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GROUP OF RESOURCE DIRECTORS MEETING
14 FEBRUARY 2017

SUMMARY RECORD

Deputy Secretary-General Paraskevi Michou, chair of the Group of Resource Directors (GDR) welcomed Ms Dana Spinant, the newly appointed Resource Director for DG REGIO. The chair signalled there would be two any-other-business points, on DGs' contributions to HR modernisation and on the conference/events register. P. Michou announced that Commissioner Oettinger had accepted to join one of the upcoming GDR meetings.

1. Young Professionals Programme (DG BUDG)

P. Michou noted that the proposal for a Young Professionals Programme had not yet been validated by Commissioner Oettinger, and that the purpose of the presentation was to gather initial input and feedback from the Resource Directors.

Christian Levasseur, Director of HR.B, presented the pilot of the Young Professionals Programme, which aims at recruiting young graduates and giving them a broad view and experience of the Commission. It would be open to blue book trainees, who would have to pass EPSO tests and then be pre-selected by their host DG. A central panel would then be in charge of the final selection. The young professionals would work consecutively in different services for a total period of 3 years, with a possibility of an external placement for a few months. They would be working as contract agents (FGIV) for the first two years and as temporary agents (AD5) for the third year. The young professionals would then have the possibility to participate in an internal competition for officials. The launch of a pilot programme is foreseen for March 2017 – subject to validation by Commissioner Oettinger. DG HR has already reached an agreement with DG BUDG to administrate at a central level a pool of Contract Agent credits for the pilot.

Resource Directors welcomed the proposal. Many stressed the budgetary impact of the programme. They welcomed DG HR's intention to pool the resources centrally for the programme yet cautioned against any reduction of contract agent staff for line DGs.

Many Resource Directors emphasised the importance of ensuring equality of treatment of all staff and expressed concerns about potential "fast track" careers. They suggested developing a parallel programme with targeted learning and mobility possibilities for newcomer officials. REGIO suggested a flexible scheme, with targeted recruitments to fill competency gaps in the Commission. EMPL proposed focusing on populations underrepresented in AD competitions. BUDG underlined the risk of a heavy investment

for a relatively small number of people, who may not be retained at the end of the programme.

Several DGs shared their experiences with similar schemes. CNECT mentioned their Young Professionals pilot comprising 16 young contractual agents, which has been running for 4 months and has helped bring creative younger talents to the DG. A "stage" in DG BUDG, allowing interested officials to work in another unit/directorate has proved a great success. ESTAT, which runs a programme for AD5/AD7 officials, with a rotation in several units, cautioned against the risk of officials staying in the preferred unit prior to the end of the programme. EEAS, which has a similar programme in delegations, faces difficulties in recruiting the talents afterwards.

C. Levasseur explained that the Young Professionals Programme does not aim to recruit special talents as other recruitment tools exist for this. In order to fill the competence gaps, one suggestion was to make better use of the assessment centre reports on candidates' skills.

Michou thanked DG HR for the proposal and presentation and welcomed the initiative. She suggested making the pilot more attractive by presenting a proposal that is as complete as possible, including answers to the various questions raised in the discussion.