

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000255/25
to the Commission
Virginie Joron (PFE)
(21 January 2025)**

Subject: Thierry Breton, Bank of America advisor

According to reports in the *Le Figaro* newspaper ⁽¹⁾, the Commission has given its approval to former Commissioner (2019-2024) Thierry Breton to join Bank of America's global advisory council. He will perform this role three days a year (and will not be a member of staff or receive a salary ⁽²⁾).

It is highly symbolic, as Thierry Breton was one of the Commission's few champions of European strategic autonomy. One can hardly imagine General de Gaulle wanting to work for Bank of America.

Thierry Breton is the former CEO of French digital and security giant Atos, which is currently in deep trouble. Atos says it received more than EUR 12 million from the Commission in 2023 ⁽³⁾ and a cyberdefence contract in 2024 ⁽⁴⁾.

In 2021, the Commission imposed a EUR 371 million fine on the Bank of America and a number of banks for forming a cartel on EU government bonds. Bank of America's fine was eventually waived, however ⁽⁵⁾. Bank of America bought and sold millions of shares in Atos in 2024 ⁽⁶⁾.

1. What remuneration, allowances or benefits has Thierry Breton declared for three days' work for Bank of America in 2025 in order to receive the Commission's approval?
2. Does the recruitment of a former Commissioner by a bank fined by the Commission damage the institution's reputation?

Submitted: 21.1.2025

**Answer given by President von der Leyen on behalf of the European Commission
(3 April 2025)**

1. The precise amount of the Bank of America's reimbursement of the former Commissioner for Internal Market participation to the two-days Bank of America's Global Advisory Council, to be held twice per year, has no bearing on the Commission's assessment of the compatibility of the former Commissioner's post term of office activity with the Bank of America, which is based on Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Code of Conduct for Members of the Commission. The former Commissioner for Internal Market has not informed the Commission about the precise amount of his reimbursement and the Commission has not asked to share this information with the Commission.
2. The Commission's assessment of former Commissioners' envisaged post term of office activities is based on the compatibility of the notified activity with the principles of integrity and discretion enshrined in Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and with the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, irrespective of the Commission's use of its prerogatives in the context of the implementation of EU policies.

¹ <https://www.lefigaro.fr/societes/l-ex-commissaire-europeen-thierry-breton-va-integrer-le-conseil-consultatif-international-de-bank-of-america-20250116>; <https://urlr.me/yVK95r>; Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that when entering upon their duties, Members of the Commission give a solemn undertaking to respect their duty to behave with integrity and discretion as regards the acceptance, after they have ceased to hold office, of certain appointments or benefits. <https://urlr.me/xHfVQM>

² Thierry Breton said on 21 January 2025 that he would not be a member of staff or receive a salary; <https://x.com/SudRadio/status/1881612253717237932>

³ <https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/datacard/atos-se?rid=249876817241-03>

⁴ <https://urlr.me/4GRVmS>; <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/informatics/items/28799/en>

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_2565

⁶ <https://urlr.me/XqFNCc>; <https://urlr.me/QuzKkE>; In 2009, Bank of America received USD 120 billion from the US Government; <https://urlr.me/GzD8Yf>