

Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ  
Vice-president  
and commissioner for inter-institutional relations  
and administration.  
**European Commission**

Brussels, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Dear Vice-President and Commissioner Šefčovič,

Following your invitation to give our reactions, we take the initiative to write to you on behalf of a significant and constantly growing, albeit poorly recognised, category of EU Staff: those among us who entered service after the 2004 Reform, coming from all 27 Member States.

We have read with great interest the proposal for the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) as well as the proposal presented by the Commission to change the staff regulations. Although we highly respect all the considerations highlighted in the corresponding documents, we would like to raise some issues that we consider of utmost importance for the European Civil Service.

Any reform of the Staff Regulation which aims only at ‘cost reductions’ will miss the elephant in the room. The European Civil Service is ailing since 2004 from two major deficiencies. Firstly, the Reform brought a deep division between two groups of staff, defined by the time of entry in service. Professional opportunities, salary and retirement conditions have been significantly reduced for the staff members recruited after the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004. As a result, there is a widespread divergence between grade and actual responsibilities and duties, while the principle of equal pay for equal work is no longer applied. These problems are known to your services, but they have been only partly highlighted in the *Report to the European Parliament and the Council – Equivalence between old and new career structures* COM(2011) 171 final, of 30.3.2011. To our knowledge, no measures have yet been proposed to redress this problem. Secondly, the draft reports circulating about the actual promotion rates during the period 2004-2010 clearly show that the objectives explicitly set by Art 6 of the Staff Regulations in conjunction with Annex I.B, and other articles on the convergence between old and new career structures, are by far not achieved. Here again we are not aware of any corrective measures planned by your services in order to respect the rates established by the legislator.

These deficiencies caused by the previous staff reform would certainly benefit from an exhaustive and transparent analysis. We feel that such an analysis would much increase the authority and justification of your current proposal.

In this context of proven divergence between the two groups of staff we contemplate with perplexity the proposal of a 5% cut in staffing levels. We fear that this proposed cut, which would occur in the context of many services being already severely understaffed after two successive enlargements and an increased number of competences devoted to Europe by the Lisbon Treaty, will bring a heavy toll on the operational capability of the Institutions. Those who were recruited after the 2004 reform obviously have the highest stake in preserving the European Service as most of us still have many years to serve before retirement. The proposed cut in staffing levels appears to us not only as counterproductive, but also as a reinforcement of the major divergence highlighted above since it is the young colleagues that will suffer most from it.

As a group, we have borne the major impact of the 2004 Reform. We heartily welcome your call to solidarity as it reflects our daily experience of the past seven years. It is self-evident that real solidarity implies a unified European Civil Service. We are hopeful that in the best interest of the Institutions, the recuperation of unity of old and new careers will be at the heart of the future developments of your proposal to change the staff regulations.

Respectfully yours,

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