



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 27.12.2001
COM(2001) 792 final

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**Research staff policy changes in the context of the reform of the Commission's human
resources**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Research staff policy changes in the context of the reform of the Commission's human resources

The White Paper on Commission Reform has called for the "integration of research staff into the mainstream of the Commission's personnel policy" (Chapter 4, point 8). This objective was confirmed in the "Non-Permanent Human Resources" document adopted by the Commission on 28 February 2001.

On the one hand, a convergence objective of this kind reflects the desire to strengthen Commission staff management procedures through the creation of a unified framework based on clearer rules. On the other, it takes account of the growing trend towards stability and permanence in the area of Community research policy. Indeed, since the 1970s this policy has been considerably strengthened, in particular as a result of the successive Framework Programmes. The Single Act, followed by the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam, have served to confirm this political trend at the highest level.

Convergence, as far as the research Directorates-General are concerned, means that the latter are under an obligation to adapt their management rules in line with the new reform realities. It also involves the ending of certain arbitrary management practices which nowadays make it increasingly difficult to ensure the efficient management of research staff, particularly in the area of recruitment. It is imperative, after all, that the Directorates-General responsible for the research sector should be able to recruit staff under the same conditions as apply in the other Directorates-General of the Commission .

In the context of reform, the Commission is therefore proposing amendments to the Staff Regulations and to the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants, with a view to placing research staff on the same footing as operating staff as far as recruitment and careers are concerned.

Furthermore, in order to complete the convergence process, the Commission has decided to recruit to permanent research posts successful candidates from competitions as officials, thereby distancing itself from the following statement noted by the Council at its 245th session on 4 June 1973: "As regards occupying vacant posts involving research and investment appropriations, and in particular the recruitment of nationals from the new Member States, the Commission undertakes ... to recruit staff under fixed-term contracts".

In taking these measures, the Commission is sending out a clear message that it is modernising research staff management procedures in an atmosphere of openness and transparency and that it is taking all reasonable steps to lay the groundwork for the forthcoming new Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration.