



Sylvie Goulard

France (RE)

Background

Sylvie Goulard currently serves as Deputy Governor of the French Central Bank, supervising work in the field of international and European affairs, and financial stability.

She served for a short period of time as Minister of Defence in the Government of Emmanuel Macron (May 2017).

Mrs Goulard held office in the European Parliament as an MEP for two terms from 2009 to 2014 and 2014 to 2017 in the ALDE group, before being appointed Minister of Defence. She was a member of the ECON committee and ALDE group coordinator; and served as rapporteur on many high-profile economic files, including eurozone governance, financial supervision and banking union. She served as substitute member of the AGRI committee from 2009-2014 and of the AFCD committee from 2014-2017. She also headed the Intergroup on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, and participated in the creation of the Euro-federalist interparliamentarian Spinelli Group in 2010, where she had a leading role.

At the end of 2016, she ran as a candidate in the ALDE Group for the election of the European Parliament President, against Guy Verhofstadt, before withdrawing her candidacy. During her time in the Parliament, she was a regular correspondent in the German media on European issues.

Originally from South of France (Marseille) and aged 54, Mrs Goulard graduated in law from the Université Paul Cézanne Aix-Marseille III and studied at Sciences Po Paris and the French Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA).

She started her career as a senior official in the legal department of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where she was involved in the working group responsible for the negotiations on the unification of Germany. After some time working at the French Council of State, she returned to the Foreign Affairs Ministry where she became responsible for European affairs, working in close collaboration with the German Government.

From 2001 to 2004, she served as Political Advisor for former European Commission President Romano Prodi, and was in charge of the work on the Convention on the future of Europe aimed at drafting a constitutional treaty.

Sylvie Goulard was nominated Commissioner candidate by the French Government for her extensive policy experience, her expertise in EU affairs and economics, and her vision for Europe. She is a close ally of French President Emmanuel Macron and was one of the first French politicians to support him in the Presidency campaign, advising on European affairs and participating actively to the development of his Presidency programme in the field. She particularly supported him meet with German Chancellor Merkel.

During Commissioner designate hearings, Mrs Goulard might face scrutiny over alleged misuse of EU Parliament funds (suspicion of fictitious employment of parliamentary assistants) by her national party MoDem during her time in the European Parliament. This affair had led Mrs Goulard to resign from her position of Minister of Defence in June 2017, a few weeks after her appointment, with a view to “demonstrate her good faith”. According to French officials, she has never been heard in Court and the investigation has not been taken any further to date.

In her declaration of interests while working as an MEP, Sylvie Goulard also reported working as a Special Advisor for the US Think Tank Berggruen Institute on Governance, which has recently been criticized due to the high pay she was receiving for these functions.

EU priorities

Mrs Goulard is known for her high expertise in economics, which aligns with President Macron’s desire for France to lead on an economic portfolio at Commission level. France has also expressed interest in a climate and energy portfolio.

Personal Insights

Mrs Goulard speaks fluent German and Italian. She is a convinced pro-European, federalist and promoter of French-German cooperation. She is described as a hard-worker and was a well-recognised MEP during her time in Parliament.

Being one of the earliest supporters of President Macron, she “perfectly shares” the president’s vision.

Mrs Goulard also has a close personal relationship with Commission President-Elect Ursula von der Leyen. They have worked together in various instances, including while being both defence ministers in 2017.

In 2005, she stood against the adhesion of Turkey to the EU. As an MEP, she also strongly advocated for greater gender balance in the European institutions, in particular at senior level.

Education

Studied law at Université Paul Cézanne Aix-Marseille III

Postgraduate studies at Sciences Po Paris and French Ecole Nationale d’Administration (ENA)

Political Experience

National politics

Minister of Defence (May 2017)

President of the European Movement-France (Mouvement-Européen France) from 2006-2010

European level

MEP from 2009-2014 and 2014-2017

Political Advisor to European Commission President Romano Prodi from 2001-2004

Other activities

Mrs Goulard has participated in many conferences on the future of Europe at national, European and international level as a speaker, and taught courses on European affairs at the College of Europe in Bruges. She authored various publications and books on Europe, democracy and globalisation,

including the essay “Democracy in Europe” jointly with Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti in end 2012.