European Parliament: termination-of-service for officials and temporary staff in the political groups

2002/0070(CNS) - 12/09/2002 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

In a letter received at the Court on 11 April 2002 the Council requested the Court's opinion on this proposal. The proposal is to authorise a termination-of-service scheme, between 2002 and 2004, for 100 Parliament officials and 24 temporary staff working in the Political Groups in order to take account of the need to renew professional skills. The Court has examined the proposal and states that the increase in future pension costs due to the appointment of the new staff seems not to have been taken into consideration. It suggests that the proposal should define which budgetary mechanism will be used to ensure that the savings will actually be safeguarded in the long term. Moreover, the Court is of the opinion that the preamble to the proposed regulation should explain the coherence of the scheme with the European employment policy objective of increasing the employment rate of older workers through flexible and gradual retirement formulas. The Court takes note that no appropriate and clear selection criteria are established. The implementation of the scheme, according to the Court, should ensure that staff who are able to update their skills are fairly treated. The preamble to the proposed regulation should explain why the scheme should apply to temporary staff whose contracts could be simply terminated. Lastly, the Court is of the opinion that an early retirement system such as the one proposed should be a one-off solution. In the future the focus should be on improvement of staff development policy.