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**PRESS RELEASE**

On July 7th 2020, The Good Lobby lodged a complaint against the EU Commission President von der Leyen for interfering in national parliamentary elections in Croatia in breach of the Code of Conduct of EU Commissioners. On January 14<sup>th</sup> 2021, the EU Commission announced it will revamp its ethics rules for its members when participating in political campaigns.

While this commitment is praiseworthy and must be welcomed – stated Prof. Alberto Alemanno – the crux of the matter lies in how these guidelines are – and will be – enforced. Being the enforcement of the Code of Conduct entrusted to the Commission itself and notably its President, the EU Commission’s ethics framework falls short – by design – of ensuring an independent, open and effective oversight mechanism over the Commissioners’ behavior.

As epitomized by the lack of oversight of von der Leyen’s intervention into the 2020 Croatian electoral campaign, this is all the more true in relation to the President of the Commission, who is both judge and party in the current ethics framework. Hence the need to urgently set up an independent EU Ethics Body common to all EU institutions.

That’s what President von der Leyen pledged to do during her mandate and asked Vice-President, Věra Jourová, in her mission letter, to devise such a body.

Yesterday, Prof. Alberto Alemanno presented to the European Parliament a legal study presenting how the EU could set up a EU ethics body. On that occasion, EU Commissioner Jourová confirmed her intention to deliver on this commitment in the coming year.