



UNION SYNDICALE

What is the Working Party on the Staff Regulations cooking up for us?

Brussels, 20 June 2012

Dear Colleague,

After six months' work on the Commission proposal the Working Party on the Staff Regulations has drawn up a report for the Permanent Representatives Committee and the Council on the progress of its proceedings (11199/12).

Not surprisingly, on most points there is not yet complete agreement within the Working Party but, once agreement is reached, the Council will still have to negotiate with the Parliament and the Commission. So these initial results in no way establish what our situation will be in the future. They do, however, show us what pitiful regard our employer has for us; it is on the basis of this document that the discussions with the Parliament will soon begin.

1. Budgetary aspects

The delegations' general position is that the Commission proposal does not produce enough in the way of savings (reminder: the Commission promises savings of 1.1 billion Euro for 2014-2020 and in the long term 1 billion Euro a year). On most of the items on which the delegations' positions converge, the Working Party on the Staff Regulations does not want to adopt positions until the financial experts have indicated the amounts of the savings necessary in the context of the Multi-annual Financial Framework.

2. Method for the adjustment of salaries

Instead of the present parallelism the delegations want:

- every adjustment proposal submitted by the Commission to be capped at 2 %;
- the Council and the Parliament then to fix the adjustment percentage in co-decision, the Commission proposal being the maximum, taking account of the Multi-annual Financial Framework, changes in staff numbers and the total wages bill;
- that adjustment to apply only to basic salaries (and not to allowances or pensions).

The increase in **the solidarity levy** proposed by the Commission (from an average rate of 4 % to a fixed rate of 6 %) is regarded by the delegations as a step in the right direction, but as too small a step. In addition, the levy ought to be applied to all allowances and to pensions and the lowest salaries ought not to be exempt any more, as they are at present.

Your Union Syndicale team Commission at your disposal

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At the Heart of the Action, Union Syndicale is there for you

The Commission's proposals for reductions to Annex VII (basically annual travel) are also a step in the right direction but the delegations again consider them insufficient and our system of allowances still too generous to staff. They specifically mentioned the expatriation allowance as a possible source of budgetary savings.

3. Working conditions

Most delegations are in favour of increasing the working week to 40 hours without compensation (which represents a reduction in wage costs of 7 %) and of the introduction of Flexitime, but excluding Heads of Unit from the system.

4. Careers

The downgrading of future secretaries' and assistants' careers (they would be locked into an AST/SC function group, with a starting salary 20 % lower and a promotion rate reduced by half) is also described as a step in the right direction, but the delegations want to go further: they want fewer steps and fewer promotions for all, and to reserve the higher ranks for employees with managerial responsibilities.

5. Pensions

Once again, the delegations think that increasing the retirement age (from 63 to 65 and, for early retirement, from 55 to 58) is a step in the right direction, but some of them want to go further. Here too the delegations consider the transitional measures proposed by the Commission too generous.

They also asked for more savings on pensions during the period of the Multi-annual Financial Framework and afterwards, which would appear to indicate that they want to change the method for the calculation of our pensions.

The publication of this report prompted **Union Syndicale** to request a meeting with the President of the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper).

We know that because of the Member States' behaviour conflict is inevitable.

We encourage staff to be vigilant and closely follow our publications.

We hope, however, that after the meetings that we will have in the next few days we shall be able to tell you that it would be premature to trigger action straight.

The Executive Committee
Union Syndicale Brussels



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