

MURANYI Erika

From: Danny Houben [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 September 2014 20:21
To: Euro-Ombudsman
Subject: [EOWEB] Public consultation on the Commission's expert groups
Attachments: Public consultation on EC expert groups.docx

Sender

Sender Danny Houben [REDACTED]
Date Monday, September 15, 2014 8:21:13 PM CEST

Your data

Part 1 - Contact information

First name	Danny
Surname	Houben
Gender	Male

E-mail address [REDACTED]

Language you would like to receive an answer in en - English

Part 2 - Data

Subject Public consultation on the Commission's expert groups
European Ombudsman,

Please find attached the contribution from the Non Government Members from the EU Joint Transfer Pricing Forum. We apologize for our overdue submission and nonetheless hope you can take attached

Content comments into account.

Yours sincerely,

Danny Houben assistant to Alan McLean of EU JTPF

Note: Public consultation on European Commission expert groups
Date: September 15, 2014
To: Ms Emily O'Reilly
European Ombudsman
1 avenue du Président Robert Schuman
CS 30403
F - 67001 Strasbourg Cedex, France
From: Non Government Members of EU Joint Transfer Pricing Forum

1 Introduction

The Non Government Members (NGMs) of EU Joint Transfer Pricing Forum (Forum) welcome the opportunity to comment on the public consultation concerning the composition of European Commission expert groups. We apologize for our overdue submission and nonetheless hope you can take below comments into account.

2 Comments to public consultation

Our comments to the queries raised in EC's communication are as follows.

Q: Which specific Commission expert groups do you consider to lack a balanced representation of relevant areas of expertise and interest in their membership? What, according to you, is the root cause of the unbalanced composition of the Commission expert groups identified by you?

A: Based on NGMs experience in the Forum, we believe the composition is balanced and representative of a variety of countries, Member States and Non-governmental members who are experts in the field and can provide relevant expertise and valuable contributions to the objectives of the groups. By definition, the issues being considered by the groups are highly technical in nature and it is critical that the membership have the experience and expertise to contribute effectively to the groups with practical points.

Q: The Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups allow for the Commission to appoint individual experts in their personal capacity. In your experience, does this possibility give rise to concern in terms of the balanced composition of expert groups and/or conflicts of interest?

A: Based on our experience in the Forum, we feel there are no concerns, or conflicts of interest regarding individuals being appointed in their personal capacity.

Q: Do you consider that the current level of transparency regarding the composition of Commission expert groups, in particular through the Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities, is sufficient? In particular, does the information made available by the Commission allow you to ascertain which interests are represented by the members of Commission expert groups? If not, where do you see room for improvement? Do you consider that the current level of transparency regarding the work of expert groups, in particular through the publication of agendas and minutes, is sufficient?

A: We believe that the public register is sufficient to determine which interests are represented by members of the expert groups. Likewise, the publication of the agenda and minutes provides sufficient information to ensure the work of the groups is transparent to the public.

Q: *Where the Commission publishes calls for application for membership in expert groups, do you consider that these calls provide for selection criteria which sufficiently take into account the need for a balanced composition of expert groups? If not, where do you see room for improvement? In your view, could the Commission do more to raise awareness about these calls, with a view to encouraging applications? If so, what concrete steps could it take in this regard?*

A: We believe the breadth of applications received is wide from a varied group of applicants to allow for a balanced composition of expert groups. In our view calls for application have been sufficiently published. Evidence of the foregoing can be found in the recent call for application for NGMs in the Forum that attracted applicants from business, academia and civil society organisations.

Q: *Do you have any experience in applying for membership in a Commission expert group? If so, did you face any problems in the application process? If not, are you aware of any such problems faced by civil society organisations? Based on your experience, do the costs inherent in participation/the lack of comprehensive reimbursement schemes discourage civil society organisations from applying for membership?*

A: Based on our experience in the Forum, we did not have any significant problems in the application process. We are not aware of any such problems faced by civil society organizations or whether reimbursement schemes are relevant in this context.

Q: *Please give us your views on which measures could contribute to a more balanced composition of Commission expert groups.*

A: We feel the current measures in place provide for an adequate process.

Q: *Do you have any other comments?*

A: We have no further comments and thank you for the opportunity to contribute.