

## NOTE TO Mrs E. WERNER, HEAD OF CABINET

**Subject: Comments and proposals of the Central Staff Committee on the appraisal and promotion exercise**

**Ref.: Your note A(16)3157050 - S(16)3880719 of 27 July 2016**

In July 2016, the Central Staff Committee (CSC) had an exchange of notes with Vice-President Georgieva and your Cabinet on the shortcomings of the first stage of the 2016 promotion exercise. With this note, the CSC intends to draw attention to some issues still persisting in the fifth year of implementation of the current promotion system. It also submits a corresponding number of what the CSC considers constructive and feasible proposals to improve the system, in the interest of staff and the Commission services.

The CSC has conducted an extensive assessment of the appraisal and promotion system currently in place. This assessment is based on: CSC's stock-taking of this year's appraisal and promotion exercises, upon feedback of its representatives in dialogues with Directors-General (D-Gs) and in the Joint Promotion Committee (JPC); extensive discussions on the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) reports for 2015 and 2014, the report of the "Groupe de travail restraint" appointed in October 2015 by the Chair of the JPC AD; the note Ares(2016)1703835 of 11/04/2016 to Directors-General and Heads of Service on the promotion exercise 2016, the instructions for reporting officers published on the intranet<sup>1</sup>, most recent statistics on promotion received, and recent case-law on promotion matters.

The proposals outlined below draw to a large extent on recommendations already issued or discussed within joint Administration – CSC settings.

- 1) The CSC notes that some recommendations issued by the **JMC reports 2014 & 2015**, are not yet implemented, and requests that they are as of the next appraisal and promotion exercise. More specifically:
  - The calculation of the distribution of promotion possibilities should be adjusted (first by grade and then by DG) in relation to the officials that have reached the average expected seniority in the grade (...) (2015 report, see also point 3 below);
  - Concrete examples illustrating the level of the responsibilities of the jobholder should be included as guidance for reporting officers in Sysper2 (2014 report, see also point 2 below);

<sup>1</sup> [https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/hr\\_admin/en/appraisal\\_promotion/appraisal/Pages/ReportingOfficers.aspx](https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/hr_admin/en/appraisal_promotion/appraisal/Pages/ReportingOfficers.aspx)

.../...

- The report of JMC should be made available to staff no later than 2 and a half months after the publication of the list of promoted officials (2014 report);
  - The updated version to the 2011 report on career equivalence, already requested in the JMC report for 2013 should be provided (2014 report).
- 2) The CSC regrets not having been consulted on the constitution of the **Groupe de travail restraint** by the Chair of the Joint Promotion Committee AD in October 2015. Moreover, it considers that any working group tasked with suggesting improvements to the system should at least include some representatives of the AST category.

Nevertheless, well aware of the importance of the **appraisal** stage to enhance the Institution-wide merit comparison, the CSC largely endorses the remarks and proposals submitted by the Groupe restraint in their report, attached. In particular, that

- Job descriptions should be updated, cover the entire appraisal period and all the tasks executed, as well as mention mobility or appointments/certification,
- Job descriptions should correspond to well defined levels of responsibilities, which should be established prior to appraisal and be equally applied to all jobholders,
- Each jobholder should be provided with "SMART" objectives, to be fixed and updated in common agreement; the level of achievement of objectives should be clearly stated in reports,
- A template should be proposed to jobholders in Sysper2 to draft one's self-evaluation, thereby reporting in a standardized manner about achievements,
- A min-max length of self-evaluations (as well as of evaluation reports and appeals) should be established and implemented in Sysper2,
- The drafting of reports should be harmonised by type of activity/task/post within and across DGs; a working group should be tasked to prepare a list of harmonised evaluation texts that should be used by all Reporting Officers (ROs), assorted with concrete examples allowing third parties to verify the soundness of the appraisal,
- The role of Appeal Assessor should be reconsidered to possibly move it outside the direct hierarchical line,
- A correspondence grid should be created and used to judge on the level of responsibilities in a harmonised manner across the Institution,
- Criteria on how to appraise the use of languages in the service should be clarified,
- For the tasks in the interest of the service, a grid differentiating by level of workload required should be established,
- Use of the 'Comments' tab to highlight extra merits, specific situations non mentioned elsewhere in the report should be encouraged.

In addition, the Central Staff Committee notes that there is no quality control whatsoever on the quality of reports. It requests therefore that an appropriate sampling be done by the JPCs to ensure compliance with available guidance by all ROs. It also recommends that the value of individual reports be considered also in conjunction with the 360° appraisal of the respective RO.

- 3) Further to the above recommendations on the appraisal reports, the CSC considers that a number of other improvements should be brought to bear as regards the **promotion system**.

The CSC considers that the current promotion system remains time-consuming and cumbersome, without however offering sufficient assurance of equal treatment and impartiality in exchange. The CSC especially regrets the current lack of transparency, the reversal of the burden of proof on appellants, the excessive fragmentation and scarce repeatability of decisions taken. More specifically,

- **On promotion quotas calculation and distribution:** as suggested by both JMC and Groupe restraint, in order to avoid distortions promotion quotas distribution among DGs should take into account the seniority of staff employed in each entity. The CSC however questions the need to distribute quotas among DGs in the first place, and would prefer that D-Gs propose a list of names with justification for promotion to the JPCs without knowing the number of promotions falling to their respective services,
  - **On the role of JPCs:** JPCs should be tasked with verifying, among others, the soundness of both quick and slow promotions/careers, to double-check cases of (non) promotion coinciding with internal or inter-institutional mobility, and to submit reasoned opinions to the AIPN. Furthermore, quotas exceeding the number of staff at the average seniority in the relevant grades could be retained and awarded by the JPCs following accurate analysis of individual careers across the Institution. JPCs should meet the AIPN three times during the promotion exercise:
    - before launch of the exercise and quota distribution, to discuss the criteria to be taken into account during the promotion exercise and/or any distortions arising from quota distribution,
    - before publication of the lists of proposed for promotions by D-Gs, in order to report on the outcome of the dialogues with D-Gs and suggest possible corrections,
    - before publication of the final promotion lists in case the list of proposed by the JPC could not be fully accepted by the AIPN;
  - **On promotion criteria:** together with the Groupe restraint, the CSC considers that a number of common additional criteria should be devised and applied in a uniform way to award promotions in cases of equal merit,
  - the CSC formally asks to finally discontinue the practice of granting promotions to jobholders having served in the grade for less than 2 full years on 1 January of the promotion exercise,
  - **On confidentiality** of the promotion exercise: the CSC notes the increasing number of **leakages** coming from some ROs, HR officers and members of the hierarchy on the outcome of the promotion exercise along all its different steps. It calls therefore on DG HR to take the appropriate measures to ensure the confidentiality until the end of the exercise.
- 4) On the impact of recent **case-law**, the CSC considers - together with the Groupe restraint - that the promotion deficit totalled since 2005 should be made good as soon as possible by awarding the missing promotions following an accurate career analysis of all jobholders. It also considers that the General Implementing Provisions of Art. 45 should be fully implemented as endorsed by the judge, especially concerning the roles of JPCs and CSC delegations during the dialogues.

Considering the above, the Central Staff Committee asks for a meeting of the social dialogue in view to discuss improvements needed in the procedure.

Ignazio IACONO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ignazio Iacono', written over a horizontal line.

President CSC

Enclosure: Report of 12 December 2015 by Groupe restraint issued from JPC AD.

Cc: Ms K. Georgieva, Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources  
Ms I. Souka, Director-General HR  
Mr C. Levasseur, Director HR.DDG.B  
Mr C. Roques, Head of Unit HR.E.1