

Lobby transparency register alert by Corporate Europe Observatory

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Fair Energy

<http://fairenergy.eu/>

If an organisation has “the objective of directly or indirectly influencing the formulation or implementation of policy and the decision-making processes of the EU Institutions” then it should be registered. We consider that Fair Energy has this objective and should be registered, which would bring transparency to its activities and funding.

The Fair Energy website says “We are an advocacy campaign set up to promote the key goals of the European Union in the energy field: sustainability, security and stability of supply, diversified resources and open and unified markets.” It also calls itself an “independent think tank”, and says that it is “sponsored by Naftogaz” which is Ukraine’s national oil and gas company.

<http://fairenergy.eu/>

We consider that Fair Energy is seeking to influence the formulation and / or implementation of policy and the decision-making processes of the EU institutions around the Nord Stream 2 project. For example, Alan Riley, who is the chairman of Fair Energy, recently wrote a comment piece for EUObserver in which he critiques a Council Legal Services’ opinion on Nord Stream 2.

Furthermore, under its KEEP EUROPE UNITED Fair Energy Security Campaign, Fair Energy lists quotes from Energy Commissioner Cañete and Energy Union Vice President Šefčovič, as well as other EU decision-makers. Its website contains further blogs which offer commentary on EU policy-making on Nord Stream 2.

The Fair Energy website raises further, additional questions related to the EU lobby register:

- by using quotes by Commissioners on its website, it implies that they are actively supporting the Fair Energy campaign. However, Politico has apparently asked the Commissioners’ offices if indeed they had backed the campaign, but spokespeople for both said they hadn’t and weren’t aware they had been quoted. In that case, the use of these quotes in this way seems misleading.

- The Fair Energy website says that the organisation is “sponsored by Naftogaz” which is Ukraine’s national oil and gas company. Alan Riley is an adviser to Naftogaz (and a Polish energy firm too). http://cepa.org/EuropesEdge/Russian_Disinformation_meets_Pipeline_Politics Shouldn’t Naftogaz declare its sponsorship of Fair Energy and include those costs as part of its own lobby register declaration? It currently only declares €10,000 - €24,999 EU lobby expenditure in 2016 and it is unclear whether this includes sponsorship of Fair Energy or not.

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=769349815543-90>

- Naftogaz employs lobby consultancy Cabinet DN

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=91124993695-29> and Politico has also reported that it received a press release from Fair Energy, with the list of recipients hidden save for the email address of someone who works at Cabinet DN. Is there a direct relationship between Fair Energy and Cabinet DN? This should be clarified.

- Aside from Alan Riley, the only other person listed as involved in Fair Energy on its website is Peter Wilding. Peter Wilding is the founder and director of The Influence Group. The Influence Group is a consultancy firm based in the UK but “has access to a wide pool of EU experts”. Its

website also says “Our advocacy service helps you shape political outcomes by influencing negotiating positions” on both Brexit and non-Brexit issues. The Influence Group is absent from both the UK and EU lobby registers. Is there a relationship between Fair Energy and The Influence Group? This should be clarified <http://influencegroup.org.uk/about/>

To sum up:

- Fair Energy should be registered in the EU lobby register as it seems clearly to have “the objective of directly or indirectly influencing the formulation or implementation of policy and the decision-making processes of the EU Institutions”
- Fair Energy should ensure that its website does not mislead about whether EU decision-makers actively endorse its campaigns
- There should be clarity as to the exact relationships between and among CabinetDN, Naftogaz, The Influence Group, and Fair Energy. If CabinetDN or The Influence Group is in any way supporting Fair Energy, we consider that this relationship should be declared, by all parties.
- It should be clarified whether Naftogaz has included its sponsorship of Fair Energy as part of its own lobby register declaration.