



Brussels, 2 August 2022

**Note for the attention of Mr Johannes HAHN Commissioner
for Budget and Human Resources**

**Subject: Declaration of the Budget Committee of the European Council of 13 July on
the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2023**

All the European Commission staff unions, grouped in the Common Front, have taken note of the statement of the Council Budget Committee on the draft General Budget of the EU for 2023 ([link](#)) in which the Commission is asked, in accordance with article 241 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) present to it, by the end of September 2022, an assessment of the effects and sustainability of automatic salary discounting in a context of high inflation and submit any appropriate proposals to alleviate the pressure on administrative expenditure.

At your last meeting with the trade unions and professional organisations (OSP) on 14 June, you undertook that the Commission would not present a proposal to reform the Staff Regulations.

On 20 July, following the statement introduced by the Council Budget Committee on 13 July and the OSPs' leaflets, DG HR organised an extraordinary meeting to present to the OSPs its position on this statement, namely that:

- the Council's statement is not such as to call into question your commitment not to reopen the Staff Regulations;
- the Commission will require strict compliance with the current Staff Regulations in respect of concerns the application of the method of adjusting salaries in accordance with Annex XI and the acquired rights of each member of staff.

The Common Front thanks DG HR for meeting with the OSPs so quickly and clarifying your position.

The Common Front wishes to confirm with the utmost clarity that ALL unions are totally and unreservedly opposed to any further reform of the Staff Regulations.

In this respect, the Common Front wishes to recall that history shows that once the Commission presents a proposal at the request of the Council, the latter is perfectly free to broaden it, to distort it, to touch on aspects not included in the

The Commission's original proposal and even included those it had expressly excluded, giving detailed reasons for its choice.

Thus, as the European Court of Auditors confirmed in its report *According to the Commission's "Implementation of the 2014 revision of the Staff Regulations and related measures - Substantial savings but not without consequences for staff"* (2019) ([link](#)), the 2004 and 2014 reforms have generated and continue to generate substantial savings, estimated at 56.1 billion euros between 2004 and 20641 , well beyond what was foreseen by the Commission's initial proposal.

In the same report, the European Court of Auditors also pointed out that the last two reforms have not only had a negative impact on the working conditions of staff, especially our colleagues Contract Agents (CA) and Secretaries/Clerks (AST-SC), but have also *"reduced the attractiveness of the European Union as an employer, which is struggling to recruit sufficient staff, especially from a number of Member States"*.

The situation is even more serious in Luxembourg where, due to the cost of living, a growing number of jobs remain vacant and some salaries are below the Luxembourg minimum wage.

Moreover, the European Court of Auditors points out that Commission staff were the most affected. Unrecorded working hours were also commented on in the report as the internal recording system does not allow them to be taken into account (paragraphs 80-85 of the Court's 2019 Special Report).

Since then, the international situation has worsened, the health crisis and widespread teleworking have had an even greater impact in terms of unpaid hours worked and increased workload. In such a context and as mentioned during your last meeting with the OSPs, the Common Front supports the Commission in its willingness to ask for an increase in the budget to face the challenges ahead.

In view of the above, **the Common Front requests the Commission to :**

- **to follow the line presented at the 14 June meeting not to open up the Staff Regulations and to apply Annex XI to the letter for salary adjustment;**
- **to be consulted in good time throughout the process in order to put in place, within the framework of the current Staff Regulations, all measures to improve the attractiveness of the European civil service and the working conditions of all colleagues.**

¹ Data taken from the Court of Auditors' Special Report 2019: '[Implementation of the 2014 revision of the Staff Regulations and related measures in the Commission - Substantial savings, but not without consequences for staff](#)' - p.20: 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations: Savings on staff pay and pensions 8 billion euros (2011 prices), savings on pensions 24.8 billion euros (2008 prices); 2014 revision of the Staff Regulations: Savings on staff pay and pensions 2.7 billion (2014 prices); Smaller adjustment in 2011 and 2012: Savings on staff salaries and pensions 1.4 billion (2011 prices)

Finally, the Common Front asks you to ensure that the Commission provides an adequate and firm response to the attacks on the European civil service that have recently appeared in the press in relation to the budgetary situation.

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(signed)

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