

22.10.2019

Heidi Hautala
Member of the European Parliament

Jo Leinen
Former Member of the European Parliament

Martin Schirdewan
Member of the European Parliament

Dear Ms Hautala, Mr Leinen and Mr Schirdewan,

On behalf of Prime Minister Antti Rinne, I would like to thank you for your letter of 20 June 2019.

Increasing the openness and transparency of the European Union is one of Finland's long-standing goals. We believe that transparency and open communication play a significant role in bringing the EU closer to citizens, in increasing the trust, legitimacy and accountability of the EU and in combating disinformation.

During our Presidency, Finland is implementing some pragmatic and well-balanced measures to make the Council's work more open and understandable to citizens. It is important to strike the right balance between the effectiveness of decision-making and transparency.

We are also facilitating discussions on ways to increase the transparency of the EU during the next legislative cycle. As part of this effort, we organised an open expert seminar on the future of EU transparency in Brussels on Tuesday 24 September 2019.

You can find more information about our openness and transparency practices on our Presidency website:

<https://eu2019.fi/en/presidency/openness-and-transparency>

In your letter, you also referred to corporate sponsorships of the presidencies of the Council of the EU. Finland concluded a partnership agreement with Oy BMW Suomi Ab following an EU-wide call for tenders. The cars were used for transport during the informal ministerial meetings that were organised in Helsinki in July and September 2019. This is a common practice, as Member States holding the presidency rarely have enough vehicles readily available for transport at these meetings. Corporate sponsorships are a matter falling within the remit of each Member State and we do not foresee discussions about the matter with the other Member States.

To conclude, I assure you that your input is well noted and I hope that contacts between the Finnish Presidency and the Members of the European Parliament will remain constructive and forward-looking during these final months of our Presidency.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tytti Tuppurainen', written in a cursive style.

Tytti Tuppurainen
Minister for European Affairs
Finland