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|  | Schola Europaea / Office of the Secretary-General  Human Resources |

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Difficulties of the European Schools to Recruit and Retain Qualified Administrative Staff

Board of Governors

**Meeting from 4 to 7 December 2018**

1. **Introduction**

The Board of Governors mandated at its meeting on 17 – 19 April 2018 the AAS Working Group too continue its work on a ‘single spine’ and to combine this work with the review of the salary of the Administrative and Ancillary Staff of the European Schools in line with Article 25 of the AAS Regulations.

In Article 25.2 of the AAS Regulations it is stated that “*the salary levels for AAS will be reviewed every six years, by the Administration Board of each school, and by the Secretary-General for his/her staff, under the authority of and within prior limits set by the Board of Governors”.*

The first such review should have taken place in 2012.

Unfortunately, at that time the Board of Governors could not agree on a coherent review of the salary scales, but gave more flexibility to the schools with respect to the initial grading of staff by revising Article 7.3 of the AAS Regulations.

Moreover, in very specific cases a review of the salary scale of specific occupational categories in some schools was agreed.

Based on the mandate given by the Board of Governors and based on Article 25.2 and 25.3 AAS the AAS Working Group is asked to provide a proposal for a more coherent review of the salary scale of AAS.

1. **Method of salary review**

Article 25.3 of the AAS Regulations clarifies the approach for the salary review and reads as follows:

*This review should take all the following factors into account:*

*a) the salary scale for comparable posts in the country in which the school is situated;*

*b) the need to ensure recruitment and retention of suitably qualified staff;*

*c) the salary paid for the same posts in the European Schools in general, taking account of the correction coefficient;*

*d) the budgetary resources/limitations which may be indicated by the Board of Governors.*

Taking in consideration the budgetary limitation the review might have to face, it is proposed to focus in line with lit. b) of Article 25.3 of the AAS Regulations on those functions/occupational categories where the Schools and the Office of the Secretary-General (OSG) face difficulties to attract and retain qualified staff.

**In a first step** the OSG and the 13 Schools were asked to identify the occupational categories where in the last five years they faced difficulties to recruit qualified staff respectively qualified staff left the system due to more attractive salary conditions.

**In a second step** the AAS Working Group will have to compare the salary offered in the European Schools for these functions with the salary offered by other competitors on the local market (see Article 25.3 lit. a) of the AAS Regulations).

1. **Identified Occupational Categories**

The OSG circulated by a survey among schools to identify occupational categories where the schools faced problems to recruit and retain qualified staff.

The detailed results can be found in the annex of the document.

1. **Situation in the OSG**

The OSG faces more and more difficulties to recruit and retain highly qualified staff.

For the moment, this concerns in particular technical areas (ICT-, SAP- and Security-Experts). The recruitment of experts in finance is also a potential area of risk. In other, more administrative areas (posts of Secretaries, administrative Assistants) the OSG still receives a quite high number of qualified candidates.

In order to be competitive in the area of SAP and ICT, the new Article 7.3 of the AAS Regulations has been applied in five cases.

**aa) Recruiting qualified staff**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas ICT, SAP, Security and Contracting Expert:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Security Officer** | 01.09.2016 | First call | 6 | * Out of 6 qualified candidates only 4 followed the invitation. * The only successful candidate withdrew his application due to the salary conditions. | 12 months |
|  |  | Second call | 7 | * The BoG decided to foresee a higher salary grade, which was considered to be competitive. * The vacancy could be filled in September 2017. * The post holder terminated contract in March 2018 due to a more attractive offer. |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **SAP Expert** | 01.05.2014 | 1 | 6 | * Out of a total of 20 candidates six had been invited. * Only one candidate could entirely convince. * In order to be competitive step 5 was offered. * The post holder terminated contract in March 2018 due to a more attractive offer. | 1 month |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **SAP Assistant** | 01.06.2015 | 1 | 5 | * Out of a total of 50 candidates five had been invited. * Only one candidate could entirely convince. * In order to be competitive step 5 was offered. | 1 month |
|  | 01.09.2016 | First Call | 0 | * None of the 30 candidates met the requested profile. | 13 months |
|  |  | Second call | 2 | * Out of a total of 11 candidates two had been invited. * Only one candidate could entirely convince. * This candidate declined the offer due to the salary conditions. |  |
|  |  | Third call | 6 | * Out of a total of 48 candidates six had been invited. * Three of them did not follow the invitation due to the salary conditions, one was selected for another function and one did not show up. * In order to be competitive step 4 was offered to the remaining candidate. |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ICT Network Engineer** | 01.08.2017 | First call | 0 | * None of the 24 candidates met the requested profile. | 6 months |
|  |  | Second call | 1 | * The only sufficient candidate refused due to the salary conditions. |  |
|  |  | Third call | 0 | * None of the 5 candidates met the requested profile. |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ICT System Engineer** | 01.04.2017 | 1 | 3 | * Two candidates did not follow the invitation. | 3 months |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ICT Developer** | 01.08.2017 | First call | 0 | * None of the 19 candidates with the exception of one internal candidate met the requested profile. | 5 months |
|  |  | Second call | 3 | * Out of the total of 15 candidates three had been invited * One of them refused the invitation * One did not meet the requirements |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ICT Administrator DBA SQL** | 01.01.2018 | First call | 6 | * Out of the total of 18 candidates six had been invited. * Five did reject the invitation or did not show up. * The remaining candidate did not meet the requested requirements. | 3 months |
|  |  | Second call | 0 | * This procedure involved a specialized agency, but finally no valid candidates could be attracted with the offered salary. |  |
|  |  | Third call | 1 | * Out of the 9 candidates only one met the requirements. * This candidate rejected invitation due to the offered salary. |  |
| **Contracting Assistant** | 01.04.2016 | First call | 0 | * None of the 70 candidates met the requested profile. | 3 months |
|  |  | Second call | 6 | * Out of the total of 30 candidates six had been invited |  |
|  |  |  |  | * Out of the 6, only 3 suitable candidates were qualified. |  |
|  |  |  |  | * 2 of the 3 suitable candidates refused the post due to the salary conditions, the third candidate was then selected |  |

**bb) Retaining qualified staff**

As already indicated in the table above, the OSG also has quite recently been faced with **difficulties to retain** experts in these functions.

The following table illustrates in more detail the cases concerned:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **IT Assistant** | 01.02.2015 | 1 | 31.07.2017 | More attractive salary package |
| **SAP Expert** | 10.06.2014 | 5 | 31.03.2018 | More attractive salary package |
| **Security Officer** | 01.09.2017 | 3 | 09.03.2018 | More attractive salary package |
| **Contracting Assistant** | 24.05.2018 | 3 | 12.10.2018 | More attractive salary package |

In the case of the Security Officer the Board of Governors had decided to increase the salary before publishing the post for a second time.

With respect to the offered ‘salary package’ it needs to be noted that the monthly gross salary offered by the OSG is comparable and sometimes even slightly higher than the monthly gross salary offered by the competitors which are mainly companies on the private market. But these competitors offer a more interesting ‘package’ including a 13-month salary, group insurance, company car, meal checks, etc., which finally makes the salary that the OSG can offer less attractive.

1. **Situation in the Schools in Belgium**

The answers received from ES Brussels I, ES Brussels II, Brussels III and ES Brussels IV indicate that three of the schools faced difficulties to recruit ‘ICT Technicians’. ES Brussels I faced also a problem to recruit a ‘Higher Grade Technician’. Brussels II had difficulties to find a ‘Prevention Adviser’ and a ‘Technician’ with the required language skills.

Until now, only one of the schools faced a situation where a staff member left the school due to a more attractive offer.

1. **Situation in the Schools in Luxembourg**

The ES in Luxembourg did in particular face difficulties to retain secretaries and nurses.

1. **Situation in the Schools in Germany**

All three schools placed in Germany replied to the survey.

The ES Karlsruhe faced some difficulties to attract candidates for the function of ‘Librarian’. Until now, no AAS member has left the school due to more attractive salary conditions offered by another employer.

The ES Frankfurt is facing problems in recruiting qualified ‘Laboratory Assistants’, ‘Librarians’, ‘Nursery Assistants’, ‘Psychologists’ and ‘Secretaries’.

Members of these staff categories as well as an Assistant to the Director’ have already left the school due to more attractive salary conditions.

All three schools confirm that they quite often can only attract candidates with children who would like to enroll their children in the school.

1. **Situation in Alicante**

So far, the ES Alicante has not faced problems to recruit and retain qualified staff.

1. **Bergen**

The ES Bergen faces difficulties to recruit qualified ‘Laboratory Assistants’, ‘Nursery Assistants’ and ‘Workers’.

So far, no AAS member has left the school due to more attractive salary conditions.

1. **Situation in Varese**

The ES Varese has faced in one case difficulties to recruit an ‘ICT Technician’.

So far no AAS member has left the school due to more attractive salary conditions.

1. **Conclusions**

In general, the schools seem to face less major problems in recruiting and retaining qualified staff than the OSG.

Nevertheless, there are certain categories where the schools seem not to be competitive.

These categories vary between the schools.

Moreover, it seems that certain categories are only attractive for candidates who want to enroll their children.

The consequences of not being competitive in some areas are the following:

* long lasting vacancies of key positions;
* investments in terms of experience and trainings which are lost with the departure of those members of staff;
* extra load on the HR staff, due to repetitive publication of posts and recruitment procedures;
* overall lack of efficiency.

**III. Proposal**

The Members of the Board of Governors are invited to take note of this overview.

**Annex**

**Name of the School: ES Brussels I**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas ICT, technician in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Technician supérieur** | 01.06.2016 | First call | 5 | * The only successful candidate withdrew his application due to another offer he received | 23 months |
|  |  | Second call | 1 | * The vacancy could not be filled. The candidate didn’t pass the test * Post is still vacant |  |
| **Technicien** | 01.06.2017 | First call | 2 | - The vacancy could not be filled. The candidates didn’t pass the test  -post is still vacant | 11 months |
| **Preparateur ICT** | 08.01.2018 | First Call | 1 | - The vacancy could not be filled. Because the candidate didn’t have the skills for the post  - The post was filled by a temporary contract since 2/5/2018 | 5 months |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **NO ONE LEFT due to more attractive salary packages** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: Brussels II**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Prevention Adviser** | 01.01.2018 |  |  | Language knowledge |  |
| **Technician** | 01.01.2017 |  |  | Language knowledge |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **No cases** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: Brussels III**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **ICT Technician** | 01.01.2018 | 2 |  | * First placed candidate refused the post due to salary conditions * Second placed candidate left the service after 1.5 months | 5 months |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **ICT Technician** | 01.01.2018 | 2 | 01.03.2018 | found a better paid position |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: Brussels IV**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in ICT in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Préparateur ICT** | 05.2017 | First call | 7 | Le candidat choisi a longtemps hésité pour finir par refuser car son patron lui avait proposer des conditions plus intéressantes. Nous avons alors proposé au 2ème candidat qui a accepté | 1 mois |
| **Secrétaire Finances et Administration** | 06.2018 | First call | 7 | La non perception d’un 13eme mois, d'un bonus éventuel et la suppression de tous les avantages extra légaux, ont influencé sa décision. | La 2ème est recrutée |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **No cases** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: ES Luxembourg I**

The European Schools in Luxembourg have **difficulties in retaining** staff mainly in these functions:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Secretary** | 01.04.2017 | 3 | 12.05.2017 | unbalance between payment and job requirements |
| **Secretary** | 20.04.2017 | 2 | 15.07.2018 | Dto. |
| **Secretary** | 01.09.1981 | 1 | 30.04.2017 | Dto. |
| **Nurse** | 27.04.1992 | 1 | 31.08.2016 | unbalance between payment and job requirements |
| **Nurse** | 01.01.2008 | 1 | 14.08.2017 | Found a more attractive salary package |
| **Nurse** | 01.09.2016 | 2 | 08.09.2016 | Found a more attractive salary package |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: ES Luxembourg II**

The European Schools in Luxembourg have **difficulties in retaining** staff mainly in these functions:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **Head of Accountancy** | 2012 | 3 | 31.01.2018 | unbalance between payment and job requirements |
| **Secretary** | 06.01.2007 | 1 | 31.08.2016 | unbalance between payment and job requirements |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: European School Frankfurt**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas of administrative functions Psychologist, Laboratory Assistant, Secretary in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| Laboratory Assistant | 01.09.2012 | **Second** Call | 3 | First and second candidate denied  3rd accepted on level 1 |  |
| Secretary HR | 1.11.2014 | First Call | 3 | First candidate denied because of salary- salary offered on level 3  2nd candidate accepted |  |
| Laboratory Assistant | 01.05.2015 | **Second** Call | 3 | Candidate accepted salary on level 1 |  |
| School Psychologist part-time 0,5 | 01.01.2017 | First Call | 5 | Out of 6 qualified candidates we invited 5.  The most successful candidate withdrew her application due to the salary conditions.  Candidate ranked number 2 accepted – mother of kids at the school. |  |
| Secretary Primary School | 01.05.2017 | First Call | 3 | First two candidates denied  3rd accepted, salary on level 3 |  |
| Laboratory Assistant | 01.09.2017 | First Call | 4 | Out of 6 qualified candidates we invited 4. The most successful candidate withdrew her application due to the salary conditions  2nd candidate ranked accepted (at beginning of professional career). |  |
| Secretary Primary School - 0,5 | 1.1.2018 | First call | 3 | Out of 6 qualified candidates we invited 3.  The successful candidate withdrew her application due to the salary conditions. The second possible candidate acted accordingly for the same reasons. | 5,5 months |
|  |  | **Second** call | 3 | The only two successful candidates withdrew their applications one by one due to salary conditions. |  |
|  |  | **Third**  Call | 1 | 8 applications – 1 qualified candidate who accepted the post on level 3 (comeback to work) |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| Secretary HR | 2002 | 1 | 31.08.2012 | More attractive salary package |
| Librarian | 2002 | 1 | 31.08.2012 | More attractive salary package |
| Nursery Assistant | 5.2.2007 | 1 | 28.2.2014 | More attractive salary package |
| Librarian | 01.09.2013 | 3 | 31.8.2014 | More attractive salary package |
| Nursery Assistant | 1.9.2014 | 3 | 31.8.2017 | More attractive salary package |

**General Remarks:**

* 2/3 of the staff are paid according to the new statute, the difference in salary increase has reached a difference of now 11,64% and salaries are no longer competitive. Harmonization of the Annex II and Annex III salary scales need to be considered in the single spine.
* In 2012 a lot of staff left the school because ESRM could offer better salary packages.
* Since 2014 the majority of staff had to be hired on level 3 as level 1 of the salary scale was no longer competitive.
* The majority applying and accepting job offers are mothers at the ESF or mostly women who accept uncompetitive conditions for the sake of a comeback to work (they are mostly not the main family earner) or very young people as job experience.
* There is hardly any room for career development for well-educated and experienced staff.
* A large number of the Administrative Staff has a University diploma (most of them in Business Administration).

**Name of the School: ES Karlsruhe**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in all areas in the last five years. ESK had just one single case that caused problems:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Librarian** | 01.09.2012 | Only one | 11 | Out of 11 qualified candidates only 8 followed the invitation.  The successful candidate withdrew her application due to the salary conditions.  We had to offer the contract to the second one. | n/a |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **n/a** |  |  |  |  |

**Name of the School: ES Munich**

The following table illustrates some **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the areas given below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **Nurse** | 15.10.2015 | First Call | 6 | predecessor left 31.7.15 because of low wage | 3 months |
| **Accountant** | 19.10.2015 | First Call | 6 | predecessor left 31.10.2015 because of low wage |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Annotation:**

In almost all cases, the salary received by the ESM is not the main income for the family. Both employees who left school in 2015 are single.

**Name of the School: ES Bergen**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the following areas in the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** |  |
| **Laboratory assistant** | 1 December 2012 | 1 | 3 | To find someone with knowledge in all science subjects for the salary offered |  |
| **Laboratory assistant** | 1 May 2015 | 1 | 3 | To find someone with knowledge in all science subjects for the salary offered |  |
| **Laboratory assistant** | 1 December 2016 | 1 | 3 | To find someone with knowledge in all science subjects for the salary offered |  |
| **Nursery assistant** | 1 November 2013 | 1 | 6 | To find someone for the salary offered |  |
| **Nursery assistant** | 1 March 2015 | 1 | 3 | To find someone for the salary offered |  |
| **Nursery assistant** | 1 September 2015 | 1 | 6 | To find someone for the salary offered |  |
| **Nursery assistant** | 1 January 2016 | 1 | 4 | To find someone for the salary offered |  |
| **Worker** | 1 April 2014 | 1 | 8 | To find someone with knowledge of facility management for the salary offered |  |
| **Worker** | 1 December 2015 | 1 | 3 | To find someone with knowledge of facility management for the salary offered |  |
| **Worker** | 1 September 2017 | 1 | 4 | To find someone with knowledge of facility management for the salary offered |  |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **N.A.** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

We have the following remarks:

1. The personnel members in service before April 2007 tend to stay longer in service than the staff members in service from April 2007. The reasons of the termination of the contracts: pension, death, and only 1 person resigned.
2. There is a higher staff turnover with regard to the personnel members in service from April 2007. The reasons are: the contract is not renewed, finding employment with better salary rates elsewhere.
3. The salary rates in the European School Bergen are low in comparison with the other European schools.
4. The labor market is tight; the unemployment rate is < 4% in the Netherlands. Difficulties in recruiting qualified staff in all areas can be expected.

**Name of the School: ES VARESE**

The following table illustrates the **difficulties in recruiting** qualified staff in the area IT in the last years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function**  **ICT Technician** | **Vacancy as of** | **Number of calls** | **Number of invited candidates** | **Difficulty faced** | **Post being vacant for** |
| **IT technician *(prépareteur informatique)*** | 01/01/2009 | 1st call | 5 | The only successful candidate withdrew his application due to the salary conditions. | 9 months |
| 2nd call | 5 | The selected candidate started his contract as from the 1st September 2009. |

The following table illustrates cases where staff members left due to more attractive salary packages:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Recruitment** | **Initial step** | **Resignation** | **reason** |
| **no cases** | | | | |