



Ombudsman asks Commission for further clarification in revolving door inquiry

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The Ombudsman has asked the Commission for a meeting to discuss in detail how it takes decisions concerning applications by (former) staff to take up employment elsewhere, for example in the private sector.

The request is part of the Ombudsman's broad inquiry, launched earlier in 2021, into how the Commission handles 'revolving doors'.

"Today we have taken the next step in this inquiry. Two years ago we urged the Commission to take a more robust approach, yet the strategically important DG for competition policy, for example, continues to shed top lawyers to private sector entities with major commercial interests in competition regulation. This next step will take a deeper look at Commission practices both generally and in relation to specific cases," said Ombudsman O'Reilly.

To date in this inquiry, ombudsman inquiries officers have examined personnel files covering 14 Directorates-General as well as all commissioner cabinets, the Commission's Legal Service, the Secretariat-General, the internal think tank and the Regulatory Scrutiny Board.

Based on these files, the Ombudsman is asking the Commission to clarify a number of details. These include how often the Commission has banned a staff member from taking up an intended post and how it counters the risk that former staff members - while possibly not working on issues directly related to their previous roles - may be advising their new colleagues on those very issues.

The Ombudsman has asked that the meeting with the Commission take place in November 2021.