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Barroso scandal

outrage continues as Greens/EFA call for swift action to curb conflicts of interest

the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament wrote to EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Vice-President for Transparency Frans Timmermans, calling on them to use their powers to cut short any conflicts of interest arising from Barroso's controversial move to Goldman Sachs.

- [Read the letter about Barroso here](#)

This high-profile case of revolving doors between the public and private sector has once again highlighted the need to have stringent rules on the post-employment of Commissioners and high-level EU staff. Currently, ex-Commissioners are only covered by an 18-month ban on lobbying former colleagues. Barroso left the Commission 20 months ago, so technically he is not in breach of the Commission's Code of Conduct.

However, we've been saying for years that the Code of Conduct is not strong enough to ensure that Commissioners' obligations to "behave with integrity and discretion as regards the acceptance, after they have ceased to hold office, of certain appointments or benefits" are met with. This obligation exists under the EU Treaties, and is not - and cannot - be limited in time.

We have been proposing that the Commissioner's Code of Conduct be amended to include more stringent controls on the revolving door. Since Commissioners are currently entitled to a monthly payment for three years after they leave office, we believe that restrictions on post-employment should last for at least three years as well.

We included this recommendation in a report on transparency, accountability and integrity in the EU institutions that is being drafted by Greens/EFA member Sven Giegold on behalf of the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee. We need a political majority to ensure that this recommendation is eventually adopted.

However, the Conservatives and Social Democrats in the European Parliament have asked for this provision to be deleted, despite the fact that the socialists, at least in France, are now calling for stricter ethics rules for the European Commission. We hope that following the Barroso scandal, the Socialists in the European Parliament will withdraw their amendments to delete the stronger recommendations, so that

their words are more fully in line with their actions.

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