



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY

Director-General

Brussels,

NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF
MR BERND LOESCHER, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION SYNDICALE FÉDÉRALE
AND MR JEAN-MARIE JUNGBLUT, VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE EUROPEAN AGENCIES

Subject: Staff reductions in the European Agencies

Thank you for your letter of 24 February to the President and Vice President, who asked me to reply on their behalf.

In the Inter-Institutional Agreement of 2 December 2013¹, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agreed on the 5% staff reduction to be applied to all EU institutions, bodies and agencies over the period 2013-2017. For the agencies, the 5 year period of staff reductions will be completed in 2018 (one year later than for the Commission), which gives the agencies some more time to adjust to the new staffing levels. In a Communication of 10th July 2013 on the programming of agency resources 2014-2020², the Commission proposed to apply an annual 1 % tax on the posts of all agencies, to offset increases in the number of posts which are deemed necessary for 'start-up phase' agencies, as well as to meet the additional needs of the 'new tasks' agencies. This exercise of programming of agency resources was meant to arrive at an overall 5% staff reduction for all agencies combined. Since then, the Communication has provided the starting point for the Commission's Draft Budgets requests, while taking account of the outcome of the annual budget procedures. The Commission has also responded to the migration crisis by reinforcing frontline agencies, as a new policy development which should not enter in the 5% staff reduction target.

Just like all the other institutions and bodies, in order to cope with these staff reductions, agencies need to improve their efficiency, to look for increased synergies, internally or inter-agency, and they need to assess how their workforces need to be redeployed, where appropriate, from coordination and support functions to operational functions.

With a view to effectively address agencies' concerns as regards this decision, an inter-institutional working group has been established to analyse the challenges of resource programming in the decentralised agencies, in particular to look into further possible efficiency gains and the specific situation of the fee-financed agencies. The results of this working group will pave the way for future decisions in this respect.

¹ Inter-Institutional Agreement on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, point 27.

² COM (2013) 519, 10.7.2013.

However, a number of principles and measures are already in place and provide a clear framework in which the staff reductions will be implemented.

Indeed, the redeployment pool is made up of vacant posts and does not involve the transfer of staff between agencies, and should not entail premature termination of contracts. The creation of the redeployment pool is intended to create flexibility in the allocation of posts, while considering the EU priorities and respecting overall budgetary constraints.

Moreover, the new implementing decision to the Staff Regulations on the engagement and use of temporary agents 2f, already in place in the agencies, is providing solid prospects for career development by offering contract continuation in case of inter-agency mobility, as well as other provisions that will benefit the career prospects of staff in agencies, such as vacancies open to all agencies and within larger grade-brackets.

Let me reassure you that the Commission is encouraging actions that would lead to increased synergies, with a positive effect on the staff dynamics in agencies. In this respect, a good example is the case of Justice and Home Affairs agencies, which have made progress to intensify their cooperation and have worked in a joined-up manner to address the challenges of the migration crisis. The Commission and other Institutions have generally welcomed and encouraged this type of cooperation.

Lastly, the Commission is supporting the efforts for efficiency gains made by agencies and is looking into ways for further improvement. Thus, the Commission is systematically associating agencies to its procurement procedures and framework contracts and is making constant efforts to improve or extend the services provided to agencies.

Yours sincerely,



Irene SOUKA