

## Introduction

The Act Introducing a Lobbying Register for the Representation of Special Interests vis-à-vis the German Bundestag and the Federal Government of 16 April 2021 (Lobbying Register Act – *Lobbyregistergesetz*) came into effect on 1 January 2022.

The Lobbying Register Act was published on 16 April 2021 in the Federal Law Gazette (Federal Law Gazette 2021 I p. 818).

All **natural persons and organisations** must register in the Lobbying Register who make contact with members of the Bundestag or of the Federal Government in order to influence political processes, or who commission such activities on their own behalf, if their activity exceeds a materiality threshold defined in the Act and if none of the exceptions provided for in the Act applies. Voluntary registration is also possible.

Any person subject to the obligation to register who does not register at all, completely, or in good time, commits a **regulatory offence** punishable with a **fine of up to EUR 50,000**.

The intention is to make representation of social and business interests vis-à-vis the political sphere, which is essential for a democratic society, more transparent. In this regard, the Lobbying Register first and foremost creates **structural transparency** and aims to strengthen public trust in the political sphere and the legitimacy of the process of formulating aims and taking decisions in the Parliament and in government.

A further key function of the Lobbying Register is to provide the **addressees of the representation of special interests** in the German Bundestag and the Federal Government with closer information on the representatives of special interests who contact them. The entry in the Lobbying Register provides the addressees of the representation of special interests with information on the person making contact with them, and on the structures for representation of special interests backing them.

Representatives of special interests must therefore **publish a range of information**, principally regarding their person or organisation, their activities and areas of interest, the clients whose interests they represent, and the number of employees and the financial expenditure employed for the representation of interests vis-à-vis the German Bundestag and the Federal Government.

In enrolling in the Lobbying Register, representatives of special interests also accept a **Code of Conduct** under which they agree to operate on the basis of openness, transparency, honesty and integrity and which sets out the rules for making contact with members of the Bundestag and of the Federal Government. Infringements of the Code of Conduct are published in the Lobbying Register.

Taken together, the Lobbying Register Act and the Code of Conduct provide a new regulatory framework for cooperation among the political sphere, business, and civil society.

**Registration** in the electronic Lobbying Register maintained by the German Bundestag takes place through the website of the German Bundestag at:

[www.bundestag.de/lobbyregister](http://www.bundestag.de/lobbyregister)

OR

<https://lobbyregister.bundestag.de>

The **registration process** is intended to be as self-explanatory as possible.

Please note that the registration process itself may take some time even if you have all of the information to be entered to hand. This is because the particulars given must be confirmed with the signature of the representative of special interests or their authorised representative(s). In addition, on completion, a release code must be entered that will be sent to you by post.

If you need more information or help with registering, you can contact the **registry**. Please also inform the registry if you should come up against technical problems during registration or if anything is unclear in the handbook or on the website.

**German Bundestag**

**Division ZR 6 (Lobbying Register) – Registry**

Email: [lobbyregister@bundestag.de](mailto:lobbyregister@bundestag.de)

**Tel.: +49 30 227-37555**