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After having served for six years as the elected chairman of France's lobbying consultants' association, AFCL, and relentlessly called for the recognition and regulation of lobbying, I am particularly pleased to see this commitment finally rewarded by the French National Assembly and soon the Senate.

The National Assembly has decided to create a register and adopt a code of conduct for interest representatives, an initiative that I very much welcome, as it acknowledges the legitimacy of lobbying. It embodies the values we have always stood for, namely the need to ensure the ethics and transparency of our interventions, which we consider as a necessary condition of all lobbying activity. It will also contribute to the development of the market in France, by helping to convince those who still doubted that lobbying is fully part of any democratic, public, decision-making process.

This is hence a very positive step. The next one, to go further in terms of transparency, will be to measure the real influence of registered representatives over legislative initiatives or processes in the form of indicative lists of lobbyists who were consulted and had significant input – the so-called 'legislative footprint'.

In this context, perhaps the biggest potential problem with the register is the fact that most law firms that do lobbying are likely to decline the opportunity to register (as has happened with the European Commission's register in Brussels).