



Assessment and careers No transparency means abuse and cronyism !

As you well know,

R&D has been fighting for years to improve the appraisals/promotion system put in place by Mr (now Lord) Kinnock and to make it work;

R&D has been fighting to replace it with a fair system based on solidarity, similar to the one used in the European Parliament and which the Commission sadly considers to be illegal.

One way or another, the Commission has given in to the temptation to replace one very bad staff appraisal/promotion system with another that could be even worse.

The new appraisal and career system has been launched, and the dangers that **R&D** identified and criticised during "concertation" exercises are already beginning to become reality.

Here are the initial **problems** and dangers that implementation of the scheme is already beginning to throw up:

- Dialogue with no "outcomes"; in practice, the jobholder will meet the reporting officer (the Head of Unit), who will only be able to prepare a "qualitative" appraisal. There is a possibility that the "quantification" of merits will already have been made in absolute secrecy by the appeal assessor (the Director-General) and the countersigning officer (the Directors). In this case, you are not even appraised by your direct managers who are supposed to know your work well, as your "reporting officers" have no way of determining either your level of performance or the points to award you so that you can be promoted.
- Untenable comparison; in this case, the appraisal is not carried out in relation to the work you were allocated at the beginning of the exercise, but by comparison with colleagues on the grade fixed by the hierarchy in your DG. If you are close, you will be able to move up a grade; if not, your shortfall could prove to be a serious handicap for your career;
- Limited opportunities for appealing; appeals against both your appraisal and your level of performance and promotion points can only take place when all decisions have been finalised. The hierarchy will therefore have every chance to "co-ordinate" the descriptive part of the appraisal of your level of performance that they will already have decided "behind closed doors". So in the absence of any clear political will to allow Joint Appraisal and Promotion Committees to do their job, the scope for appealing is likely to be very limited.
- Opportunities for extremely rapid career acceleration for some; in a system based on average career speed in a given grade, any career acceleration for some officials will unavoidably be paid for by other less fortunate colleagues: for example, we already understand that about 33% (AD) and 21% (AST) of colleagues in cabinets (whose merits are not disputed) could be graded in Performance level IA, while in services, the officials

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with the highest number of merits will account for only 8% of the total. In either case, most colleagues in services will clearly pay for these super-fast careers.

- Weighting of the three appraisal criteria; under the old system, each of the three appraisal categories (efficiency, abilities and conduct) had a weighting of 10, 6 and 4 respectively. The new system gives no indication, and once again this could lead to “uneven” appraisals by DGs and Directorates, and possibly by Heads of Unit. There could also be an objective case of discrimination within a given service. Furthermore, the job-holder will be prevented from lodging a justified appeal. If a job-holder has no indicators, the way will be open for abuse and cronyism.
- Excessive transparency and efficiency; we understand that some DGs already have the names of colleagues to be placed on performance levels IA and IB. How efficient! We may be forgiven for asking “Why bother with appraisals, management meetings and all this bureaucracy?” R&D will deploy all the necessary efforts to end such abuses.

You're not on your own when confronting these dangers!

R&D will go the extra mile to assist you at every stage of the procedure (consult our "Renard" on our website). Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or doubts that you may have and to tell us of any problems you encounter.

R&D will carry on fighting to ensure:

- all possible transparency and fairness;
- that procedures are put in place, and with no trickery from the more treacherous DGs;
- that there is genuine dialogue between job-holders and their hierarchies on the basis of substantive parameters such as work objectives);
- that there is neither a “class” nor a “caste” of privileged officials, nor a situation in which most officials are arbitrarily and definitively relegated to lower performance levels;
- that some colleagues who have already been penalised by the introduction of the “Kinnock system” do not have to undergo a second transition;
- that genuine appeal procedures are put in place, and that the JAPC (Joint Appraisal and Promotion Committee) and its working groups can play their full roles.

R&D calls on:

- DG ADMIN to play its full part in co-ordinating and regulating the system;
- Vice-President Kallas, who has been very active in having the system approved, to be equally active in the implementation stage.

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