

[EU set to adopt new rules to prevent misuse of personal data in EP elections](#)

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The EU is bringing in new rules to prevent the misuse of personal data in EP elections.

EU ambassadors today endorsed an agreement reached between the Council presidency and the European Parliament last week on changes to the 2014 regulation governing the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations.

The new rules will allow for financial sanctions to be imposed on European political parties and foundations that deliberately influence, or attempt to influence, the outcome of EP elections by taking advantage of breaches of data protection rules.

The EU institutions are working rapidly to have the rules in place before the EP elections this spring.

Misuse of personal data to influence elections cannot be allowed. This is essential for electoral processes and the future of our democracies. Member states are determined to ensure that this year's European elections will be fair and protected from the malicious use of data breaches.

George Ciamba, Romanian Minister Delegate for European Affairs

The Commission submitted its proposal for amendments to the 2014 regulation on 12 September 2018 as part of the 'Securing free and fair European elections' package.

According to the agreement endorsed today, a verification procedure will be put in place for determining whether a breach of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation, established by a national supervisory authority, is linked to the political activities of a European political party or foundation in the context of EP elections.

The sanctions are imposed by the Authority for European Political Parties and Foundations after receiving an opinion from the committee of independent eminent persons established under the 2014 regulation. They would amount to 5% of the annual budget of the European party or foundation concerned. In addition, the European party or foundation subject to a sanction would not be able to receive funding from the EU budget the following year.

The new rules still have to be formally approved by the Parliament and adopted by the Council before they can enter into force. The vote in the EP plenary is scheduled for March. The Council is expected to adopt the amendments to the 2014 regulation in April.

Background

European political parties are political alliances registered under EU law. They can have national and regional parties, as well as individuals, as members and they must meet a number of requirements and conditions, including representation in at least a quarter of the member states. The EU funding is intended to help them finance their activities at European level and their campaigns in the EP elections.

In 2018, 10 European political parties and 10 European political foundations received funding from the EU budget.

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