



# Generation 2004

## Newsletter no.29

June 2018

2

*DGT is facing an exceptionally high workload: gloomy perspectives for the future*

3

*Young Professionals Pilot Programme 2018 – A new idea of DG HR sold for talent management*

4

*Outcome of Ispra/Seville LSC Elections*

7

*Staff elections in Brussels in autumn 2018*

*130% increase of parental contribution for outdoor childcare!*

8

*The 6 years-rules*

*Achievements of the Local Staff Committee during the term 2015-2018*

9

*Why a job description is so important for a CA career?*

10

*Legal framework for Local Agents – finally fairly treated?*

11

*Fact Checking*

12

*Secretly Fighting Against Precariousness*

13

*Professional Mobility survey: the results are out!*

14

*Reform of the social dialogue – Will staff representation disappear from the smaller sites as tells you "the" LSC of Luxembourg?*

15

*Are you registered to vote in Belgium?*

## TOP STORY

### Promotion exercise 2018



**S**ince Monday, you can see in Sysper whether you have been proposed for promotion this year or not.

We congratulate the colleagues proposed for promotion!

The promotion meetings between the Directors General and the staff representatives took place between 14 May – 8 June. In more than 40 meetings we took care of the interests of the post-2004 staff. From our experience and feedbacks we reached **some conclusions**:



- ⇒ Most Directors General were well prepared in these meetings: it seemed that they knew their staff and they tried to make balanced and fair decisions on promotion.
- ⇒ We have seen in many cases that the very different profiles and responsibilities in AST but also in AD grades are often extremely difficult to compare. (Did you know that the Commission employs nuclear inspectors checking the safety measures in power plants all over Europe who are being paid AST's salaries?)
- ⇒ Most Directors General are very keen on taking into account merits but -equally important - also the seniority of the colleagues.
- ⇒ However, a limited number of colleagues, in particular in the AD category, have been promoted every other year, in certain cases with very poor reports, even after they have reached grades in the double digits where the average seniority is 4 or more years.
- ⇒ Once again, quota distribution proved to be flawed, no matter how often and with how many relevant arguments the Central Staff Committee and its representatives in Promotion committees have pointed at. In several cases, this made (quick) promotion more linked to demographics than to merit. As a result, several highly meriting colleagues with flawless reports could not be promoted, and will therefore have to file an appeal to see their merits recognised.
- ⇒ Once again, the way quotas were distributed among DGs allowed for promotions in less than 2 years in the grade on 1 January 2018, a practice only in force at the Commission out of all Institutions. In this case, promoted officials receive their salary increase starting with the month they reach their two years, thereby robbing the promotion of other deserving staff longer in the grade.

**Seniority versus merits** – it is in many cases a big dilemma and it is hardly possible to take in all cases an objective decision. A usual argument we have heard many times was "we have not enough quotas" to promote all colleagues who would have merited a promotion. Generation 2004 thinks that all staff having reached the average seniority in the grade of Annex IB of Staff regulations should be promoted, unless there are well-grounded reasons not to do so. All remaining promotion quotas should be awarded to really meriting staff, taking into account also other, pre-defined and equal for all criteria.

Generation 2004 thinks that all staff having reached the average seniority in the grade of Annex IB of Staff regulations should be promoted, unless there are well-grounded reasons not to do so. All remaining promotion quotas should be awarded to really meriting staff, taking into account also other, pre-defined and equal for all criteria. That is what our representatives in the Promotion Committees have been fighting for.

Nevertheless, **if you feel treated unjustly** because you worked hard in the past years but you have not been proposed for promotion, **think about filing an appeal.**

➔ **After 18 June, you have 5 working days to lodge an appeal.** All appeals will be thoroughly examined by the Joint Promotion Committee in September/October.

**Generation 2004 offers personal advice to our members.** Our template is available [here!](#) Feel free to [contact us](#).

**DGT is facing an exceptionally high workload: gloomy perspectives for the future**

DGT is at the moment in an unprecedented situation. During the past couple of months colleagues worked countless evening and weekend hours. Many staff members have significantly exceeded the 20-hour flexitime limit that gets transferred to the next month. This goes on top of other recurrent 'urgencies' now becoming more and more a routine. Management does not sign summer holidays, thus obliging staff, especially those with children, to higher expenses for last minute bookings. Similarly recuperations are made difficult or impossible by certain line managers. Even with the extra hours, DGT colleagues report that they are not able to do a decent professional job anymore since they don't have time to do proper quality controls. They cannot revise internal translations anymore nor most external translations. Besides a strong demotivating effect (no one likes being forced to do work of sub-standard quality), this is a legal time-bomb.

Freelancers are refusing DGT's requests – even under the "free tender" procedure because of the high time pressure. A higher proportion of accepted freelance translations seem to be of sub-standard quality.

Plans for the new JMO2 in Luxembourg let fear that translators will not only have to work in an open space – notoriously inadequate for professions needing high concentration level – but will be subject to hot-desking.

On top of that, DGT senior management has just published a new "DGT language learning strategy". In effect, DGT staff members are no longer allowed to study any other language than English during the working time. Not even French or German, the other two procedural languages and official languages of their host countries. What a way to motivate linguists...

Senior management announced that the perspectives at DGT are rather gloomy with the Brexit and the expected budget cuts. Apparently, DGT is a main target and the Commission is considering [converting it in an external service or Agency](#) to drastically decrease the number of officials, who cost too much compared to contractual agents. This are rather scary perspectives for DGT staff members who are wondering if they will have long term perspectives or are they meant to disappear in the next 10 years. At the same time, DGT translators are subject to one management layer more than any other DG (Head of Unit, Head of Department, Director, Director-General and nobody is challenging this certainly particularly efficient and indispensable management structure, particularly concerned for the well-being of its staff.

At a recent meeting with the Central Staff Committee, DGT Director-General Mr Martikonis seemed convinced that since staff in other DGs also need to work extra, night, week-end hours, it is perfectly legitimate to ask translators endless availability together with a steady 'productivity' increase, as if personal resources were infinite. In doing this, does not seem to be on the same line of other Directors-General, who are very well aware of where the limits are.

**DGT staff has already expressed its concern with a [note](#) to management published to all staff as well. In this particularly difficult and worrying situation, Generation 2004 will support the right to strike for DGT staff, if management continued with its uncompromising attitude.**

## Young Professionals Pilot Programme 2018 – A new idea of DG HR sold for talent management



**A** few days ago, DG HR announced on IntraComm the launch of the Young Professional Programme (link [here](#)) in spite of a mixed opinion expressed by the Commission Paritaire Interne de la Commission Européenne (COPAR). DG HR has been discussing the programme – planned to start already March 2017(!) – with resource directors and staff representatives since the beginning of 2017. Generation 2004 has been rejecting the proposal as it is *discriminatory* and *not transparent*.

### What is it about?

Let's start with taking a critical look at the proposal. The context in which it has been put is that the Commission would like to respond to future challenges, both in terms of resources and people. So the Commission aims to make careers in the Commission more competitive against the national and international job markets in order to attract and retain the best people from across the EU.

Sounds very good, but what measures are proposed? Firstly, as going through an open EPSO competition appears to be a long and cumbersome procedure with little chance of success, it is concluded that diversified recruitment channels and improved selection procedures are necessary. Secondly - and most interestingly – DG HR intends to preserve and further improve the employment package, including pecuniary as well as non-pecuniary rights and career development. Thirdly, some measures are presented to make communication more effective, although the connection to the pilot programme may not be obvious.

So what is the solution to all this? Well, if you had expected after reading the above that the Commission was going to propose something that would improve your own career prospects or working situation, then most probably you

will be disappointed. While the Commission more or less admits that the current recruitment procedure is not efficient, and the current (post-2004) employment package is barely competitive vis-à-vis international and many national job markets, the Commission proposes nothing to reform EPSO and to revamp your career for instance via the valorisation of the experience and knowledge you have brought into the institution or the actual job you are doing. Also if you are a contract or temporary agent coming close to the end of your employment possibilities, having proven capacities to work for the Commission and hoping to become an established official, we have to disappoint you. This programme is not for you!

### What is proposed then?

A perspective of becoming an AD official is proposed for in total 40 blue book trainees, contract agents FG IV, AD temporary agents and AD officials with not more than 3 years professional experience and being employed at the time of the call. No blue book trainees who have completed their internship, no contract agents in lower function groups and no AST officials will be eligible. A lengthy procedure over 2 years including a lot of training and involving high costs is proposed to allow DGs to recruit those closest to their hearts. While the candidates will have to undergo an interview with a selection panel, the first selection is made by the DGs and the final selection will largely be based on the evaluation by the DG. At the end of the project, the participants will get the possibility to participate in an internal competition and become an official. And once arrived there they will fulfil an important mission! According to DG HR they will break the silos that have been built up during long decades of rigid hierarchical structures and bad human resources management.

Will this programme offer anything interesting for established officials? The training to be offered to the participants would by all means be interesting to all since we could get the chance to develop skills and knowledge needed by the organisation, which according to DG HR we do not possess! Also those having faced difficulties in changing job could benefit from an experience in a different part of the organisation. But is it worth to anybody having made his/her way through an open competition and having been recruited from a reserve list to go again through another selection procedure for no real benefit for his/her career progress?

Interestingly, the programme was planned to start in March 2017; at the end, the participants would have had the possibility to participate in an internal competition. In other words: during 2 years the participants would have been trained and prepared by the Commission for the internal competition planned at the end of the term of the College. This means 40 well-prepared competitors in grades AD5 or equivalent to contend with for those of us who entered the Commission via the normal recruitment procedure in the recent past. Hopefully, this unfair competition will not happen since the whole process has been delayed by a whole year.

What is even worse in the whole process is that the Commission pretends that the programme is a "*new approach for the Commission in the retention and development of talent among the internal pool of junior professionals*". What about e.g. the thousands of contract agents who have been employed in the Commission under a CA3b contract with a 6-year limit in lower function groups or for more than 3 years? Does their talent not need to be retained and developed? How come DG HR is able to bend the rules to recruit people via the ad-hoc Young Professional Programme and not able to do anything to propose a better situation to the many contract agents who have been demonstrating their skills in the Commission for several years?

**Join us for our lunch event on 27<sup>th</sup> June at 12:30 in room CCAB-4D at Rue Froissart 36! We will discuss the Young Professional Programme and propose actions against this HR imposed initiative!**

## Generation 2004 doubles number of seats in Ispra/Seville LSC Elections

In the recent elections, Generation 2004 won four seats (out of 21) on the Ispra/Seville Local Staff Committee (LSC), which means a doubling of the number of seats, compared to the last elections. The list votes cast for Generation 2004 increased from 8.5 % to 12.3 % and the preferential votes from 9.2 % to 22.5 %. This is, overall, an excellent result considering that we faced a number of obstacles during the electoral process, including a sudden re-interpretation of the rules on supplementary candidate nominations, leading to the rejection of seven Generation 2004 candidates by the Electoral Bureau (EB), even though those candidates were nominated following the EB's initial instructions. A particular difficulty of these elections was the timing.

Just because DG HR demanded to have the LSC elections still in May, bluntly neglecting the well-reasoned decisions of the General Assembly of Ispra/Seville staff to have it at a later time, the polling period fell in the Easter holiday season. This led to the electoral campaign being rather short and the quorum (two thirds of staff) being met only on the very last day of the extended (!) electoral period.





In addition, two main issues made the Ispra/Seville LSC elections specific: Firstly, the (entirely reasonable) wish of the Seville staff to get their own LSC, which triggered the absorption of a substantial part of the votes by one list (Sevilla Voice) that lobbied specifically for a separate Seville LSC, even though this request was fully supported by Generation 2004 and other unions. Notably, Generation 2004 is now the only list with elected LSC members from both sites, Ispra and Seville. Secondly, it needs to be kept in mind that the Ispra and Seville sites are almost exclusively staffed by DG JRC, which employs a very high number (about 45 %) of contract agents (CA) overall, and with CAs comprising over 65% of staff in Seville. This situation may explain the substantial number of votes cast (15.5 % list votes and 16.0 % preferential votes) for the joint list of Save Europe and ISCA (Ispra Seville Contract Agents) which had an exclusive focus on CA-specific topics. As a result, in total, seven seats of the Ispra/Seville LSC were won by lists focusing fully or partially on very specific topics.

The distribution of seats can be seen in the chart and election results in more detail can be seen [here](#).<sup>1</sup>

**Many thanks to all candidates for their contributions to the electoral campaign!**

**Congratulations to the elected colleagues!**

### Outcome of Ispra/Seville LSC Elections

#### List votes 2018

List	No. of votes	Percentage	Seats
<b>1 Generation 2004</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12,30%</b>	<b>2</b>
2 Save Europe & ISCA	126	15,50%	2
3 USI & FFPE/U4U	81	9,96%	1
4 R&D	204	25,09%	3
5 CISL-FIR	79	9,72%	1
6 Sevilla Voice	192	23,62%	3
7 Tao-AFI & Independent	31	3,81%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13</b>

#### 2015

No. of votes	Percentage	Seats
60	8,47%	1
124 <sup>#</sup>	17,52%	2
130 <sup>#</sup>	18,36%	2
171	24,15%	3
33	4,66%	1
150	21,19%	3
40	5,65%	1
<b>708</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13</b>

#### Preferential votes

List	No. of votes	Percentage	Seats
<b>1 Generation 2004</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>22,47%</b>	<b>2</b>
2 Save Europe & ISCA	609	16,03%	1
3 USI & FFPE/U4U	492	12,95%	1
4 R&D	892	23,47%	2
5 CISL-FIR	368	9,68%	1
6 Sevilla Voice	319	8,39%	1

#### 2015

No. of votes	Percentage	Seats
321	9,16%	1
674 <sup>#</sup>	19,24%	1
928 <sup>#</sup>	26,49%	2
799	22,81%	2
375	10,71%	1
199	5,68%	0

<sup>1</sup> <https://connected.cnect.cec.eu.int/docs/DOC-163708>

Tao-AFI & 7 Independent	266	7,00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3800</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8</b>

207	5,91%	1
<b>3503</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8</b>

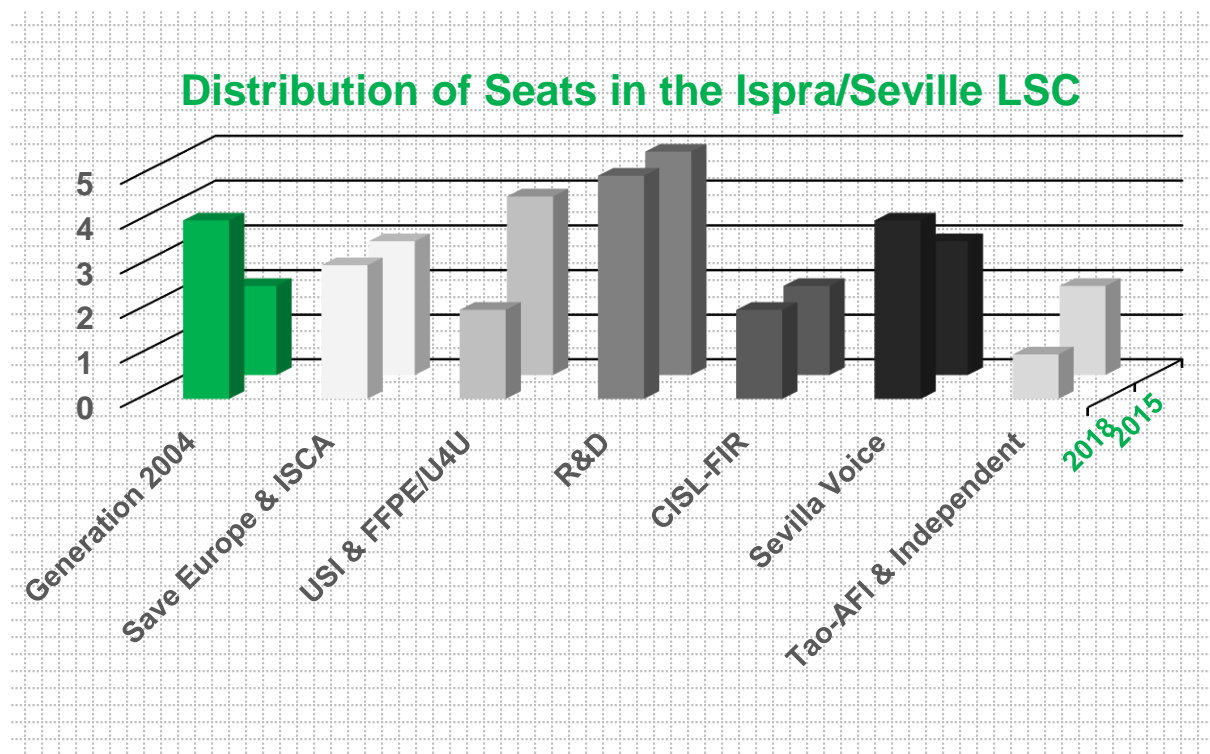
## Total seats 2018

List	Total seats
1 <b>Generation 2004</b>	<b>4</b>
2 Save Europe & ISCA	3
3 USI & FFPE/U4U	2
4 R&D	5
5 CISL-FIR	2
6 Sevilla Voice	4
Tao-AFI & 7 Independent	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21</b>

## 2015

Total seats
2
3 <sup>#</sup>
4 <sup>#</sup>
5
2
3
2
<b>21</b>

# Sum of votes for two lists that participated separately in 2015 but presented a joint list now.



## Staff elections in Brussels in autumn 2018



Several major staff elections have been scheduled for 2018: in Ispra/Seville, Brussels and in the EU Delegations (outside the EU).

Generation 2004 actively tried to hold these elections together with the Brussels elections and also to give some time to DG HR to modify the rules governing the staff representation so that the elections take place at the same time under the same rules and that Seville would have its own local staff committee. By the way, we are also the only organisation which came up with a comprehensive staff representation reform.

Unfortunately DG HR unilaterally, and against the decision of the General Assembly, decided to hold the Ispra/Seville elections at the beginning of May, during a period of school holidays. Despite that, with your support Generation 2004 succeeded to double its representatively.

It now looks likely that in Brussels and in the EU Delegations elections will take place under the current rules, i.e. with rules that differ according to the geographical location of the staff. The current rules lead to duplication of electoral campaigns that distract the staff representation from more important issues such as **the impact of the future Multiannual Financial Framework on administrative expenditure in the coming years.**

**The next Brussels staff elections are most likely to take place in October or early November 2018 as decided by the General Assembly that was organised on 14 May 2018.**

Since the 2015 Brussels elections, as its winner, Generation 2004 has been able to fight for the interests of the post-2004 staff and the increasing number of contract agents using the existing statutory bodies.

### 130% increase of parental contribution for outdoor childcare!

#### Your voice counts – share your opinion with us

Would you be concerned if the inflation rate in the EU would be again 130%? Generation 2004 is, as it seems that within the COM we are in a hyperinflation mode. And who do you think should be hit again? Those who have already suffered the most - the post 2004 and 2014 reform fellows and especially our contract staff colleagues with children!

During the 13 June 2018 Joint Management Committee of the Childhood Centre (COCEPE) meeting OIB proposed to increase the amount you would have to pay from 228.4 EUR to 500 EUR per month for each child during summer holiday and Easter holiday. Apparently 1 day of service costs 86,38 EUR (1727.6 EUR per month) and the parents' contribution covered only 13% of it. Therefore, OIB wants would like to encourage you to use the services offered on the Belgium market and thus limit the 20% absenteeism rate and.

OIB has forgotten that we do not have alternative solution, as sometimes vacation period in European schools does not coincide with Belgian schools.

One could perhaps agree that with demand for the service has been evolving since 2016 and the parental contribution indeed ought to be revised. However, asking a family of 3 children to contribute 1500 EUR per month is not acceptable when looking at the salaries of the post 2004 colleagues' staff. By the way did you know that we have CA FGII colleagues who earn as little as 1300 EUR per month?

All staff representatives in the COCEPE and Parents' Association, who prepared a well debated position papers ([doc1](#) & [doc 2](#)), were against the proposal and put for discussion several proposals:

- adjustment of the contribution to the monthly revenue (this solution has been successfully [introduced for our COM colleagues in Luxembourg](#));
- reduction of a certain percentage of required contribution for the second (and the following) children;
- reduction schemes depending on duration of enrolment;
- day per day inscription.

Participate in a short survey [here](#) and give us your valuable feedback. Ideas on how we can achieve a comprehensive solution mutually acceptable are particularly welcome. It will allow us to come back better equipped for the decisive COCEPE meeting planned for 26 September 2018.

## The 6 years-rules

There are two 6-year rules in the Commission:

⇒ The 6-year rule for **Contract Agents** which makes it impossible for CA3b's to work for more than 6 years in the Commission. This rule is enforced very strictly, no matter how hard you work(ed), you are fired after 6 years if you are a CA 3b.

⇒ **The 6-year rule for the Staff Representation** which imposes that staff representatives **cannot be seconded to the staff representation for more than 6 years over a rolling period of 10 years**.

The purpose of this healthy rule is to ensure that staff representatives stay in touch with the services of the Commission. Indeed, the staff representation benefits from 41 full time secondments which allow them to sit the joint committees where staff issues are discussed with DG HR but also to represent the voice of the staff. When a staff member gets a secondment, they leave their service for a period of time during which they work for the staff representation, just like when someone is seconded to another organisation in the interest of the service. The danger of course is that he or she may lose touch with reality, which highlights the need and importance of the 6-year rule. Generation 2004 has always been wary about these secondments, we know too well that the staff representatives of 2004 did nothing to defend us back then and instead traded our rights against access for them to grades that they would not have been able to reach beforehand. In the end, we have, however, taken the secondments because if you are not present in the relevant meetings, things proceed without you.



**Things are now reaching new heights.** Commissioner Oettinger announced about a year ago that he wanted to reform the staff representation. In order to convince the unions to embark in this reform, he offered to postpone the application of the 6-year rule for staff representatives. We cannot help but note the contrast between the 6-year rule for CA3bs where no flexibility is allowed and the **6-year rule for staff representatives where all sorts of exceptions are allowed!** More importantly, the 6-year rule for the staff representation is a good one. It seems to us that most of the current staff representatives (from other unions) have been seconded for ever. As far as we can tell, many of them were actually already seconded to the staff representation in 2004. **This is not healthy.** For that reason, we drafted a note to the Commissioner to try to convince him to stop playing these kinds of games. Rules are rules and they should not be bended to justify a reform of the staff representation which is long overdue. **Let us hope that the Commission will finally implement the 6-year rule and bring some fresh air in the staff representation!**

## Achievements of the Local Staff Committee during the term 2015-2018

**T**he 2015 Brussels Local Staff Committee (LSC) elections marked a historical change in the staff representation. Generation 2004 as its winner, albeit obtaining 7 out of 27 seats, took its responsibility for the 2015-2018 mandate. Today with proudness we can claim that we achieved a lot and obtained several positive results.

From the start the Local Staff Committee was on G2004's priority list. That is the reason why most of its resources, 4 out of 4,5 secondments, were assured by Generation 2004. Before the 2015-2018 term there were 13,75 seconded colleagues from different trade unions and who decided to abandon the ship after G2004 took the steering wheel.

Both Łukasz Wardyn, the LSC President and Paola Pagliarulo, the LSC Secretary-General (both members of Generation 2004)



organised over 40 plenary sessions and 44 meetings of the Bureau of the Local Staff Committee.

## Just to name a few success stories

- a) new communication strategy (new LSC logo, leaflet, monthly LSC Newsletter and a new website);
- b) a comprehensive guide for newcomers;
- c) providing legal support to over 200 cases;
- d) stopped open space transition in DG NEAR;
- e) improvement of working condition of the DG EMPL and SCIC staff in open space;
- f) 26 new afterschool classes - 400 additional places in the European Schools;
- g) cross-transfers scheme for European Schools;
- h) improved measures in COM children facilities;
- i) cancelled decision on foldable bikes;
- j) new tables in PLB3 for language classes;
- k) language training deadline was prolonged;
- l) phasing out and resignation from plastic cups;
- m) approval of the LSC position on mobility plan;
- n) cooperation with sport and leisure clubs;

The main challenge was to reform the 26 years internal rules of procedure of the LSC as well as the reform of the Delegations of the LSC (Drivers, Interpreters and Nurseries and Childcare facilities).

Additional internal reforms were implemented in order to lay foundation for an efficient and effective well-functioning of the LSC aiming at giving the staff committee back to staff.

The LSC was dealing with throughout the term with: European Schools, Nurseries and after-school facilities, security issues, open space, mobility plan, air quality/noise pollution and GSM antennas. Many of these collective issues were brought to the attention to OIB, PMO and HR with over 200 ARES notes.

The LSC organized a number of events, such as conferences (on mobility), trainings (on negotiations), roundtable meetings and volunteering day which were a very big success.

## The Figures of the Month

Did you know that since 2014 over 795 Senior Expert (in 2016 - 609) and 425 Senior Assistant posts (in 2016 - 212) have been created? However since 2005 only 740 qualified AST officials were appointed to AD jobs. What do you think about such human resource management by our DG HR?

*... My Head of Unit always told me that my job description is not very important for my CA's career, because it should only form the basis of my job specification. As a result, my job description presents a broad, general, and written statement of a specific job, based on the findings of a job analysis. It only includes generic duties, purpose, responsibilities, scope, and general working conditions of a job along with the job's title, but never my effective, often additional, performed tasks. ...*

Generation 2004 presents to contract agents at least two arguments highlighting the importance of job descriptions.

### 1. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND RECLASSIFICATION

Standard performance measures to evaluate a CA's job performance objectively can cut down on the amount of time and stress. A current job description for each position, which is essential to specify quantity and quality goals, can serve as a measurement tool during an evaluation. An effective job description not only provides professional expectations for the position, determines the CA's role and a functional group and forms a legally binding contract of employment, but also helps to set goals and target for the CA, aids in the evaluation of the agent's job performance and helps formulating training and development plans.

From the organisations perspective, the job description is vital in ensuring that the applications received for the position closely match the needs of the service (performed tasks) with the CA's functional group.

## Why a job description is so important for a CA career?

## 2. CHANGING FUNCTIONAL GROUP

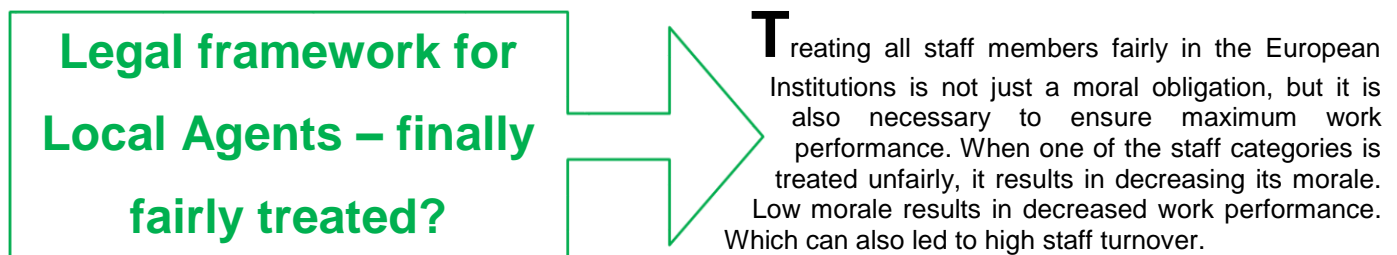
According to *Article 13 – Changing function group* of the new GIPs (2017) the changing of functional group is possible (of course by way of exception) for the contractual staff.

Nowadays, only one exercise in Luxembourg enabling the CA 3a to advance to the next function group by taking part in a specific procedure is organised by the AECE. This recent experience shows that HR's analyses are entirely based on the job description of selected CAs (applicant). Based on this detailed analysis the AECE may grant a further procedure of changing group or not!

What is typically included in a job description?

A well-rounded job description should clearly identify the purpose of the role as well as the key tasks to be performed and the main accountabilities of the position. The document will also include practical information, such as where the job is based, whether it is full or part-time, as well as the name or position of the CA. In addition, you can also expect to find professional experience and achievements, skill set, educational background and qualifications, as well as any desired personality traits of CAs.

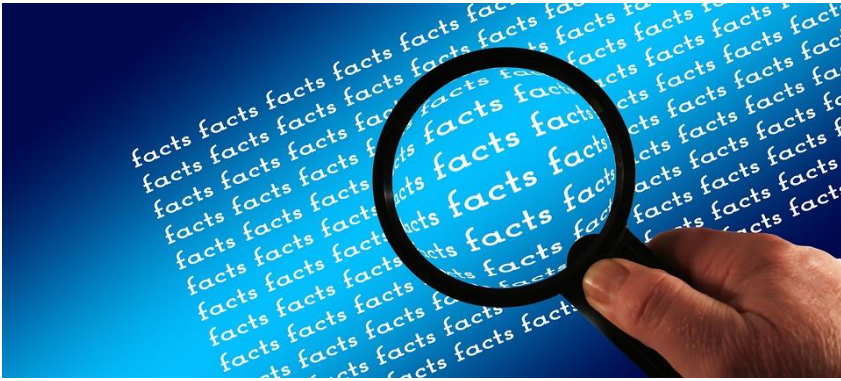
It can be very difficult to capture what a job will really entail within a few short paragraphs. Furthermore, some positions within an organisation may be newly created roles and, when creating the job description, it may not always be possible to fully foresee the role will develop and be adapted over time.



In this scope, **Generation 2004** takes part in the comprehensive social dialogue to upgrade the legal framework for Local Agents in EU Delegations. The expected result of the comprehensive social dialogue has provided significant inputs for reflections on the part of all social partners and has contributed to achieve a mutual understanding. This should result in better work performance and working relationships in EU Delegations.

Requested points for correcting work conditions of local agents in the EU Delegations:

1. Protection against medical incapacity – we propose to add benefits for LAs to the legal framework in case of invalidity.
2. Changing of functional group and reclassification – we request a clear action plan with a timeline and modalities for the implementation of the necessary corrections to these LAs posts, which should be corrected (by moving to a higher function group).
3. Differential benefits under the new LA-Medical Scheme – we request a medical coverage for the entire retirement period with the same contribution rate as while in service (1/3 LA & 2/3 EU) on the notion of solidarity and equal contributions from all. It is unfair and unethical to limit the medical coverage based on whether a Local Agent agrees to opt for the new package of decisions or not. Furthermore, the interinstitutional Joint Management Committee of the LA-Medical will monitor the proper functioning of the scheme and will have the mandate to come forward with proposals to improve its functioning.
4. Legal basis against harassment – we propose an unlimited access to all procedures and tools provided by the Institution for this purpose.
5. Post-retirement medical coverage with the same contribution rate (1/3 LA & 2/3 EU) – we propose an extension of the medical coverage to the entire retirement period with the same contribution rate.
6. Out-of-country medical treatment – we request a possibility to arrange the medical treatment outside the country of employment equally than in the country of employment.



As most of you probably also are, Generation 2004 is fed up of reading staff representation tracts that are at least misleading and sometimes blatantly false. For this reason we have decided to create this column. Its name, Fact Checking, will be a place where we will try to regularly debunk these claims.

You may also participate and help us. How? Well, it's simple, if you see any

message or statement from any union or staff association – Generation 2004 included – and that you find falls short in the realm of truthfulness, then just point it out to us and we will analyse it, get the straight dope on it and report back to all. Finally and obviously, unless otherwise explicitly requested we will keep our source anonymous.

While reporting back we not just expose the false claims but we will also explain what is Generation 2004's position on the matter and show what could be done about it.

And to open the hostilities here goes our first Fact Checking article. We hope you enjoy the reading and find it useful.

### **On the feasibility of converting all Contract Agents into Officials**

Recently an European Commission staff union said, in a rather well written and very articulate email tract that: *"the integration of this same (Contract Agents – Ed.) population into the establishment plan could be carried out in a perfectly harmonious way"*. If on one side Generation 2004 supports any measures to reduce precarious employment in the European civil service – and we know what we are talking about because we are probably the staff organisation with the strongest record on these matters; it is after all the major reason for our existence – on the other hand we keep our feet on the ground when we assess and communicate on what is or not possible to do. The fact is, under the current staff regulations, converting all the Contract Agents into permanent positions would be neither easy nor "harmonious", and this is so for the fact that there is a rather low hard limit of 5% of annual hires that can be hired through internal competitions. This limitation, which emanated from a political decision, is set by the staff regulations under paragraph 7 of article 82 of the Condition of employment of other servants of the European Union – see page 212 and could only change if the staff regulations are again open for discussion.

On the same message, the same union went on to claim that such "integration" of Contract Agents staff could "even lead to real structural savings in the medium and long term". They do so without substantiating their claim in any way shape or form. We therefore call on them to further clarify their statement and provide irrefutable reasoning and calculations to support it.

### **On the possible status of local staff committees following the upcoming staff representation reform**

A wave of blatantly false information regarding the extinction of local staff committees following the staff representation reform right now under discussion seems to apparently be developing at some sites outside of Brussels. You may have recently got some emails from organisations claiming that the new possible agreement on the reform of social dialog will bring no good to staff outside Brussels. Such messages, claiming that in the future local staff committees will be dismantled and no longer exist, are just false attempts to spread FUD: Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt. You can call it FAKE NEWS if you like.

At Generation 2004, we know the goal of these messages is to lobby for the status quo with its distorted version of democracy, which always results in weak staff committees run by a minority of people who got very little representativity when compared to the total number of expressed voices at elections.

During the discussions for the new staff representation agreement, Generation 2004 has proposed and has been fighting for a democratic, proportional and transparent system, with simultaneous election for all sites, with the same rules and **with local representation of staff at all sites weather central or remote**.

With this proposal, we would give staff more power for crucial social dialogs that are soon going to be on the table.

Spreading false information is absolutely against our principles and what the majority of colleagues wants and we ask ourselves if those who are spreading such news are really prepared to work for the staff or are only concerned about theirs longstanding positions and personal interests.

### **On the upward revision of the remuneration limit for external activities**

Recently a trade union of the European Union claimed that after an initial social dialogue discussion where an upward revision of the remuneration ceiling for external activities of members of staff was achieved, they kept fighting alone and still managed to further push up the ceiling.

The fact is they would have never been able to do it on their own because, as per [Article 18 of the Agreement on relations between the EC and the trade unions and the staff associations](#) (page 7) for a political concertation to be approved a minimum of 20% representativity is needed and that trade union has level of representation well below that threshold. In short, they may have some merit in keeping the flame alive on the matter but without the support of others they wouldn't have achieved anything.

Now, to thank you for reading this far we would like to ask you a bonus quiz question: who do you think supported that trade union and made sure the political concertation on this matter was possible? Wait, wait, don't answer yet; let's all answer at the same time: **Generation 2004** of course!!! You are a great audience, and now we rest our case! :-)

## Secretly Fighting Against Precariousness

**T**he **R&D** section at the EP has publicized its strong agreement with anti-precariousness positions taken up by Parliamentarians in a [resolution](#). Parts of the R&D text are somewhat fuzzy due to being translated too literally from French into Franglais, so some readers may get the impression that R&D has played a major part in persuading the EP. If that is so, they have been very secretive until now.

[NPS](#) and [SID](#) jointly developed [Petition 0178/2017 against Automatically Firing Contract Agents](#) and with much appreciated support from [G2004](#) got the endorsement of the EP's [Petitions Committee](#) which passed the petition on to [Legal Affairs Committee](#). In all that time, we never heard even a whisper from the R&D, so discrete that we did not know they were there. Maybe you, dear reader can help us out. Here is a video clip of the key [meeting](#).

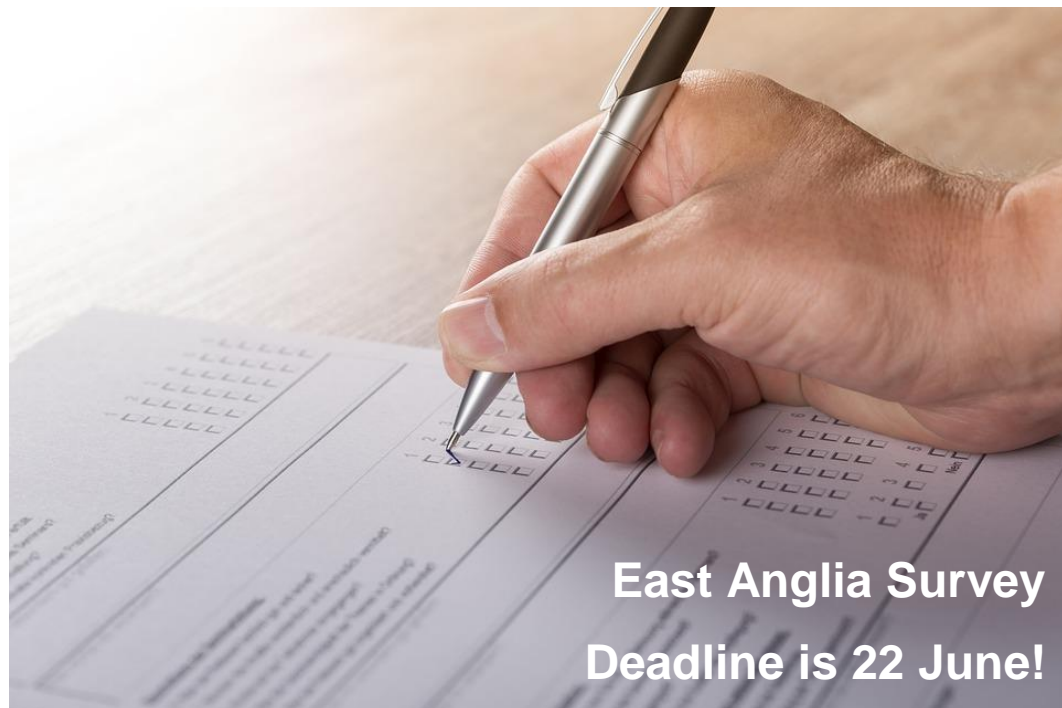
Send us an [email](#) if you can identify R&D members in the room.

**Y**ou have probably seen several invitations to fill in a survey organised by the University of East Anglia on the EU institutions and its staff. The survey is about our organisation and about our working methods. It is part of an important study that provides an insight into how our organisation functions and is managed today.

Your contribution by filling in the survey would be important in order to give rich and diverse information to the researchers from all corners of the Commission.

Generation 2004 is thus tempted to encourage you to fill in the survey and to promote it among your colleagues, with 2 caveats though:

1. The survey is rather time consuming. The invitation indicates 30 minutes, if you are not familiar with the questions expect rather 60 minutes.
2. The intention of the survey is good, what HR will do with it might not be so good. Just looking at the results of the previous University of East Anglia survey ([link](#)) it looks like their recommendations have been put in the dust bin by DG HR. See for instance page 24 which stated that (in 2014):





- ⇒ A large segment of staff are dissatisfied with the current appraisal system. Although the system has been reformed several times over the past decade, a further change may be necessary if staff are to feel confident that appraisal provides a genuine assessment of their achievements and performance. In devising a more satisfactory scheme, the Commission may be able to learn from systems used in other international organizations and public administrations.
- ⇒ The Commission may wish to re-examine the opportunities for staff employed on fixed-term contracts as temporary agents or contract staff to become permanent officials. Where such employees have demonstrated their abilities, investment in their recruitment and training will have been wasted if the possibility of continuing to work in the organization remains a remote possibility.
- ⇒ given the high percentage of assistants who are recruited with qualifications that are higher than the threshold educational requirement, the Commission should consider whether the expectations of staff in this group need to be better managed and should review pathways into other roles.

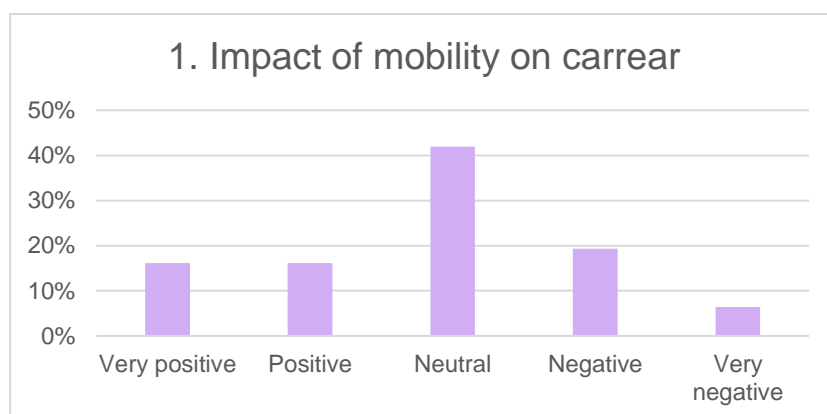
Ms Souka and the senior management of DG HR could not care less about the recommendations above, so the idea that the East Anglia study will “inform reflections on the Commission's development during this mandate and beyond” as announced in the invitation sounds like wishful thinking.

So our take on the East Anglia Survey: fill it in if you have an hour to spare but do not work overtime for something that will most probably have a very limited impact.

## Professional Mobility survey: the results are out!

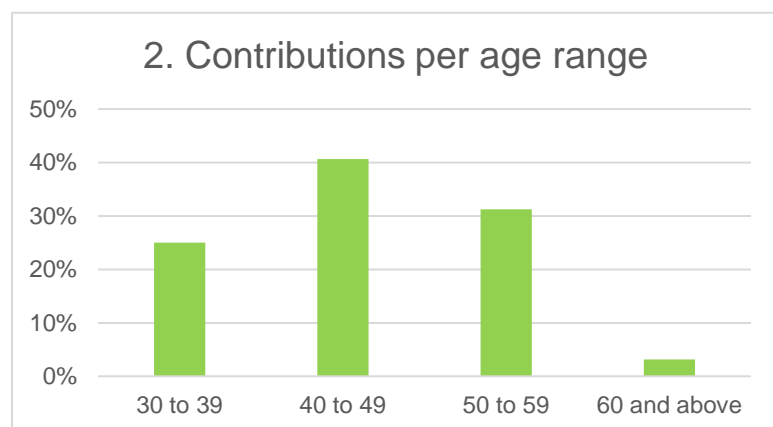
In our previous Newsletter, we asked you to participate in a survey on professional mobility. Here is our analysis of the contributions we have received.

Let us start with the gist of it. In general, job mobility seems to be a positive thing (**chart 1**) while at the same time it seems to be difficult to achieve (**chart 5**): around 3 quarters think that the impact of a move is neutral to very positive while the same share of respondents find it neutral to very difficult to move.



With this in mind, Generation 2004 would like to call on the Commission's Human Resources services to launch an official and thorough survey on the subject of job mobility. The goal of this exercise would be to better understand why something viewed as positive and so obviously important for anyone's career path is considered as difficult to achieve, and, as appropriate, take corrective action on its job mobility policy.

The contributions per DG, age range (**chart 2**) and location were not very insightful. They gave an even distribution across the ranges, locations and DGs, showing that these are not major factors influencing mobility. An exception

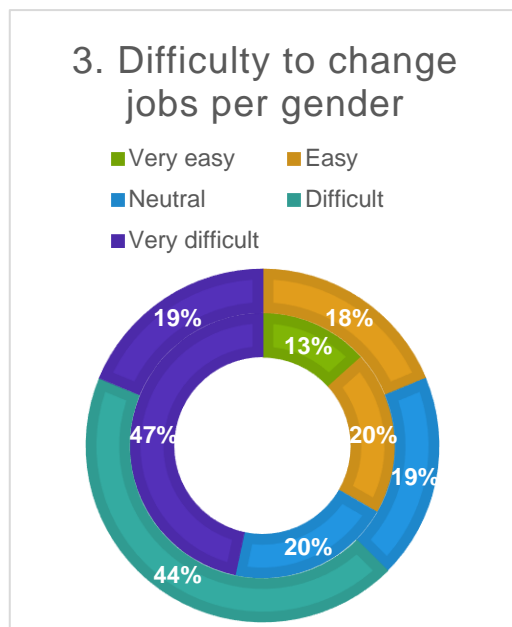
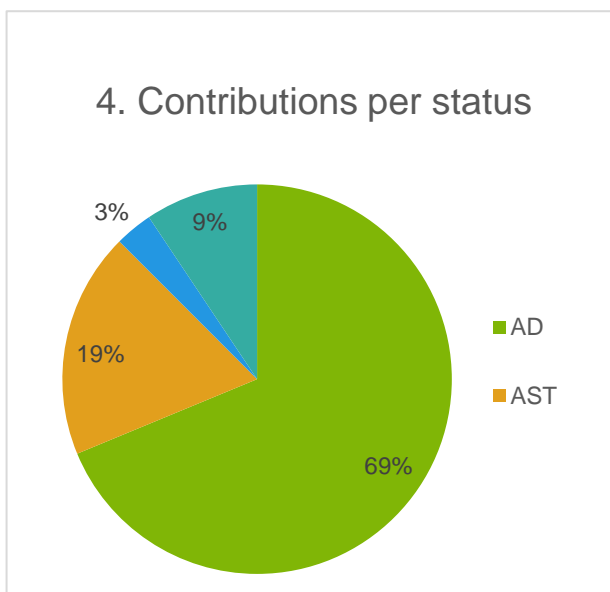


arises in the oldest age segment (more than 60 years old) where mobility seems to be very low. Colleagues also seem to find it more difficult to move when they grow older. Contributions per gender tells more or less the same story, but with a twist. Men represented the largest segment with 50% of participants, followed very closely by women at 47%, which in principle is a good thing as it shows that both men and women are equally engaged in job mobility, nevertheless one shouldn't forget the Commission employs more women; therefore, in being nominally even this result does show some imbalance. The missing 3% went to colleagues who reported as belonging to other gender.



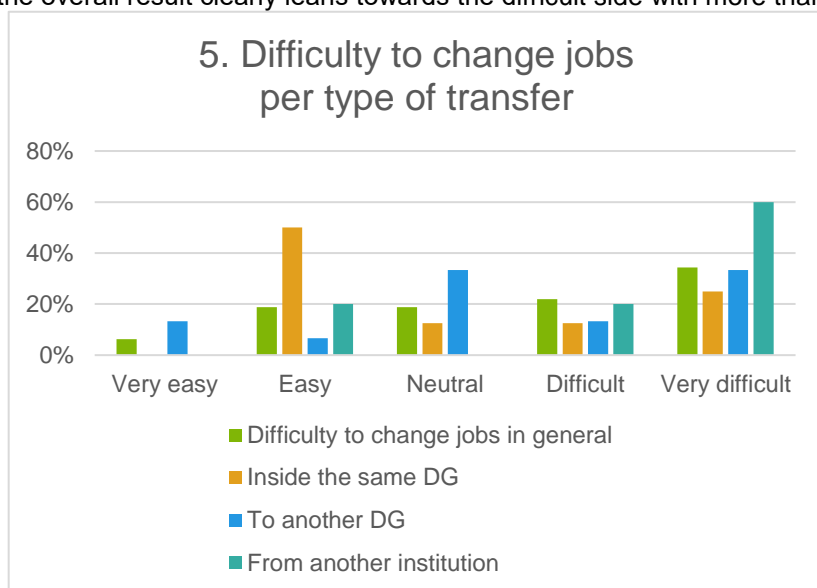
Female respondents faced less difficulties than male respondents to change jobs, with well over 50% of male colleagues saying it was difficult or very difficult to do so (**chart 3**).

When we look at the contributions per status (**chart 4**) we find that almost two thirds of participants were ADs. This suggests that AD colleagues tend to move much more than any other category of staff. We also found that the relation between AST staff (ASTs + AST-SCs) vs. AD staff is 25% to 75%. However, DG HR official numbers show that the staff distribution between ASTs vs. ADs is around 40% to 60%, which fuels our findings that AD staff does tend to move considerably more than the other categories. Maybe the compulsory mobility imposed on some AD colleagues plays a role in this matter. It also appears to be easier to move for AD colleagues, while it seems almost impossible for CAs. This does not surprise us much given the rather poor conditions of the General Implementing Provisions (GIPs), which does not foster for professional mobility among this group of staff.



In general, colleagues that want to change jobs find it to be difficult (**chart 5** blue columns). This chart shows an even distribution in the middle of the scale. However, since the "Very difficult" option was clearly the most selected and the "Very easy" option the least selected, the overall result clearly leans towards the difficult side with more than 50% of colleagues finding it difficult or very difficult to change jobs.

Finally we find, or rather confirm what we already suspected: respondents find it is easier to change inside the same DG (red) than across DGs (green) or through transfer from another institution, which respondents seem to find to be the most difficult modality.



## Reform of the social dialogue – Will staff representation disappear from the smaller sites as tells you "the" Local Staff Committee of Luxembourg?

### Declaration of "the" Local Staff Committee of Luxembourg

"The" Local Staff Committee of Luxembourg, in its communication of 22 May 2018 "Declaration on the importance of local representation of the Staff Committee in Luxembourg" explains that the interests of the Luxembourg staff are at risk, because of a reform of the staff representation. This is at least very strongly exaggerated!

### What is really going on?

The reform aims to modernise the Staff Committee (its organisation, composition, powers and functioning) in order to improve the effectiveness of staff representation for all staff at all places of work.

The reform is being discussed since November 2017: different options are on the table, and several OSPs are participating in the process, in order to improve the quality and the efficiency of staff representation. No OSP has yet proposed that local staff representatives disappear!

Still, one OSP coalition is trying to block this reform, blindly defending the status quo. This same OSP coalition, which with 43 % (26%+17%) of the votes controls 75% (14+1 members) of the Local Staff Committee in Luxembourg, approved the above declaration, was neither listening to nor trying to conduct an honest discussion with the other 5 members of the LSC, who are members of the 3 OSPs that together represent the other 57% of the personnel. Among those who refused to sign the declaration are the four G2004 representatives, who have been trying to improve the quality of staff representation in Luxembourg. They have signed a joint communication with other OSPs (USF-L, FFPE) - sent on 12 June 2018 - in which they called upon the Local Staff Committee of Luxembourg to inform staff in a neutral and factual manner.

### **So let's be clear:**

The alarm bell ringed by (part of) the LSC Luxembourg is exaggerated and imprecise. Spreading these rumors only aims to manipulate the debate without proactively participating to it.

G2004 will keep trying to improve the quality of the staff representation IN ALL SITES. We also believe that every site deserves its own voice and that changes can and must be made to the status quo to improve the quality and the effectiveness of the representation.

## **Are you registered to vote in Belgium?**

## **Don't miss the deadline - your voice counts!**

**Until 31 July**, non-Belgians can sign up to vote in the local municipal elections which will take place in October. All EU citizens have the right to vote, while non-EU citizens can vote after living 5 years in Belgium.

Non-Belgians represent one third of the electorate (or 300.000 people) in Brussels, including nearly 1/2 of the electorate in the communes of Etterbeek, Ixelles or Saint Gilles. Voting is your chance to have a say on the decisions taken by the communes which have broad powers, such as population services, cleanliness, urban planning, roads and public spaces such as parks and playgrounds, and cultural and sports centers.

We live and work in Belgium and voting is an opportunity to engage and contribute. Brussels needs you, your new ideas and your action!

Most of us have not voted before in Belgium because we did not get the correct information in time to sign up.

### How can I register?

You can easily download and send in a 1-page registration form to your commune by post or email – see instructions here

<http://www.commissioner.brussels/i-am-an-expat/communal-elections-2018/121-communal-elections-2018/682-political-participation-678-679-682>

### Myths about voting

There are a lot of myths about voting in Belgium. For example, voting is not exactly obligatory for non-Belgians because they vote by proxy if you're abroad or sick, and de-register any time after the election—think of voting as an opt-in/opt-out system. Voting in Belgian elections has absolutely no effect on voting rights abroad or one's status in Belgium. Voter registration lists are local and secret.

### For more information

For more information contact [votebrussels@migpolgroup.com](mailto:votebrussels@migpolgroup.com) : VoteBrussels is a non-partisan campaign co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020 of the European Union, and part of the [FAIREU project](#) led by the European Citizen Action Service.

- ⇒ You & the other 300,000 non-Belgians in Brussels could be one third of the voters in October's local elections
- ⇒ To be able to vote, you need to be registered in your commune by 31 July.
- ⇒ A lot can change in local elections, where a few thousand votes can make the difference.
- ⇒ You can vote by proxy if you're traveling or sick & easily DE-register as a voter after the elections.
- ⇒ Voting in Belgian elections has no effect on your voting rights in your home country or your status in Belgium.

## ..... and finally

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