

**Priority question for written answer P-004207/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Conflicts of interest under the Financial Regulation

The Commission's ongoing investigation into the Czech Prime Minister's conflicts of interest has raised some fundamental questions about the interpretation and application of the provisions of the 2018 Financial Regulation. The upcoming financial framework makes it all the more urgent for us to ensure that the Member States and the Commission have a coherent position on the matter, so that we can prevent entities and persons with conflicts of interest from drawing on the EU budget. What is more, situations may arise in which the national authorities responsible for submitting observations to the Commission's investigation are in fact subordinate to the person under investigation, in which case doubts could be raised about the impartiality and objectivity of that national authority.

We therefore wonder whether it would not be in the financial interests of the EU and the Member State concerned, and in the interests of objective investigations, transparency and executive supervision:

1. For the national authorities of the relevant Member State to have the power, from the moment a conflict-of-interests investigation is launched until the final conclusion is reached, to suspend without delay the disbursement of funds to the entity under investigation under the Financial Regulation?
2. For the Commission and the Member State authorities to grant entities that have a legitimate interest in the case immediate and full access to all the relevant documents, whilst ensuring a certain level of confidentiality, and to publish the final report, given that its publication would not affect the interests protected by the exemption set out under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001?