

# Generation 2004 Report on the Survey on Rotation and Mobility in EC Representations to Member States

## Introduction

In June 2019 Generation 2004, in close cooperation with colleagues from DG COMM's EC Representations, launched a short survey on rotation and mobility in EC Representations to Member States. Thanks to all responders, mainly from Representations (94%), not only we are now sure the system needs to change, but we also know what are the most pressing issues DG COMM staff working in the EC Representations faces today.

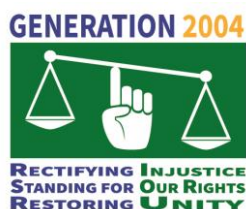
## Analysis

The current rules on rotation in EC representations, which entered into force 12 years ago and are only applicable to Officials, stipulate a maximum length of the assignments to either 5 or 7 (5+2) years in an EC Representation (with the exception of Heads of Representations who serve a maximum of 5 years). Respondents know the rules very well, with 91% saying they are aware of them.

Regarding the reasons for the existence of rotation rules, there is no clear winner. However, factors linked with general needs to change staff take precedence with 186 selections, against 101 for reasons related to revitalisation, and 85 for easier placement/removal of staff. The high number of answers on the revitalisation and easier placement/removal reasons sound somehow scary to us; it hints staff believes mobility is used to punish unwanted staff from any given EC Representation as opposed to properly addressing underperformance via the appraisal and promotion exercises as prescribed by the Staff Regulations.

The situation related to challenges that EC Representation's colleagues face is quite different though. However, before we go into details, it is important to note that a 62% majority of answers came from the countries with a coefficient corrector below 100%. Family related problems totalled 102 voices taking the lead (finding work for partner, international schools availability/costs and travelling to keep contact with relatives). Responders pointed out also inadequate salary allowances to cover extra costs of life (91 voices), limited training possibilities (72 voices) and return to HQ after posting in the EC Representation (67 voices), as issues that should be handled out as soon as possible to make both EC Representations and DG COMM HQ (after return) more attractive working places. Least problematic are learning of a new local language (16 voices) and poor medical service in some countries (18 voices).

The survey concluded with a question on how current rotation rules in terms of posting times are perceived. Only 18% of the responders believe current posting times are



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completely adequate. Most of the responders would like to see a flexible system taking interest of the service into account to be implemented (45%). Differentiating rotation rules based on type of contract/post would be welcomed by just 17% of staff, while a lower 14% of staff would be happy with a general extension of posting time. Finally, only 9 voices were raised towards shortening the length of postings.

## Conclusion

With all this in view, our conclusion is that after 12 years of experience with the current rotation rules – there is a clear need for change.

## The results in detail

Participation		
Total participants	164	
From Representations	154	94%
From countries with correction coefficient below 100%	101	62%

Knowledge of rules		
Out of all participants	149	91%

Understanding why rotation rules are in place (multi choice)		
Revitalisation of EC Representations with new staff	101	62%
Limitation of becoming an improper representative of EU interests in favour of the national ones	50	30%
Limitation of budgetary abuse risks	41	25%
Easier removal of unwanted staff members from EC Representations	44	27%
Easier placement of preselected HQ staff on desired positions in EC Representations	41	25%
Other	27	16%

**GENERATION 2004**



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STANDING FOR OUR RIGHTS  
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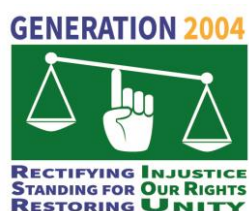
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Challenges linked with rotation (multi choice)		
Learning or improving the local language	16	10%
Getting used to work in a different and smaller environment	38	23%
Limited contact with colleagues that are non-nationals of the country where the Representation is located	23	14%
Limited training possibilities	72	44%
Poor medical service in the country	18	11%
Finding a place to live and managing country specific administration (resident id cards, car registration plates, utilities, etc.)	24	15%
Finding work for your partner	27	16%
Availability of international schools for your children	25	15%
Cost of schooling for your children	29	18%
Frequent travelling to keep contact with relatives	21	13%
Inadequate salary allowances to cover extra costs of live (correction coefficient)	91	55%
Return to HQ after a posting in an EC Representation	67	41%
Other	28	17%

Need for changes		
Fully adequate to the needs	30	18%
Should be adapted to the type of post – (AD, AST, technical AST, CA, LA)	28	17%
Should be shorter in general	9	5%
Should be longer in general	23	14%
Should be replaced with a more flexible system taking into account the interest of the service	74	45%



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