



# OPEN EUROPEAN DIALOGUE

## Highlights

### MP OPEN CALL #7

#### Your Direct Line to Europe's Policymakers

6 April 2021

The Open European Dialogue is committed to strengthening dialogue between policymakers across Europe by providing a neutral, informal, and accessible space for conversation. Our monthly, online MP Open Calls grew out of this mission and are a space for parliamentarians to set the agenda, discuss pressing national and European issues, and support each other by sharing best practices and concerns.

Our call was joined by three parliamentarians from Germany, Poland, and Slovenia and an expert from the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The participants discussed how the application process for the EU's Covid-19 Recovery Fund had affected their parliamentary work and national politics at large.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CONVERSATION

- **Opposition parties in Germany, Poland and Slovenia are closely monitoring the allocation of EU recovery grants**, as governments may be tempted to use the windfall for electioneering or purposes not warranted by the Next Generation EU provisions.
- **Tougher background checks on lobbying might become necessary** when administering the large amount of funds made available through the Next Generation EU.
- **Participants expressed opposing views on whether spending allocation should be more centralized or more regionalized.** Regionalization can lead to pork-barrel politics, while centralized spending might not meet specific regional needs for economic recovery.

- “Some MPs might use the money to build a road in their constituency in the hope to become the next mayor.”
- “Our central government will use funds to promote itself ahead of the elections. We need to localize spending to make sure it will lead to a more durable recovery.”
- **Best practices are hard to come by when it comes to the Next Generation EU recovery instrument.** The situation is different in every country and the political priorities to fight the crisis vary significantly.
- **National priorities and European core values at a crossroads?**
  - One MP described the dilemma of having to approve a complex program of national reforms with funds made available through the Next Generation EU that might get the governing party re-elected even if, in his view, this party violates key European values. However, the country cannot afford to delay reforms which are urgently needed to prevent an even deeper European crisis.

## RESOURCES

- [Una legge sul lobbying, per il bene della democrazia](#) (It); [A new law on lobbying in Italy](#) (Eng), Ongoing campaign.

In Italy, The Good Lobby, has been among the organizations demanding a stricter law to regulate lobbying activities. If you are interested in learning more about this initiative or want to set up a similar one elsewhere, feel free to get in contact with our Open European Dialogue expert [Alberto Alemanno](#) (Founder of The Good Lobby).

## KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

The Open European Dialogue is a network driven by MPs. We look forward to hearing from you and helping you as best we can to connect and work with your colleagues from across Europe in these challenging times.

Keep in contact with your colleagues! Please know that you can always find the contact details of all OED members on the [members-only area of the website](#). Should you have issues logging in, you can contact [rfarulli@gmfus.org](mailto:rfarulli@gmfus.org).

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