Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

Transparency International EU report shows extent of hiring of former EU politicians by lobby organisations.

Daniel Freund · Tuesday, January 31st, 2017

Today, more than 50% of ex-Commissioners and 30% of ex-Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who have left politics are now working for organisations on the EU lobby register. These findings from a new report by Transparency International EU, provide for the first time provides a complete overview of the 'revolving door' phenomenon in EU institutions in the wake of ex-Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso's move to Goldman Sachs last year.

The report "Access all areas: when EU politicians become lobbyists" is a comprehensive analysis of 512 former EU Commissioners and MEPs and their after-office employment. The report shows that companies are employing former officials to gain access, influence and proximity to policy-making. For example, 50% of Google's registered lobbyists used to work for the EU. 26 MEPs who left the European Parliament in 2014 are currently working for Brussels lobbying consultancies.

"All organisations can benefit from the experience and insights that former politicians bring, but there is an issue with those who one minute are drawing up EU laws and the next are lobbying their former colleagues on the exact same issues," said Daniel Freund, Head of Advocacy, EU Integrity, Transparency International EU. *"We need rules that prevent conflicts of interest or the capture of the institutions by lobbyists,"* Freund continued.

Transparency International EU are calling for the EU institutions to match international best practice. A strong ethics oversight body, like those in France and Canada, should oversee ethics and revolving doors cases in the EU Institutions and be able to impose sanctions. A cooling-off period for Members of the European Parliament should be introduced as a matter of urgency, according to the group.

"Lax ethics rules and a lack of enforcement erode trust in the EU Institutions," said Freund. "The Barroso case was a fantastic recruiting tool for eurosceptics. If the EU wants to defend itself against increasing nationalistic and populist forces then it needs to prove itself as a global leader in integrity and transparency," concluded Freund.

Background:

There are currently no rules in place regulating post-mandate activities for MEPs. For

Commissioners, there is an 18-month cooling-off period.

The full report is available here: https://transparency.eu/access-all-areas/

The full career-paths of 485 former MEPs and 27 former Commissioners are available on EU Integrity Watch: www.integritywatch.eu/revolvingdoor

This entry was posted on Tuesday, January 31st, 2017 at 9:30 am