

Ms Luigia Dricot-Daniele  
Political Secretary  
Save Europe

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Brussels **10 10 17**  
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Subject: Response to Save Europe Letter on a staff petition related to the situation of ASTs in the Commission

Dear Ms. Dricot Daniele,

On behalf of President Juncker, I am responding to your letter from 23 May 2017, where you present a petition promoted by your organisation among AST officials at the European Commission.

The Commission values the work and commitment of all staff, be they AST or AD officials or temporary staff. All have a role to play to achieve our common goals and deliver the priorities of the Juncker Commission. In that context, we want to make sure that every single staff member develops skills and competences in the interest of the organisation. The Commission adopted in June 2016 its Talent Management Strategy, and is working to the implementation of actions foreseen in it. Some of these have been specifically designed to address expectations of AST staff, and to make AST careers more visible, respected and attractive.

To respond to the need to provide information on career options for ASTs, clarifying expectations and roles (in particular following to the creation of the AST/SC function group in the 2014 reform), defining issues and identifying possible solutions, DG HR organised focus groups for AST and AST/SCs as well as systematic career management discussions with all Commission DGs.

These consultations and exchanges, coupled with the continuous input of the AST network, will serve as a basis to give a new impetus to career development for AST officials. DG HR will present the results in the second edition of the corporate Career Day, in November 2017. Last year more than 1000 colleagues took part in it and many of them joined the several follow up actions organised in the course of 2017.

Let me give you some examples of initiatives that are currently being piloted. To promote mobility for AST staff, after a period of budgetary restrictions and staff reduction imposed on the Commission that affected AST group more strongly, DG HR is currently analysing the opportunity of organising steered mobility exercises at corporate level, by launching calls for expression of interest. This would give the opportunity to interested AST staff to experiment mobility on the basis of their preferences in terms of DGs and functions to perform.

The Commission continues to support the certification of meriting AST officials –from grade AST5 onwards- according to the procedure foreseen in the Staff Regulations, and training AST officials to access to AD careers. Despite budget constraint and limited recruitment forecast, in 2016 the number of places available for the annual certification, was raised from 50 to 60 to respond to the demand. As you are aware, the number of candidates entitled to be appointed following the certification training each year is limited by Staff Regulations to maximum 20% of the annual appointments made in the AD function group. Since the introduction of the certification procedure in 2005, over 760 qualified AST officials have been appointed to AD jobs. Thanks to the actions undertaken by DG HR, a DG has now the obligation to propose an AD post to a certified official who asks for it.

In addition, a number of horizontal actions are being implemented to ensure to all staff in the Commission the necessary support for professional development. These include a new Learning and Development Strategy, responding to different and specific needs; corporate guidelines for on-the-job learning and job shadowing; specific professionalisation programmes for finance, audit and HR jobs; a continuous and reinforced career guidance support through the central Career Guidance service (SCOP), and today AMCs, that in 2016 provided career coaching to 495 staff members, and 168 ASTs colleagues among them.

My hope is that AST colleagues realise that the Commission is at work in supporting them and that a range of instruments are available within the framework provided by the Staff Regulations and the Talent Management Strategy to manage their professional development. I would be ready to discuss this topic further at the occasion of our next meeting with the Staff representatives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Müller', with a stylized flourish at the end.