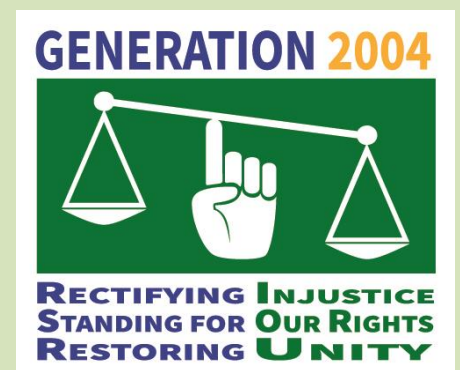


**“FOR THE MANY
NOT THE FEW”**



VOTE LIST 1



GENERATION 2004 – 2019 Election Manifesto



The EU civil service is under threat! Brexit is approaching, Eurosceptic parties are likely to gain seats in the next European Parliament elections, and we are hearing already from some Member States that the administrative cost component of the EU budget, i.e. our salaries and pensions should be "scrutinised" – whatever that means!

Generation 2004 will defend the EU civil service. But with a difference!

Unlike the others, we do not claim to defend the acquired rights, which is a veiled way to say that there should be no changes to the status quo. A status quo that preserves the significantly more favourable employment conditions applicable to the ever-thinning ranks of high-graded colleagues recruited before the damaging reforms of the staff regulations in 2004 and 2014. We say it loud and clear:

- We represent the interests of all those recruited after 2004, regardless of grade or staff category.
- We demand ‘equal pay for equal work’ and a level playing field for the careers of all colleagues that have been treated unfairly.
- We will fight fake solidarity claims which imply that the post-2004 generations will continue to shoulder most of the burden and an ever-widening gap between the pre- and post-2004 generations.
- We will promote concrete and realistic measures to improve the working conditions and work-life balance for all, including for contract agents and secretary/clerks: ‘For the many - not the few’!

This electoral manifesto sets out 5 lines of action to deliver on this pledge within the constraints set out in the current Staff Regulations:

- 1. Reverse the “Mexican Army” Syndrome**
- 2. Put an End to the Contract Agent Precariat**
- 3. Denounce Equal Work for (Very) Unequal Pay**
- 4. Defuse the Pension Time Bomb**
- 5. Fight the Organised Collusion of the “Old Guard”**



However, before going into detail, here is a summary of our main demands:

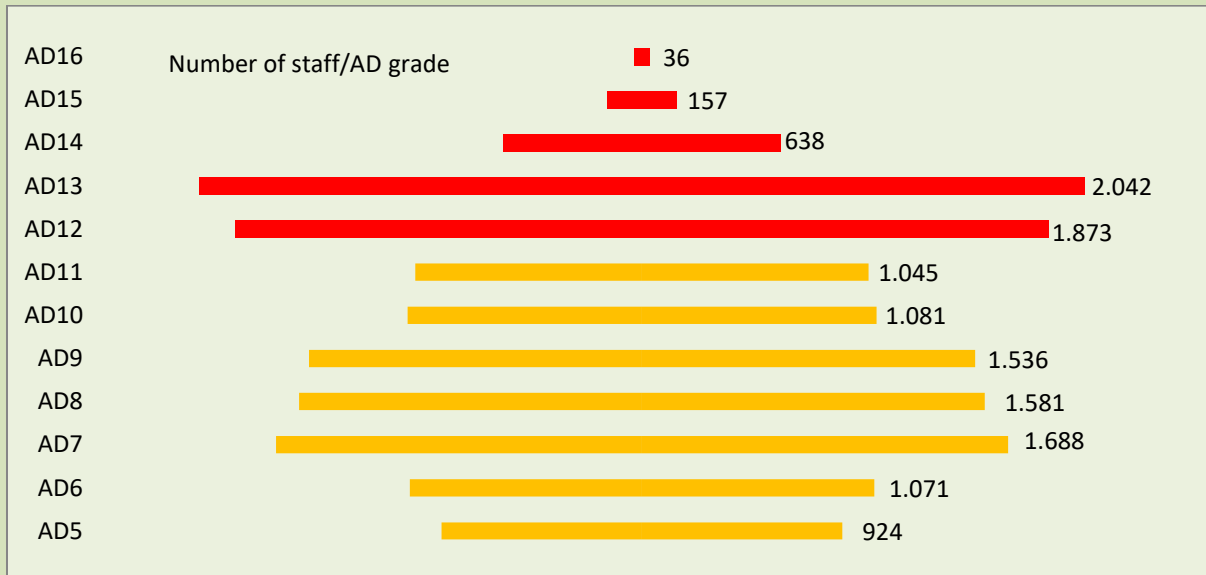


- Act to close the career gap between pre-2004 and post-2004 staff, restoring geographical balance in the AD category and motivation in the EU civil service.
- Greatly increase the number of AST Colleagues allowed to become ADs via certification, with eligibility for application from AST4. Make sure that the function group of the job holder and of the post match.
- Stop the 'Junior Professional Programme' (JPP), which in its present form is discriminatory and divisive. Instead, develop a talent Management scheme for CAs to give them a decent chance to become permanent officials.
- Recycle the mechanism used in the JPP as a possible solution for Contract Agents who are reaching the end of their contracts: open Temporary Agent positions to them and organise annual internal competitions outside of the 5% ceiling.
- Plan internal competitions for SCs to become ASTs with a reasonable number of positions available annually.
- Stop making cuts to our retirement conditions but instead tax the higher pre-2004 pensions, unattainable for post-2004 colleagues. In parallel, set up a real capital-based pension fund for interested colleagues.
- Achieve savings in the administrative budget by offering redundancy to AD13-14 staff without managerial responsibilities, and then redistribute this budget to other categories.
- Put an immediate stop to the "senior expert" designation leading to costly promotions for those without management responsibility from AD 12 up to grade AD14.
- Introduce 360-degree reviews for managers, including sending them periodically to assessment centres, from which they must receive a positive report to retain their roles.
- Rotate managers in DG HR to other DGs and enforce the 6-year limitation for union secondments.



THE 'MEXICAN ARMY' SYNDROME

Following the disastrous 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations, too many people have benefitted from promotions to grades that were previously reserved to management effectively creating a 'Mexican Army' - a historic term describing a situation where too many generals rule over too few foot soldiers. This has inspired the Mexican theme of our manifesto!



'Sombbrero' hat pattern in the AD grade distribution based on our analysis of the 2019 budget proposal

Further stretching our Mexican theme, does the figure above also not look a bit like somebody wearing a Mexican "sombbrero" hat?!

Let us introduce to you the sombrero hat problem: A disproportionate amount of the administrative budget is used for thousands of high-ranking civil servants leaving less and less room in the administrative budget for the post-2004 generation. As a matter of fact, the AD grades that form the sombrero hat (essentially 3 grades, 12-14) collect as much basic salary as the rest of the lower 7 AD grades (5-11) put together. Worse, the 2,000 AD13s, most with no particular management responsibilities, receive more in total than all the 7,000 Contract Agents of the Commission. Ironically, recruitment of cheaper Contract Agents is being favoured because there is no money left in the administrative budget after spending on high-grade salaries and benefits!





The problem has been hugely exacerbated by schemes cooked up by a largely biased HR department that is controlled by a close-knit group of pre-2004 managers in collusion with some of the old staff unions. They claim to be defending the staff's interests but in reality, they just work for the preservation of their pre-2004 acquired rights.

A particularly outrageous example of this collusion are the “senior expert” positions, created to circumvent the grade cap on AD careers reinstated by the co-legislators in 2014. These positions lead to hyper-costly promotions for those without management responsibility to grade AD14, which is no less than the grade required to become a director. To stop wasting the administrative budget, the very least the Commission should do is to put an immediate stop to the senior expert scheme.

No wonder that the perception from outside the EU institutions is that in terms of staff policy the Commission is increasingly disconnected from the real world: There is little correlation between salary and responsibility at the top of the salary scale. The situation is no better at the bottom because an overall reduction in the administrative budget has led to stringent cuts since 2004 to the remuneration package for newcomers.

The Mexican Army staff policy has also destroyed the geographical balance of recent recruitments. Even the Commission has had to



acknowledge this fact in a recent report¹. Despite the report focusing on Administrators (AD) and ignoring Contract Agents (CA), Assistants (AST) and Secretaries/Clerks (SC), the results are disastrous: Nationals from several Member States have a level of participation in AD5 competitions that is less than half the EU average. Conversely, these Member States are grossly over-represented in the higher AD9-AD12 grade bracket. Moreover, DG HR was careful not to show in its report the geographical balance in the AD13 grade: it is simply non-existent, almost 60% of AD13s come from just 5 old EU Member States!

The large number of senior officials in our Mexican Army leads to an often-Kafkaesque complexity and an ultra-hierarchical management style.

While Generation 2004 approves and supports the effort of a few European Commission services to promote a new management style, we demand that the Commission makes it obligatory for all Heads of Units that have been acting at managerial level for more than 10 years to go through an assessment centre.

Such an exercise should determine whether they possess the managerial skill needed for the job and whether they are fit for motivating and managing people rather than pushing files or bullying people. In the case of a red light from the assessment centre such managers should be demoted for at least 2 years from their management jobs to do work as regular desk officers or advisors, and would then need to pass another assessment centre, before being able to be reinstated as Heads of Unit.

As regards recruitment of new Heads of Unit, we demand that a positive report from an independent assessment centre should be a prerequisite. Currently the assessment centre report is a simple assessment of individual strengths and weaknesses and its results can be ignored by the DG concerned.

¹ <http://bit.ly/ECGBRep>



Last but not least, the Commission should offer to those AD13 and AD14 administrators with no management responsibilities the provisions set out in articles 41 and 42 of the Staff Regulations (which are essentially rather generous redundancy measures). The resulting savings in administrative expenditure could be used to improve the attractiveness of the Commission for newcomers of all nationalities, redress the careers of those already in place and offer better employment prospects to Contract Agents.



THE CONTRACT AGENT PRECARIAT

Since 2004, the Commission has pushed-through a silent revolution, replacing permanent officials with Contract Agents who are employed on the basis of precarious contracts and/or zero career prospects. CAs already represent 7,000 staff in the Commission, (not counting executive and decentralized agencies staff), and over 20% of the workforce.

Generation 2004 pledges to work towards terminating this harmful practice of turning the EU Civil Service into some sort of budget airline, driven by precarious agency employment, and continue our fight to regularise the employment of as many Contract Agents as possible. Budgetary resources are there to kick-start this regularisation: According to its 2019 budget proposal, the Commission is almost €1billion below the MFF ceiling with respect to administrative expenses. In the longer run, if the Commission ended the wasteful practice of granting senior expert posts to already high-ranking officials and reduced the number of AD13/AD14s who have no management responsibilities, then decent employment conditions for Contract Agents could easily be funded.

With internal competitions for temporary agents (i.e. cabinet staff) based on tailor made 'talent screeners', and with the recent 'Junior Professionals Programme' (JPP), the Commission has shown that when the political will is there it can be very creative and generous in cooking up schemes for specific groups.





Under the new JPP, up to 80 blue book stagiaires can get a Temporary Agent contract for 2 years and then may become AD5s without passing any external competition – this is effectively the same back-door easy route taken every 5 years by TA cabinet staff. 80 laureates are the equivalent to 25% of the average annual recruitment of AD5 staff!

The JPP is a slap in the face to all diligent colleagues that have passed one of the highly competitive recruitment competitions as well as to the majority of Contract Agents who are excluded from this scheme. Generation 2004 therefore demands an immediate stop to this programme or, instead that an alternative talent management scheme be developed, through which a decent number of CAs can become permanent officials.

Very importantly, Temporary Agents are not subject to the 6-year rule imposed on CA3bs. Therefore, opening TA positions to Contract Agents could provide some relief, albeit temporary, to the increasing number of CAs reaching the 6-year cut-off.

Moreover, TAs are not subject to the 5% ceiling that limits the number of CAs that can pass internal competitions to 5% of total appointments in function groups AST and AD in any given year. The mechanism used in the Junior Professional Programme could thus be ramped up in order to offer career prospects to all deserving talented CAs.

In addition, many technical measures could be immediately implemented to improve the conditions of the CAs working in Brussels. The Commission should:

- List vacancies on a single website across all institutions and agencies to promote mobility;
- Promote short term job shadowing and longer-term secondments across the Commission and agencies;
- Ensure preferential recruitment of CAs and other non-permanent staff by Executive Agencies and delegations;



- Take into consideration professional experience acquired before joining the European institutions when allocating function groups;
- Facilitate access to career guidance (job-seeking training, information on vacancies, HR Career Day);

What is DG HR waiting for to make this happen?

EQUAL WORK FOR (VERY) UNEQUAL PAY



Watch the short video:

**Even Monkeys
believe in equal pay
for equal work!**

Since 2004, the Commission has been consistently violating the principle of "Equal pay for equal work", despite this principle being publicised by President Juncker in the Commissions' priorities repeatedly since 2014². We have been very outspoken about the need for the Commission to walk the talk and enforce this principle. We have not forgotten the principle of "equivalence" of pre and post-2004 careers enshrined in the Staff regulations but never applied. Unlike the other staff unions, we do not think that preserving the very unequal 'acquired rights' of the high-grade permanent officials is the priority!



An example of unequal conditions is the Commission increasingly asking ASTs (and even SCs) to carry out tasks normally allocated to ADs. Most of us know such talented individuals and then we are surprised when we come to learn about their function group and grade. They are given the responsibilities without reward! The Commission should allow ASTs who have clearly demonstrated their ability to handle higher responsibilities

² << [...] the same work at the same place should be remunerated in the same manner. >> Political guidelines 15/07/2014 - https://ec.europa.eu/priorities/publications/president-junckers-political-guidelines_en

to become ADs. This requires a massive expansion of the certification exercise, currently limited to only about 50 ASTs per year.

Access to the certification program should be granted from grade AST4 onwards instead of from AST5 as currently is the case. Here again, the financial resources are available, in particular if the Commission stops the costly appointments of senior assistants. Similarly, internal competitions should be organised for the most deserving SCs so they can become ASTs.

The Commission should also reverse the decision that artificially allocated secretarial and clerical posts to many AST colleagues. This was the result of an outrageous overnight manoeuvre, which has not only put a discriminatory label on many staff members, but also has had a very negative impact on their mobility and career prospects.

The Commission should take immediate action to redress the geographical balance of its AD population by recruiting staff at a higher grade and putting an end to the disastrous policy of using precarious CAs to carry out permanent AD tasks.

In order to ensure equal treatment of the AD staff already in place, the Commission should cascade promotion quotas from high grades (e.g. AD12s) to lower grades. In particular, those with significant prior work experience not recognised when hired at AD5, and who, in addition never benefitted from the increase in promotion rates from 33% to 36% introduced by the 2014 reform, should have the opportunity to get promoted faster. Moreover, they should get a serious chance through an appropriately designed internal competition to fast-track their promotions. These promotions should be given on top of the normal promotion quotas and not by "cannibalising" them.

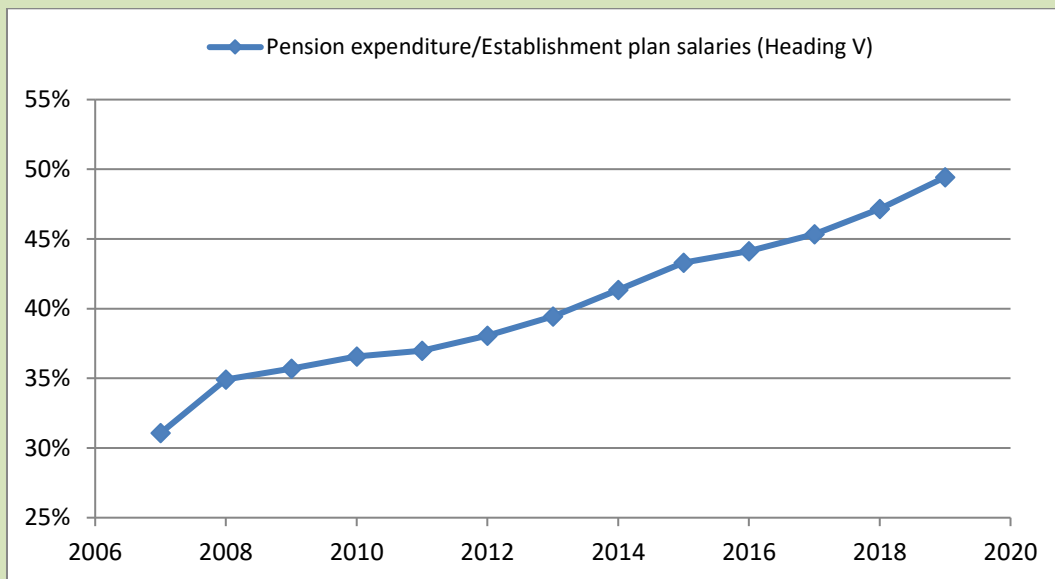


THE PENSION TIME BOMB

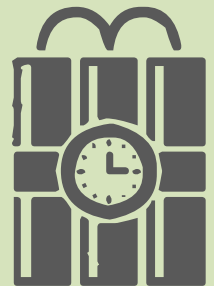
We are the only staff organisation that for years has been warning about a pension time bomb ticking inside the EU institutions. The EU staff pension scheme's projected costs, are going through the roof. In 2019, for the first time they will exceed €2 billion per year. In the coming

decade they are projected to reach the same order of magnitude as salary expenditure. This is not going down well with Member States.

The graph below shows the evolution of the annual pension expenditure as a percentage of the salaries paid out of the administrative budget to permanent officials and temporary agents in the EU institutions. This ratio is reaching 50%! How long will the Member States accept to pay ever more to privileged pensioners while the proportion of the administrative budget going to active staff shrinks?



Source: Commission budget figures



The soaring cost is mainly due to the pensions paid to privileged former staff whose expensive 'acquired rights' have been left untouched by the 2004 and 2014 reforms. Thus, the first thing to do is to reduce these very high pensions rather than once again trim to the bone newcomers' meagre benefits.

If no serious reform of our pension scheme is carried out soon, this will blow up in our faces, as more cuts will be imposed on us later. For example, consider a 2013 proposal by eight EU Member States where they suggested a pension rights calculation based on an average rather than the final salary. This would be disastrous for the already discriminated against post-2004/2014 staff and would render the EU service even more unattractive for newcomers!

On a more general note, it is not justifiable that pension claims currently being acquired still differ significantly depending on entry date (with

accrual rates having dropped from 2.0% to 1.8%). We must urgently change the perception of acquired rights.



The Commission pension rules have basically not changed since the 1950s when people used to work for the same employer for life. We know that reform of the pension scheme is not popular and has old unions and pensioners' association raging in their comfortable beds. We are the only ones who dare to put this subject on the table!

Specifically, Generation 2004 is calling for an immediate higher taxation of the higher pensions that the vast majority of the post-2004 staff will never reach.³ This luxury pension tax would be possible without opening the staff regulations!

Furthermore, against the backdrop described above, Generation 2004 welcomes the proposal of the Commission to reflect on the feasibility of the creation of a capital-based pension fund for EU staff, as formulated in the 2021-2027 MFF proposal⁴. We made this proposal ourselves 5 years ago and we are finally being heard! Such a fund would benefit those who do not wish to, or cannot (e.g. CAs with 6-year contracts), spend the rest of their professional life in the institutions.

Indeed, at present those who leave the institutions before having reached 10 years of seniority in the EU pension scheme are asked to transfer their rights out, most often to a limited range of private financial schemes that are of dubious quality (one recently went bust in Belgium, PMO is unable to tell us what happened to the former colleagues who had subscribed to this fund!). Those who have more than 10 years of seniority in the EU pension scheme also face great difficulties in transferring out. These difficulties constitute a serious barrier to professional mobility.

The current EU pension scheme is particularly unfair to Contract Agents. If they find a new job in the institutions or in one of the EU agencies, they are automatically recruited under the less favourable pension conditions of the 2014 reform. This can lead to Kafkaesque situations, such as when someone close to retirement ends up having to work until the age of 66 instead of 63 just because (s)he has found a new job.

³ Try your luck with the pension calculator: <http://bit.ly/G04PenCalc>. For information, many pre-2004 Gucci pensioners earn 10.000€+ per month and do not even pay the 6% solidarity levy...

⁴ See footnote 18 of the following document: <http://bit.ly/mffp2021-27>.



In this context, Generation 2004 wonders why the Commission is planning to wait until 2023 to "reflect on the feasibility" of this capital-based fund. Generation 2004 will not let DG HR kick this long overdue initiative down the road. Action is needed now! The product of the tax on very high pensions could be used to establish the capital-based pension fund so badly needed by the most precariously employed. Such a tax would be a way to rebalance our pension scheme since it would affect those who have escaped from the successive reforms of the Staff Regulations, while leaving untouched the pensions of those recruited since 2004.



ORGANISED COLLUSION OF THE 'OLD GUARD'

The present staff representation system is characterised not only by excessive fragmentation but also by an embedded collusion of a long-standing clique of old union representatives with an equally longstanding number of senior managers in DG HR. These managers are often at Director level and higher, have been around forever and are not neutral because they have vested interests in preserving a system that protects their 'acquired rights', rather than promoting socially just reforms and systemic change. Ironically, these managers are not being rotated although this is precisely what they ask of other managers in the Commission.

Just one example of this collusion: The internal rules of the staff representation state that EU staff cannot be seconded for Union work for more than 6 years⁵. However, DG HR has consistently ignored this rule and prolonged the secondments of the representatives of the old unions, way beyond the 6-year limit, so they would not have to return to work in the service before retirement! This generates an obvious conflict of interest for the union leaders who depend on DG HR for the renewal of their secondment beyond 6 years.

The collusion and complicity do not stop there. In return for supporting HR schemes that favour the few not the many, the small number of high-ranking union officials that have gone back to their DGs after the end of their secondments have been granted senior

⁵ There are almost 50 full time equivalents working in the staff representation!





expert posts. Other high-grade union reps have received costly prolongations of their retirement age, so they can continue play “Head of Union” beyond the age of 65, some of them with AD 14 salaries, and this is signed off by DG HR ‘in the interests of the service’!

Generation 2004 is the only staff union that has publicly asked Commissioner Oettinger to rotate HR managers and to enforce the 6-year limit in order to break the unholy alliance of the old guard that protects their acquired rights and undermines the morale of the majority of staff. Send the Commissioner a strong signal by voting for Generation 2004!

WHY VOTE FOR US WHEN SO MANY OTHERS CLAIM THEY DEFEND ALL CATEGORIES OF STAFF?

Generation 2004 is the only staff association that unequivocally gives a voice to the interests of staff recruited to the EU Institutions after 2004 and 2014 with diminished career prospects and employment conditions.

We:

- were founded in 2012 as a grassroots reaction to the 2004 staff reforms, which cut the benefits, career prospects and working conditions of newly incoming staff.
- represent the biggest local individual staff organisation in Brussels (every fourth staff member voted for us in the 2015 Local Staff Committee elections).
- ran, for the last three years, the operations of the Brussels Local Staff Committee, where we fought to advance stalled files related to colleague’s everyday working life, environmental issues, wellbeing, mobility, childcare, European Schools, work life balance, etc.



- need your vote to continue our fight for fair play on HR matters in the EU institutions and to be able to counter the syndicate of the older unions who try to make you believe there is “Café para todos!”⁶ The benefits of the pre-2004 generation cannot all be preserved if you seriously want to improve the situation of the rest of the Commission staff.



The “2004 Reform” (and the subsequent “2014 Reform”) of Staff Regulations (the legal act that sets all your rights and obligations as an EU employee):

- marked the most substantial changes ever to the employment conditions of EU staff, with improved conditions for staff already in place but much reduced conditions for all newcomers.
- cast in stone the ‘acquired rights’ of the staff already recruited before 2004.
- meant all the downsides were borne by new recruits.

As a consequence:

- the current recruitment policy of the institutions is marked by artificial “juniorisation” of recently recruited staff and the lack of an equal career playing field within the institutions.
- vulnerable categories of staff have been created, in particular the Contract Agent category.
- there has been a fragmentation of the EU workforce, presided over by a biased administration and inept trade unions.
- Generation 2004's fairly modest and sensible demands so far have not been implemented but, with your support, we will continue fighting.



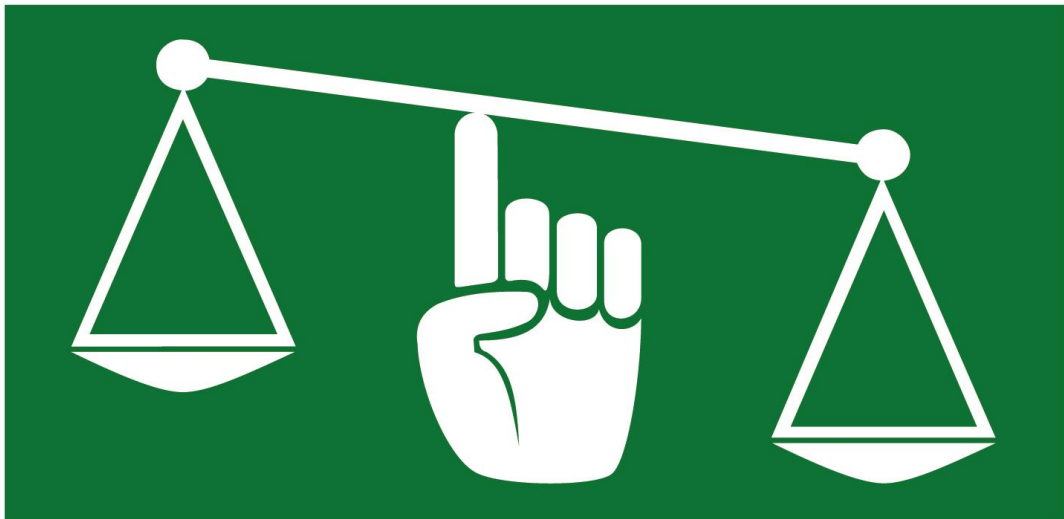
⁶ Free coffee for everyone

VOTE LIST 1



VOTE

GENERATION 2004



**RECTIFYING INJUSTICE
STANDING FOR OUR RIGHTS
RESTORING UNITY**