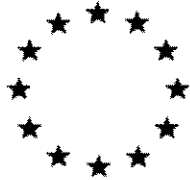


Council of Europe

Conseil de l'Europe



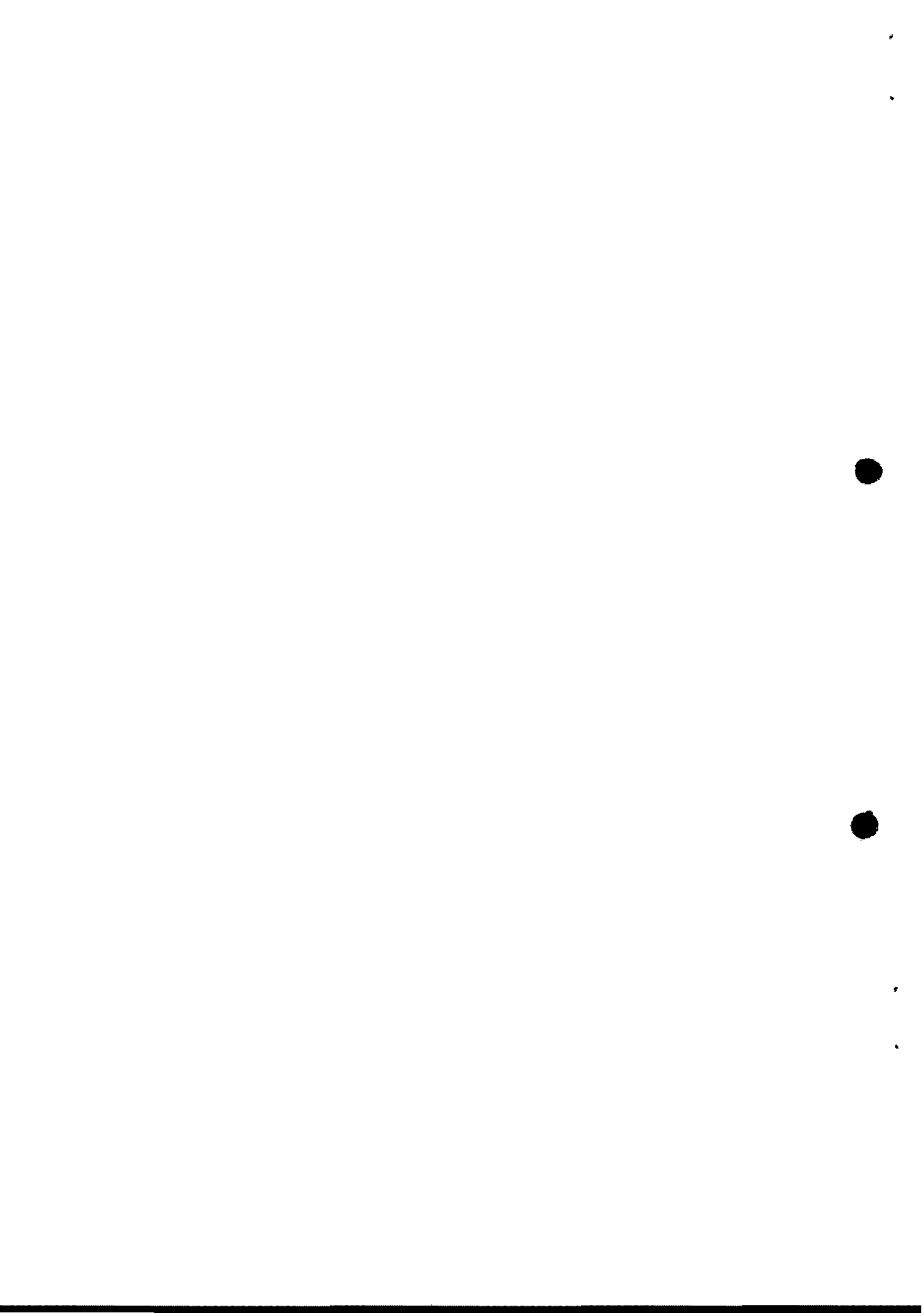
Strasbourg, 12 September 1995

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**MULTIDISCIPLINARY GROUP ON CORRUPTION
(GMC)**

**Rules governing lobbying in the national parliaments
of the member states of the European Union**



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



Directorate General for Research

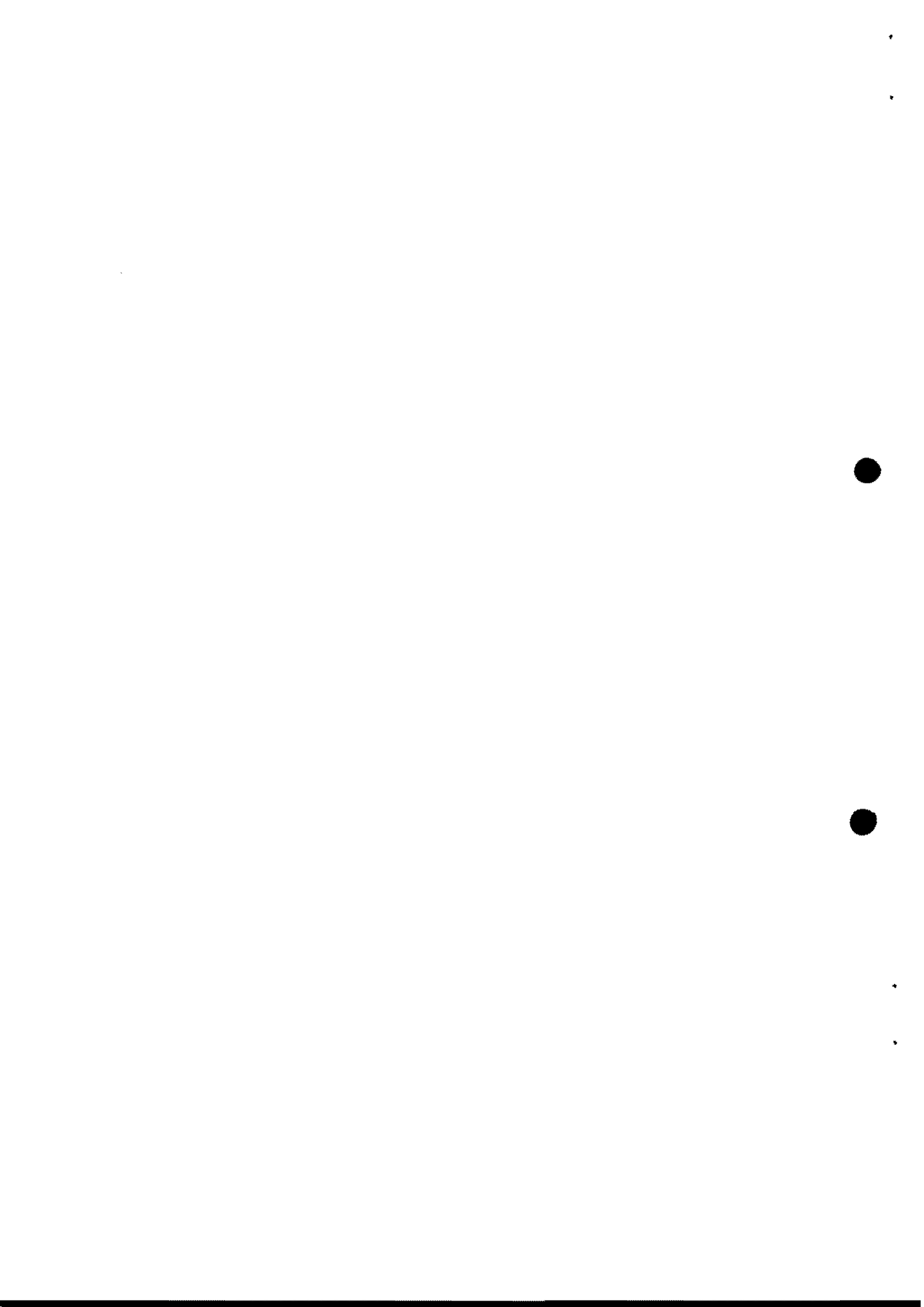
WORKING PAPER

**RULES GOVERNING LOBBYING IN
THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS
OF THE MEMBER STATES**

National Parliament Series

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Brussels, 31 March 1995

Rules governing lobbying in the
national parliaments of the Member States

A. Foreword

This note is based on information provided by the relevant services of the national parliaments and basically covers two aspects of the subject: first, the rules, if any, (accreditation, registration, code of conduct) concerning interest groups or lobbyists working or wishing to work within the parliamentary institution and, as far as possible, on the practice followed in this respect, and secondly the provisions, if any, governing the constitution and operation of parliamentary all-party groups (or 'intergroups'), in view of the influence or pressure they often exert¹.

B. General overview

1. In most parliaments in the Member States there are *no specific rules or provisions governing the activity of interest groups or their representatives.*

The German *Bundestag* is the only Chamber which has specific rules set out in an annex to its rules of procedure, which stipulate that groups ('Verbände') wishing to express or defend their interests before the Bundestag or before the Federal Government must be entered in a register; a list of organizations registered and certain other information concerning them is published annually.

In the Danish *Folketing* there is de facto recognition of interest groups, which may be received and heard by parliamentary committees according to an accepted practice.

Several national parliaments apply a system similar to that of the European Parliament, issuing access cards or passes of variable duration, as and when requested by members of parliament or political groups, which allow the holders to establish contacts and/or gain access to certain parts of parliament buildings and/or to attend public meetings.

In the United Kingdom, the Select Committee on Members Interests of the *House of Commons* reported in session 1990/91 that a Register of lobbyists should be set up together with an associated Code of Conduct. However, when the Report was debated in the Commons, the debate did not include a vote for and against the recommendations of the Committee. In 1994, a Committee on standards in Public Life was set up. This Committee is considering the use of Parliamentary lobbyists along with a wide range of public ethics issues. It is expected to report in May 1995. There are, however, in the House of Commons, Registers of journalists, All-Party and registered groups and Members staff, which were introduced in 1985. In 1994, two separate Associations of Parliamentary lobbyists launched voluntary codes of conduct to regulate their affairs and set up voluntary registers of professional lobbyists.

¹ These two subjects have already been the subject of a notice to members of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities (PE 153.305 of 29 October 1991), which this document updates.

In most of the national parliaments, practice and the rules applied allow committees to listen to the opinions of persons or organizations from outside parliament, in particular through public hearings, where this procedure is considered necessary¹.

2. In most of the parliaments of the Member States there are no rules governing parliamentary intergroups, and in some chambers they do not even exist.

In practice, intergroups are set up on an occasional and informal basis within several national parliaments; certain facilities (for example the use of meeting rooms) are sometimes made available. In France, the rules of procedure of the National Assembly (Article 23) and of the Senate (Article 5(6)) forbid the setting up within the Chamber of groups whose aim is to defend private, local or professional interests and which require their members to accept mandatory instructions. However, the bureaux of both chambers authorize the setting up of 'study groups' (or working groups) which may enjoy certain facilities.

In the United Kingdom, there are many All-Party Groups, Parliamentary Groups and similar groups whose membership is open to Members of either House of more than one party; these are unofficial and tend on the whole to cover subjects which are not generally contentious in party terms. Under the authority of a resolution of the House of Commons of 17 December 1985, a Register of these Groups was set up.

C. Situation in the national parliaments, by Member State

1. Rules and/or practice governing the activities of interest groups or lobbyists
2. Provisions and/or practice governing the setting up and operation of parliamentary intergroups

BELGIUM

Chamber of Representatives and Senate

1. At the moment there are no rules on this matter in the Belgian parliament.
2. There are no rules governing the setting up and the operation of parliamentary intergroups.

In the Chamber of Representatives, certain individual initiatives, not subject to rules, have led to the setting up of a few interparliamentary groups such as the 'Friends of Tibet' or the 'European Federalists'. The involvement of the Chamber of Representatives is confined to making rooms and, where necessary, staff available when these groups meet.

¹ In several Member States, the constitution and/or national law provide for the setting up of national bodies representing economic and social interests (e.g. economic and social committees) which have the right to participate in the formation of legislative policy in certain areas and which must in certain cases be consulted by the executive and also by parliament. This notion of 'representation of interests', which is part of a different approach and context, is not dealt with in this note.

DENMARK
Folketing

1. Lobbyists who seek to have their interests made known or defended in the Folketing by sending deputations or petitions to the Standing Committees, have their names entered in the archives of these Committees, but this, and the registration of working documents is done purely for recording purposes.

However, there are certain rules governing the admittance of deputations to the presence of a Committee such as :

- those making up a deputation must have a natural affiliation to the person, organization, association etc. applying for admittance to the Committee (e.g. a lawyer, member, or employee). Persons without any real affiliation to the deputation are not allowed to participate.
- the spokesman of a delegation - possibly assisted by other participants - is entitled to make a short statement of the deputation's position to the Committee.
- after this statement, the Members of the Committee may ask questions and receive replies from the deputation.
- no negotiations may take place, but the points of view stated by the deputation are included in the deliberations of the Committee.
- the deputation is not allowed to put questions to the Committee.
- the hearing is not expected to exceed 10 to 15 minutes.
- all participants in the deputation should be acquainted with the above mentioned rules.

Written material for the Committee should be sent to the Committees Department of the Folketing in 60 copies in sufficient time to enable the Committee to study its contents.

Details of the names, affiliation etc. of the members of a deputation must be given to the Committees Department in good time. Changes in the composition of the deputation must be notified to this department no later than one day before the hearing.

2. There are no rules concerning 'all-party' groups.

GERMANY
Bundestag

1. According to Annex 2 of the rules of procedure of the German Bundestag, each year a public list is drawn up of all groups wishing to express or defend their interests before the Bundestag or the Federal Government.

Representatives of pressure groups must be entered on the register before they can be heard by parliamentary committees or be issued with a pass admitting them to parliament buildings. The following information must be provided: name and seat of the group; composition of board of directors and board of management; sphere of interest; number of members; names of appointed representatives; address of group's or association's office at the seat of the Bundestag and of the Federal Government.

However, registration does not automatically entitle a group to special treatment. The Bundestag may unilaterally declare an entry pass invalid, and the Bundestag and its committees may invite associations or experts who do not appear on the register to their meetings where they consider it necessary.

2. Parliamentary intergroups are not covered by any specific rules. They are regulated case by case according to the initiatives of interested members of parliament who decide on the content and the form of their work.

Bundesrat

- and 2. There are no rules governing interest groups or parliamentary intergroups.

GREECE Chamber of Deputies

1. The concept of lobbying is totally unknown to Greek Law and is therefore not regulated.
2. The only kind of all-party groups existing in the Greek Parliament are the so-called 'Parliamentary Groups of Friendship'. These are all-party groups (30 in total) which are established in order to create and develop friendship between the members of the Greek Parliament and members of foreign parliamentary assemblies. There exist no special provisions for them. Their establishment and operation are governed exclusively by custom. After each general election, MPs are informed about the existence of these groups and are invited to declare their preference, i.e. which of these groups they would like to join. Each MP can belong simultaneously to several of these groups. Each 'Parliamentary Group of Friendship' elects its own chairman and establishes its own rules of procedure.

SPAIN Congreso de los Diputados and Senado

1. and 2. There are no rules governing the activity or registration of pressure groups or the setting up and operation of parliamentary intergroups.

FRANCE Senate

1. The Senate has no register or list of pressure groups.

Professional groups or organizations wishing to gain access to the Senate apply to the Presidency of the Senate. The request is dealt with by the General Secretariat of the Presidency which, in addition to authorizing access to the Palais (the seat of the Senate), may also authorize access to the corridors of the Salle des Séances (the Chamber itself), if the professional group is considered important and representative (e.g. Barreau de Paris, Chambre des notaires, Assemblée permanente des Chambres d'agriculture, Electricité de France, Gaz de France, etc.).

The request may also be addressed to the College of Quaestors which then issues a pass for the Salle des Conférences and the Galerie des Bustes where it is possible to meet senators. In this case no access is given to the Salle des Séances.

About 20 passes are issued each year by the College of Quaestors and a dozen or so authorizations for access to the corridors of the Salle des Séances are granted by the Presidency General Secretariat.

There is no code of conduct for representatives of interest groups. Any who behave improperly may be the subject of oral recommendations or be declared 'persona non grata' at the request of senators.

2. Under Article 5(6) of the Senate's rules of procedure, which forbids the setting up within the chamber of groups whose aim is to defend private, local or professional interests, the bureau of the Senate authorizes the setting up of 'study groups' and 'working groups' (Senate Bureau Order No. 84-63 of 20 June 1984).

Study groups comprise senators from different standing committees and working groups are made up of senators from one committee only. The setting-up of working groups requires the approval of the committee concerned. Study groups (intergroups in the sense understood in the European Parliament) are set up by decision of the Bureau, after considering the opinion of the standing committee concerned (Commission de Tutelle or supervising committee), to which the intergroup is linked in administrative terms.

Once an intergroup has been authorized, a Senate official acts as secretary.

Membership of a study group usually involves payment of a subscription. The minimum sum is set annually by the College of Quaestors and is automatically deducted from Senators' monthly emoluments.

National Assembly

1. Lobbying activities are not regulated and are not covered by any code of ethics. There is no list or register (public or otherwise) of pressure groups, which are neither 'known' nor 'recognized' as such.

There is only one relevant provision: under Article 26(1), first paragraph, of the general directives of the bureau of the National Assembly on circulation within the Assembly, 'those with special cards issued personally by the President or by the Quaestors may have access to the Salon de la Paix'.

In practice this means about twenty people responsible for public relations, or perhaps only the 'parliamentary' part of such relations in a few large public undertakings (e.g. Electricité de France) and a few 'institutional' bodies (e.g. Caisse des dépôts et consignations - Deposit and Consignment Office).

However, these are not the only people likely to lobby within the National Assembly. In fact many others have access to certain areas, either on a permanent basis or otherwise, for example at the request of one or more deputies, and may thus in effect put forward the point of view of many large private companies or professional and trade union organizations.

2. Article 23 of the rules of procedure of the National Assembly forbids the setting up within the chamber of groups whose aim is to defend private, local or professional interests and which require their members to accept mandatory instructions, and also forbids meetings within the Palais of permanent groups whose aim is to defend the same interests.

Article 79 of the rules of procedure forbids deputies from pleading and from using their position or status or allowing it to be used for any purpose other than the performance of their duties as deputy, with disciplinary sanctions for non-compliance. They are also prohibited from belonging to any association or group which defends private, local or professional interests or from making any commitments to such groups regarding their parliamentary activities, where such membership or commitments involve accepting mandatory instructions.

However, there are 'study groups' within the National Assembly open to deputies from all political groups. There are currently 81 such bodies. Any deputy expressing an interest may join.

These are groups approved by the National Assembly Bureau according to the following procedure: a deputy or a group of deputies submits a request for approval. This is examined by a Bureau delegation which, having received the opinions of the competent standing committee or committees, proposes to the bureau whether to accept or refuse approval.

According to the administrative rules applicable to them, approved groups may have the services of an Assembly official to act as secretary, if a volunteer is found. They may also use the meeting rooms and document reprographic facilities of the Assembly. They receive no administrative expenses.

IRELAND

Dail and Seanad

1. and 2. There are no rules governing pressure groups or parliamentary intergroups.

ITALY

Senato della Repubblica and Camera dei Deputati

1. There are no specific rules on the activities of interest groups or their representatives within the Italian parliament.

However, in the Ninth Legislature (1983-1987), four bills were tabled on regulating professional public relations activities (A.C. 148, 157, 2983 and A.S. 125) and discussed by the committee on employment and social security of the Camera, which in the course of its deliberations prepared a unified text. However, the passage of this proposed legislation was interrupted by the early dissolution of parliament. In the Tenth Legislature (1987-1992) two further bills were tabled (A.C. 479 in 1987 and A.C. 4144 in 1989) and examined, but there the procedure ended. A further proposal, to be referred to the competent committee, was tabled during the last legislature (1992-1994) (A.C. 144 of 23 April 1992)¹.

¹ *In theoretical terms there has been much debate on the regulation of pressure groups in Italy and indeed on the need for such regulation at all. It is not easy to arrive at a definition, which would, in any case, only cover public relations 'professionals' and would not tackle the issue of lobbies as such or the representation of interests in general. Some have objected that the degeneration of the legislative process and the proliferation of legislation provides fertile ground for pressure groups. The return of Parliament to basic legislation of principle, keeping the adoption of laws to a minimum and publicizing or 'proceduralizing' access of pressure groups to the pre-legislative stage would be the best means of resolving the issue of lobbying. However, it is generally felt, though with differences of emphasis, that there is a need for regulation, accompanied by institutional reform which would change the relationship between interest groups and political groups (for example, the introduction of one-member constituencies or incompatibility between parliamentary posts and government office). It is argued that information should be credible and should therefore be subject to rules of professional conduct. This could be achieved by compiling registers of pressure groups and making it compulsory for registered groups*

In the Senate, national associations and organizations can usually ask to be issued with a card admitting them to Senate buildings, but not to the rooms where the parliamentary committees meet. This card does give the holder access to parliamentary facilities (library, use of rooms, photocopies, etc.). Printed material is distributed by the Senate library, which sells parliamentary acts either direct or by subscription.

2. The Italian parliament has no rules concerning parliamentary intergroups, although intergroups do occasionally form on the initiative of deputies or senators. However, their activities and organization are not covered by the rules of the two chambers nor are they part of the official parliamentary structure.

LUXEMBOURG Chamber of Deputies

1. There is no register or public list of pressure groups wishing to express or defend their interests before the Chamber of Deputies.

No facilities are provided for such groups by the Chamber of Deputies and there is no code of conduct applicable to them.

However, the Chamber of Deputies, a parliamentary committee or one or more deputies do have the right to hear such pressure groups if they wish, either on their own initiative or at the request of the pressure groups themselves.

2. The Chamber of Deputies has no regulations or practice concerning the setting-up or operation of all-party groups or intergroups.

NETHERLANDS Eerste Kamer and Tweede Kamer

1. There are no specific rules on the activities of pressure groups within the Dutch parliament.

The Public Relations Division of the Second Chamber issues the agents of pressure groups and lobbyists and representatives of other organizations with a special card or pass which is valid only on the date of issue. In exceptional cases this card may be valid for a maximum of two years. The pass admits the holder to the buildings of the Second Chamber in order to contact members of parliament, attend public sittings and consult documents.

2. There is no specific provision in either of the Dutch Chambers governing the setting-up or operation of parliamentary intergroups.

to submit reports stating the expenses incurred and action taken. This would not only improve the quality of information but would provide greater transparency of interest group activities. The introduction of registers would mean deciding on a precise definition of what constitutes 'public relations activities' which, in any case, should cover a number of activities which would otherwise not be covered under the law' (information supplied by the Research Department of the Camera dei Deputati).

AUSTRIA

National Council and Federal Council

1. The Rules of Procedure of neither the Austrian National Council nor the Federal Council contain any provisions affecting the activities of lobbies or interest groups in connection with the framing of the federal legislation, and there is no official register of interest groups in Austria.

Nonetheless, the influence of interest groups, especially of the large economic interest groups cooperating within the framework of the so-called "social partnership", on Austrian legislation is relatively strong. The "social partners" participate in the preparation of legislation : government has to consult the chambers when preparing a government bill under the so-called "appraisal procedure", and it is usual for not only the chambers but also other interest groups to be consulted. At the parliamentary stage the "social partners" influence legislation through political and personal contacts : for a long time more than 50 per cent of MPs have had close ties with interest groups. This proportion has only recently diminished.

Furthermore, under the provisions of section 40 para. 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the National Council and section 33 para. 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Federal Council, which entitle the committees of the National Council and the Federal Council to summon experts or other witnesses, experts representing interest groups may also be invited to present their point of view to a committee deliberating on a bill.

2. "All-party groups" exist in the Austrian Parliament only on an informal basis; e.g., some weeks ago an informal group consisting of one member of each of the five parliamentary groups was established to prepare the sittings of the Main Committee of the National Council dealing with EU matters.

PORTUGAL

Assembleia da República

1. There are no specific rules or registers concerning pressure groups or their activities.

Representatives of such groups are covered by the general rules governing access to, circulation and presence in Assembly buildings (despacho n° 1/93, D.A.R. du 22.3.1993, II Série-C, n° 22).

2. There are no specific rules governing the setting-up or operation of parliamentary intergroups. However, in 1990 the assembly decided to create 'parliamentary friendship groups' whose aim is to develop relations with the parliaments of other countries and thus to promote reciprocal consultation and the exchange of information.

FINLAND

Eduskunta

1. There are no registered lobbyists in the Finnish Parliament. Interest groups maintain contact with MPs and political parties on an informal basis.

Parliamentary Committees may take expert opinion, inviting experts to participate in a debate. These experts are very often representatives of various organizations.

2. There are no official all-party groups in the Finnish Parliament, but they do exist unofficially, e.g. MPs from the same constituency cooperating on local affairs and with local organizations, women MPs, etc.

SWEDEN
Riksdag

1. There are no rules or practices concerning lobbying in the Riksdag.

There is a lively public debate about lobbying, particularly in connection with the European Union-issue.

In January 1995 two private bills concerning lobbying were drafted.

Referring to the Commission database, one of the private bills suggests a system of registration for lobbyists in Sweden. The code adopted by lobby companies within the European Union in September 1994, according to which the companies should state whose interests they represent, is also mentioned in this bill.

The other private bill is focusing on public authorities' involvement with lobby organisations. National boards members should not be allowed to be members of lobby organisations or involve themselves in lobbying. There was a call for rules to be laid down on public authorities and lobbying.

These bills have not been considered yet.

2. There are no rules or established practices about all-party groups.

UNITED KINGDOM
House of Commons

1. At present there is no public list or Register of Parliamentary Lobbyists. The Select Committee on Members' interests reported in Session 1990/91 that a Register of Lobbyists should be set up together with an associated Code of Conduct (HC Paper 586). It envisaged a mandatory Register administered by the House of Commons and established by Resolution of the House which would cover all those defined as "professional lobbyists", i.e. someone who is professionally employed to lobby on behalf of clients or who advises clients on how to lobby on their own behalf.

When the Report was debated in the Commons, Tony Newton, Leader of the House doubted the value of such a Register (HC Deb 28/6/93 c785-786). The debate did not include a vote for and against the recommendations of the Committee, so although the Report has not been formally rejected, there is as yet no authority for the Commons to set up a Register of Lobbyists.

In October 1994 the Prime Minister, John Major set up the Committee on Standards in Public Life chaired by Lord Nolan to "examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of probity in public life". The Committee is considering the use of Parliamentary Lobbyists along with a wide range of public ethics issues. It is expected to report in May 1995. It is not known at this stage whether the committee will recommend a mandatory Register of Lobbyists.

The Select Committee on Members' Interests had begun a new enquiry into Parliamentary Lobbying in the Session 1993/94 (HC 85) but decided subsequently to adjourn it without a Report.

The Select Committee on Members' Interests has recently reviewed the rules for registering Members' Financial Interests and concluded that a *Member should Register clients of a consultancy with whom he has a personal interest*. (HC 326 Session 1991/92). This has now been agreed by the House (HC Deb 28/6/93 c757-780). The guide prepared by the Registry of Members' Interests (Rules on the Registration and Declaration of Financial Interests, October 1993) spells out the new requirements in detail :

"Clients (Category 3)"

"22. If any directorship or employment registered under categories 1 and 2 involves the provision to client of services which depend essentially upon or arise out of membership of the House, the Member is required to disclose the names of the clients and the nature of their business in this section of the Register. For example, if a Member is employed as a parliamentary adviser by a firm which is itself a consultancy and therefore is providing such advice and services to its clients, the Member should disclose those of the consultancy's clients with whom he has a personal connection or who benefit, directly or indirectly, from his advice and services. The same requirement applies where a Member, on his or her own account, accepts payment or material benefits for providing such services, but not on such a regular basis as to warrant registration as employment under section 2 of the Register. Where a company is named as a client, the nature of the company's business should be indicated briefly; this requirement applies throughout the registration form".

"23. The types of services which are intended to be covered by this category of the Register include action connected with any parliamentary proceeding, sponsoring meetings or functions in the parliamentary buildings, making representation to Ministers, fellow Members or public servants, accompanying delegations to Ministers, and the provision of advice on parliamentary or public affairs. A Member who has clients in a non-parliamentary professional capacity (for example as a doctor, solicitor or accountant) is not required to register the clients, provided it is clear beyond doubt that the services which are being provided do not arise out of or relate in any manner to the Member's membership of the House".

There are, however, *Registers of Journalists, All Party and Registered groups, and Members' staff*, introduced by the Commons in December 1985 following concerns about the introduction of professional lobbyists into the House under the guise of Members' staff. The following extract from the 1990/91 Select Committee Report on "Lobbying" gives further details : "... Our predecessor Committee identified some minor abuses connected with lobbying and one major abuse, though it was uncertain as to its extent. This was the use of privileged access to the Palace by journalists and Members' staff to advance other interests for which they were paid. It also felt that the links between outside interests and backbench all-party groups should be more easily identifiable to Members generally. Upon our predecessor Committee's recommendation, the House agreed to set up three new Registers, copies of which are placed in the House of Commons Library for the use of Members..."¹.

¹ There continued to be concerns that lobbyists are gaining access to security passes enabling them to contact Members within the Palace. For example, the Select Committee on Services (Session 1987/88 HC 580) stated that abuses were continuing. Little hard evidence of misconduct has, however, been uncovered.

These Registers are described as follows in the guide prepared by the Registry of Members' Interests :

Register of Parliamentary Journalists

Those holding full passes to the Palace of Westminster as lobby journalists, as journalists accredited to the Parliamentary Press Gallery, or for parliamentary broadcasting, are required to register both the employment for which they received the pass and any other paid occupation or employment where their privileged access to Parliament may be relevant.

Members' Staff

Those holding full passes as Members' secretaries or research assistants are required to register any relevant gainful occupation other than that for which the pass is issued. An occupation is "relevant" for this purpose if it might reasonably be thought to be advantaged in any way by access to the parliamentary buildings and their services and facilities. Members' staff are also required to register visits, gifts or other benefits which they receive and which are covered by the definitions in categories 5 (gifts, benefits and hospitality from UK sources), 6 (overseas visits) and 7 (overseas benefits and gifts) of the Register of Members' Interests.

All-Party and Parliamentary Groups (see below, point 2).

1994 saw two separate Associations of Parliamentary Lobbyists launch codes of conduct to regulate their affairs. The *Association of Professional Political Consultants* and the *Institute of Public Relations* have set up registers of professional Lobbyists. It is important to note that these are voluntary codes and voluntary registers.

Professional Lobbyists are not treated as a separate category when passes are issued. The Palace of Westminster and Lobbyists have no right to a security pass (which would gain them access to the Palace). There have been unsubstantiated allegations that some Lobbyists have gained security passes through employment as a member of an MP's personal staff.

2. There are many All-Party subject groups in the House of Commons. These are unofficial, and have a membership of backbench Members of the House, or of both Houses. The groups tend on the whole to cover subjects which are not generally contentious in party terms.

These groups flourish and wane according to the interests and enthusiasm of members and with the topicality of various subjects. They reflect very much the interests of the day and therefore may change frequently.

Over the years since 1945, it has been argued, less and less influence has been exerted by backbench Members in the formulation of government policy, and there has been insufficient consultation between backbenchers and Ministers. These All-Party Groups can sometimes serve as a counterbalance to this. They have a liaison function and can, when necessary, exert pressure on a Minister to modify policy or influence legislation and further action in particular areas. They thus play a part in the flexible pattern of consultation that Government nowadays employs in order to sound out views both inside and outside Parliament.

To sum up, All-Party Groups may draw attention to certain aspects of public affairs, may assist in keeping the Government informed of parliamentary opinion, and may act as pressure-groups to promote some particular cause.

On 9 November 1988 the House approved without debate a Resolution of the Select Committee on House of Commons (Services)¹, which has the following effect: the use of the title "All Party Group" should be confined to groups of Members from either House, which include in their membership at least five Members from the Government and five from the opposition parties (including at least three from the main Opposition party), which hold an annual election of officers, of which adequate notice is given; use of the title "Parliamentary Group" should be confined to groups which admit strangers (i.e. those who are not Members of either House) to their membership, but which otherwise conform to the requirements stated above.

Commons officers of All-Party Groups, Parliamentary Groups and similar groups whose membership is open to Members of either House of more than one party are required to register the names of the officers of the Group and the source and extent of any benefits, financial or in kind, which they may enjoy. These registrable benefits include the provision of staff help by outside organisations or individuals. In such cases it is also necessary to register any other relevant gainful occupation which those staff may have.

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House of Lords

1. There is no official register or public list of lobbyists seeking to have their interests made known or defended in the House of Lords, and no rules or code of conduct specifically applicable to such persons. In general, the facilities of the House are made available only to Members, and not to lobbyists or interest groups as such, although it is open to Members supporting particular interest groups to sponsor in person meetings or functions of such groups at the House.

When speaking in the House, Lords may indicate that an outside body agrees with the substance of the views that they are expressing; but they speak for themselves and not on behalf of outside interests.

2. In general, there are no specific rules of the House of Lords on All-Party Groups although the rules of the House of Commons relating to All-Party Groups apply to groups including Peers amongst their members (see above). Registration entitles the group to use the facilities of the Palace of Westminster for meetings.

¹ *All Party and Parliamentary Groups HC 183-v 1987/88.*