

AFP begins to resume, timidly, general wage hikes

A touch of farce at the end of the 2021 annual wage negotiations (NAO): less than 48 hours after having sent unions the draft text of an accord that would have extended the freeze of our wage scales dating from 2012 (except those awarded following the SPQN lawsuit) in favor of the further *individualization* of wages, *one-shot measures* and *vague promises for 2022*¹, management abruptly changed course. The new proposal² may be considerably below what is needed to compensate for inflation, but it contains **three positive, if insufficient, measures:**

- **A wage increase for (almost) everyone: the prime fixe collective**, which a large majority of HQ staff receive, **will be increased by €20 gross per month** (over 13 months) from January 1, 2022. It will be slightly more as it is included in the salary upon which the seniority bonus is calculated. And as wages, it will also affect our pension contributions. It is also a *permanent wage hike*, except for those who receive a promotion at the discretion of management to one the highest wage categories. For example, journalists lose this bonus when they receive a promotion from RED6 to RED7 (= assistant editor-in-chief).
- **An increase in wages for stringers.** In management's first offer, only *text* stringers were to get a raise. The final text offers a **2.5% increase** for text stringers, while **photo and video** stringers get a **1% increase**.
- **Mileage allowances** are to be raised by **10%** from January 1.

Two other measures don't correspond to SUD's demands and the principles we defend, but they don't undermine our benefits:

- **Bonus and promotions campaign 2021** (on March 31, 2022): *SUD* prefers automatic career plans and general wage hikes to individual measures at the discretion of management. The budget for these could have been used to improve the general wage hike. **SUD had demanded** a *2.8% wage hike for everyone*, creation of *new seniority bonus levels of 21% at 25 years and 22% at 30 years*.
- **An exceptional contribution of €350,000 to the Social and Economic Commission's (CSE) cultural and social activities budget.** For staff, this gesture by management translates into *gift certificates*. While welcome, the money for these could have been used to boost wages. With less than one year to elections for staff representatives to the CSE, it's hard not to see this as a reward for the unions who run the CSE for signing the 2017 "Grand Accord" and their lack of real opposition to the Fabrice Fries' "Transformation Plan" – two damaging measures which have led to a reduction in the wage bill and thus the funds provided to the CSE.

As the final text includes our demand for a general wage hike **SUD will sign the NAO agreement.**

And a wish for the New Year: that *all* trade unions *act and mobilize staff* to obtain *complete compensation for inflation and the introduction of new seniority bonus levels* to ensure that there are automatic wage increases during the second half of careers at AFP.

¹ See FO's tract published on 7/12/2021 which refers to management's second offer, made after the publication of *SUD's* tract on 3/12/2021 - <https://www.sud-afp.org/spip.php?article651>

² See <http://u.afp.com/wSg4>