LSE EUROPP blog
Reach: 132'397
AVE: 3'500 CHF
Visits: 3'971'916
Unique Users: -
Date: 10.06.2020
Author: -
Topic: Universität Basel International

Is there really a revolving door between politics and business?

In Germany and the Netherlands, famous cases of politicians who benefit from their time in office are numerous. Think about former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who became CEO of the company Nord Stream 2. Or former Dutch Minister of Transport, Camiel Eurlings, who became the CEO of KLM. And what about Ronald Pofalla, who heavily criticised Schröder for going to Nord Stream but ended up making the switch to a lucrative lobbying position at Deutsche Bahn after his own time in office.

The result of these prominent transitions is that an image of opportunistic politicians who obtain huge benefits from their time in office is created among the public and the media. Moreover, many politicians do not even try to hide their ambitions; Gerhard Schröder, for example, has the following quote on his website: "No question about it. Personal advancement - the desire to advance myself, to advance my social standing - has played a crucial role in my life." The question is, however, to what extent this image holds true for other politicians in parliament and whether they succeed in this regard.

To examine this issue, we looked at all parliamentarians who left office after 1986 in the Netherlands and 1998 in Germany (n = 1,351). We found that only 32% obtained more attractive positions during their post-parliamentary careers (see figure 1). In other words, the vast majority of our national politicians in the Netherlands and Germany have not used public office as a stepping-stone for their career.

Open link