups engaging in corruption;
- P. whereas corruption in the private sector affects supply chains, distorts markets, undermines competition and increases costs to companies and consumers, and therefore requires targeted action;
- Q. whereas preserving public trust with regard to corruption requires constant attention, comprehensive and robust rules, a sustained political commitment to integrity and accountability and strong leadership across all the EU institutions;
- R. whereas public-interest actors such as civil society organisations, whistleblowers and independent media play an essential role in exposing and preventing corruption; whereas these actors often face threats such as abusive litigation, judicial harassment or

measures affecting access to funding, which undermine the fight against corruption;

I. Strengthening preventive measures, transparency and integrity

1. Emphasises the critical importance of prevention as a central pillar of any effective anti-corruption policy, which aims at addressing vulnerabilities before any criminal conduct occurs;
2. Calls for the strategy to include streamlined measures assessing and targeting more preventive actions, given the focus of the current Directive on Combating Corruption on repressive measures; calls for the strategy to include regular, practical and adequately funded training programmes on anti-corruption for public administrations; calls for the strategy to include evidence-based mapping of the sectors, administrative levels and policy areas most affected by corruption in each Member State, so that preventive measures, resources, training and monitoring can be targeted where risks are higher; calls for both preventive actions and legislative proposals to strengthen the current EU anti-corruption legal framework, in particular on public procurement, grants and transparency, as well as on the definition of misappropriation and safeguards against clemency measures in corruption cases;
3. Calls for the strategy to include commitments to address integrity, transparency and accountability within the EU institutions, including where this requires adaptation for representatives of Member States;
4. Urges the development of guidelines for efficient anti-corruption schemes in both the private and public sectors;
5. Underlines the importance of fostering a culture of integrity by promoting awareness-raising actions and civic education programmes targeted at a broad spectrum of society; expresses concern about corruption cases that have emerged in the EU institutions and stresses the need to address such corruption through preventive measures, including clear rules on conflicts of interest, asset declarations and revolving doors, applicable to both Members and staff; stresses that anti-corruption efforts must be understood as a shared responsibility involving public authorities, the private sector and public-interest actors such as civil society organisations, whistleblowers and independent media;
6. Calls for strengthened and more harmonised integrity standards across the EU covering conflicts of interest, gifts, hospitality, asset and interest declarations, and sponsored travel for all elected officials and senior office-holders, as well as checks and enforcement against violations;
7. Calls for stricter and more harmonised rules on revolving doors, including adequate cooling-off periods, clear rules and transparency requirements regarding secondary paid activities carried out by Members of Parliament, and clearer rules on lobbying and the representation of private interests related to previous public functions;
8. Stresses the crucial role of research into sector-specific corruption; calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure sufficient funding for this research and to use its conclusions and recommendations; calls on the Commission to reintroduce the measurement of corruption perceptions concerning the EU institutions into the

Eurobarometer;

9. Calls for common rules on political financing, the transparency of political foundations and intermediaries, and the auditing and disclosure of political party funding;
10. Recognises the essential role of civil society organisations, investigative journalists and anti-corruption watchdog organisations in preventing, exposing and monitoring corruption, and calls for their meaningful involvement in the development, implementation and evaluation of the strategy;

II. Enhancing detection, investigation and prosecution

11. Underlines the indispensable role of effective detection, investigation and prosecution in ensuring accountability and preserving confidence in the rule of law;
12. Calls for improved cooperation and data sharing among Member States and among EU agencies and bodies such as Europol, Eurojust, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), in the broader context of combating organised crime, protecting EU financial interests and preserving the integrity of the EU institutions while ensuring full compliance with fundamental rights, including with EU personal data-protection rules; calls for the Authority for Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism and, where relevant, the future EU Customs Authority, to be included in such cooperation, including in relation to corruption crimes and the tracing, freezing, confiscation and recovery of assets linked to corruption, fraud, money laundering and the misuse of EU funds;
13. Calls on the Commission to promote the use of innovative digital tools, including data analytics and artificial intelligence, to support the detection and prevention of corruption, while addressing the risks posed by crypto-assets and opaque ownership structures; calls for the revision of the mandates of the relevant agencies and bodies to be undertaken with a view to strengthening the fight against corruption;
14. Calls for the strengthening of independent anti-corruption bodies, acknowledging international obligations to establish such bodies; calls on the Commission to promote common minimum standards guaranteeing the operational, financial and functional independence of specialised anti-corruption bodies, together with adequate human and financial resources, and to monitor Member States' compliance with such obligations; regrets any steps to weaken, dismantle or politicise specialised anti-corruption bodies in Member States and candidate countries;
15. Calls for additional resources for, and the general reinforcement of, the EPPO to better address serious cross-border corruption affecting EU interests;
16. Emphasises the need to protect actors that are crucial in exposing corruption, such as whistleblowers and investigative journalists, including via measures to counter strategic lawsuits against public participation, and calls for the application of special measures to ensure confidential reporting channels and safeguard these individuals from retaliation,

in line with the Whistleblowing Directive³ and the European Media Freedom Act⁴;

17. Highlights that robust public procurement procedures are crucial in the context of the fight against corruption, noting that shortcomings in this area remain an issue in most Member States, and questions whether adequate safeguards are in place to stop companies convicted or suspected of wrongdoing in one country from applying for procurement procedures in another country;
18. Expresses its support for judicial authorities and prosecutors and calls for full respect for their independence; further expresses its support for other competent authorities involved in the fight against corruption, including law enforcement authorities; condemns all unjustified attacks against and pressure exerted on any authorities on account of their role in investigating and prosecuting corruption cases;
19. Calls on the Member States to follow best practice on digitalisation and public access to court proceedings and rulings, and calls on the Commission to make best practice more visible and Justice Scoreboard data more reliable;

III. Cross-border and international dimensions of corruption

20. Recognises that corrupt practices are constantly evolving and increasingly linked to organised crime and digital technologies, which create new opportunities to conceal illicit activities and move criminal proceeds across borders; calls on the Commission to integrate the fight against corruption into the EU's broader response to organised crime, recognising corruption as a key facilitator of criminal activities;
21. Highlights the increasing infiltration of organised crime, including mafia-type criminal organisations, into the legal economy, public procurement and strategic sectors; calls for the strategy to address the links between corruption, money laundering, organised crime and asset concealment through a coordinated European approach;
22. Notes the growing misuse of crypto-assets, encrypted communication tools, artificial intelligence and complex digital financial systems to facilitate corruption, disguise beneficial ownership and evade detection by law enforcement authorities;
23. Calls for stronger cooperation to trace, freeze, confiscate and recover the proceeds of corruption, ensuring that illicit assets are returned for public-interest or social purposes wherever appropriate;
24. Expects the next multiannual financial framework to strengthen rule of law conditionality as a means to protect the EU budget, thus reinforcing the role of the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation and consequently of the annual rule of law cycle; calls on the Commission to ensure that future national and regional programmes include dedicated anti-corruption milestones and targets, where relevant, to strengthen

³ Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law (OJ L 305, 26.11.2019, p. 17, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1937/oj>).

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market and amending Directive 2010/13/EU (European Media Freedom Act) (OJ L, 2024/1083, 17.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj>).

prevention, detection and accountability in the use of EU funds; reiterates that decisions regarding funding in the context of rule of law conditionality should be based on transparent, objective and enforceable criteria, including at regional and local level;

25. Stresses the increasing importance of international cooperation in combating corruption, including fighting corruption abroad and establishing anti-corruption frameworks for acts committed by EU nationals for the benefit of private companies in non-EU countries and for acts committed abroad for the benefit of private companies in the EU;
26. Calls for the EU to define its key priorities regarding the EU enlargement policy and international cooperation in anti-corruption, especially in the context of preparations by candidate countries for EU accession; recalls that the existence of specialised independent anti-corruption bodies constitutes an important benchmark in the accession process of candidate countries; notes the significant role of civil society organisations in providing information on progress and setbacks in candidate countries and recommends that they be systematically consulted and involved in the accession process, and that their assessments be duly taken into account when evaluating anti-corruption frameworks in candidate countries;
27. Considers it essential that the EU gain full member status in the Council of Europe cooperation framework GRECO, building on its current observer status; highlights the existing accountability gap between the Member States, which are all evaluated by GRECO, and the EU, which is not; emphasises that EU institutions have to be subject to the same level of scrutiny and standards as national authorities; calls on the Member States to fully implement GRECO's recommendations on anti-corruption, as well as their own national anti-corruption strategies, recalling that some Member States have so far failed to comply with these recommendations; asks in this regard that common minimum transparency and integrity standards be introduced and applied to all EU institutions;
28. Underlines the risk that anti-corruption obligations are circumvented through indirect means, such as amending statutes of limitation and under-resourcing specialised anti-corruption units; reminds the Member States that unduly shielding individuals, particularly those holding public office, from accountability for corruption offences, even while fully respecting all the relevant provisions of national constitutions, constitutional principles and laws, might undermine public trust; stresses that a culture of integrity, rather than a culture of impunity, must guide Member States' anti-corruption policies;
29. Notes that measures affecting the execution of sanctions in corruption-related cases, such as pardons, amnesties, commutation of sentences, early or conditional release, or the non-execution of confiscation orders, require particular care to avoid undermining the effectiveness of sanctions, weakening deterrence and eroding public trust in the equal application of the law; recommends that, where such measures are applied, they be subject to clear, objective and transparent criteria and duly reasoned decisions made publicly available; underlines that a shared culture of integrity across the EU remains central to the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies; calls for increased transparency concerning foreign-funded think tanks, consultancies and corporate lobbies engaged in EU policy processes, as part of safeguards against covert foreign interference and undue

influence;

30. Reiterates its call for all remaining investor residence schemes across the Member States to be phased out, given their documented use as vectors for money laundering, tax evasion and corruption;
31. Pushes for the effective implementation of the new directive on combating corruption, particularly with a view to ensuring that all corruption offences defined under EU law, including unlawful exercise of public functions, are covered by national legislation; calls for the timely and correct transposition and effective enforcement of all offences established in the directive, so that national reforms do not create gaps in criminal liability or weaken accountability for corruption offences; encourages the Member States to take a maximalist approach during the transposition of the directive by carefully taking into account the optional measures it provides for, especially preventive measures, and to apply higher standards where appropriate;

IV. Implementation and strategic framework

32. Encourages the Commission to pursue bold measures in implementing the strategy, going as far as possible with binding anti-corruption measures, while also providing clear and unambiguous guidelines;
33. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to accompany the strategy with sufficient financial and human resources and appropriate digital tools to effectively apply and enforce anti-corruption policies and legislation, and to provide appropriate legal instruments for preventing and combating corruption, while ensuring the independence of competent authorities; calls for digital tools to be used in a way that respects fundamental rights and upholds the EU's personal data protection rules; calls on the Commission to better coordinate its actions and cooperate more closely with the EU bodies involved in the fight against fraud and corruption affecting the EU's financial interests, such as the EPPO and OLAF, in the context of the revision of their mandates;
34. Encourages the Commission to launch a regular review process to accompany the strategy, involving all EU institutions; suggests that further bold measures should include amendments to the Staff Regulations, the Financial Regulation and the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission, and an update of the inter-institutional agreement on the transparency register;
35. Underlines the role of the EU network against corruption, through which the EU fulfils its function as a forum for cooperation and the exchange of best practice in the fight against corruption;
36. Calls on the Member States that have yet to join the EPPO to do so without further delay;
37. Calls on the Commission to develop common indicators and an appropriate monitoring framework to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy and of national anti-corruption policies across the EU;

38. Calls for the annual rule of law report to continue to include a dedicated assessment of the corruption situation in the Member States, as a key tool to monitor progress in the implementation of the strategy; calls on the Commission to formulate recommendations that are more specific, operational and readily implementable, covering both preventive and enforcement aspects of anti-corruption policies, and to strengthen the monitoring of their implementation in subsequent reporting cycles; calls for country-specific recommendations to be formulated as SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound);

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39. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Member States.