



Generation 2004

Newsletter no.13

November 2015

TOP STORY

Łukasz Wardyn **Elected as new Chair of the** **Brussels Local Staff Committee**



After lengthy and difficult negotiations with the other staff organisations, Generation 2004 member Łukasz Wardyn has been elected Chair of the Brussels Local Staff Committee (LSC). His election is part of a broader agreement which includes also nominations for the Central Staff Committee and general orientations for the work of the LSC. The text of the programme proposed by Generation 2004 can be found [here](#).

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What is new for Contract Agents joining the Commission?

The new proposals in snapshot

Since last July 2015, staff representatives have been meeting heads of DG HR, in order to discuss a Commission decision which will apply to section IV of Staff Regulation, changing basic rules referring to CAs, but unfortunately yet not improving their position so much.

Let's recap:

- ⇒ no change on the maximum length of 6 years
- ⇒ no possibility of a permanent contract
- ⇒ no outplacement programme for the after-EC
- ⇒ not a word about Internal Competitions
- ⇒ NEW! Reduced salaries for new CAs (see grids below)
- ⇒ NEW! Introduction of annual evaluation
- ⇒ NEW! CBT tests on demand (of the Head of service)
- ⇒ NEW! Reclassification with a very risky procedure

G2004 took part in the discussions, stating firmly that in spite of all responsibilities and work taken over by the 6500 CAs at the Commission, their pay off is still a lack of a real policy on them.

Our objectives:

- ⇒ We suggest an equal treatment for all agents, without creating inequality and division of staff. (Equal pay for equal work).
- ⇒ We underline the necessity of real possibilities of a permanent contract for those agents that, after 6 years of employment, have showed trust, professionalism and commitment towards the Institution.
- ⇒ We underline the pressure for internal competitions opened to CAs.
- ⇒ We stress on the need to implement the same calculation grid used before 2015.
- ⇒ We welcome more transparency in the selection procedure and CBT more tailored on working subjects (no general verbal and abstract reasoning tests).
- ⇒ We would welcome a less risky reclassification procedure, opening the possibility of going back to the lower grade previously occupied, in case of a failing operation.
- ⇒ We suggest an outplacement program for CAs after 6 years employment at the EC. The idea is to prepare them for the transition and to support them in the finding a new job, using specific networks and benefiting of additional education (trainings) in their last year of employment.

Up to today, we have received no meetings' minutes, nor any document tracking HR position, welcoming or taking into account staff representatives concerns raised during the social dialogue.

Another certification exercise - Another lost opportunity for Post2004 ASTs

If you were recruited as AST after the 2004 reform you may remember the advertising on the recent (at that time) changes in Art. 45a of the Staff Regulations. A big opportunity – it was claimed – for all AST officials offering compensation for the lower recruitment grade. You wait for only couple of years and you may become an AD official: the certification exercise previously open from grade AST 5 became accessible from AST 4 instead.

What a joke. The provisions of the Staff back to their pre-2004 version right at reached eligibility (the three criteria are AST 5 or higher and to have two to carry out AD functions in the last the SRs themselves remain silent on the officials were moved back to square one transitional arrangements.

In their official communication DG HR is other eligibility criteria the assessment functions, namely two positive evaluation reports. In their direct however, DG HR made it clear that it positive assessment of AD potential is provided by the 2004 version of



Regulation were conveniently restored the time when many post2004 ASTs to be in active employment, in grade positive assessments of the potential three evaluation exercises). And while transitional cases, hundreds of AST by the clear refusal of DG HR to apply

quite cautious as it simply lists among of the potential to carry out AD assessments in the last three communication to staff members, will not accept applications, where the part of a AST4 grade report (as Art.45a).

How does that tailor with a sensible talent management policy? And is there really a legal problem or is it a deliberate policy choice at the detriment of a particular group of officials?

A detail that ends the discussion before it has even started for many colleagues: for the first time this year DG HR made sure that the deadline for application to the certification exercise expires before the end of the current promotion cycle. If you have been promoted AST 5 this year, congratulations! Yet, for some of you this is a bitter-sweet experience: while you keep doing your AD work, the obstacles between you and your desired AD recognition are more solid than ever.

Generation 2004 Communication on Promotions

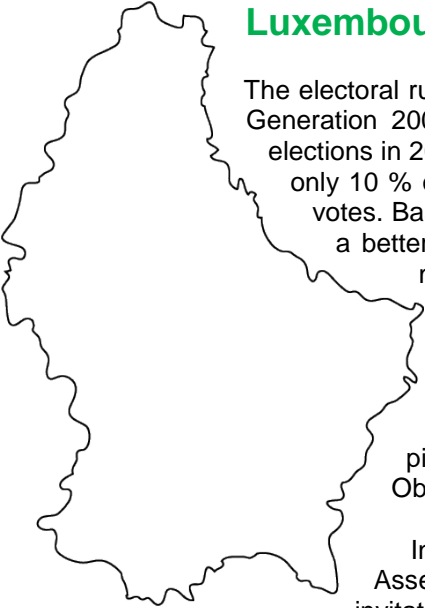
It's done. After thousands of hours spent on writing and discussing appraisal reports, holding endless meetings to allegedly 'compare' merits and going through thousands of individual files, the 2015 promotion exercise is over and the results appeared in Sysper – only a few months before the whole work starts again....

And of course, several thousand colleagues have been told: *"Sorry, we have not been able to give you a promotion this year"*. Many of them may have guessed that from the lists published by their DGs earlier this year. But those who have filed an appeal, can only be sure about their fate once the final list is published. Most of them are now wondering why their appeals did not bear fruit and why they did not get any explanation for the rejection of their appeal either. Again nothing new!

But that is exactly where the problem is. The key deficiencies of the system have not been resolved, only reaffirmed. In fact, based on their reading of current court rulings, HR wants us to believe that we live in the best of all possible worlds and apart from some minor issues that to them are inherent to any evaluation system there is no need to change anything. Read the full text published in October [here](#).

PS: HR has recently invited staff representatives from the Joint Promotion Committee to join a working group that is to develop a model promotion exercise. Honni soit qui mal y pense ...

Luxembourg: Staff representation electoral rules



The electoral rules for the Luxembourg Local Staff Committee (LSC) are currently under review. Generation 2004 was one of the organisations that called for a reform. Remember the last elections in 2013 when our nearly 20 % of list votes and lots of preferential votes translated into only 10 % of seats? At the same time, USL obtained 65 % of seats with less than 37 % of votes. Based on a mandate from the General Assembly to ensure more proportionality and a better reflection of staff's preferences, the LSC established a working group with the mandate to prepare a proposal.

However, the current proposal by the working group does not address what Generation2004 considers to be the main problem of the existing system: double counting of some votes. If, under the existing system, you vote for people from a single list, your vote influences all 20 seats in the LSC. If, on the other hand, you pick people you trust from more than one list, you only influence 10 seats. Obviously, that is something that Generation 2004 cannot agree with.

In any case, the outcome of the work will be presented to the staff in a General Assembly. Therefore, if you work for the Commission in Luxembourg, expect an invitation to a General Assembly, hopefully by the end of the year, and please try to attend if you can. Your vote should count!

VP Georgieva met staff representation in Luxembourg

VP Georgieva met staff representatives in Luxembourg on 2 July 2015. The aim of the meeting was to report on the situation of the move out of the JMO building and on the implementation of the agreement in order to settle the social conflict in Luxembourg (contract agents).

Generation 2004 participated and raised the issue of unequal career speeds for pre- and post-2004 colleagues. We underlined that instead of narrowing the gap the current policies rather benefits higher grades and further widen the divide among pre- and post-2004 colleagues.

Generation 2004 also reminded the VP of the necessity to ensure a comprehensive follow-up on the agreement between her and staff representatives, which aim at improving the precarious situation of certain groups of contract agents in Luxembourg and to make sure that all social measures contained in the agreement will be implemented as soon as possible.

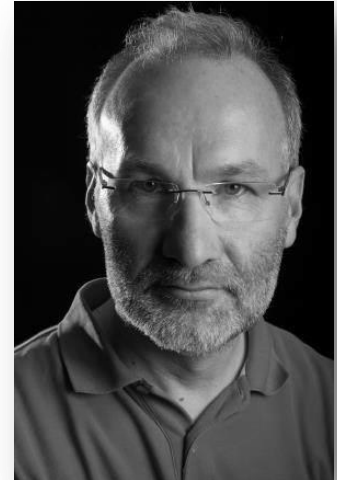


Furthermore, Generation 2004 called for an official acknowledgement of the fact that living costs in Luxembourg are higher compared to those in Brussels and for appropriate measures by the Commission. It was stressed that especially the exorbitant costs for dwellings in Luxembourg make it for colleagues recruited in low salary grades since 2004 almost impossible to make a decent living in Luxembourg. Many of the colleagues cannot afford an appropriate dwelling for themselves and their families on Luxembourgish territory and are forced to commute over long distances.

Eckehard Rosenbaum elected as the new Chair of Generation 2004

Following the resignation of Stefan Grech as board member and Chair of the organisation, the Board elected Eckehard Rosenbaum to chair the organisation until the regular election of a new board in 2016.

Born in Berlin, Eckehard grew up in the south of Germany. He studied economics at Constance University and received a PhD in economics from Cambridge University. After working for several years in the German Federal Ministry of Economics, he joined the Commission in 2007. Initially, he worked in DG ENTR as a country desk officer and since 2012 in DG JRC in Ispra, Italy.



Message from the new Chair

Dear Members of Generation 2004,

Following the resignation of Stefan Grech as Chair, the Board of Generation 2004 has elected me as the new Chair of Generation 2004. I will lead the organisation until the election of a new Board early next year. Despite the obvious difficulties of doing the job via "remote control" from Ispra, I am confident that our excellent team in the Brussels office gives me all the support that is needed.

2015 has been marked by an outstanding achievement for Generation 2004. As a result of the success in the elections for the Brussels Local Staff Committee, Generation 2004 has become the biggest staff association in terms of representativity in the European Commission. In this regard, I would like to thank Stefan Grech for his ceaseless efforts and his commitment, without which this success would not have been possible.

Over the coming months and years, we have to transform our newly won strength into tangible improvements for staff:

- *The divides created and further deepened by the 2004 and 2014 reforms need to be addressed once and for all. Thanks to the efforts of Generation 2004, the issue is no longer ignored, but viable solutions are still wanting.*
- *The appraisal and promotion system is dysfunctional and needs to be overhauled from head to toe to ensure that it is legally sound, feasible and fair.*
- *The rapidly expanding number of Contract Agents in the Commission without proper career perspectives and with substantially worse employment conditions further undermines the principle of equal pay for equal work, misuses temporary employment for permanent tasks and creates yet another divide among staff.*
- *Last but not least, our pensions are arguably less safe than many believe and we should come up with an answer to that challenge before others do it on our behalf and on their terms.*

These will not be easy tasks, but if we work as we did in the past based on hard facts, comprehensive data and sound analysis, chances are that we will succeed.

Best Regards,

Eckehard Rosenbaum

..... and finally

We sincerely extend our profound sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the French people and particularly the bereaved families for their great and irreplaceable loss from this horrific tragedy.



Got any ideas for the G2004 newsletter? [Send](#) them along (with "Newsletter" in subject), together with any letters, articles, poems and other assorted forms of expression.

If you identify with what you have read, and share our objectives, **please give us your support TANGIBLY by becoming a member.** [Click here](#)

Whilst **Generation 2004** is the home of **EVERYONE** who believes in equality, justice and solidarity, it is

✓ ***the natural home of ALL staff recruited after 01 May 2004***

and de facto,

✓ ***the natural home of ALL staff recruited from the "new" (2004+) Member States***

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