

Minimum requirements for a code of conduct (2 December 1992)

Caption: In its communication of 2 December 1992, the Commission sets out the minimum requirements to be taken into account by the special interest groups in the establishment of a code of conduct governing relations between these groups and the Commission.

Source: Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). 05.03.1993, n° C 63. [s.l.].

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Annex II: minimum requirements for a code of conduct between the Commission and special interest groups

The Commission has always been an institution open to input from special interest groups. The Commission believes this process to be fundamental to the development of sound and workable policies. This dialogue has proved valuable to both the Commission and to interested outside parties. The Commission acknowledges the need for such outside input, welcomes it and intends to build further on this practice in future. To this end the Commission is taking a series of measures intended to broaden participation in the preparation of its decisions.

In the context of this wider dialogue, the Commission believes that there should be a broad understanding with special interest groups on some basic rules of conduct. Over the course of many years, both have followed principles of conduct which the Commission would like to see the special interest groups continue to adhere to. The Commission feels that special interest groups are best placed to establish and enforce codes of conduct. The Commission therefore invites the sectors concerned to draw up such codes, which should include the following minimum requirements.

1. Public presentation

Special interest groups should not misrepresent themselves to the public by the use of any title, logo, symbol or form of words (particularly those employed by the Commission) designed either to lend false authority to the representative or to mislead clients and/or officials as to his or her status.

2. Behaviour

Special interest groups should behave at all times in accordance with the highest possible professional standards. Honesty and competence in all dealings with the Commission are specifically viewed as being of the greatest importance.

Special interest groups should avoid working in situations where a conflict of interests is either inevitable or likely to arise.

The representative should declare the name of the client for whom he or she is working each time he or she consults the Commission.

In any communication with the Commission (either written and/or oral), the representative should declare all previous contact he or she has had with other representatives of the Commission regarding the same or a related subject.

Special interest groups should neither employ, nor seek to employ, officials who are working for the Commission. Nor should they offer any form of inducement to Commission officials in order to obtain information or to receive privileged treatment.

3. Dissemination of Commission information

Special interest groups should not disseminate misleading information.

Special interest groups should not obtain information by dishonest means.

Special interest groups should not seek to trade copies of Commission documents for profit.

4. Organizations

The establishment of one or more organizations, through which special interest groups would communicate with the Commission, would be welcomed. Such an organization should be open to all representatives of

special interest groups and it is therefore hoped that an individual firm's subscription can be in proportion to its relative size.