

**Question for written answer E-006829/2016/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Apple and sabbatical leave from DG COMP

We have learned that an official who worked in the Commission Directorate-General for Competition from 2007 to 2015, specifically responsible for several investigations concerning Google and Microsoft, and who headed the Mergers Unit within the Energy and Environment sector, applied for sabbatical leave in February 2014, and the request was granted. Immediately afterwards he took a job with Apple Benelux BV as director of regulatory and competition law affairs for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

As laid down in the EU Staff Regulations, Commission staff members have, since 1 January 2014, been prohibited from taking sabbatical leave if this involves lobbying or advocacy and could lead to an actual or potential conflict with the legitimate interests of their institution.

Can the Commission explain the circumstances of this case, bearing in mind that the leave was granted only a few months before the Apple investigation opened (in June 2014) and the person in question, having worked in DG COMP, had a thorough knowledge of the sector concerned?