

Front Commun interinstitutionnel de la représentation du personnel

OPEN LETTER TO EU HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

Strengthening of the European Civil Service to secure Europe's future

We, the staff of EU institutions and bodies, are very well aware of this historic moment for the European Union and the challenges ahead. We invite the EU Heads of State and Government as well as all decision-makers involved in the ongoing reform of the Staff Regulations to analyse the proposed reforms and their impact on the Institutions' capacities to contribute towards solving the current economic, financial and social problems. In particular:

- 1. the inconsistency between the proclaimed objectives (invigorated EU Institutions with more responsibilities and more efficient governance) and the means envisaged to be placed at their disposal (fewer staff, short-term contracts, demotivated, demoralised and ageing staff);**
- 2. the expectations of EU citizens and businesses to have reliable, efficient and professional staff at EU level to serve them in an impartial and appropriate way, immune from any external pressure from wherever it might come;**
- 3. the need for a clear distinction between the “executive” responsibilities of EU institutions and agencies and the major political decisions to be taken at national level aiming at fiscal consolidation and economic growth.**

The 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations continues to produce significant long-term savings for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework but the consequence has been increasing difficulties to recruit highly competent staff from all EU Member States.

We join together in defence of the European integration project, which remains undoubtedly the only viable and long-term solution for all European citizens in a rapidly evolving world.

We believe in the European Union's capacity to meet citizens' expectations and deliver tangible results in terms of growth and job creation, whilst maintaining its unique social welfare model and diversity.

We are committed to its further success and are convinced that our dedication and determination to overcome crises and political complexities, as proven throughout the last sixty years, will pave the way forward in the future.

We sympathise with the efforts undertaken by millions of employees and pensioners in Member States, whose income and quality of life is endangered as a consequence of economic and financial problems beyond their control and understanding.

We highlight that the effectiveness of EU action is based solidly on the high quality, competence and independence of its staff vis-à-vis external influences as well as on the multicultural variety of origins and languages from all Member States as represented in daily institutional business.

We call on the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council to resist populist and demagogical attempts to devalue our European public administration, taking into serious consideration its functional position and specific objectives, its already very small workforce (which is even smaller than a single Ministry in many Member States) and finally its cost-effectiveness compared to the EU budget.

We invite them to consider properly the particularities of employment in EU institutions in comparison with relevant examples of other international organisations and diplomatic services around the world.

We deplore that the upcoming proposal amending EU Staff Regulations has not been preceded and accompanied by a thorough Impact Assessment and Financial Statement.

We note that the staff have themselves made numerous and serious suggestions for improving efficiency through reasonable organisational changes which could produce significant savings without undermining the attractiveness of the European public administration for young, talented Europeans.

We call upon EU legislators to engage in an open social dialogue, and subsequently in an inter-institutional negotiation focussing on the challenges which are expected to be faced by EU institutions in the future as well as on the appropriate means at the EU's disposal to cope with them.

We stress that any “blind” effort to undervalue EU staff performance will not only undermine the effectiveness and deteriorate the quality of EU policies in a period when more intensive and focussed action is expected from the European citizens, but certainly deprive several Member States of a proportionate geographical representation of their nationals within EU institutions and bodies as the EPSO statistical data from recent competitions after the 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations patently demonstrate.

We remain confident that a constructive attitude and common sense will prevail, thereby ensuring that the “European project” will further unfold its long-lasting potential for the benefit of all Europeans.