The *Saeima*1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following law:

**Law on Transparency of Interest Representation**

**Section 1. Terms Used in the Law**

The following terms are used in the Law:

1) **interest representation**– any direct or indirect communication of a private individual in their own interests or the interests of other private individuals with a public authority representative in order to influence the initiation, development, taking, or application of a public decision. The following shall not be regarded as interest representation:

a) communication between a political party or an alliance of political parties (including meetings) and a public authority representative during public political discussions or such political discussions in which an interest representative does not participate;

b) the communication of a member of the diplomatic and consular service of another state with a public authority representative within the scope of the functions assigned thereto;

c) communication in relation to administrative proceedings within an institution (except for the cases where the administrative act is issued by political officials), administrative offence proceedings in an institution, pre-trial criminal proceedings, legal proceedings, or settlement of a dispute in another way (for example, conciliation or mediation);

d) communication which takes place publicly through electronic media, press, or social networks;

e) participation in processions, sessions, or pickets publicly or the submission of an application in itself;

2) **interest representative**– a private individual who represents interests with or without remuneration, regardless of the legal status or registration;

3) **public authority representative**– a public entity, an authority, official, or employee thereof, and also a private individual in relation to the administration task delegated thereto. The public authority representative is also a member of the *Saeima*, a councillor of a local government council, and an external advisor hired by a public entity (for example, an external advisory employee of a member of the Cabinet);

4) **public decision**– a legal act, a policy planning document, a political decision, and an administrative act issued by political officials.

**Section 2. Purpose of this Law**

The purpose of this Law is to ensure:

1) the transparency of the process of the interest representation by promoting public trust in interest representatives who participate in the initiation, development, taking, or application of public decisions and in public authority;

2) fair and equal opportunities for all private individuals concerned to participate in the interest representation.

**Section 3. Register of Interest Representation**

(1) Information on interest representatives shall be entered in the register of interest representation (hereinafter – the register) which shall be kept by the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – the register institution).

(2) Interest representatives who implement a systematic interest representation have an obligation to register with the register. The application for registration shall be submitted within two weeks from the date on which the interest representative qualifies for systematic interest representation. Within the meaning of this Paragraph, systematic interest representation shall mean the interest representation implemented at least three times over a period of 12 months from the first interest representation.

(3) All the information referred to in Paragraph four of this Section, except for the information referred to in Paragraph four, Clauses 4 and 7 of this Section and the information which has already been registered in one of the registers led by the register institution shall be indicated in the application for registration. The application shall be submitted electronically, using the special online form under the management of the register institution, and shall be signed with a secure electronic signature.

(4) The following information shall be entered in the register:

1) the name, registration number, legal address, and legal form of the interest representative – legal person or partnership – or the given name, surname, and personal identity number (if none, the date of birth, the number and date of issue of the personal identification document, the state and authority which issued the document), and also the country of permanent place of residence of the representative of interests – natural person – and, if the interest representative so wishes, the details of the telephone number, e-mail and website address thereof;

2) the given name, surname, and personal identity number (if none, the date of birth, the number and date of issue of the personal identification document, the state and authority which issued the document), and also the country of permanent place of residence of the legal representative of the interest representative – legal person or partnership – and another representative who is authorised to carry out the interest representation, indicating whether they have the right to represent the interest representative individually or jointly;

3) the number of members of the interest representative, the given name, surname, and personal identity number (if none, the date of birth, the number and date of issue of the personal identification document, the state and authority which issued the document), and also the country of permanent place of residence of the shareholder, stockholder, and beneficial owner, but if the person referred to in this Clause is a legal person or partnership – the name, registration number, legal address, and legal form;

4) the unique identification number assigned to the interest representative and to the person referred to in Clause 2 of this Paragraph;

5) the fields of interest representation. The Cabinet shall determine the fields;

6) the private individual for whom the interest representation is carried out, indicating the information referred to in Clause 1 of this Paragraph on this individual;

7) the date of making the entry;

8) other information, if provided for by law.

(5) The interest representative or, in the relevant cases, the competent authority shall, within one month from the day of occurrence of changes in the information referred to in Paragraph four of this Section, submit an application to the register institution on the changes, indicating the nature of the changes and the new information on the interest representative being submitted for entry in the register. The application shall be submitted electronically in accordance with the procedures laid down in the second sentence of Paragraph three of this Section.

(6) The register institution shall make entries in the register and entries regarding changes in the information recorded in the Register, including regarding the exclusion of an interest representative from the register, electronically on the basis of an application of the interest representative or, in the cases specified in the law, a notification of the competent authority and without taking a separate decision.

(7) The applicant shall be notified of the entries made in the register, using the special online form under the management of the register institution.

(8) The information entered in the register on an interest representative shall be kept for 10 years after exclusion of the representative from the register.

**Section 4. System for Declaring Interest Representation**

(1) The public authority representatives shall publish information on the activities of interest representation in the system for declaring interest representation (hereinafter – the system) which shall be maintained by the register institution. The information is published in the system not later than two weeks after the activity of the interest representation.

(2) Details of meetings taken place and sessions held (for example, working groups, meetings of commissions and committees) shall be published in the system, indicating at least the date, form of communication, participants, and issues discussed, the details of the private individuals in favour of whom the interest representation is being carried out, information on the drawing up of a protocol (in the case of drawing up thereof, the protocol shall be appended or the address of the website shall be indicated where the protocol is available), and also other information stipulated by the Cabinet. The publication of information in the system on meetings and sessions with participation of at least two public authority representatives shall be ensured by the public authority representative who is the organiser of the meeting or session.

(3) If the publication of the information referred to in Paragraph two of this Section in the system endangers State security or causes other disproportionate damage to the public interests, the public authority representative shall not publish them, but shall ensure the inclusion of such information in a separate document.

(4) Information on sessions in which the interest representation takes place shall not be published in the system if they have been established on the basis of a legal act or another legislative act and the progress thereof is recorded in a protocol or video recording.

(5) The information published in the system shall be publicly available free of charge.

(6) An interest representative is entitled to submit a complaint to a public authority representative regarding the information published by the public authority representative in the system during the last 12 months, insofar as they relate to the representative of the particular interests and are erroneous or incomplete. The public authority representative has an obligation to review such complaint in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Administrative Procedure Law.

(7) The Cabinet shall determine:

1) other information to be published in the system, and also the amount of publication of such information;

2) the procedures by which a public authority representative is granted access to the system.

**Section 5. Obligations of Interest Representatives**

An interest representative has the following obligations:

1) to disclose to the public authority representative the private individual for whose benefit the interest representation is being carried out;

2) to disclose to the public authority representative the unique identification number thereof and whether the interest representative implements a systematic interest representation;

3) to refrain from providing false information;

4) to refrain from representing opposing interests in relation to the same public decision;

5) to refrain from promising that it will achieve specific action by the institution in relation to a public decision;

6) to not encourage a public authority representative to violate legal norms which are binding on it;

7) to ensure that all information provided thereon to the register institution and all information to be disclosed in accordance with the procedures of this Law is true and not misleading.

**Section 6. Restrictions on the Operation of Public Authority Representatives**

(1) A public authority representative is prohibited:

1) to provide special advantages to any of the interest representatives without respecting the principle of equality;

2) to accept gifts from an interest representative within the meaning of the law On Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Activities of Public Officials;

3) to mislead the interest representative, including by giving the impression of a possibility of providing it with special advantages in order to contact another public authority representative or a possibility of influencing the behaviour of the public authority representative;

4) to request an interest representative to make a donation to the authority in which the public authority representative is employed. The term “donation” is used within the meaning of the law On Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Activities of Public Officials.

(2) A public authority representative also has an obligation to comply with the prohibitions referred to in Paragraph one of this Section in respect of a private individual for whose benefit the interest representation is carried out.

(3) A public authority representative, when submitting a draft public decision or a proposal thereof, shall indicate the activities of the interest representation which have taken place during the initiation or development of a draft public decision. If activities of the interest representation have taken place during the preparation of a proposal, they shall also be reflected in the table of proposals for the examination of the draft law, a statement of objections expressed in opinions, or other similar documents in cases where such documents are to be prepared in accordance with legal acts.

(4) It is prohibited for a public authority representative, during his or her term of office, to be an interest representative in matters in which he or she is involved himself or herself as a public authority representative. This restriction shall also be in effect two years after the end of the term of office for cases in which the person has been involved as the public authority representative.

(5) A public authority representative has the right to refuse communication with an interest representative who has not registered with the register, but who has an obligation to register with the register in accordance with this Law.

**Section 7. Monitoring of the Achievement of the Objectives of the Law**

The Cabinet shall, once a year by 31 March, submit a report to the *Saeima* on what has been done in order to achieve the objectives of the Law, and also on the future activities.

**Transitional Provisions**

1. Sections 3 and 4, Section 5, Clause 2, and Section 6, Paragraph five of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2025.

2. The Cabinet shall, by 1 September 2023, issue the regulations referred to in Section 3, Paragraph four, Clause 5 and Section 4, Paragraph seven of this Law.

3. The restriction specified in the second sentence of Section 6, Paragraph four of this Law shall not be applicable in respect of those public authority representatives whose powers have expired until 1 April 2023.

4. The Cabinet shall submit the report referred to in Section 7 of this Law to the *Saeima* for the first time in 2024, but the report for 2025 shall also include an assessment of the need to provide for administrative liability in relation to the failure to fulfil the obligations referred to in this Law.

The Law shall come into force on 1 January 2023.

This Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 13 October 2022.

President E. Levits

Rīga, 25 October 2022