Reforming the Commission: termination-of-service for officials

2001/0027(CNS) - 31/01/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to present a proposal for a Council Regulation introducing special measures to terminate the service of officals of the Commission of the European Communities as part of the reform of the European Commission. CONTENT: In its White Paper of March 2000, the Commission announced its intention to undertake a reallocation of human resources across its departments with a view to concentrating activities on its core policy objectives. On 26 July 2000, it adopted the conclusions of the review by the Peer Group charged with carrying out a comprehensive assessment of the Commission's current activities and putting forward an action plan. These conclusions clearly indicate that, over and above the rationalisation efforts carried out already in 1999 and 2000, the staff numbers assigned to priority activities continue to be inefficient, with the shortfall being estimated at 1 254 posts. Two thirds of these requirements can be met from further rationalisation (discontinuation or scaling back of activities, productivity gains) or by internal redeployment. Targeted and effective accompanying measures are to be designed to allow redeployed staff to perform other, higher priority, activities. In addition to these accompanying measures, termination-of-service arrangements are to be available under which the Commission would be able to offer reasonable severance conditions to officials whose skills are deemed not to be in line with the duties to be performed. Against this background, the main provisions of the proposed Regulation are the following: - to limit the arrangements to officals, with the exception of those in Grades A1 and A2, who have reached the age of 50 and have a minimum of 10 years of services, regardless of the budget (operating or research) from which they are paid; - to fix the total number of officials to whom the measure may apply at 600 (300 in 2001 and 300 in 2002); - to lay down that the Commission is to select the officials to whom the arrangements will apply from among those requesting termination of service; - to provide that selection will take place after consultation of the Joint Commitee provided for in the Staff Regulations and consisting of representatives of the administration and the staff in equal numbers; - to establish the criteria to be applied by the Commission when making the selection; - to establish entitlement to a monthly allowance to be set as a percentage of the last basic salary. Entitlement will cease when the former official reaches the age of 65 or in any event as soon as the former official is eligible for the maximum retirement pension of 70%; - to lay down that where the allowance combined with income from any new employment exceeds the gross remuneration last received, the amount of the excess will be deducted from the allowance; - to lay down that family allowance will be paid consisting of dependant child allowance (full flat-rate amount) and household allowance (in proportion to the allowance subject to the minimum provided for in the Staff Regulation); - to lay down that the former officials and the personscovered by their insurance will be able to benefit from the sickness insurance scheme on payment of a contribution on the basis of the allowance; - to lay down that former officials will be able to acquire further retirement pension rights for a maximum of six years, provided that during that period they contribute to the retirement pension scheme on the basis of their previous basic salary. In the event of death during the period of retirement, the surviving spouse's pension will be paid.