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# ***Rules on the engagement and use of Seconded National Experts and National Experts in Professional Training to the European Institute for Gender Equality***

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*These provisions repeal and replace those adopted by Management Board Decision No MB/2015/013 of 10 December 2015.*

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# CHAPTER I

## General Provisions

### *Article 1 - Scope and definitions*

1. These Rules are applicable to national experts seconded to EIGE, hereinafter referred to as Seconded National Experts (SNE). SNE are staff employed by a national, regional or local public administration or an IGO who are seconded so that the Institute can use their expertise in a particular field. For the purposes of this Decision, the public administration means all State administrative services at central, federal and regional level, comprising ministries, government and parliament services, the courts, central banks, and the administrative services of local authorities, as well as the decentralised administrative services of the State and of such authorities.
2. The persons covered by these Rules must have worked for their employer on a permanent or contract basis for at least 12 months before their secondment and shall remain in the service of that employer throughout the period of secondment. The SNE's employer shall thus undertake to continue to pay his/her salary, to maintain his/her administrative status (permanent official or contract staff member) throughout the period of secondment and to inform the Institute's management of any change in the SNE's situation in this regard. The SNE's employer shall also continue to be responsible for all his/her social rights, particularly social security and pension. The termination of, or change in, the SNE's administrative status (permanent official or contract staff member) may lead to the termination of his/her secondment by the Institute, without notice, in accordance with Article 10(2)(c) (termination of periods of secondment).
3. Except where the Institute's Director grants a derogation an SNE shall be either a national of a Member State or of an EU candidate country or an EFTA country or a country with which the European Council has decided to open accession negotiations and which has concluded a specific agreement with the Commission on staff secondments.

When a secondment is being planned, the Institute shall ensure the geographical and gender balance and compliance with the principle of equal opportunities, in accordance with the principles set out in Article 1d and Article 27 of the Staff Regulations. The Institute shall monitor compliance and shall take the necessary measures to ensure balanced representation of SNE.

4. When accepting a SNE into its ranks EIGE shall ensure that the an SNE's employer is:
  - an independent university or research organisation which does not set out to make profits for redistribution; or
  - in fact part of the public sector.

For the purposes of this Decision, to qualify as being part of the public sector, the SNE's employer must meet all the following conditions:

- it must be attached to a public administration, as defined in paragraph 1, and specifically it must have been created by legislation or regulation;

- its resources must come primarily from public funding;
  - any activities in which it competes against other private or public entities on the market must represent less than half of its activities.
5. Exceptionally and where justified by the interest of the service, the Institute's Director may authorise the secondment of an SNE by an employer that does not meet one or more of the above criteria. The Institute shall regularly report to the Commission on the use of this procedure.

To this end, the Permanent Representation concerned and, where appropriate, the EFTA Secretariat, the IGO and the diplomatic missions of non-member countries concerned shall supply the Institute's Human Resources office with all the necessary facts to enable the Director to assess whether the various criteria are satisfied and to take an informed decision.

The Director shall, if necessary, clarify the arrangements for implementing the different criteria and communicate them to the Permanent Representations of the EU Member States, the EFTA Secretariat and the IGO concerned, or a country associated with a Community programme by a Council decision.

### ***Article 2 - Cost-free SNE***

1. For the purposes of this Decision, cost-free SNE means SNE whose secondment does not entail any costs borne by EIGE as referred to in Chapters III and VI of these rules or cover any of the expenses provided for in this Decision, other than those related to the performance of their duties during their secondment.
2. Cost-free SNE may be seconded from the public administration, as defined in Article 1(1), of an EU member state and Article 1(3).
3. In addition, the Director may authorise the secondment of cost-free SNE on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the geographical balance at the Institute and the work to be carried out.
4. Cost-free SNE shall be taken into account in the Institute's Staff Policy Plans indicating the allocation of human resources and administrative expenditure.

### ***Article 3 - Selection procedure***

1. SNE shall be selected according to an open and transparent procedure, the practical details of which shall be decided by the Unit responsible for Human Resources matters.
2. Before the secondment, the Institute must have been authorised to use SNE on the basis of the Commission's approval of its multi-annual Staff Policy Plan.
3. Applications can be forwarded by the Permanent Representations and where provided for in the vacancy notice, by the EFTA Secretariat, the diplomatic missions of

the non-member countries whose nationals are eligible for the secondment and the administrations of the IGO.

4. Any secondment shall be authorised by the Institute's Director and the SNE's employer by an exchange of letters.

#### ***Article 4 - Period of secondment***

1. The initial period of secondment may not be less than six months or more than two years. It may be renewed once or more up to a total period not exceeding four years for reasons linked to the interest of the service. SNE shall serve on a full-time basis throughout the period of secondment, subject to Article 12(2) of these rules. Exceptionally, the Director may authorise one or more extensions of the secondment for a maximum of two more years at the end of the four-year period.
2. In cases where an SNE has been seconded as a national expert in professional training within the meaning of Article 26 during the six years preceding his/her secondment as an SNE, the period of the traineeship shall be deducted from the maximum period of six years provided for in the previous paragraph.
3. The initial period of secondment shall be specified in the exchange of letters provided for in Article 3(4). Any extension of the period of secondment shall be the subject of a new exchange of letters.
4. An SNE who has already been seconded to the Institute may be seconded to it another time subject to Articles 4(1)- 4(3) of these rules and subject further to the following conditions:
  - the SNE must continue to meet the conditions for secondment;
  - a period of at least six years must have elapsed between the end of the previous period of secondment and the new secondment; if at the end of the previous secondment the SNE received an employment contract with the Institute, the duration of that contract or secondment shall be taken into account when calculating the six-year period referred to above.

The minimum period of six years referred to above shall not be required if the previous secondments lasted for less than four years, but in that case the new secondment shall not exceed the unexpired part of the four-year period, without prejudice to the possibility of extending it by up to two more years, as provided for in paragraph 1.

#### ***Article 5 - Place of secondment***

An SNE may be seconded to any place where the Institute has an office.

## ***Article 6 - Duties***

1. SNE shall assist the Institute's Temporary Agents and carry out the tasks assigned to them based on their professional knowledge and experience in accordance with a predetermined work programme or job description established by the Institute. They may not perform middle or senior management duties, even when deputising for their immediate superior.
2. An SNE shall take part in missions or external meetings only if accompanying an Institute temporary agent, or acting alone as an observer or for information purposes.
3. SNE may work in any area where their services are deemed necessary, provided there is no conflict with the interests of the Institute.
4. In all other cases, by way of derogation from paragraph 2 above, the Director may give a specific mandate to the SNE to participate on his/her own in one or more missions or external meetings, after having ensured that there is no potential conflict of interest.

In such cases the Director shall give the SNE clear and specific written instructions on the position to be adopted during the missions or meetings in question.

The Director may delegate power to derogate to Heads of Unit. Under no circumstances may an SNE on his/her own represent the Institute with a view to entering into commitments, whether financial or otherwise, or negotiating on its behalf. An SNE may, however, represent the Institute in legal proceedings as co-agent with a Temporary Agent.

5. The Institute shall remain solely responsible for approving the results of any tasks performed by an SNE and for signing any official documents arising from them.
6. The Institute's Unit(s) concerned, the SNE's employer and the SNE must ensure that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the SNE's duties while being seconded to the Institute. For this purpose, the Unit to which the SNE is to be seconded shall inform the SNE and his/her employer before the start of the secondment about the intended duties and ask them to confirm in writing that they do not know of any reason why the SNE should not be assigned to those duties.

The employer and the SNE shall also undertake to inform the Institute of any change of circumstances during the secondment which could give rise to any such conflict. The office responsible for human resources shall keep a copy of all such exchanges of correspondence in its records and shall hand it over to the Director upon request.

7. Failure on the part of the SNE to comply with his/her obligations arising from paragraphs 2, 3 or 5 above shall entitle the Institute, if it sees fit, to terminate the secondment of the SNE pursuant to Article 10(2)(c).

## ***Article 7 - Rights and obligations***

1. During the period of secondment:

- a) The SNE shall carry out his/her duties and conduct him/herself solely with the interests of the Institute in mind. S/he shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government, authority, organisation or person outside the Institute. S/he shall carry out the duties assigned to him/her objectively, impartially and in keeping with his/her duties of loyalty to the Institute.
- b) An SNE wishing to engage in an outside activity, whether paid or unpaid, or to carry out any assignment outside the Institute shall be subject to the rules on prior authorisation for officials<sup>1</sup>. The Unit concerned shall consult the SNE's employer before issuing an authorisation.
- c) The SNE shall refrain from any action or behaviour which might reflect adversely upon his/her position and from any form of psychological or sexual harassment<sup>2</sup>.
- d) The SNE shall not, in the performance of his/her duties, deal with a matter in which, directly or indirectly, s/he has any personal interests such as to impair his/her independence, and, in particular, family and financial interests. If s/he has occasion in the performance of his/her duties to deal with such a matter, s/he shall immediately inform his/her Head of Unit, who will take any appropriate measure and may in particular, relieve the SNE of responsibility in this matter.

The SNE may neither keep nor acquire, either directly or indirectly, in undertakings which are subject to the authority of the Institute or which have dealings with the Institute, any interests of such kind or magnitude as might impair his/her independence in the performance of his/her duties. The SNE shall declare any gainful activity performed in a professional capacity by his/her spouse, as defined by the Staff Regulations.

- e) The SNE shall refrain from any unauthorised disclosure of information received in the line of duty, unless that information has already been made public or is accessible to the public.
- f) The SNE has the right to freedom of expression, with due regard for the principles of loyalty and impartiality. The SNE who intends to publish or cause to be published, whether alone or with others, any text on a matter relating to the work of the Institute, shall inform his/her Head of Unit in advance. Where the Head of Unit is able to demonstrate that the publication is liable seriously to prejudice the legitimate interests of the Institute, s/he shall inform the SNE of his/her decision in writing within 30 working days of receipt of the information. If no such decision is notified within the specified period, the Head of Unit shall be deemed to have had no objections.
- g) All rights in any work done by the SNE in the performance of his/her duties shall be the property of the Institute.
- h) The SNE shall reside at the place of secondment or at no greater distance therefrom as is compatible with the proper performance of his/her activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 12b of the Staff Regulations and the provisions implementing this Article shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

<sup>2</sup> Article 12a of the Staff Regulations and the provisions implementing this Article shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.



- i) Based on his/her professional knowledge and experience, the SNE shall assist and tender advice to the superiors at the Institute to whom s/he is assigned and shall be responsible to his/her superiors for performance of the tasks entrusted to him/her.
2. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of paragraph 1 during the period of secondment shall entitle the Institute, if it sees fit, to terminate the SNE's secondment pursuant to Article 10(2)(c).
3. At the end of the secondment the SNE shall continue to have a duty of loyalty to the Institute and be bound by the obligation to act with integrity and discretion in the exercise of new duties assigned to him/her and in accepting certain posts or advantages.

#### ***Article 8 - Level, professional experience and knowledge of languages***

1. To qualify for secondment to the Institute, an SNE must have at least three years' experience in an administrative, scientific, technical, advisory or supervisory function/s that can be regarded as equivalent to function groups AD or AST as defined in the Staff Regulations of the Officials of the European Communities and in the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities.
2. An SNE must have a good knowledge of English which is the main working language of the Institute and a satisfactory knowledge of a second EU language. An SNE from a non-member country must produce evidence of a thorough knowledge of one Community language necessary for the performance of his/her duties.

#### ***Article 9 - Suspension of secondment***

1. At the written request of the SNE or his/her employer, the Institute may authorise suspensions of periods of secondment and specify the terms applicable. During such suspensions:
  - a) The subsistence allowances referred to in Article 16 shall not be payable;
  - b) The allowances referred to in Articles 19 (travel expenses) shall be payable only if the suspension is at the Institute's request.
2. The period of suspension shall not be counted in the period of secondment as defined in Article 4.

#### ***Article 10 - Termination of periods of secondment***

1. Subject to paragraph 2, the secondment may be terminated at the request of the Institute or of the SNE's employer, subject to three months' notice or at the SNE's request, subject to the same period of notice and with the agreement of the Institute and the SNE's employer.

2. The secondment may be terminated without notice in exceptional circumstances:
  - a) by the SNE's employer, if the employer's essential interests so require;
  - b) by agreement between the Institute and the employer acting jointly, on request by the SNE to both parties, if the SNE's essential personal or professional interests so require;
  - c) by the Institute in the event of a failure by the SNE to respect his/her obligations under these Rules.
3. In the event of termination under paragraph 2(c), the Institute shall immediately inform the SNE's employer.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Working conditions**

#### ***Article 11 - Social security, accident insurance***

1. Before the period of secondment begins, the employer from which the SNE is to be seconded, shall certify to the Institute that the SNE will remain subject throughout the period of secondment to social security legislation applicable to the employer who will assume responsibility for expenses incurred abroad.
2. Before the period of secondment begins, the SNE's employer shall provide the Institute with the certificate referred to in Article 11(1) of the Council Regulation (EEC) No 574/72<sup>3</sup>. An SNE who cannot be covered by a public sickness insurance scheme may apply to have this risk insured by the Institute. The expert shall pay half the relevant insurance premium and his/her contribution shall be deducted monthly from the subsistence allowances referred to in Article 16.
3. From the day on which their secondment begins, SNE need to be covered by their employer against the risk of accident. Exceptionally, EIGE will provide adequate insurance cover in this regard and a copy of the policy will be provided to the SNE concerned.

#### ***Article 12 - Working hours***

1. The working hours for SNEs shall be the same as those in force at the Institute.
2. An SNE shall serve on a full-time basis throughout the period of secondment. Following a duly justified request originating from the Unit concerned, the Institute's Director may allow an SNE to work part time, provided the SNE's employer agrees and the arrangement is compatible with the smooth running of the Unit.

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 74, 27.3.1972, p.1

### ***Article 13 - Sick leave***

1. In the event of absence from work for reasons of sickness or accident, the SNE shall notify his/her Head of Unit as soon as possible, stating his/her present address. S/he shall produce a medical certificate if absent for more than three days and may be required to undergo a medical examination arranged by the Institute.
2. If such absence due to sickness or accident of not more than three day exceeds a total of 12 days over a period of 12 months, the SNE shall produce a medical certificate for any further absence due to sickness.
3. Where the period of sick leave exceeds either one month or the period of service performed by SNE, whichever is longer, the subsistence allowances referred to in Article 16 shall be suspended. This provision shall not apply in the event of illness linked to pregnancy.
4. Sick leave may not extend beyond the duration of the secondment of the person concerned.
5. SNE who are the victim of a work related injury which occurs during the secondment shall continue to receive the allowance in full throughout the period during which they are unfit for work up to the end of the duration of the secondment.

### ***Article 14 - Annual, special leave and official holidays***

1. SNE shall be subject to the rules on annual leave and official holidays in force at the Institute. They shall be entitled to two-and-a-half working days of leave per whole month of service, giving 30 days per calendar year.
2. Leave is subject to prior authorisation by the Head of Unit to which the SNE is assigned. In case of unauthorised leave, the relevant daily allowance shall not be paid.
3. SNE may, on submitting a reasoned application, be granted special leave in the following cases:
  - a) marriage of the SNE: two days;
  - b) serious illness of spouse: up to three days;
  - c) death of spouse: four days;
  - d) serious illness of a relative in the ascending line: up to two days;
  - e) death of a relative in the ascending line: two days;
  - f) birth of a child: 10 days (to be taken within 14 weeks from the birth);
  - g) serious illness of a child: up to two days;
  - h) death of a child: four days;
  - i) removal for taking up duty: up to 2 days;
  - j) adoption of a child: 20 weeks, or 24 weeks in the case of adoption of a child with disability.

4. Upon a duly justified request from the SNE's employer, up to two days of paid special leave in a 12-month period may be granted by EIGE on a case-by-case basis.
5. The entitlements set out in paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 above shall be considered exhaustive. In particular, no further entitlement shall be allowed in respect of travel, age or category.
6. Days of annual leave not taken by the end of the secondment shall be forfeited.
7. SNE shall be entitled to official holidays applicable to Institute staff.

### ***Article 15 - Maternity leave***

1. The rules in force at the Institute on maternity leave shall apply to SNE. Whilst on maternity leave, the SNE shall receive the subsistence allowances as set out in Article 16.
2. Where the rules that are binding upon the SNE's employer provide for a period of maternity leave longer than that granted by the Institute, the secondment may, at the SNE's request, be interrupted for the period by which that leave exceeds the leave granted by the Institute. A period equivalent to the break may be added to the end of the secondment if the interests of the Institute warrant it.
3. The leave shall start not earlier than six weeks before the expected date of confinement shown in the certificate and end within but not later than 14 weeks after the date of confinement. In the case of a multiple or premature birth or the birth of a child with disability, the duration shall be of 24 weeks. Premature birth for the purposes of this provision is a birth taking place before the end of the 34<sup>th</sup> week pregnancy.
4. An SNE may, as an alternative, apply for a break in the secondment to cover the period allowed for maternity leave. In that case the second sentence of paragraph 3 above shall apply.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Allowances & Expenses**

#### ***Article 16 - Subsistence allowances***

1. An SNE shall be entitled, throughout the period of secondment, to a daily subsistence allowance and a monthly subsistence allowance. On the date of entry into force of this Decision:
  - a daily subsistence allowance shall be based on that for Brussels in addition to taking into account the correction co-efficient applicable to Lithuania which is subject to the weighting set by the Council pursuant to Article 64 of the Staff Regulations, and

- a monthly subsistence allowance shall be based on that in Brussels taking into account the correction co-efficient applicable to Lithuania.
- 2. These subsistence allowances shall be granted under the same conditions as the expatriation allowance for officials<sup>4</sup>.
- 3. In the case of cost-free SNE, the exchange of letters referred to in Article 3(4) shall stipulate that these allowances will not be paid.
- 4. The adjustments to remuneration adopted by the Council pursuant to Article 65 of the Staff Regulations shall apply automatically to the subsistence allowances in the month following their adoption. The Head of Unit of the Institute's Administration shall be responsible for implementing this provision.
- 5. These allowances are intended to cover SNE living expenses in the place of secondment on a flat-rate basis and shall in no circumstances be construed as remuneration paid by the Institute. Before the secondment, the SNE's employer shall certify to the Institute's Head of Administration that during the secondment it will maintain the level of remuneration the SNE was receiving at the time of his/her secondment. The SNE shall inform the Institute's Director of any allowance similar to the subsistence allowances paid by the Institute received from other sources. This amount shall be deducted from the subsistence allowances paid by the Institute. Following a duly justified request from the employer, the Institute may decide not to make this deduction.
- 6. Subsistence allowances shall be payable for every day of the week, including during periods of mission, annual leave, special leave and holidays granted by the Institute.
- 7. SNE are entitled to reimbursement of school fees for Vilnius-based pre-school, primary and secondary education for their children under the same rules and regulations as those applicable to EIGE staff subject to the Staff Regulations as well as to EIGE's policy on supplementary education contributions for children of EIGE staff members attending Vilnius-based nurseries, kindergartens, pre-schools and schools up to and including grade twelve put into force by Management Board Decision MB/2016/012 of 23 November 2016. However, SNE shall not be entitled to any educational allowances related to higher education.

Reimbursement of education fees for the children of SNE shall be subject to the availability of funds and approval of the Authorising Officer. Where there are limited funds, eligible SNEs will be treated equitably.

### ***Article 17 - Non-review of allowances***

Allowances to the SNE shall not be subject to review during the period of secondment except to reflect changes in the correction co-efficient applicable to the Institute.

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<sup>4</sup> Article 4 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations and the provisions implementing this Article shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

### ***Article 18 - Place of origin***

1. For the purposes of these Rules, the place of origin means the place where the SNE performed his/her duties for his/her employer immediately prior to the secondment. The place of secondment shall be the place where the Institute Unit to which the SNE is assigned is located. Both places shall be identified in the exchange of letters mentioned in Article 3(4).
2. If, six months before his/her secondment to the Institute as an SNE, a national expert already has his/her main residence in a place other than that in which the employer's headquarters is located, the place of origin shall be deemed to be whichever of the places is closer to the place of secondment.

### ***Article 19 - Travel expenses***

1. SNE other than those seconded cost-free, shall be entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses:
  - a) for himself/herself
    - At the beginning of the period of secondment, from the place of origin to the place of secondment;
    - At the end of the period of secondment, from the place of secondment to the place of origin.
  - b) for his/her spouse and dependent children
    - when the removal is effected from the place of origin to the place of secondment;
    - At the end of the period of secondment, from the place of secondment to the place of origin.
2. By way of derogation from sub-paragraph 1(a), SNE who prove that they will be assigned to a place other than their place of origin, at the end of the secondment shall be entitled to reimbursement of the travel expenses to that new place up to the limits noted above. The reimbursement may not involve the payment of a sum higher than that to which s/he is entitled in case of return to the place of origin.
3. Air travel expenses shall be reimbursed up to actual cost of a reduced-price economy class ticket, on production of tickets and boarding cards. Such reimbursement shall be granted only where the standard rail journey exceeds 500 km or where the standard route involves a sea crossing.
4. If the SNE has effected his/her removal from his/her place of origin to his/her place of secondment, s/he shall be entitled each year to a flat-rate payment equal to the cost of a return journey from his/her place of secondment to her/his place of origin for her/himself, her/his spouse and any dependent children on the basis of the conditions in force at EIGE.

The Institute shall not reimburse any expenses referred to in the preceding paragraphs where they have actually been met or reimbursed by the employer. For this purpose, the SNE shall declare any such payments or reimbursements to EIGE.

### ***Article 20 - Administration***

The payment of allowances shall be the responsibility of the Institute's Human Resources office in line with any updates provided by the European Commission.

### ***Article 21 - Missions and mission expenses***

1. An SNE may be sent on mission subject to Article 6 of these Rules.
2. Mission expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the rules and conditions relating to the payment of mission expenses in force at the Institute.

### ***Article 22 - Training***

An SNE may attend training courses organised by the Institute. The reasonable interests of the SNE to attend, in particular in view of the SNE's professional career after secondment, may be considered when deciding on the permission to attend courses.

Separately, and subject to budget availability, an SNE may request reimbursement for language classes in accordance with the rules laid down by EIGE's Language Training Policy put into force by Director's Decision No 112 of 14 March 2016.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Appeals**

### ***Article 23 - Appeals procedure***

Any SNE seconded for more than six months may submit to the Head of Administration a complaint against an act under this Decision taken by EIGE, adversely affecting him/her except decisions which are direct consequences of decisions taken by his/her employer. The appeal must be lodged within two months. The period shall start to run on the date of notification of the decision to the person concerned, but in no case later than the date on which the latter received such notification. The Head of Administration shall notify the person concerned of his/her reasoned decision within four months from the date on

which the complaint was lodged. If at the end of that period no reply to the complaint has been received, this shall be deemed to constitute an implied decision rejecting it<sup>5</sup>.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Administrative & Budgetary Provisions**

#### ***Article 24 - Taking up duties***

Any SNE shall report to the Human Resources office on the first day of secondment to complete the relevant administrative formalities. S/he shall take up duty on either the first or on the sixteenth of the month.

#### ***Article 25 - Settlement of expenditure***

Payments shall be made in € (Euro).

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **National Experts in Professional Training**

#### ***Article 26 - General provisions and definitions***

1. National experts in professional training (hereinafter referred to as NEPT) are staff from the public administrations of EU or EFTA Member States or, depending on the places available, of countries with which the Council has decided to open accession negotiations and which have concluded a specific agreement with the Institute on staff secondments, or from IGO, who are admitted to the Institute for professional training purposes.
2. The provisions of Article 1(1), (3), and (4) shall apply by analogy to NEPT.

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<sup>5</sup> However, this article does not prevent a seconded national expert from bringing an action against the initial decision, under the conditions laid down in Article 20 of the EC Treaty.



### ***Article 27 - Purpose of the professional training***

1. The purpose of the professional training is:
  - to give NEPT experience of the Institute's working methods and policies;
  - to enable them to gain practical experience and understanding of the day-to-day work of the Institute's Units and to give them the opportunity to work in a multicultural, multilingual environment;
  - to enable staff of national administrations to put into practice the knowledge they have acquired in their studies, particularly in their respective areas of responsibility.
2. For its part, the Institute:
  - benefits from the input of people who can offer a new point of view and up-to-date knowledge which will enrich the daily work of the Institute;
  - builds up a network of people with direct experience of its procedures.

### ***Article 28 - Eligibility***

1. The provisions of Article 8 on professional experience and knowledge of languages shall apply by analogy to NEPT.
2. People who have already been seconded as an SNE or worked under an employment contract in one of the Community institutions or bodies shall not be eligible for traineeships.

### ***Article 29 - Selection of candidates***

1. Applications shall be forwarded by the Permanent Representations or, as the case may be, the EFTA Secretariat, administrations of non-member countries or IGO to the Human Resources office of the Institute in accordance with established procedures.
2. After consulting the Units concerned and considering the situation, the Head of Administration shall decide how many NEPT are to be admitted to the Institute for each period.

### ***Article 30 - Duration of the professional training***

1. The professional traineeships shall last between three and five months. The duration shall be fixed at the outset and may not be changed or extended. An NEPT may only complete a single professional traineeship.
2. The professional traineeships shall start on either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### ***Article 31 - Organisation of the professional training***

1. Throughout the professional traineeship, NEPT shall be supervised by a training advisor. The training advisor must inform the Human Resources office of the Institute of any significant incidents during the professional traineeship (in particular absences, illness, accidents or interruption) which s/he knows of or has been informed of by the NEPT.
2. NEPT must obey instructions given by their training advisor and their superiors in the Unit to which they are seconded.
3. NEPT shall be allowed to attend meetings, unless they are restricted or confidential, to receive documentation and to participate in the activities of the Unit to which they are seconded.

### ***Article 32 - Suspension of the professional traineeship***

At the written request of the NEPT or his/her employer and with the latter's prior agreement, the Head of the Administration may authorise a very brief suspension of the professional traineeship or its early termination. The NEPT may return to complete the remaining period of the professional traineeship, but only up until the end of that period. Under no circumstances may the traineeship be extended.

### ***Article 33 - Working conditions and remuneration***

1. The following Articles of this Decision shall apply by analogy to NEPT:
  - Article 6 (duties);
  - Article 7 (rights and obligations);
  - Article 11(1) and (2) (social security, accident insurance);
  - Article 12(1) (working hours);
  - Article 13 (sick leave);
  - Article 14 (annual, special leave and official holidays);
  - Article 21 (missions and mission expenses).
2. NEPT shall be regarded as cost-free SNE within the meaning of Article 2. They shall continue to be paid by their employer without any financial compensation being paid by the Institute. The Institute will accept no requests for grants or fees or the reimbursement of travel or other expenses other than the reimbursement of mission expenses incurred as part of the professional traineeship.

### ***Article 33 - Reports and certificate of attendance***

1. NEPT who have completed the stipulated professional training period shall complete the evaluation reports requested by the Head of the Administration at the end of their traineeship. Training advisors must also complete the relevant evaluation report.
2. Subject to the completion of these reports, NEPT who have completed their professional traineeships shall receive a certificate showing the dates of the professional training and the Unit in which it took place.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **Final Provisions**

#### ***Article 34 - Delegation***

1. The Director of the Institute may delegate the powers devolved to him/her pursuant to this Decision to the Head of Administration.
2. The Permanent Representations, EFTA Secretariat, IGO and diplomatic missions of the non-member countries concerned (as applicable) shall enjoy a close working relationship with the Institute throughout the secondment. All correspondence and contacts between the seconding employer shall be made via the Member State's Permanent Representation, the EFTA Secretariat, the IGO and the diplomatic missions of the non-member countries concerned as applicable.