



Annual Report

on the Human Resources and Staffing Policy of the EESC General Secretariat for 2018



Report to the Bureau of the European Economic and Social Committee

Data as of 31.12.2018
Source: Directorate E



European Economic and Social Committee



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Foreword



I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report on the Human Resources and Staffing Policy of the European Economic and Social Committee's (EESC) general secretariat. Its purpose is to show what the Directorate for Human Resources and Finance (DHRF) did last year to attract, retain, motivate and develop people with skills and experience, contributing to the overall mission of the EESC.

A highly performing administration is essential for providing support for the important work of our members, so that our Committee remains a key institution in the European venture. Ensuring that members perform their legislative work in the best possible conditions is our *raison d'être*. However, we should strive to go beyond the idea of service and aim at a common vision for the future. Human Resources are therefore fundamental for optimising the EESC's impact on the EU decision-making process and for translating strategic goals into tangible action.

In an ever-changing – and sometimes uncertain – environment, with budgetary constraints, the role of civil service is crucial for keeping the development of the European project alive and for strengthening the values of peace, respect and solidarity that underpin it. Our administration aims to be an example of excellence: "Rationalisation of working methods" and "Optimal use of human and financial resources" – in line with the EESC general secretariat's 2017-2020 Management Plan – therefore provide the guidelines for our work. In so doing, and in line with EESC Bureau decisions, the general secretariat intends to continue to provide EESC members with the resources they need to perform the role assigned to our institution by the Treaty.

Key to success is a respectful working environment. Hence, the entire administration, myself included, is committed to fostering a positive atmosphere free from any form of discrimination, and to valuing diversity by guaranteeing dignity at work. This goal has been translated into an ambitious "Respect@Work" programme that will run throughout 2019 with a view to ensuring the best working conditions for staff at the Committee.

Gianluca Brunetti
Secretary-General

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gianluca Brunetti". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Introduction – Human Resources related policies of the Directorate for Human Resources and Finance

The aim of all Human Resources (HR) policies is to provide EESC members via the general secretariat with a qualified, competent and efficient workforce. Staff members, present at the right place and the right time with the right skills, provide crucial support for the members' work and thus for the functioning of the EESC as a European body. DHRF strives to recruit the most skilled people, providing them with possibilities for lifelong learning and personal development, while guaranteeing an inclusive and flexible working environment in which they can achieve their potential. The management plan 2017-2020 for the EESC general secretariat foresees objectives number 3 (rationalise working methods and foster interservice consultation) and number 5 (make optimal use of human and financial resources) towards which HR policies are geared. The constant drive to guarantee professionalism and efficiency underpins the implementation of these policies. The results of various HR policies are regularly checked by a series of key performance indicators, which are constantly reviewed. The most important ones are published in the EESC's annual activity report.

2018 saw quite a few important and positive changes, especially in terms of women's representation: as a matter of fact, at the end of 2018 women filled 53% of middle and senior management positions, a big change compared to the past which places the EESC among the best EU institutions in terms of gender balance.

With regard to geographical balance, improvement has been done, as the EU 13 now account for 18% of management positions.

At a time of budget cuts and reduction in the number of posts, with an increasingly ageing workforce, it is necessary to ensure that the general secretariat, which supports the work of the EESC members and thus promotes the role of the EESC in the EU legislative process, runs smoothly. To achieve this objective, an inclusive and respectful workplace is crucial. The principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination is enshrined in the Staff Regulations and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU; in 2018, the EESC continued its efforts not just to uphold these principles but also actively to promote the diversity of its general secretariat. Ensuring a respectful and inclusive workplace, free from any form of discrimination and valuing all kind of diversities, is one of the main challenges for the future.

Executive summary – Achievements and challenges in 2018

In 2018, the Directorate for Human Resources and Finance continued to introduce various measures to bolster the performance, effectiveness and efficiency of all EESC resources. At a time of budget cuts, the role of the Directorate is crucial for guaranteeing that the right person is in the right place at the right time and that resources are properly managed. Highly performing, motivated staff are therefore the pillars of an efficient administration that guarantees members the support they need for carrying out their political work.

Main achievements

Gender balance

Considerable progress was achieved as regards gender balance in management positions. Due namely to the retirement of predominantly male managers and the subsequent appointment to management posts of seven women and one man, at the end of 2018 women represented 54% of middle managers (including acting heads of unit) and 50% of senior managers, making the EESC one of the leading institutions as regards gender balance in management positions.

Equal opportunities and an inclusive working environment

The dimension of equal opportunities, diversity and an inclusive working environment was confirmed as a core value of the EESC and embedded in all HR processes while implementing the 2017-2020 Action Plan for Equal Opportunities and Diversity. Initiatives on International Women's Day and the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia were organised jointly by the European Committee of the Regions and the EESC Joint Committees for Equal Opportunities. Initiatives were also undertaken for raising awareness of disability issues, and the interinstitutional guide on "AccessAble Brussels" was presented on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Maintaining a competitive edge with regard to other institutions

The EESC has continued to promote itself as an attractive employer. It constantly aims to recruit and retain the most highly skilled people. The policies in place on working time

arrangements are conceived as one form of the institution's duty of care to its staff and they have helped make the EESC an appealing employer. Specific activities were also arranged to ensure that the EESC continues to be a desirable place to work; these include social events and the provision of practical support for colleagues, partners and families, with a particular focus on the integration of newly recruited staff. In 2018, 49 vacancy notices were published and the number of applications received, both internal and external, was 357: quite a high number for a small institution.

Main challenges

Geographical balance

The EESC has made significant efforts to improve the geographical balance of its staff, especially among managers, and some objectives have been reached: the proportion of EU 13 managers increased from 16% in 2017 to 18% in 2018. Nevertheless, there is still room for further improvement. An opportunity to address geographical balance in the near future will be the retirement of 20% of all managers by the end of 2023, most of whom are from EU 15 Member States.

Ageing workforce

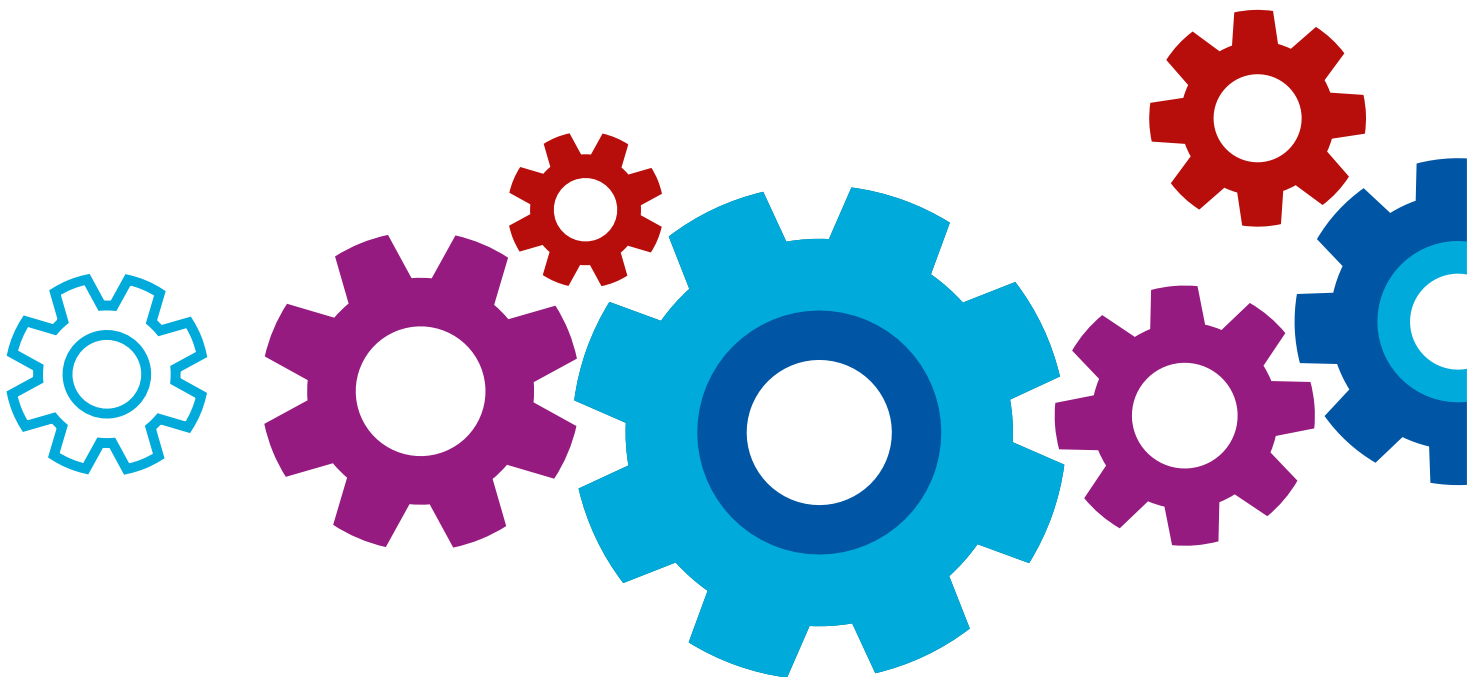
An ageing workforce is one of the main challenges to be tackled by HR policies. To strike the right balance between continuity and renewal of staff, it is crucial to monitor the age pyramid and average age of staff members closely. After the sizeable recruitment of officials from post-2004 enlargement Member States, the average age fell to 42.9 years in 2008, only to increase again in 2018 to 48 years. Based on the average annual rate of retirement for the past 12 years, it is forecast that approximately 92 staff members could retire in the next five years, representing almost 16% of the current number of EESC officials. A particular challenge for a small institution like the EESC is the smart allocation of resources in order to allow for a smooth, continuous and efficient operation.

Respectful workplace

A number of measures have been put in place in a variety of fields to meet the institution's duty of care to all staff, and an important guiding principle is the focus on staff members' individual responsibility for their own well-being. However, in order to do more to address the findings of the 2016 staff survey, and following a number of proposals in the Ombudsman's report on dignity at work, the 2019 Safety and Health programme will be organised jointly by the EESC and the CoR under the heading "Fostering respectful workplace relations for all". The main activities will be open to staff and members of both Committees in order to reach out to everyone working at the Committees and raise awareness of the issue at hand.



Part I
**Human
ressources
policies**

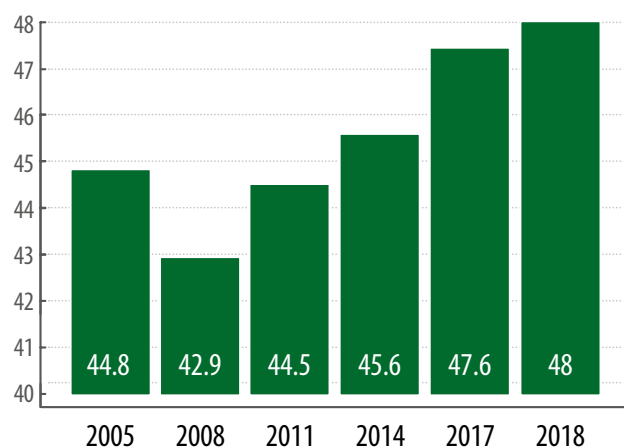


1. Human Resources Planning

The aim of Human Resources planning is to ensure that the allocation and recruitment of staff are based on the objectives and priorities of various organisational entities with a view to guaranteeing optimal support for members and to avoid any disruption of activities. This is implemented by anticipating, monitoring and planning ahead for human resources, especially at times of budget restrictions.

HR planning activities depend both on natural developments (age pyramid, retirement, etc.) and on the distribution of resources within the organisation (redeployment, mobility, etc.); therefore it is vital to strike the right balance between continuity and renewal of staff.

Graph 1: Average age trend for permanent staff (2005 – 2018)



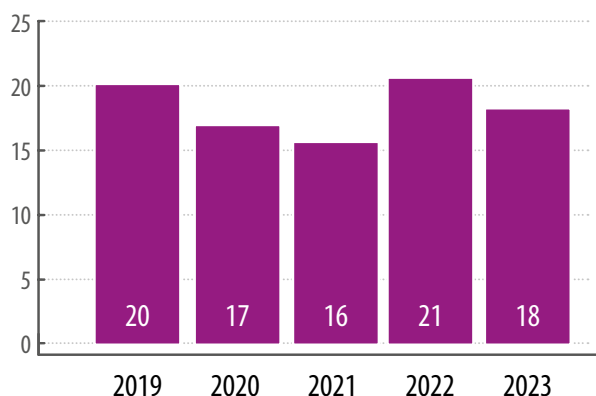
In order to forecast future retirements as precisely as possible, it is crucial to monitor closely the age pyramid and average age of permanent staff (officials and contract agents in function group I). After the significant recruitments of officials from new Member States linked to the enlargement, the average age fell to 42.9 in 2008, to increase again to 48 in 2018 (see graph 1). Not surprisingly, the average age of these officials is significantly lower (44.2) than the average of the EU 15 population (49.5). This information facilitates the anticipation of future waves of

recruitment, usually in a time-span of 25 to 30 years after the accession of the country in question.

Closely monitoring the age pyramid (see part II/Statistics, page 67) helps to estimate future retirements (see graph 2). This projection is based on the application of the average annual rate of retirements for the past 12 years to the population in coming years. The forecast for expected retirements shows that approximately 92 staff members could retire in the next five years, representing almost 16% of the current number of EESC officials.

Included in this number are ten managers (20% of all managers) who could apply for retirement until the end of 2023. As most of them (eight) are men, mostly from EU 15 Member States, appointing successors for them will be an opportunity for addressing geographical balance in particular in the near future.

Graph 2: Estimated retirements (2019 – 2023)



A particular challenge for a small institution like the EESC is the smart allocation of resources to various entities, to allow smooth, continuous and efficient functioning. To this end, it is crucial to have an overview of the individual tasks, to consider possible synergies, professionalisation and modernisation of working methods. Therefore, during the first half of 2018, the "job descriptions" were created and encoded in the staff management database (called Sysper) for most jobs in the EESC general secretariat. The "job descriptions" are now published

and available to all staff, which could possibly foster internal mobility. From an individual perspective, they provide clarity for the jobholder and can also serve as a basis for the dialogue with the manager in the framework of the annual appraisal procedure; from an organisational point of view, they make it possible to have a detailed overview of the workforce in the EESC. Thus, the general secretariat will be able to react to possible changes in EESC priorities by adjusting distribution and thus optimising resources.

Taking into account the importance of members' activities, further efforts were made to shift resources to the core policy areas in order to strengthen them. According to the Cooperation agreement between the EESC and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), which originally stipulated that a total of 46 posts (16 CoR posts and 30 EESC posts) be redeployed, the EESC has so far moved 22 posts (19 ADs and 3 ASTs) between 2016 and the beginning of 2019 from the Directorate for Translation (DT) to the own services; further efforts are needed to reach the target set in the Cooperation agreement. It should be pointed out that these movements take place on a voluntary basis, following a call for expression of interest, or are the result of vacant posts being reallocated when people retire or move to another post. The final number of posts still to be redeployed will be decided after interinstitutional monitoring of translation needs in the first half of 2019.

In addition, with a view to further optimising the DT's structure, a pilot project on common management of some translation units was established between October 2016 and March 2018. The Czech and Slovak and Finnish and Swedish units were chosen for this project for a trial period of 18 months. The project was monitored and evaluated by a DT pilot project advisory group, comprising representatives of the DT, HR and the staff committees of both the CoR and the EESC. On the basis of this evaluation, it was suggested that two or three translation units be gradually merged according to their linguistic proximity when possible. The status of already commonly managed units was confirmed.

2. Management of the establishment plan and optimisation of resources

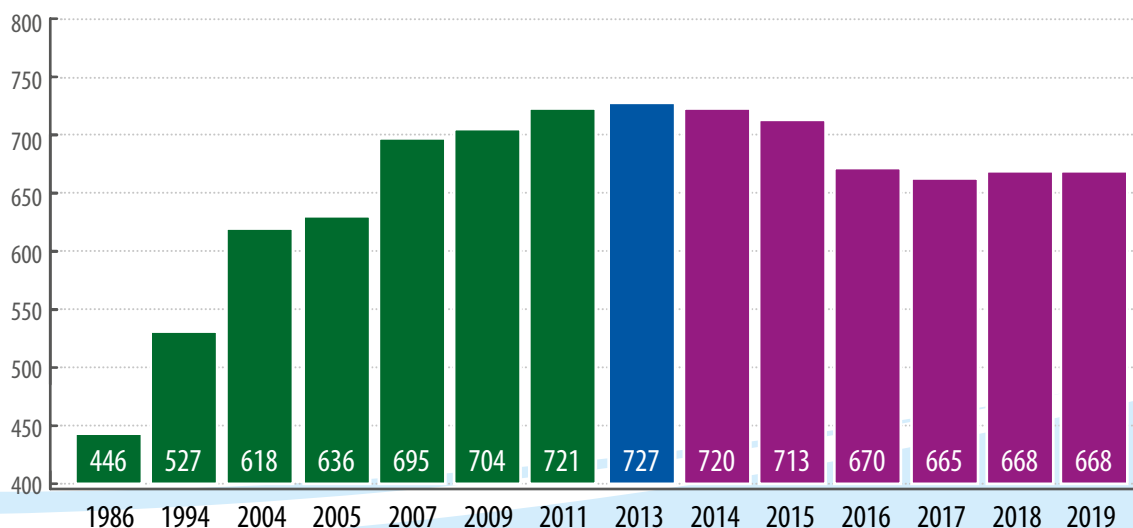
The establishment plan provides information on permanent and temporary posts available to the institution. As part of the administrative budget for the EESC, it is subject to annual approval by the budgetary authorities. In line with Internal Control Standard No 3 (see box), posts are allocated to the organisational entities according to the EESC's political priorities so that the general secretariat can fulfil its mission: to provide optimal support to EESC members.

Reflecting various waves of enlargement, the number of posts in the establishment plan grew steadily until 2013, when the maximum number of posts reached 727 (see graph 3). The EU institutions were then instructed to cut the number of their staff by 1% each year from 2013 to 2017. Thus, 34 posts were returned to the budgetary authority between 2013 and 2017. Brexit and potential financial restrictions under the Multiannual Financial Framework might lead to further post cuts in the future.

In 2018, in accordance with the practices applied in all institutions, the EESC put into place a set of 16 internal control standards:

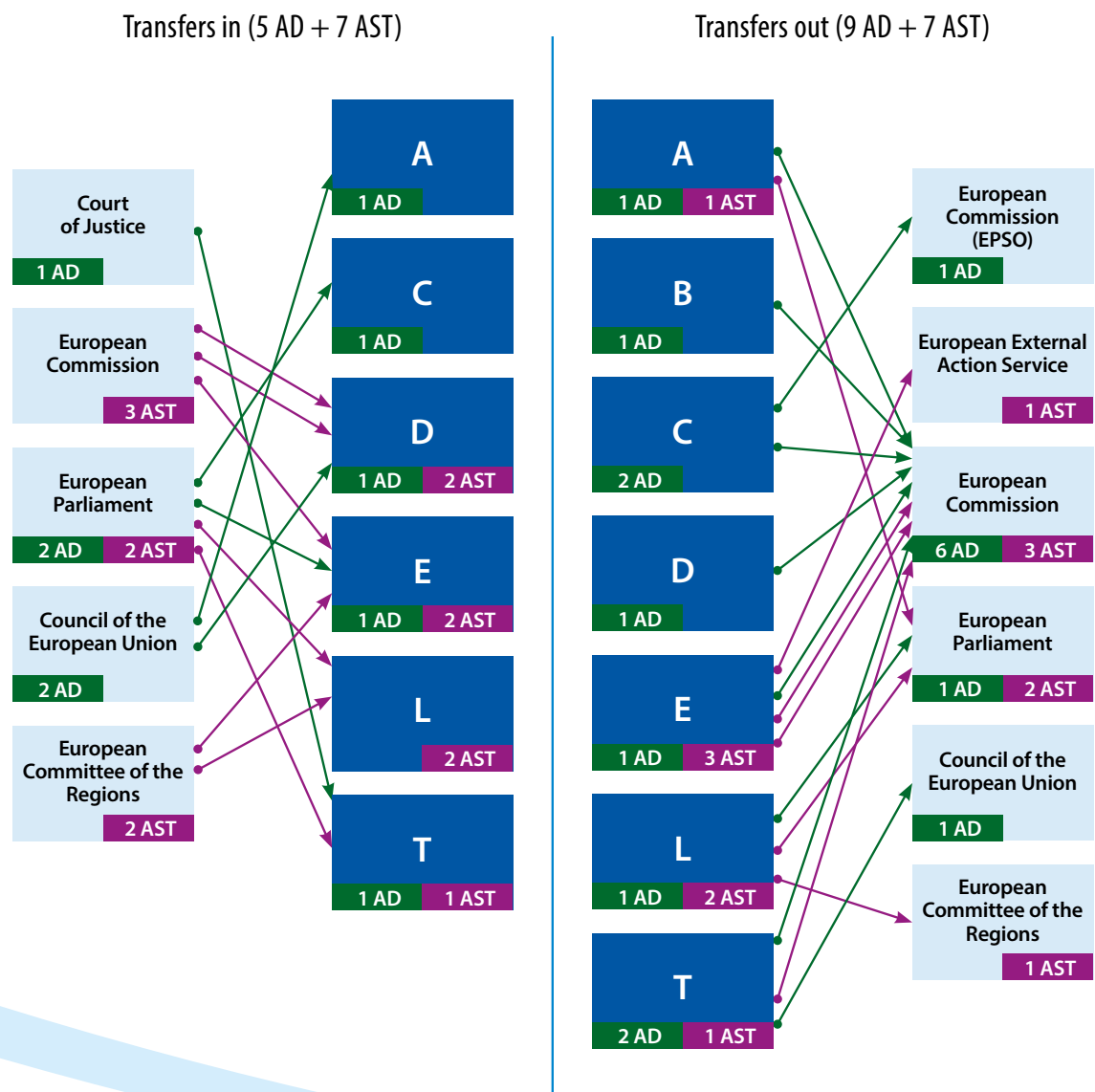
- ICS 1 Mission
- ICS 2 Ethical and organisational values
- ICS 3 Staff Allocation and Mobility
- ICS 4 Staff evaluation and development
- ICS 5 Objectives and performance indicators
- ICS 6 Risk management process
- ICS 7 Operational structure
- ICS 8 Processes and procedures
- ICS 9 Management supervision
- ICS 10 Business continuity
- ICS 11 Document management
- ICS 12 Information and communication
- ICS 13 Accounting and financial reporting
- ICS 14 Evaluation of Activities
- ICS 15 Assessment of Internal Control Systems
- ICS 16 Internal Audit Capability

Graph 3: Development of posts in the establishment plan



In addition, the EESC transferred 36 posts to the European Parliament (EP) when implementing the appendix on administrative cooperation to the cooperation agreement between both committees and the EP. Therefore, the overall number of EESC posts decreased by 10% between 2013 and 2017. Since then, the overall number of posts increased slightly to build up capacity for Irish translation. The significant decrease in the number of posts over the last six years calls for more efficiency in working methods, requiring efforts to create more synergies and to rationalise, digitalise and modernise working procedures.

Graph 4: Staff flows in 2018: transfers to and from other EU institutions



The establishment plan stipulates the number of posts in each function group. The reform of the Staff Regulations in 2014 introduced a new category of staff: secretary/clerk (AST/SC) for the performance of clerical and secretarial tasks. The EESC, along with the other EU institutions, is required to gradually convert a certain number of AST posts to this new category. Up until now, 38 posts have been converted to this new category, representing 11% of all AST posts. Compared to other EU institutions, the EESC is one of the most advanced in the conversion of these posts.

It should be noted that this conversion required by the Budgetary Authority might have an impact on geographical balance in this staff category.

The number of staff transferred from other institutions has stayed relatively stable. Last year, 12 officials arrived from another institution (compared to 12 in 2017 and 10 in 2016). On the other hand, 16 staff members moved from the EESC to other institutions, which is an increase compared to the 9 departures registered in 2017 (see graph 4).

In 2016, the HR Planning and Training unit started to carry out exit interviews with officials leaving the institution, either moving to another institution or going on retirement. The interviews are done on a voluntary basis and the collected information is reported in an aggregated form to respect the anonymity of respondents. The aim is to better understand the general profile of leaving officials, their motivations and their socio-demographic data.

In 2018, 35 colleagues were invited for an exit interview and 28 of them accepted the invitation. With regards to those moving to another institution, the main reason for leaving the EESC was an attractive job offer and the opportunity for more in-depth development in a specific field of expertise offered by other – bigger – institutions. Given the small size of the EESC, career possibilities for specialists in terms of horizontal mobility are unfortunately limited. Nevertheless, respondents in general rated very highly the EESC working environment, expressing appreciation for its modern flexible working time arrangements, the openness and availability of management and the positive relationships with colleagues, stating that it is the small size of the institution itself that makes possible an easier cooperation and communication between services.

3. Recruitment – officials, temporary and contract agents, seconded national experts and agency staff

Timely recruitment of the necessary qualified and dedicated permanent officials and other servants is crucial to enable the EESC to ensure support to members in exercising their role.

In a context of general budgetary restriction and cuts in resources, it is essential for the EESC to focus on attracting, engaging and retaining talent.

3.1 Officials

During 2018, focus was placed on the professionalisation of selection procedures and recruitment processes, mainly through the following measures:

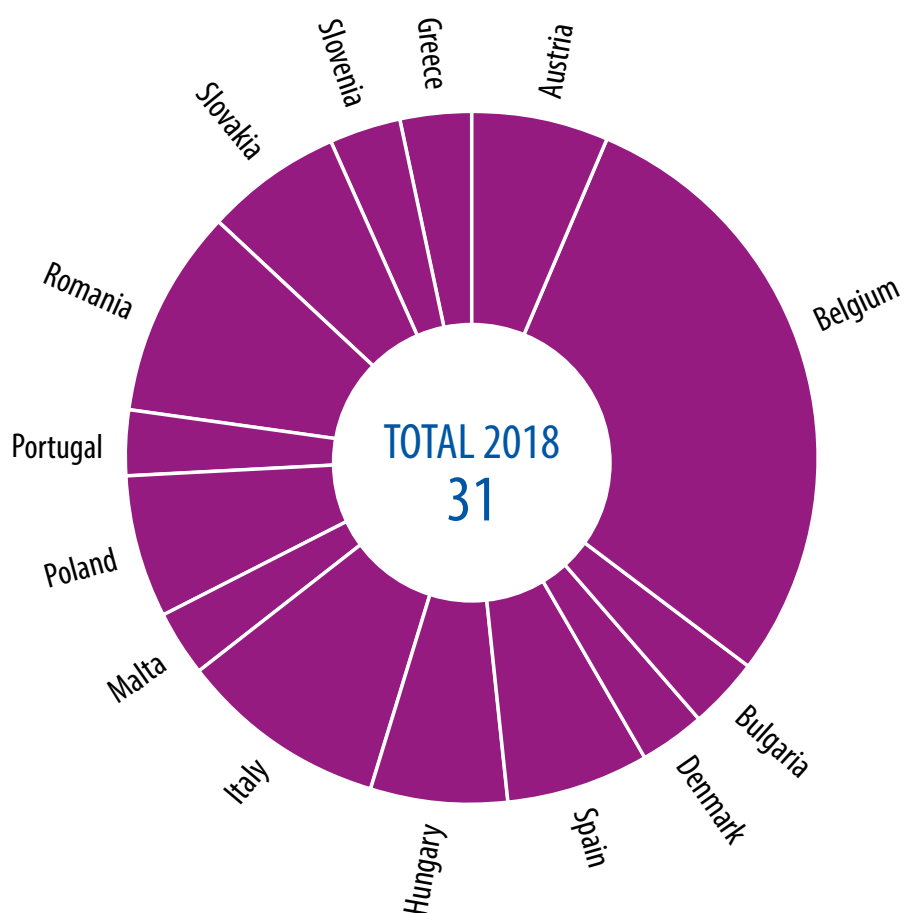
- Establishing synergies with other services in the Directorate for Human Resources and Finance through increased use of shared platforms;
- Regular participation of HR staff in selection panels; HR correspondents (i.e. dedicated contact points for HR matters in their directorate) can also represent HR during interviews;
- Harmonising, coordinating and – as much as possible – automating HR processes, working methods, reporting and communication between various services (e.g. an electronic workflow to speed-up requests for *ad hoc* support);
- Implementing the recommendations further to the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) inspection report of June 2018, in compliance with the data protection regulation: revision and publication of a data protection notice on recruitment (update of privacy statements, declaration of confidentiality and of absence of conflict of interest for selection panel members), destruction of personal data in accordance with the established retention periods.

In 2018, 49 vacancy notices were published, of which nine were closed without recruitment and 11 procedures are still ongoing. More details on the applications received are shown in table 1, while graph 5 displays successful candidates of selection procedures by nationality. The high number of applications, both internal and external, shows the attractiveness of the EESC as an employer.

Table 1: Applications received in 2018

49 VACANCY NOTICES PUBLISHED			
Total applications received	357	Men	196
		Women	161
Internal applications	51		
Applications from other EU institutions	101		
Applications from EPSO laureates	205		

Graph 5: Successful candidates by nationality

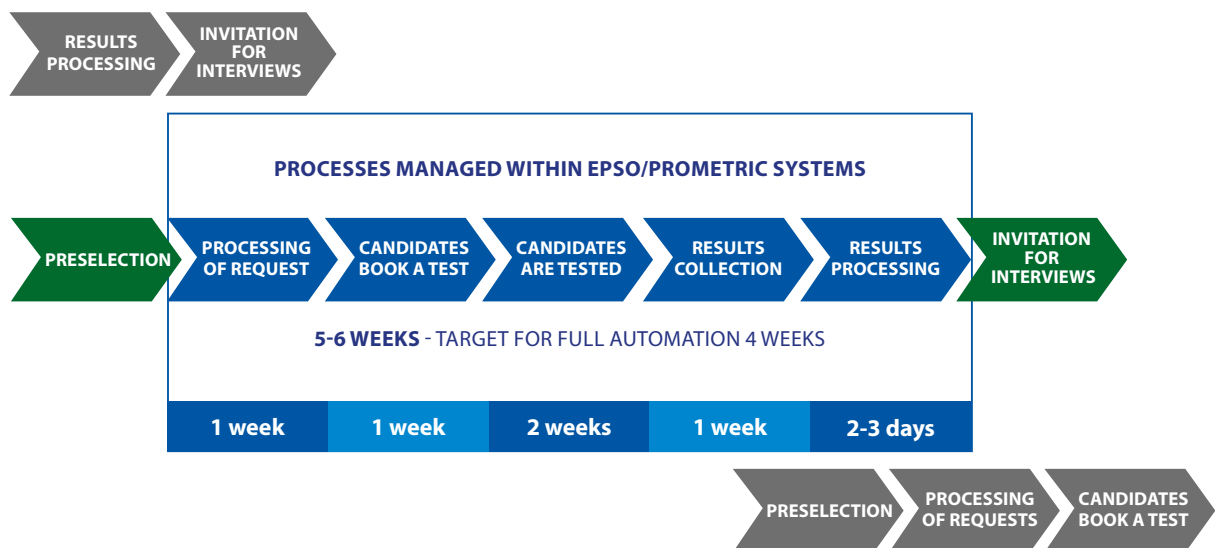


3.2 Temporary agents, contract agents, seconded national experts and agency staff

Since 2017, the "CAST PERMANENT" managed by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), serving all EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, has provided a common legally binding framework for the selection and recruitment of non-permanent staff. Recruiters have access to the database of applications and are able to shortlist a number of candidates whose profiles best suit the vacancies. Selected candidates have to pass a multiple-choice computer-based test (CBT) comprising cognitive capacity tests (verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning) and a competency test (knowledge in the field of specialisation), before being eligible for an interview and possibly being recruited.

Although this new tool facilitates the screening of suitable candidates, it considerably increases the average duration of the recruitment of an agent: once potential candidates have been pre-identified by recruiting services, the automated processes managed by EPSO might take up to six weeks (see graph 6). The whole recruitment process, including the preselection phase and the administrative phase afterwards, may take up to three months.

Graph 6: Processes managed within EPSO/Prometric systems



The length of this mechanism requires increased anticipation of staff reinforcement: hence, flexible arrangements and a "pooling" approach is preferred. It consists of temporary assignment of polyvalent skilled agents within services facing a sustained enhanced workload or long-term absences of staff. The advantage for the agents is that they receive a longer term contract, giving them more stability while enabling them to develop skills and experience that will prove to be an asset in their future career.

Recruiting qualified and committed staff at all levels is essential to help members achieve maximum policy impact, in particular as technology and working methods evolve.

Internal redeployment of staff accompanied by appropriate training also aims at providing members with political and administrative support.

3.3 Trainees

Like other EU institutions, the EESC offers traineeships for a period of five months to university graduates (long-term traineeships). These periods of in-service training offer an opportunity to learn about the EESC's role and activities and to acquire professional experience in a multicultural environment. Trainees work in various parts of the EESC secretariat and are paid a monthly grant.

In addition to these two sessions of long-term traineeships, unpaid traineeships for short periods (between one and three months) are occasionally available for university students and recent graduates. When places are limited, priority is given to applicants for whom such a traineeship is compulsory for the completion of their studies.

In 2018, the EESC hosted a total of 51 long-term trainees and 12 short-term trainees.

4. Career development

4.1 Appraisal and promotion

The annual appraisal report is an essential human resources management tool for assessing performance. It gives a clear and detailed picture of what staff members do and their level of responsibility, assesses their professional qualities and evaluates whether their performance has been satisfactory. The appraisal report exercise is stipulated by the Staff Regulations (Article 43). The annual assessment helps to compare staff members' merits with a view to their career development and is a way to identify possible training needs so as to improve skills, output and conduct in the service.

In 2018, 634 EESC staff members received appraisal reports covering the previous year (574 officials, 40 temporary agents and 20 contract agents). In accordance with Annex IB of the Staff Regulations which allows an average promotion rate of between 15% and 33%, depending on the grade, 149 officials were promoted on 01/01/2018. Roughly 30% of those promotions concerned junior staff (AST1-AST3 or AD5-AD6), which is in tune with the aim of supporting career development in entrance grades.

In line with the objective of rationalising working methods, significant efforts were made to modernise the entire appraisal process. An electronic workflow for the annual appraisal procedure called EVA has been developed with a view to replacing the former paper and manual process. The IT project started in July 2017 and was finalised in time for the 2017 appraisal round launched during the first half of 2018.

With the help of this electronic workflow, both the assessors and HR administration have been able to manage the process more easily and rapidly. This made the assessment procedure more effective, making it possible to spend more time on the content and on supporting staff members rather than on dealing with red tape. The electronic workflow has been evaluated by the various stakeholders and, based on their feedback, some adaptations were implemented for the next exercise launched early in 2019.

4.2 Certification

In accordance with Article 45a) of the Staff Regulations, the "certification" procedure provides a limited number of officials in the assistants' function group (AST from grade 5 and above) with the opportunity to be selected for a training programme with a view to becoming administrators (AD) after passing several exams.

In 2017, the General Implementing Provisions (GIPs) adopted in 2005 were revised to better meet the needs of the institution and to improve the selection procedure for this specific training programme. More focus is now placed on the needs of the service, continued training throughout the career, language knowledge (EN or FR), the content of tasks already performed and the candidates' motivation to become AD. The certification panel interviews the candidates as part of the selection process.

Due to budget cuts and fewer successful candidates of EPSO AD competitions being recruited, only one official for the 2018-2019 certification exercise has been selected to participate in the training programme.

Since the first certification exercise in 2005, 24 EESC colleagues have successfully completed the certification programme, and 21 of the successful candidates were appointed to an AD post before 31 December 2018.

4.3 Mobility

At the EESC, mobility is seen as a tool for making the general secretariat more effective. It allows staff members to extend their area of competence while boosting motivation and engagement.

Although the EESC actively promotes mobility, the small size of the institution limits the possibilities available to EESC officials. Regular monitoring of the average length of assignment in permanent posts (all officials except staff working in the Directorate for Translation) shows that on average EESC permanent staff spend six years on one job. Table 2 shows the differences between various function and age groups. Mobility is a particular challenge for staff approaching retirement.

Table 2: Average length of assignments by function group and age (2015 - 2018)

Age group	AD		AST		SC		Total	
	Headcount	Years of assignment	Headcount	Years of assignment	Headcount	Years of assignment	Headcount	Years of assignment
24-29	1	0.33	0	0.00	1	0.16	2	0.25
30-39	22	2.40	31	3.45	4	2.35	57	2.97
40-49	55	6.59	98	5.42	6	2.11	159	5.70
50-59	62	4.46	76	9.14	0	0.00	138	7.04
60-66	6	7.24	16	10.86	0	0.00	22	9.88
Total	145	4.25	221	7.29	11	2.02	378	5.99

31/12/2017	113	4.01	230	6.65	11	1.51	354	5.65
31/12/2016	109	3.49	235	6.15	10	0.60	354	5.17
31/12/2015	98	3.58	239	6.15			337	5.41

* Except for staff in the translation units.

The trend of previous years shows a slight increase in the average length of assignment throughout all function groups.

The 2016 staff survey showed some dissatisfaction with the limited career possibilities. Based on exit interviews, possible reasons for this are that, as a small institution, the EESC employs a certain number of specialists whose expertise would be lost outside their particular field. This applies particularly to staff working in IT, security or infrastructure, as well as to specialists in a certain policy field. If these staff members wish to change jobs but prefer to stay in their field of expertise, the only solution is often to change to another institution.

Some staff members have successfully made a job move within the Committee – even after long experience in one specific field (e.g. translators who changed to the own services) – thus being able to explore a new job and working environment. In order to stimulate mobility within the general secretariat, the EESC has put several encouraging measures in place.

In 2015, **structural mobility** for managers, administrators in grades AD5-AD7, senior assistants and officials whose job entails some sensitive functions was established. Once their names are published on the mobility lists, the officials have two years to change job or to take up the offer of personalised career guidance. The Joint Mobility Committee has established an in-depth report pointing out the various restraints on implementing an effective mobility policy, such as the limited number of – sometimes specialised – posts in the EESC (including some management posts), no established register for posts with sensitive functions, and no register of specialised posts. For a fully implemented, effective mobility policy, these issues must be solved.

The EESC encourages all forms of **internal mobility**, as learning on the job proves to be the most effective form of learning and gaining experience. Therefore, while internal transfers to a vacant post (following an official selection procedure after publication of a post) are encouraged, informal job assignments such as a temporary "placement at disposal" ("mise à disposition") are also promoted. In this case, a staff member is temporarily assigned to another unit for a limited period – either to replace an absent colleague or to reinforce a team facing a particularly high workload during a specific period. This approach enables the individual to discover another area of work while still being able to return to his/her post.

Those wishing to learn more about another entity within the EESC can also apply for **job shadowing**. This initiative was first implemented in 2016, and since then 62 staff members have taken part in various job shadowing rounds. Feedback has shown that all the objectives were met: breaking down silos through better cooperation between various services, networking and facilitating a possible internal transfer.

Job shadowing has thus become a regular exercise in the EESC that is increasingly well known; in addition to that, other EU institutions like the CoR, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors and the European Court of Justice have shown great interest in the EESC's practice, and are offering this exercise to their staff as well.

4.4 Career guidance

Together with other HR policies such as proper planning of resources and providing learning and development possibilities, career guidance plays an important part in the overarching objective of making optimal use of human (and financial) resources.

Career guidance officers provide individual and confidential counselling to staff members at their request in all career-related fields. Depending on the individual need, this may include tests on professional preferences or motivation, information on possible job vacancies, or guidance on specific requirements in a selection procedure, e.g. drafting a CV or motivation letter or holding a mock interview.

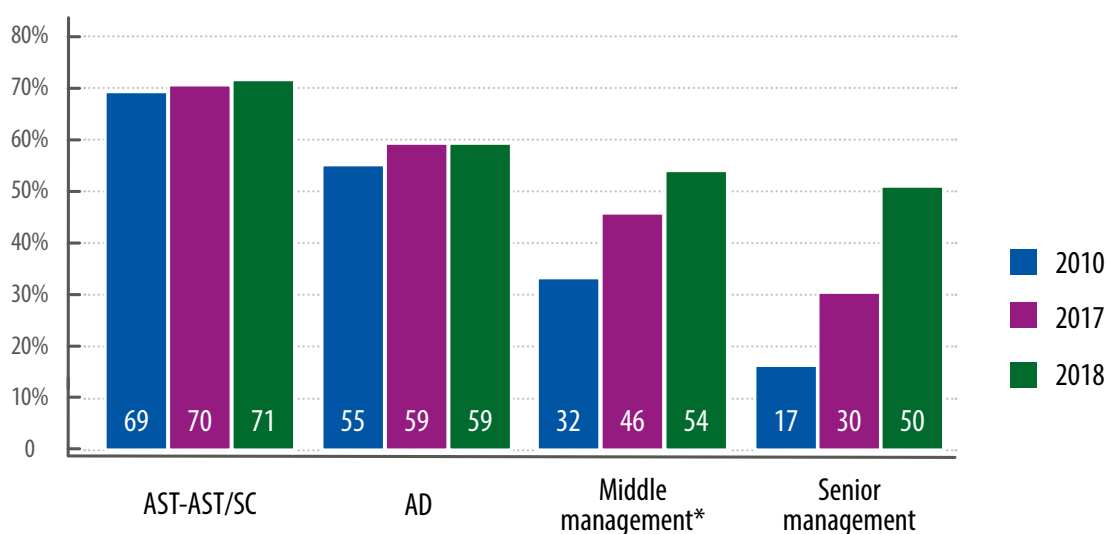
In 2018, a total of 28 interested staff members received tailored assistance; following one or more career guidance sessions, more than a quarter of them were able to make a permanent or temporary career move.

5. Equal opportunities and diversity

The EESC general secretariat undertakes to establish a respectful and inclusive working environment in which every individual is respected and differences are valued.

In 2018, the proportion of women within the EESC general secretariat remained the same as the previous year, meaning that almost two thirds of EESC staff are women; the gender proportions in both AST and AD function groups also remained unchanged compared to 2017 (see graph 7). On the other hand, there were considerable developments as regards gender balance in management positions. Due to the retirement of predominantly male managers and the subsequent appointment to management posts of seven women and one man in 2018, women represented 54% of middle managers (including acting heads of unit) and 50% of senior managers at the end of 2018. With these figures, the EESC takes one of the leading positions among the EU institutions as regards gender balance in management positions.

Graph 7: Proportion of women by function group and management position (2010 – 2018)

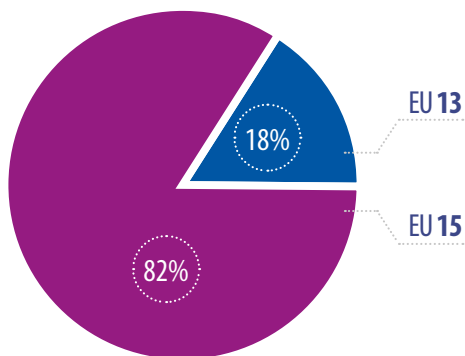


* Including acting Heads of unit.

A slight improvement was also reached in the geographical balance of managers. Due to the appointment of two managers from post 2004 enlargement Member States, the proportion of managers from EU 13 countries raised from 16% in 2017 to 18% in December 2018 (see graph 8)¹.

¹ The EESC counts 19 British staff members. According to the decision approved by the Bureau in June 2018, UK officials will continue working for the EESC after Brexit.

Graph 8: Geographical balance of managers 2018



Besides reaching a better geographical and in particular gender balance in management positions, the EESC general secretariat was also very active in promoting and raising awareness of various diversity aspects, implementing its Action Plan for Equal Opportunities and Diversity (2017-2020). The most important actions carried out in 2018 were the following.

Together with the CoR and the EESC Joint Committees for Equal Opportunities (COPECs), two lunchtime conferences were organised: in March, on International Women's Day, a representative of the European Institute

for Gender Equality (EIGE) presented the work carried out by this institute on the gender equality index, and in May, on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT), the EESC and the CoR marked their solidarity by hanging rainbow banners within their buildings and organising a debate on the state of play of LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queers) rights in the European Union. In November, a participative workshop addressed the topic of an ageing workforce, which might influence a series of HR policies in the future.

The EESC continues to demonstrate a firm commitment to preventing and/or combating harassment and promoting a respectful workplace at all levels. In the event of any difficulty in workplace relations, staff members can contact the confidential counsellors, whose role is to listen, provide information and support colleagues in complete confidentiality.

In 2018, various awareness initiatives were organised, e.g. monthly presentations to newcomers and presentations of confidential counsellors to managers and other target groups. Colleagues are encouraged to come to see a confidential counsellor as early as possible about any workplace issue that is causing concern. This has contributed to a climate where in general staff members feel more comfortable contacting confidential counsellors, who – as in previous years – have been consulted on issues such as conflict with other colleagues and/or the hierarchy, concerns about management style, perceived harassment, information and other issues. In 2018, the EESC opened one administrative enquiry in relation to perceived harassment.

Following a call for expressions of interest in 2018, the network of confidential counsellors will be reinforced by additional colleagues once they have completed their training in early 2019. In order to promote respectful workplace relations, in the autumn of 2018

DHRF began to plan a series of conferences and participatory events focusing on a fair, inclusive and ethical work environment. This awareness-raising campaign will continue throughout 2019.

Important achievements were also made in the field of awareness raising on disability issues. In November, workshops on motor, visual and hearing impairments were organised for members and staff. The participants were put in situations similar to those that people with these kinds of disability face on a daily basis. In addition to these practical exercises, a quiz with questions related to disability was organised. The event led to interesting exchanges between the participants and the facilitators of the workshop and was perceived as a real eye-opener. The workshops were supported by the Permanent study group on disability rights which also had interesting exchanges of views with the Equal Opportunities Officer and the President of the Joint Committee for Equal Opportunities.

During 2018, the EESC welcomed four trainees with various kinds of disabilities. Their feedback was very important for both further improvement and actions to facilitate the integration of staff with disabilities. Besides adapting some existing installations to the specific needs of colleagues with disabilities, the entrance hall of the Jacques Delors building was completely renovated according to the principle "Design for all".

The feedback received had positive repercussions beyond the EESC's own organisational framework: presented to the interinstitutional network of Equal Opportunities Officers, it led to joint efforts by European institutions in this field. As a first result, the interinstitutional guide "AccessAble Brussels" was drafted. The guide provides all necessary information related to the recognition of disability, adapted accommodation or accessible transport for newcomers with disabilities moving to Brussels. When it was presented on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), the EESC President joined other high-level representatives of the Brussels-based institutions in reiterating their commitment to employ persons with disabilities and to improve their working conditions. Furthermore, a high-level meeting with the representatives of the regional government in December focused on poor accessibility of public areas and public transport in Brussels.

In line with these initiatives, the EESC Intranet is responsive in both English and French and it is digitally accessible to persons with visual impairment. The EESC website, based on Drupal technology, is also fully responsive and adapted to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, compliance level AA. These guidelines have also been partially followed to do the layout of the present report.

In accordance with the action plan, various measures are planned for 2019, such as lunchtime conferences on various topics, communication of dashboards with a demographic analysis of the members of the teams and continuous improvements in the working conditions of workers with disabilities. In June 2019, the EESC, together with the CoR, hosted the interinstitutional conference InterCOPEC dedicated to disability.

6. Learning and development

Learning and development play a very important role in EESC HR policy as it is not only closely linked to efficient resource management at a time of limited budgetary resources, but it also contributes largely to staff motivation and to a positive working environment. Lifelong learning and development is necessary to meet the challenges faced in a fast-changing and complex world. It is also the way to deal with professional challenges, fill knowledge gaps and stay engaged and motivated throughout the entire career.

Three long-awaited new training rooms in the Bertha von Suttner building were inaugurated in June 2018. Light rooms with flexible furniture allow for both traditional classroom training, as well as various sorts of participatory events with staff and members. Depending on current needs, a flexible wall can be removed to create one large room, allowing for groups of up to 40 participants, whereas a smaller break-out room is used for individual or group coaching. More than 100 events (for both the EESC and the CoR) took place in the new premises in the second half of 2018, including team-building sessions, info-sessions and training courses of all sorts and formats. The feedback from both participants and trainers was extremely positive.

6.1 Training courses for members

Training courses for members are available in English or French at the EESC before or after plenary sessions and they cover the following domains:

- Communication (online communication on twitter, presentation techniques and media skills);
- IT (members' portal, opinion search and online reimbursement system);
- Role of the EESC in the policy-making process (the objective of this training session is to get an overview of the rationale behind the Committee's activities – both within and outside of the institutional framework).

In addition to regular IT training sessions, the IT Service and the Services for Members unit offer individual coaching on how to submit reimbursement claims on Wednesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. and on Thursdays from 9 to 11 a.m. during plenary sessions. These coaching sessions focus on how to use the online reimbursement system (access, filling in forms,

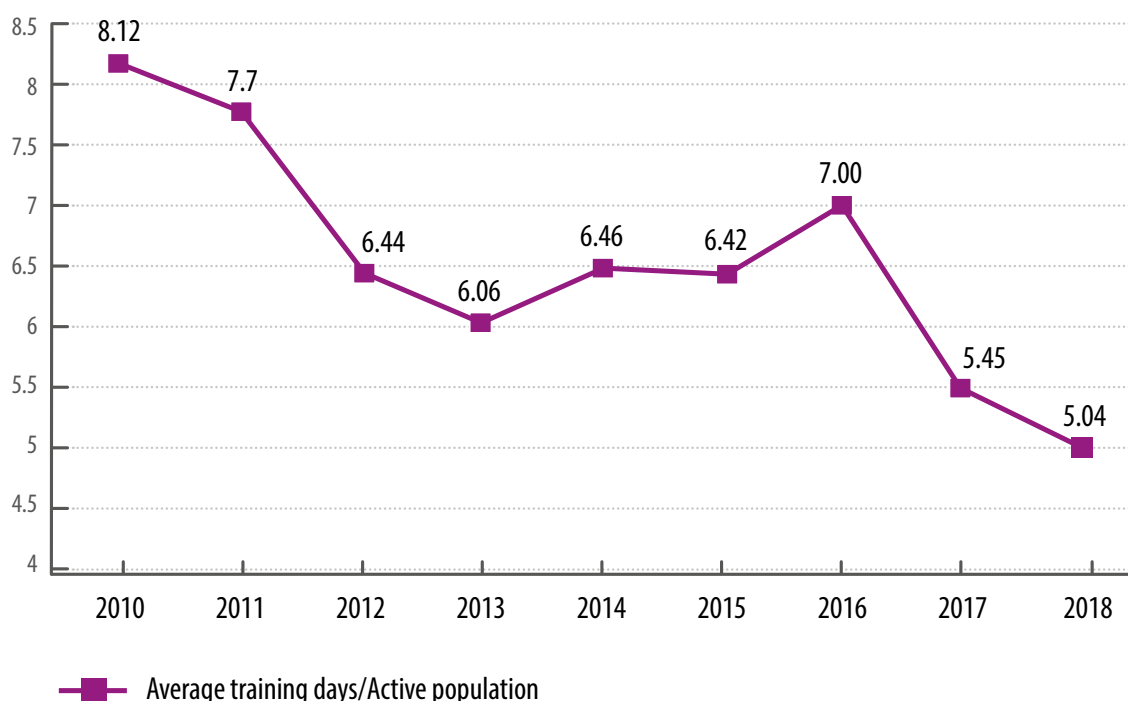
scanning, attaching supporting documents, etc.). Using the online reimbursement system ensures that reimbursement claim procedures are paperless and more efficient, and are therefore processed more quickly.

In 2018, the general secretariat carried out a thorough reflection on how to diversify members' training courses and propose a better-targeted training programme as of 2020. Consequently, in December 2018, the Bureau decided to set up an *ad hoc* group composed of the questors and three members of the Budget Group to reflect on how to improve the training offer for members.

6.2 Training courses for staff

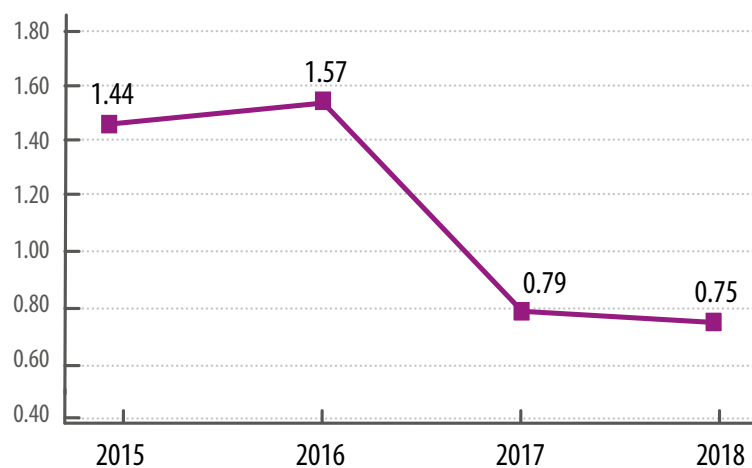
Feedback from staff via various channels (feedback questionnaire in EU Learn, staff survey, exit interviews, etc.) show that they very much appreciate the training courses on offer and the possibility of personal development. However, due to high workload and less resources participation in training activities is sometimes difficult to combine with the service needs. In particular, this was the case in the second half of 2018, when the number of EESC opinions was extremely high.

Graph 9: Average training days/Active population (2010 – 2018)



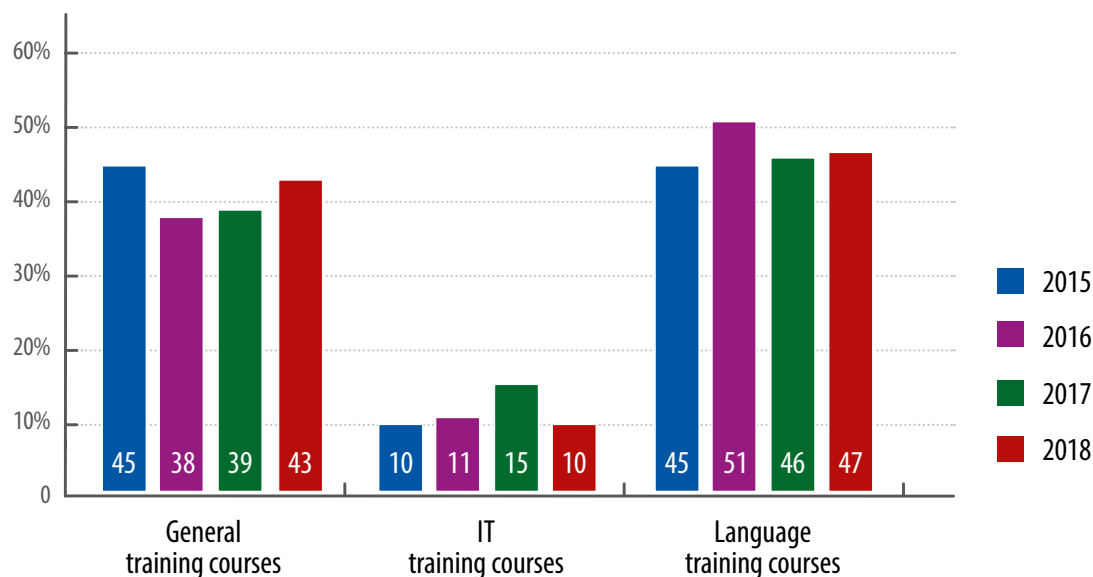
Graph 9 gives evidence that in 2018 staff globally spent less time on training activities, and that the duration of such activities was shorter than in the past (see graph 10). The average duration of a training session organised at the EESC follows last year's trend and is now at 0.75 days. Shorter info sessions and more individual coaching sessions are partially replacing traditional full day training courses. This is also in line with the strategic framework for learning and development, which recognises that we learn mainly on the job and via social learning from colleagues and peers, and only to a lesser extent in formal classroom courses.

Graph 10: Average duration of training sessions in days (2015 – 2018)



In order to transfer newly acquired knowledge to the workplace, a number of IT courses were converted into individual coaching sessions of 1.5hr per person. This trend has an immediate effect on the total number of hours spent on IT training courses and explains the lower share of time spent on IT courses compared to that spent on other domains (see graph 11).

Graph 11: Evolution of time spent on training courses per category (expressed in %)



Through a service level agreement with the European Commission, EESC staff have access to training courses in the Commission. This is in particular the case for language training ("interinstitutional language classes"), which account for almost half of the time spent in training courses; this can be explained by the following reasons:

- It takes a big effort and time investment to learn a language (a full cycle to learn a language up to level B2 comprises six courses of each 60 hours);
- Very good knowledge of English and French is necessary for all staff, as these are the languages mostly used in the Committee for all internal communication;
- Before the first promotion, officials must demonstrate the ability to work in a third language.

Another important partner in the field of Learning and Development is the European School of Administration (EUSA), which offers a wide range of management training courses for all EU institutions. Managers from smaller institutions like the EESC particularly appreciate the possibility to exchange views and learn from peers of other institutions.

7. Rights and obligations/Pensions

DHRF manages the financial entitlements of staff members from their entry into service until their departure from the institution. DHRF also manages the files of 430 beneficiaries (pensioners, staff members receiving invalidity allowances, widows and orphans) regarding their personal, financial and family situation. This is done in compliance with the Staff Regulations and the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

In order to ensure compliance with the practice of other EU institutions and with a view to the uniform application of the Staff Regulations, the EESC is represented in various interinstitutional fora, such as the Staff Regulations Committee, the Preparatory Committee for Staff Regulations Questions (CPQS) and the latter's working groups. The general approach of the EESC is to strive towards as much consensus as possible at an interinstitutional level.

The HR management tool used for staff's financial entitlements from their entry into service until their departure from the institution is the European Commission's Sysper programme, through a service level agreement (SLA).

The Rights and Obligations/Pensions team offers an in-house proximity service, designed to respond to staff needs in a timely and resource-efficient manner. It aims to secure a settlement process which is as smooth as possible and allows EESC staff members to concentrate on their core tasks.

With regard to pensions, an SLA is in place: the EESC acts as Appointing Authority while the European Commission's Paymaster Office (PMO) manages payments. Discussions are ongoing with the PMO to finalise an SLA on the management of staff entitlements. The proposals currently on the table need further clarification, both in terms of the level of service provided and their impact on the EESC's budgetary and decision-making power.

8. Working conditions

8.1 Emoluments

The EESC planned to modernise the system of salary payments in 2018, implementing the mass payment module of Payment Factory² by signing an SLA with the PMO, owner of the product. All necessary tests took place in 2017 and 2018 and the EESC is ready for implementation. The SLA is now set to be signed in the first half of 2019 due to changes in the chargeback methodology at the PMO which caused delays.

This modernisation involves mass payments instead of individual payments of salaries, and the possibility to further implement other Payment Factory modules so that certain aspects linked to salary payment can be automated.

8.2 Working time arrangements

In a changing working environment, increasingly dependent on new technologies, the existing policies of various working time arrangements contribute to making the EESC an attractive employer by combining a high quality working environment with a good work-life balance for all staff members.

Flexible working time arrangements can be seen as one form of the institution's duty of care for its staff, as they make it possible to support staff during difficulties such as caring duties, sickness and convalescence (of the staff member or a dependent person), death of a relative, or significant changes in their private life such as maternity or preparation for retirement.

In addition to this, flexible working conditions can be a competitive advantage compared to other employers (or more specifically other EU institutions) and thus attract talent; more globally, it can contribute to fostering loyalty and combat absenteeism, making an organisation more responsive to change. Highly motivated staff who have a satisfying work-life balance can offer better services to members.

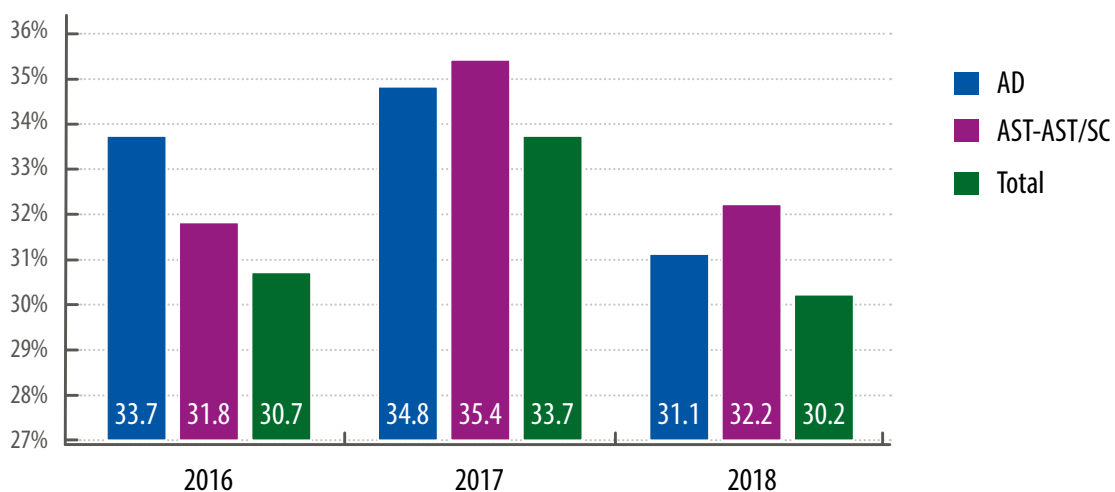
² Payment Factory is an interface owned by PMO and developed by DIGIT. This interface links up the files prepared by the pay application (NAP) and the financial and accounting applications at the EESC (ABAC & SAP), mainly by connecting the corresponding Legal Entity and Bank Account.

8.2.1 Staff flexibility/Working patterns

A significant proportion (30.16%) of staff members uses some form of statutory work pattern (part-time, time credits, parental/family leave or leave on personal grounds) compared to the full-time working regime, which is 40 hours per week (excluding lunch breaks).

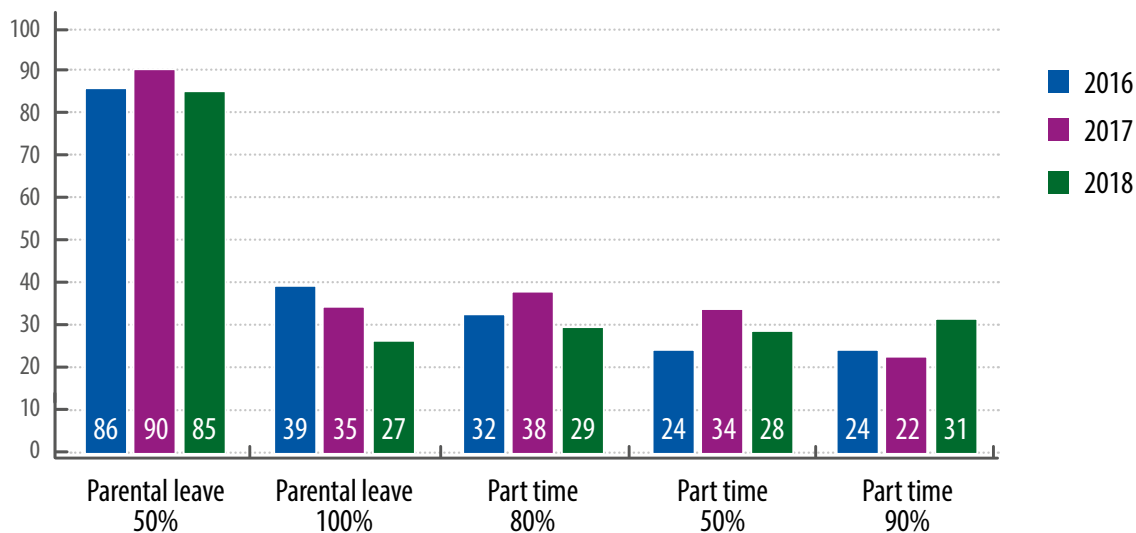
Graph 12 shows that the overall flexibility index decreased in 2018 compared to the two previous years; since 2017, ASTs have had a slightly higher flexibility index than ADs, and this tendency was confirmed in 2018.

Graph 12: Staff flexibility index by function group (2016 – 2018)³



Statutory working time arrangements are managed in Sysper modules that allow staff to register their presences, encode their holidays or possible teleworking days, request a part-time working pattern or follow the registration of their sick leaves. Management, when approving or refusing requests, has a clear overview of the presences and absences of their team at any given moment. The last years saw a certain change in the preferred patterns of part-time arrangements (see graph 13). While the parental leave work pattern of 50% continues to be requested most frequently, the 90% part-time pattern became increasingly interesting. The 40 hours work-week, combined with sometimes long commuting times, is not always easily compatible with a healthy work-life balance.

Graph 13: Five most popular working patterns 2016 – 2018 (number of requests)⁴



The administrative rules encourage parental leave and other flexible work patterns without any discrimination based on gender.

8.2.2 Overtime/Standby duty

In 2018, Sysper was updated to make it possible to record "standby duty", according to Article 56b of the Staff Regulations (which in the EESC applies to security staff only). Due to constraints arising from service needs or safety rules, these officials may be required to remain on standby duty at their place of employment or at home outside normal working hours.

The rules relating to the overtime of drivers have been reviewed and simplified. This revision was important in order to align the EESC's rules with the CoR's. Moreover, in 2019 it will be possible to encode overtime in Sysper which will replace the former IT tool Centurio.

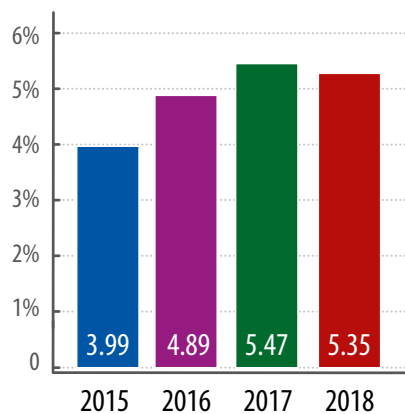
As part of the constant effort to modernise and update the existing rules, the decisions on annual leave and special leave are being revised and guidelines for granting special leave for exceptional work will be drafted.

⁴ The graph refers to the total number of requests; people can request more than one working pattern.

8.2.3 Absence management

The absence rate, meaning all type of absence due to sickness (absence with or without medical certificate and medical part time) had increased since 2015 and seems to have reached its peak in 2017, as it slightly decreased by 0.12% in 2018 (see graph 14).

Graph 14: Absence rate (2015 – 2018)



Close contacts are maintained with the Health Service to reinforce absence management and implement an efficient return-to-work policy. Medical part time may be granted in specific cases, particularly after long-term absences, to facilitate the return-to-work process, and is a preventive measure to avoid further sickness absences. This policy has also started to bear fruit in the context of psychosocial risk management and the Health Service will continue to work with the Time Management Team to reinforce absence management so as to implement an efficient return-to-work policy.

Managing absences is an important challenge for every organisation given its impact on overall productivity and performance; this is particularly true in a period of resource cuts. Ensuring high standards of day to day organisational management should reduce the risks associated with work-related psychosocial health issues.

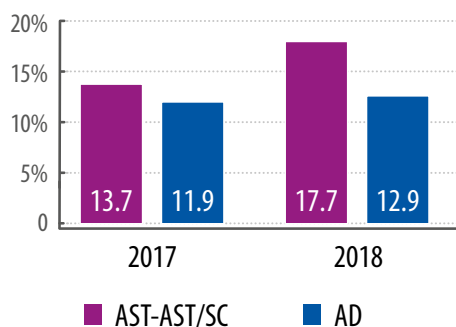
8.3 Telework

While new technologies may sometimes put additional strain on staff, they can also open up new ways of remote working. Teleworking is a method of organising and carrying out work using information and communication technology that allows staff to perform their duties outside the workplace. It allows more flexible work organisation and a better work-life balance of staff by increasing autonomy.

There are mutual benefits for the employer and staff: more flexibility in the event of commuting or mobility problems, an environmentally responsible attitude on the part of the EESC, better work-life balance, higher job satisfaction and increased staff motivation because of a higher degree of autonomy and sense of responsibility. Teleworking is now a fully integrated working method; the rules were last updated in 2016.

Two types of telework are used in the EESC: structural telework where staff work remotely on up to 2.5 days a week on a regular basis, and occasional telework for up to 28 days a year following ad hoc requests. More than 53% of staff use either structural and/or occasional telework.

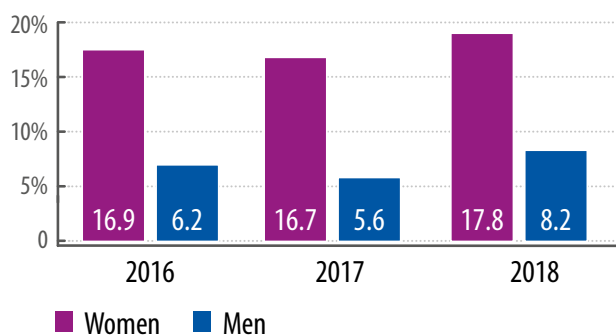
Graph 15: Structural telework per function group (2017 – 2018)



In 2018, the number of structural teleworkers increased from 90 to 102. With regard to function groups, more AST than AD are teleworking (see graph 15).

Teleworking is often also combined with working time arrangements: 37.25% of structural teleworkers combined teleworking with a part-time work pattern.

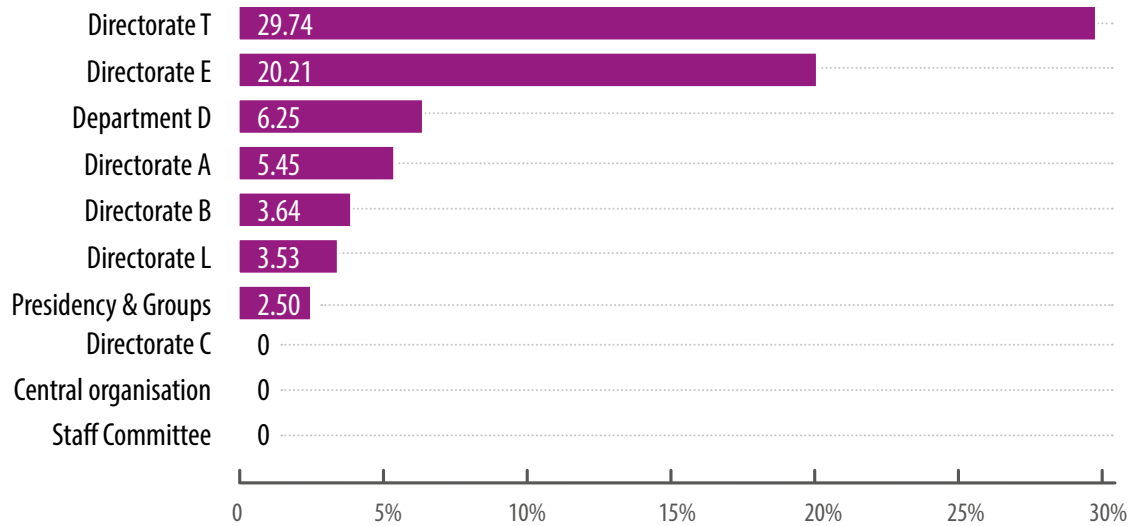
Graph 16: Proportion of structural teleworkers by gender (2016 – 2018)



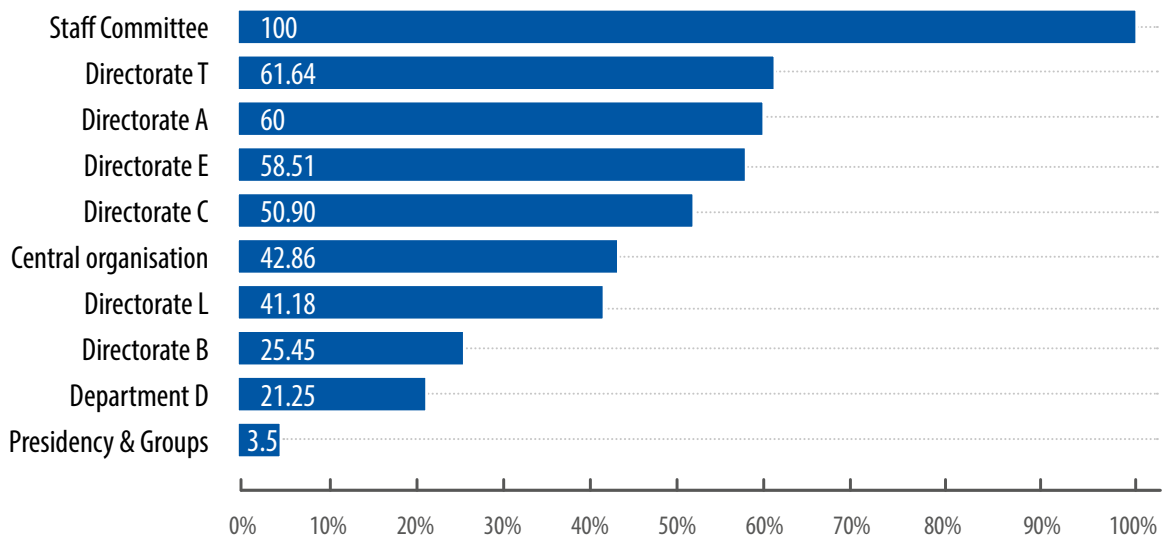
Graph 16 shows that the total number of teleworkers increased in 2018 compared to 2017. While the proportion of women teleworking is still higher than that of men, this proportion is now in line with the overall gender distribution within the EESC.

Graphs 17 and 18 show the proportion of structural and occasional teleworkers in the various entities/directorates of the EESC. The highest percentage of teleworkers is in the Directorate for Translation due to the nature of the job. On the other hand, occasional telework is also used in directorates with no or very little structural telework, and may thus help respond to specific challenges in order to combine private and professional life.

Graph 17: Percentage of structural teleworkers by Directorate



Graph 18: Percentage of occasional teleworkers by Directorate



As is done every year, in autumn 2018 a call for expressions of interest in structural telework was launched within the EESC for the following year. A modernised decision on teleworking is in the pipeline to meet the demands of both staff and hierarchy more efficiently.

9. Social policies

9.1 Well-being at work

The adoption of Council Directive 89/391/EEC was a milestone to encourage the improvement of working conditions. Implemented by Belgian law since 1996 ("loi sur le bien-être au travail"), it is also reflected in the Staff Regulations in Article 1e thereof, stating that "Officials in active employment shall be accorded working conditions complying with appropriate health and safety standards at least equivalent to the minimum requirements applicable under measures adopted in these areas pursuant to the Treaties".

Fostering well-being at work is beneficial for both the organisation and individuals. It helps to prevent stress, enhance resilience and increase productivity by creating a positive working environment.

Well-being at work is a broad concept and touches upon several aspects of human resources policies, but it also entails measures which are in the remit of the Directorate for Logistics, such as ergonomics and the canteen. Therefore, DHRF aims to take a horizontal approach, where all services work together to boost the impact of policies and activities. A number of structures and measures to increase the well-being of staff have been in place for years at different levels: staff support, health service, training, etc.

Nevertheless, staff are not always fully aware of what is offered both in house and at interinstitutional level. Therefore, in line with the results of the 2016 staff survey on psychosocial risks (PSR), awareness-raising measures on existing initiatives have been carried out since 2017.

Graph 19: Areas of improvement identified by the 2016 staff survey



Graph 20: "Our well-being at work" logo



A number of measures to respond to the institution's duty of care for all staff have been set up in different fields: return-to-work measures, training courses for managers on how to handle absences, underperformance and conflicts, promotion of well-being training courses, etc.

An important guiding principle is the focus on staff's individual responsibility for their own well-being (empowerment).

The logo "our well-being at work", created to address the issues raised by staff members in the 2016 survey, identifies the following areas that DHRF strives to

address by engaging all staff and managers:

- Respectful workplace relations;
- Physical and mental health;
- Cooperation and trust;
- Individual and collective responsibility.

As staff engagement is crucial for well-being initiatives, since 2018 colleagues have been encouraged to actively join in activities organised for staff by staff, such as:

- A community practising mindfulness with one weekly session at lunchtime open to staff and members;
- Beginning of the series of book presentations "Recommended readings on well-being at work" – topics dealt with in 2018: how to deal with stress at work, harassment in the workplace, mindfulness;
- Walks in the EU neighbourhood with a focus on heritage (in connection with the European Year of Cultural Heritage) and issues closely linked to civil society, such as volunteering or the circular economy.

Activities are open to both staff and members and have been actively promoted via newsletters, the Intranet and poster campaigns in the various buildings. In addition, well-being training courses organised by the EESC as well as by other EU institutions were promoted throughout the year. In the future, the aim is to continue to make staff and members partners, emphasising collective responsibility and engaging them in participatory events.

To further address the findings of the staff survey and following a number of proposals from the report of the Ombudsman on dignity at work, the 2019 Safety and Health programme will be organised jointly by the EESC and CoR under the title "Fostering respectful workplace relations for all". The main activities will be open to both staff and members of both committees in order to reach everyone working in the premises and to raise awareness.

9.2 Health Service

The Health Service promotes a safe and healthy work environment by providing direct medical assistance to members and through preventive actions in the field of occupational medicine for staff. In order to provide optimal support with the resources available, mutual support between the health services of the two committees is constantly enhanced.

The EESC doctor and nurse actively promote health and safety through preventive actions, such as statutory annual medical check-ups, ad hoc consultations, medical follow-up, etc. Regular health campaigns include the administration of flu vaccines and the organisation of screenings to detect different types of cancer in a timely way. Such measures are offered to EESC members and staff alike, as part of the Health Service's mission to inform and prevent physical and mental illness in the workplace.

In addition to this, the EESC's social worker offers professional help to active and retired EESC staff dealing with professional or personal issues (interpersonal relations, disability, bereavement, administrative procedures, etc.). The social worker's tasks are intrinsically linked to those of the medical team as well as to the development of well-being and absence management measures, in cooperation with other teams within the Working Conditions, Rights and Obligations, Pensions unit. The social worker also plays an important role in preventing harassment at work.

9.2.1 Actions taken in 2018

- The Medical Service actively promoted its services to members and welcomed them for annual medical visits or for one-off assistance (see table 3);
- The number of staff annual medical visits remained stable, whilst there has been a significant increase in the number of work-related consultations;

Table 3: Staff and members' check-ups and consultations

	Staff	Members
Annual medical check-up	316	15 (19 lab tests)
Consultation (doctor and nurse)	627	46

- A skin screening campaign was carried out;
- The social worker cooperated closely with the EESC network of confidential counsellors and was actively involved in the renewal of the network;
- As part of the initiatives on recommended readings for well-being at work, the book "Le harcèlement moral" by Marie-France Hirigoyen was presented; organising information sessions was identified as a best practice in the report of the European Ombudsman as a preventive action against harassment;
- As part of the newly created "life cycles conferences", the EESC Medical Service organised the first lunch-time conference on "birth". A presentation was given by a midwife from "Cocon", Belgium's first midwife centre promoting natural birth within a hospital. Along with this conference, a guide for future parents was distributed. In this way, future parents have all information in a single brochure which takes a horizontal approach to the HR services in both committees.

Graph 21: Life cycles conferences logo



9.2.2 Health and Safety for members

The medical service provided by the Committee does not replace members' medical follow-ups in their home country; however, it is available for advice or consultations on health problems which occur while members are present in Brussels in connection with their duties at the EESC.

As part of the Health Service's mission to inform and prevent physical and mental illness in the workplace, a range of preventive measures are offered to EESC members. In 2018, it continued to promote medical prevention services to members via Newsletter and the Intranet. In addition, a new brochure – Medical services for our Members – was published and distributed to members.

Tables 3 and 4 outline various services and the number of members who used them in 2017 and 2018, showing that, except for the flu vaccinations, active promotion did not bring about a significant increase in interest in health promoting activities. On the other hand, members came more frequently for medical consultations.

Table 4: Health promoting activities (2017 – 2018)

	2017		2018	
	Staff	Members	Staff	Members
Hema test (colon cancer screening)	68 handed out 52 returned	2	52 handed out 32 returned	3
Skin cancer screening	160	3	144	9
Flu vaccination	90	21	127	41

The opinion of the medical adviser is regularly requested by quaestors for temporary or long-term help for members with special needs.

The Health Service continues to work closely with other HR services on new initiatives to reduce psychosocial risks in the workplace, specifically as part of the 2019 campaign for respectful workplace relations which is organised for everyone working in the premises. Efforts to promote health and prevention activities for members will continue.

9.3 Support to staff and spouses

Specific activities are arranged to ensure that the EESC continues to be an attractive workplace, such as organising social events and providing practical support for colleagues, partners and families, with particular focus on integration of newly recruited staff. This contributes to staff well-being and creates a sense of belonging which results in more effective and continuous support to members.

Assistance is provided to newly recruited colleagues through welcome sessions and activities organised for them and their families: seminars on assistance for spouses seeking a job in Belgium, general information sessions for spouses and to help colleagues to interact and discover Brussels, as well as access to legal advice from lawyers specialising in Belgian law. Such activities are offered through a service level agreement with the European Commission.

Spouses and partners of officials, agents and seconded national experts may attend language courses (FR/NL/EN) helping them to integrate smoothly into life in Belgium. The EESC contributes to the course fees.

Places in interinstitutional childcare facilities are secured by an institutional contribution.

Support is also available for retired EESC staff: under the agreement with the International Association of Former Staff of the European Union (AIACE), the EESC maintains close contact with retired staff and promotes access to social and medical activities, as well as to specific administrative advice.

The Staff Support team organises recurring events for all staff such as the President's new year's greetings, the annual staff ceremony celebrating staff with 20, 30 or 40 years of service as well as retiring colleagues. Moreover, events in the framework of environment-friendly mobility and the week of Safety and Health at work are organised.

In 2018, the mentoring programme for newcomers was revived (calls for interest, participatory event, training course for future mentors) and the scheme was rolled out at the beginning of 2019. A working group also reflected on the creation of a new Intranet page for newcomers ("Newcomers' Corner"). It aims at facilitating their integration at work and their smooth settlement in Brussels, and will be launched in 2019.

A communication campaign to raise awareness about existing support and courses available to staff members and their families will be organised.

10. Communication

Internal communication enhances synergies and exchanges by increasing awareness of EESC activities and internal policies, provides information about developments in EESC working conditions and facilitates compliance with the administrative requirements of both members and staff. Efficient internal communication contributes to understanding the core business and the organisational objectives, sharing good practices and success stories, breaking down barriers between services and enhancing their efficiency, and therefore providing better support to members.

In 2018, HRTV became @workTV, the revamped editorial policy involving the development of two types of videos: newflash, which aims to provide timely and topical information about events taking place in the organisation, and stories, which aim to feature new managers, retiring colleagues or special projects developed within the EESC. In the second half of the year, interviews with the president and vice-presidents were published after they had been elected.

Editorial planning and the technical platform for the internal newsletter Linked@work were also developed. The objective of the newsletter is to enhance mutual knowledge of different services and projects within the organisation, and to inform colleagues about relevant projects and initiatives in the EU institutions.

In order to enhance information to members, delegates and experts about the new travel agency and the new deadline for submitting reimbursement claims for EESC activities, a factsheet on the travel agency was produced and distributed during the December plenary and a communication plan on reimbursements was developed, to be implemented in early 2019.

Editorial planning for the main internal communication channels will consider featuring stories enhancing the spread of knowledge about the EESC's core business among all colleagues in all parts of the organisation.

Available communication tools and channels will be used to ensure that members are kept informed about the reimbursement procedures as well as about other services to which they are entitled in the areas of health, well-being, insurance, etc.

11. Social dialogue

The ultimate aim of social dialogue between management and staff representatives is to boost the stability, independence and competence of the European civil service. It has a real impact on the drafting and implementation of staff policy.

DHRF is responsible for conducting this dialogue with three different sets of stakeholders: the Staff Committee, the joint committees, and the staff unions and staff associations (OSPs).

- The Staff Committee (CdP) is a statutory body (established by Article 9 of the Staff Regulations), whose job is to represent the interests of staff vis-à-vis their institution and maintain continuous contact between it and the staff. It is regularly consulted by the administration and issues opinions on all draft decisions concerning the entire staff. At the EESC, the CdP is made up of 11 full members (and 11 alternates), one of whom is appointed president;
- The joint committees are advisory bodies comprising an equal number of members appointed by the Appointing Authority and the Staff Committee. They help to develop and implement staffing policy in their respective fields, in accordance with fairness and the rules in place;
- The staff unions and staff associations (OSPs) are not statutory bodies as such; they depend on officials' right of free association (in accordance with Article 24b of the Staff Regulations). Their role is to act in the general interest of staff, without prejudice to the statutory powers of the Staff Committee. There are currently five OSPs at the EESC.

Alongside the joint bodies, the administrations have their own bodies for interinstitutional cooperation, making it easier to take decisions or adopt joint guidelines on the basis of exchanges of experience and a pooling of expertise. These include the:

- College of Heads of Administration;
- Preparatory Committee for Staff Regulations Questions (CPQS);
- EPSO Managing Board;
- EPSO Working Group, and the
- EPSO Restricted Working Group (CAST Permanent).

After the Staff Committee elections in April 2018, the members of this new statutory body met twice with the Secretary-General. They also met with the Administration on various occasions to discuss topics such as the introduction of the new electronic workflow for the appraisal reports and the new decision on annual and special leave.

Taking into account the various changes that have taken place in recent years (Staff Regulations, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU), the EESC and the CoRe are cooperating on the preparation of a draft framework agreement to be signed by the administrations and the social partners. The document aims to provide a fair legal framework that would streamline the various steps and components of social dialogue.

12. Horizontal principles

12.1 Ethics, good administrative behaviour and compliance with rules

Officials and other agents of the EESC are subject to various rules on ethics and integrity and their rights and duties are defined by the Staff Regulations and the code of good administrative behaviour for the staff of the EESC. One of DHRF's main goals is therefore to establish a comprehensive legal framework for ethics and integrity in accordance with the Staff Regulations.

An ethics and integrity framework is necessary in complex organisations such as the European institutions and serves as a point of reference for the basic principles that guide interpersonal relations and relations between staff and the institution.

In March 2016, the EESC adopted Decision No 053/2016 A on whistleblowing, which provides a framework and a formal procedure to help whistle-blowers to fulfil their statutory obligation to report serious misconduct (whistleblowing), in accordance with Article 22a of the Staff Regulations.

On 30 May 2018, the EESC also adopted Internal Directive DRH No 002/2018, which defines the mission and tasks of ethics counsellors, as well as various technical aspects relating to their appointment and the way to handle relations with potential whistle-blowers. Unlike confidential counsellors, who are involved in the prevention of harassment, ethics counsellors are contact persons whose role is to provide advice and/or assistance to potential whistle-blowers on a confidential and impartial basis. In July 2018, the EESC appointed a team of four ethics counsellors.

The training process of the ethics counsellors was finalised in autumn 2018 and staff information sessions will follow in order to raise awareness on this new initiative. The ethics counsellors are expected to be fully operational as of 2019.

In the context of the Decision of the European Ombudsman in case 1306/2014/OV, the Committee has started negotiations with the socio-professional organisations to set guidelines for staff regarding situations where the exercise of the right of association guaranteed by Article 24b of the Staff Regulations might lead to a conflict of interest with other duties and responsibilities towards the institution.

12.2 Contribution to the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)

The European Union has been involved in combating climate change for some years and this commitment extends to the EU institutions, which are gradually reducing their environmental impact thanks to the EMAS scheme. The EESC, in cooperation with the CoR, has set up an environmental management system as part of a process of continuous improvement in this sphere. Efforts over the last few years have achieved remarkable results and in 2011 the EESC was awarded EMAS and ISO 14001 certification.

DHRF is well aware of the environmental impact that an administration can have. It endorses EMAS values and is committed to rationalising and modernising working methods and to managing most of its HR processes via electronic workflows.

The Training sector offers a full day induction training to newcomers twice a year. Attendance at this course is mandatory. During the day, participants are given a presentation by the in-house EMAS service and can discuss their concerns or ideas directly with them.

The new training rooms in the Bertha Von Sutter building are equipped with bottled water fountains, thus reducing the consumption of plastic bottles. Moreover, training course materials are increasingly sent electronically after the course, leaving it up to participants whether they choose to print them or not. For courses organised by external providers, the exact number of participants is communicated prior to the course to avoid unnecessary print-outs.

12.3 Eco-friendly mobility

The principle of sustainable development is not only one of the EESC's political goals, advocated by the Sustainable Development Observatory, it was also translated into action by the Committee's internal policy on commuting to and from work, where staff are constantly encouraged to use environmentally friendly means of transport.

The EESC's activities in the field of mobility tie in with the initiatives of the Brussels-Capital Region. In its new plan, the Region talks about "mobilities" instead of "mobility", thus underlining that nowadays a healthy mix of different ways of commuting has become reality.

A number of measures are in place to encourage a long-term commitment towards environmentally friendly means of transport and to free up parking space in the EESC buildings:

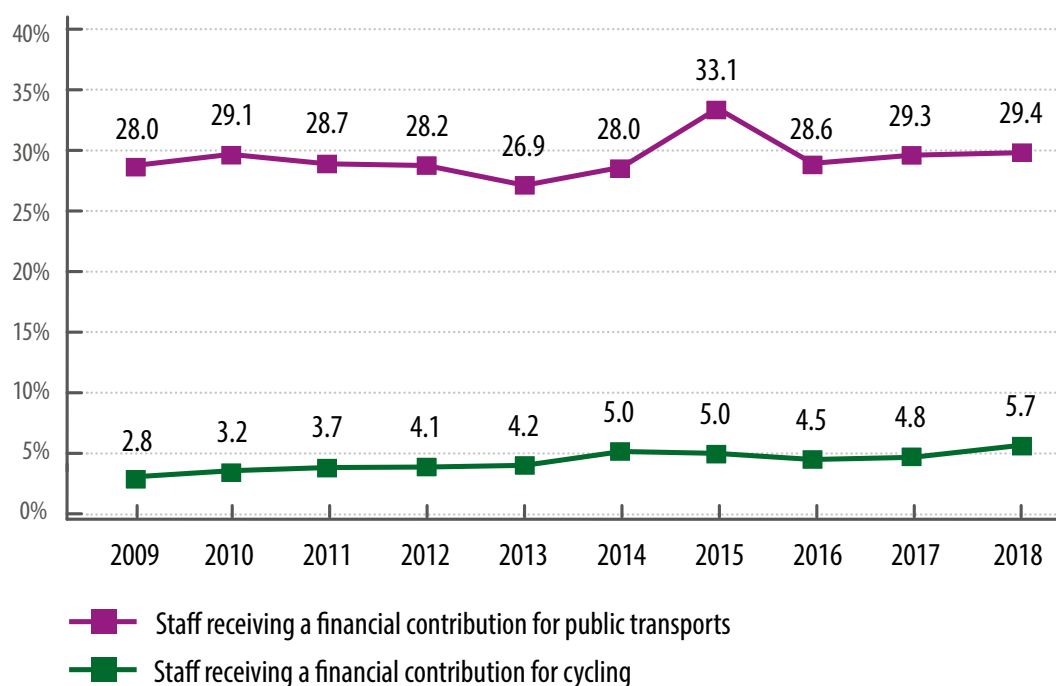
- a financial contribution to public transport season tickets in return for giving up a parking space;
- a financial contribution for cyclists who do not already receive a public transport contribution;

- service bicycles available to members and staff (owned and maintained in cooperation with the CoR);
- infrastructure for cyclists: bike racks, changing rooms, showers, lockers and electric bike charge;
- promotion of carpooling and car-sharing (internal/interinstitutional);
- regular awareness-raising activities which have gained popularity over the last few years.

It must be underlined that staff who receive the contribution for public transport or the cycling allowance must relinquish their right to use the EESC's car parks.

As a result of these continuous measures, the number of staff who regularly use public transport or cycle to work has steadily increased over the years, except in 2016 after the terrorist attacks in Brussels, when the number of contributions to public transport decreased (see graph 22).

Graph 22: Percentage of staff who receive subsidies for public transport or for cycling to and from work (2009 – 2018)



Graph 23: Velomai initiative logos



Take part in **2018 velomai**

In 2018, the EESC, in cooperation with the CoR, for the first time took part in the interinstitutional bike challenge "Velomai", a successful initiative which encourages staff to commute to work by bike.

The ambitious objective of the 2018 event was to cycle the distance from the earth to the moon (385 000 km), which represents an increase of about 80% compared to the results in 2017. During four intense weeks, VéloMai participants from several EU institutions managed to reach this goal by cycling more than 395 000 km. Moreover, the two committees won the competition (the CoR was first and the EESC second) for their performance in proportion to the number of staff and, as a result, received more visibility at interinstitutional level concerning green mobility.

Altogether, more than 2 700 colleagues from the participating institutions participated in this year's challenge, 65% more than in 2017. There were some 75 000 cycle rides, which saved over 52 000 kg of CO₂ emissions.

Furthermore, the EESC/CoR hosted an interinstitutional meeting on mobility where "push and pull" factors were discussed to promote eco-friendly means of transport.

In the coming year, in cooperation with the European institutions and supported by the Directorate for Logistics and its EMAS team, the EESC will continue to develop new strategies for sustainable mobility and look at new ways to promote eco-friendly means of transport.

12.4 Data protection

The DHRF handles a significant number of personal data concerning staff and financial actors. Data protection of members is also guaranteed, especially with regard to the information provided along with requests for reimbursement of travel expenses.

The handling of such data must comply with the EU data protection regulation. The legislative framework was recently modernised with the entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 regarding the processing of personal data by the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. The DHRF services are implementing the relevant changes in order to comply with the new rules.

With the assistance of the EESC Data Protection Officer (DPO), DHRF has mapped all the data processing activities within the Directorate. A number of records of processing activities have been created and included in the data protection register. Furthermore, in order to inform individuals whose personal data are processed, various privacy statements have been updated and published. The records and privacy statements issued cover a wide range of topics, including remuneration, recruitment, certification, appraisal, traineeships, medical files and reimbursement of travel expenses (for both members and staff).

In November 2017, DHRF was inspected by the EDPS on recruitment, appraisal and administrative enquiries. The inspection report was delivered in June 2018 and included six recommendations. Following the DHRF's reply of 15 October 2018, in February 2019 the EDPS acknowledged the successful implementation of the recommended actions and closed the case.

In order to raise awareness of the importance of complying with data protection rules and to reduce the non-compliance risks for the EESC, a number of training courses, info sessions and presentations took place in 2018 in which many staff members participated.

12.5 Transparency

DHRF aims to guarantee a transparent legal framework within the EESC where both staff and members have easy access to information and applicable rules. A transparent administration supporting exchanges of information and timely sharing of new decisions and procedures ensure the proper work environment for achieving the political objectives set by the political authorities. Transparency and communication are the backbone of efficiency and efficacy.

In 2018, a new internal directive regarding the transposition by the College of Heads of Administration (CCA) was prepared, updating the current legal framework on the implementation of the Staff Regulations. Together with the Staff Regulations and its Implementing Provisions, as well as the case law of the EU Court of Justice, these provisions are part of the current legal framework and must therefore be accessible by staff and members.

Following the staff committee elections of April 2018, new decisions regarding the membership of the various joint committees that are active within the EESC or which host representatives from the EESC were also prepared. Relevant databases and Intranet pages were updated accordingly and specific communications sent. The Quick Guide to Human Resources in the EESC presenting the HR services has also been updated, reprinted and distributed to all new members of the joint committees.

DHRF thus continuously contributes to improving timely and efficient information and to ensuring modern and dynamic communication. This was achieved in part by simplifying the procedure for publishing new decisions and finalising the setting up and updating of databases presenting all internal administrative and financial regulations as well as the membership of all joint committees. It also contributed to transparency by setting up procedures for the adoption and communication of administrative documents, managing individual staff files, registering and publishing decisions, and managing archives and databases of administrative and financial decisions, CCA conclusions and joint committee membership.



Part II Statistics



In 2018, the number of posts made available by the budgetary authority was 668. Chapters 1 and 2 of the statistics section (Establishment plan and Occupation of posts by category) refer to the number of posts, whereas the following statistics refer to the workforce. The number of staff employed (officials, temporary agents, contract agents, seconded national experts and medical adviser) was 706 on 31 December 2018. All references to the composition of staff refer to that date.

When not differently specified, the AD function group includes contract agents of FGIV, ENDs and the medical adviser; likewise, when not differently specified, the AST function group includes contract agents of FGII and FGIII, and the AST/SC function group includes contract agents of FGI.

1. Establishment plan: posts made available by the budgetary authority

334 POSTS AST/AST-SC

Categories and grades	Permanent Posts	Temporary Posts	TOTAL 2018
AST11	5	0	5
AST10	6	0	6
AST9	20	0	20
AST8	28	0	28
AST7	40	3	43
AST6	48	2	50
AST5	56	5	61
AST4	45	2	47
AST3	32	3	35
AST2	0	0	0
AST1	1	0	1
TOTAL AST	281	15	296

Categories and grades	Permanent Posts	Temporary Posts	TOTAL 2018
SC3	13	0	13
SC2	11	3	14
SC1	11	0	11
TOTAL SC	35	3	38

334 POSTS AD

Categories and grades	Permanent Posts	Temporary Posts	TOTAL 2018
HC	0	1	1
AD16	1	0	1
AD15	5	0	5
AD14	18	1	19
AD13	29	3	32
AD12	41	0	41
AD11	22	1	23
AD10	29	2	31
AD9	52	7	59
AD8	47	0	47
AD7	29	2	31
AD6	21	2	23
AD5	19	2	21
TOTAL AD	313	21	334

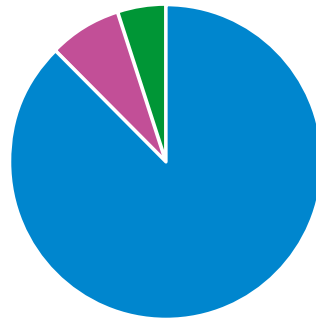
TOTAL
PERMANENT POSTS
629

TOTAL
TEMPORARY POSTS
39

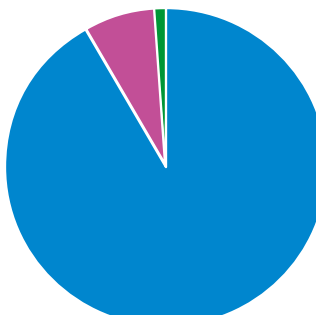
TOTAL POSTS 2018
668

2. Occupation of posts by category

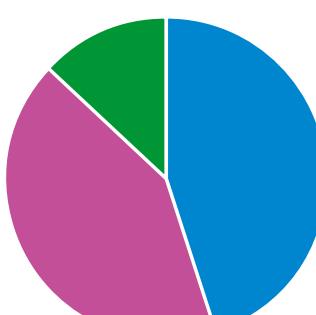
333 OCCUPATION AD



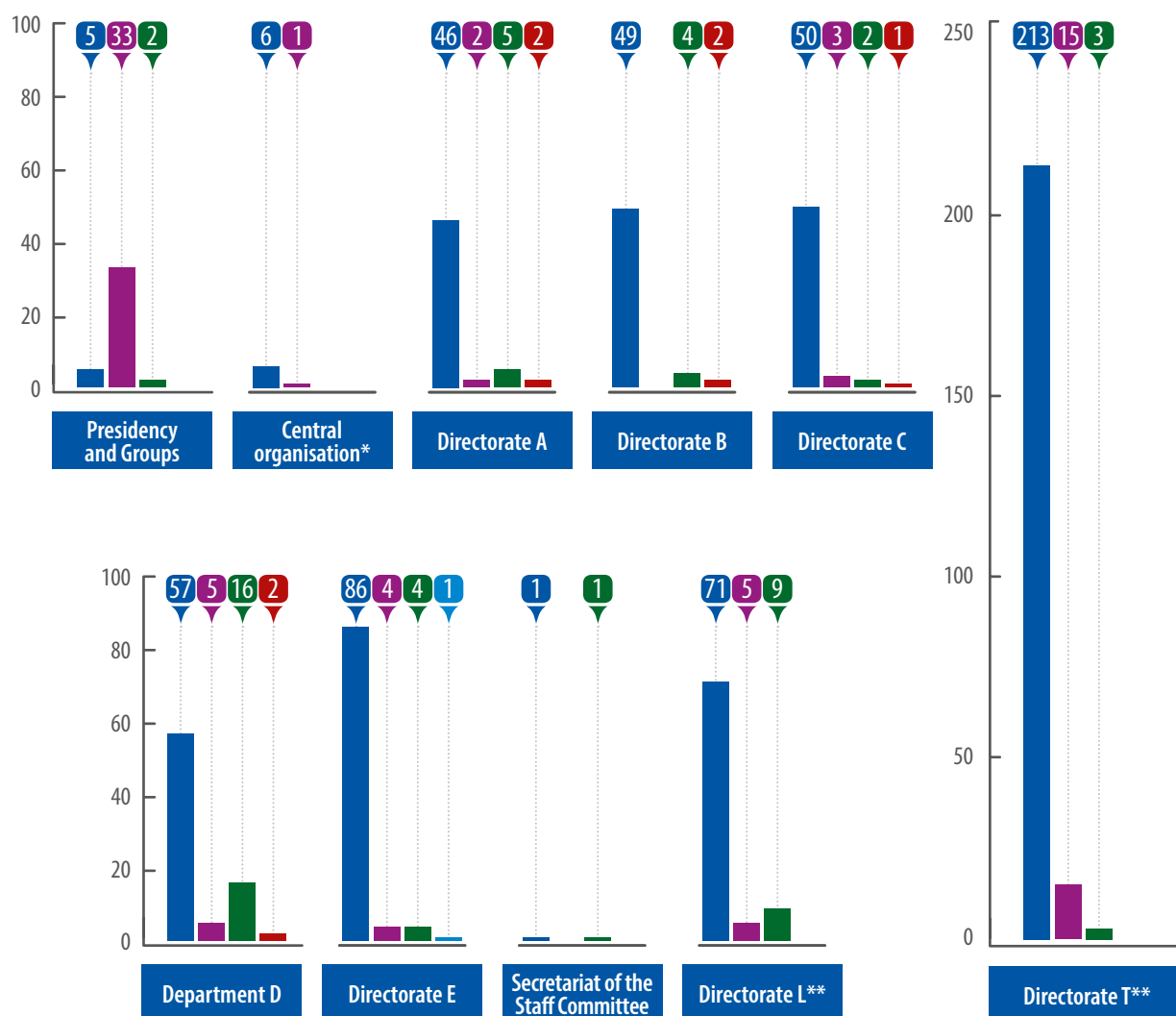
304 OCCUPATION AST



31 OCCUPATION AST/SC



3. Staff by assignment and status



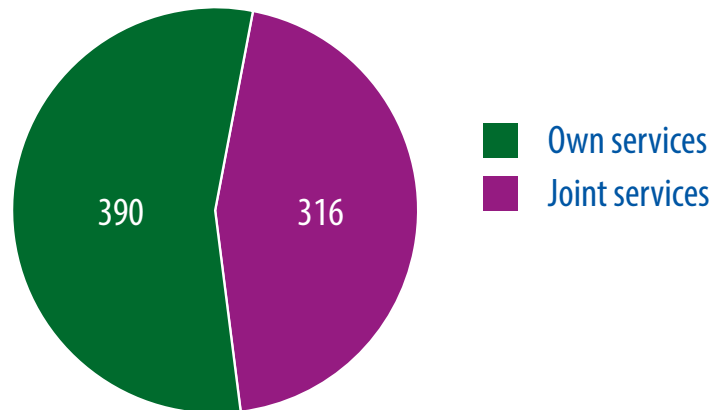
FP Officials **TP** Temporary agents **CT** Contract agents
CS Special adviser **SNE** Seconded national experts

(*) Central organisation: Secretary-General and his secretariat, as well as Internal Audit, attached for functional purposes to the President and for administrative purposes to the Secretary-General.

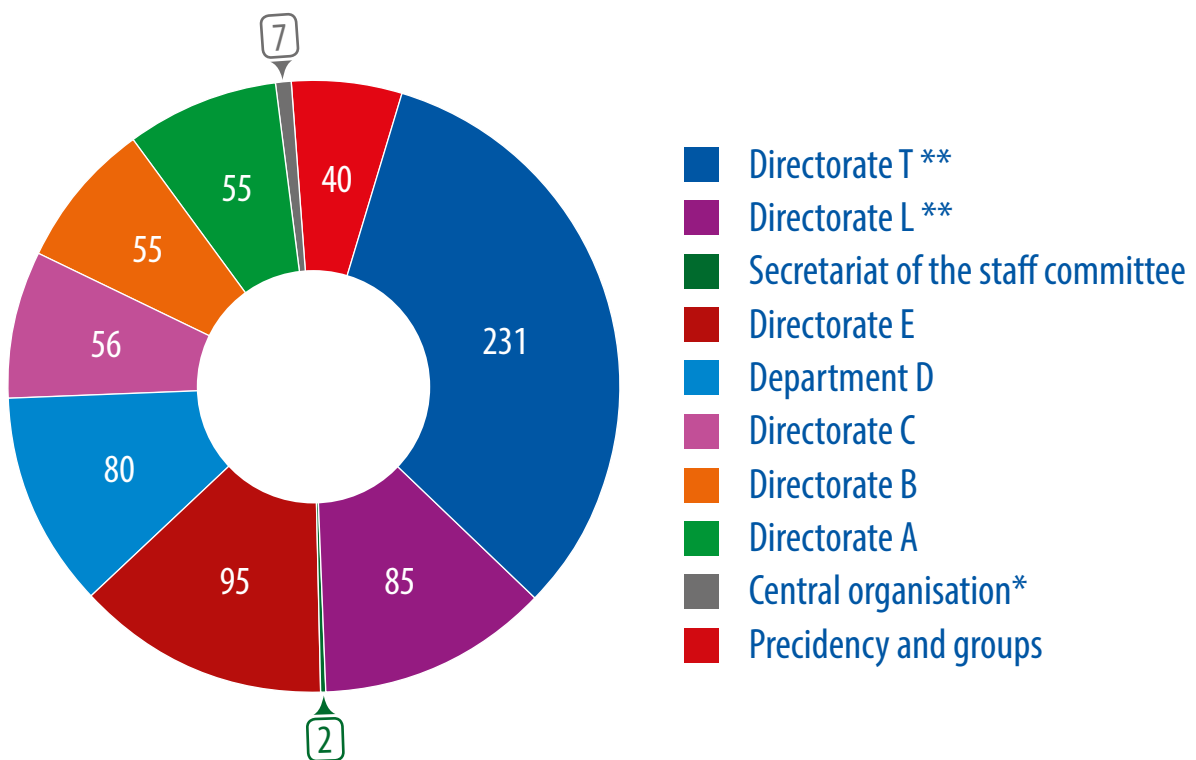
(**) Joint Services (Directorate for Logistics and Directorate for Translation) – only EESC staff are taken into account.

4. Staff by organisational entity

SHARE OF JOINT SERVICES



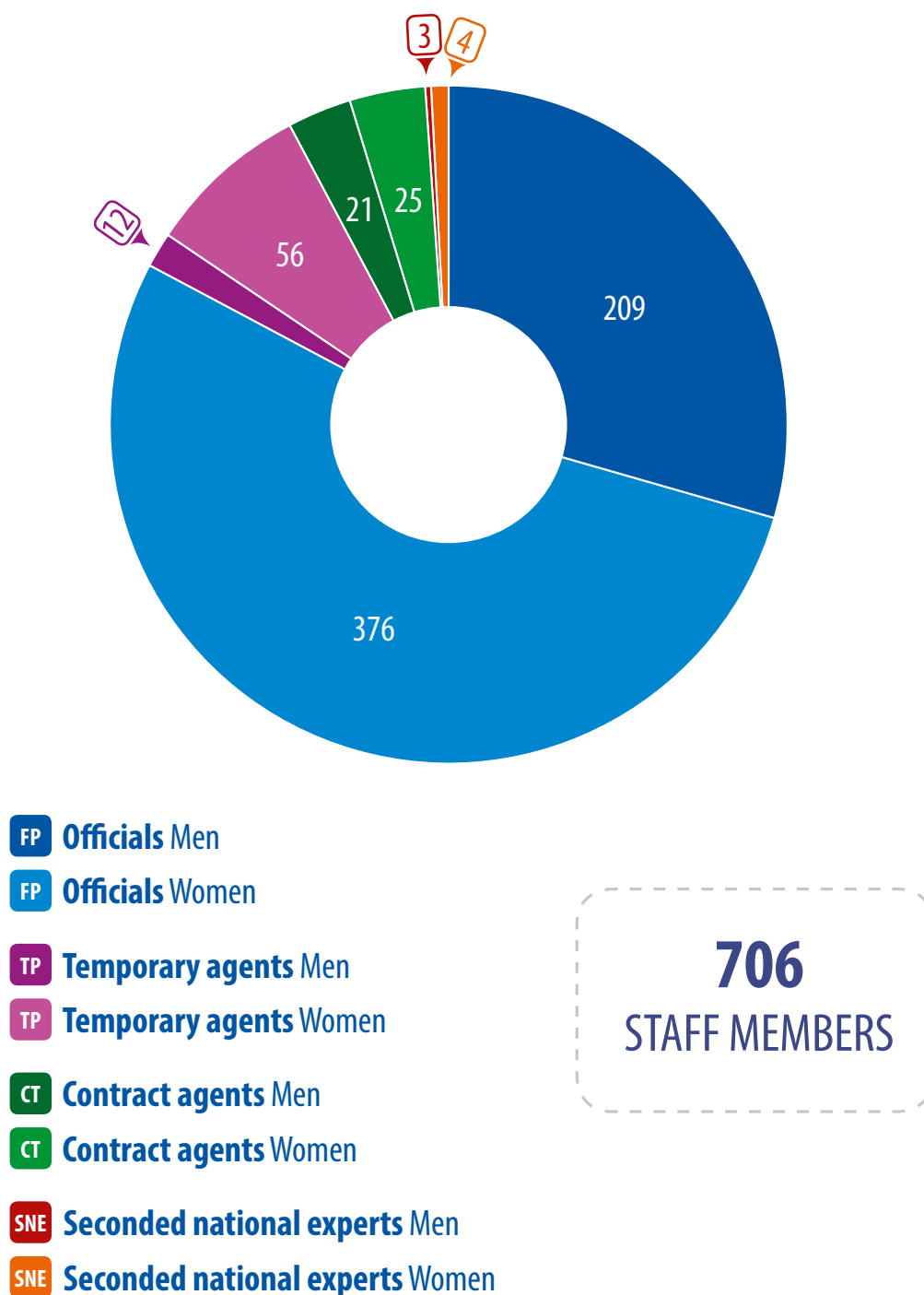
SHARE OF EACH SERVICE



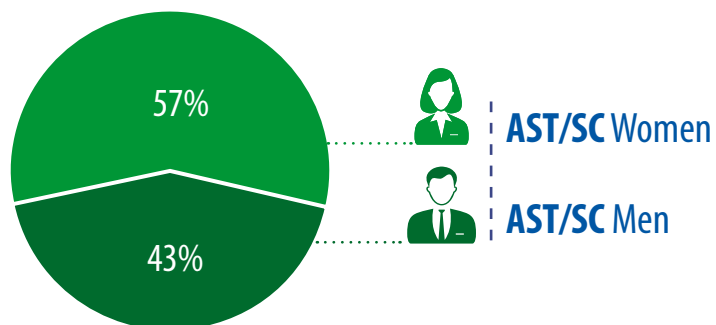
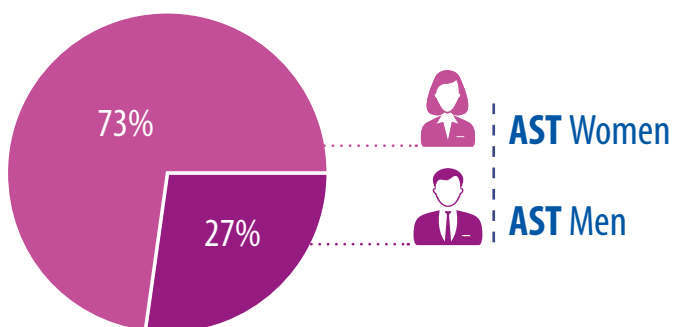
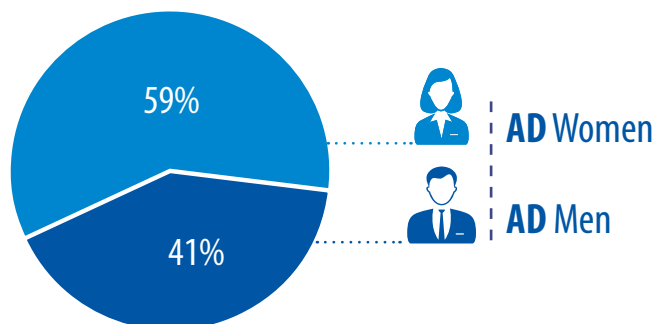
(*) Central organisation: Secretary-General and his secretariat, as well as Internal Audit, attached for functional purposes to the President and for administrative purposes to the Secretary-General.

(**) Joint Services (Directorate for Logistics and Directorate for Translation) – only EESC staff are taken into account.

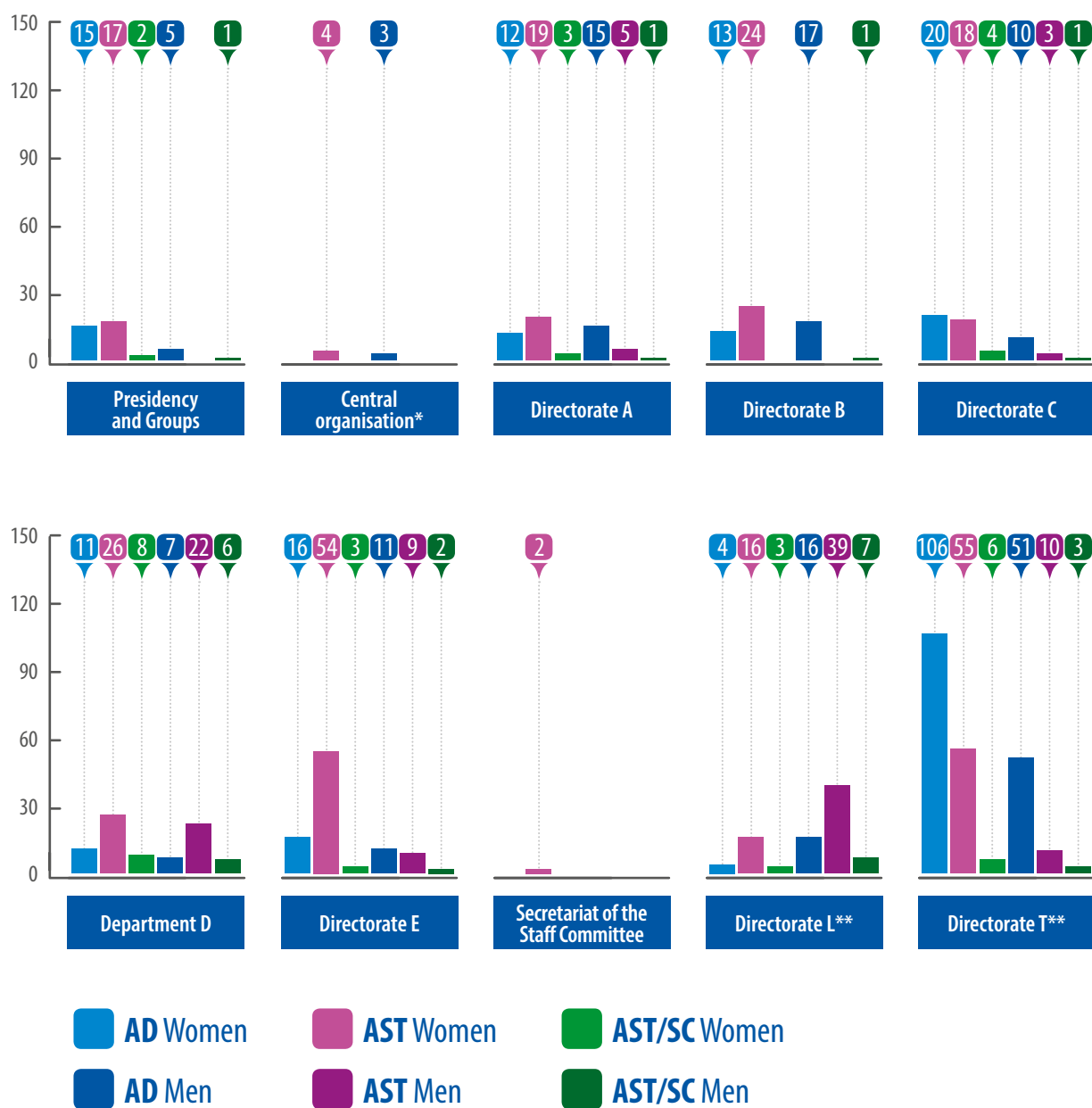
5. Staff by gender and type of contract



6. Staff by gender and function group



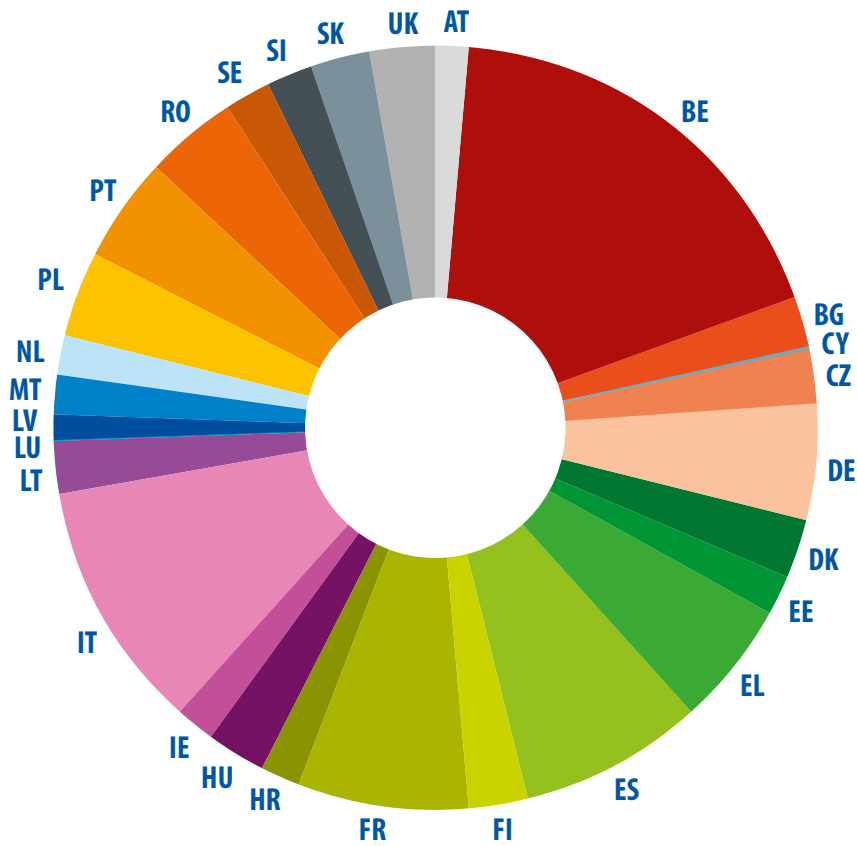
7. Staff by gender, function group and assignment



(*) Central organisation: Secretary-General and his secretariat, as well as Internal Audit, attached for functional purposes to the President and for administrative purposes to the Secretary-General.

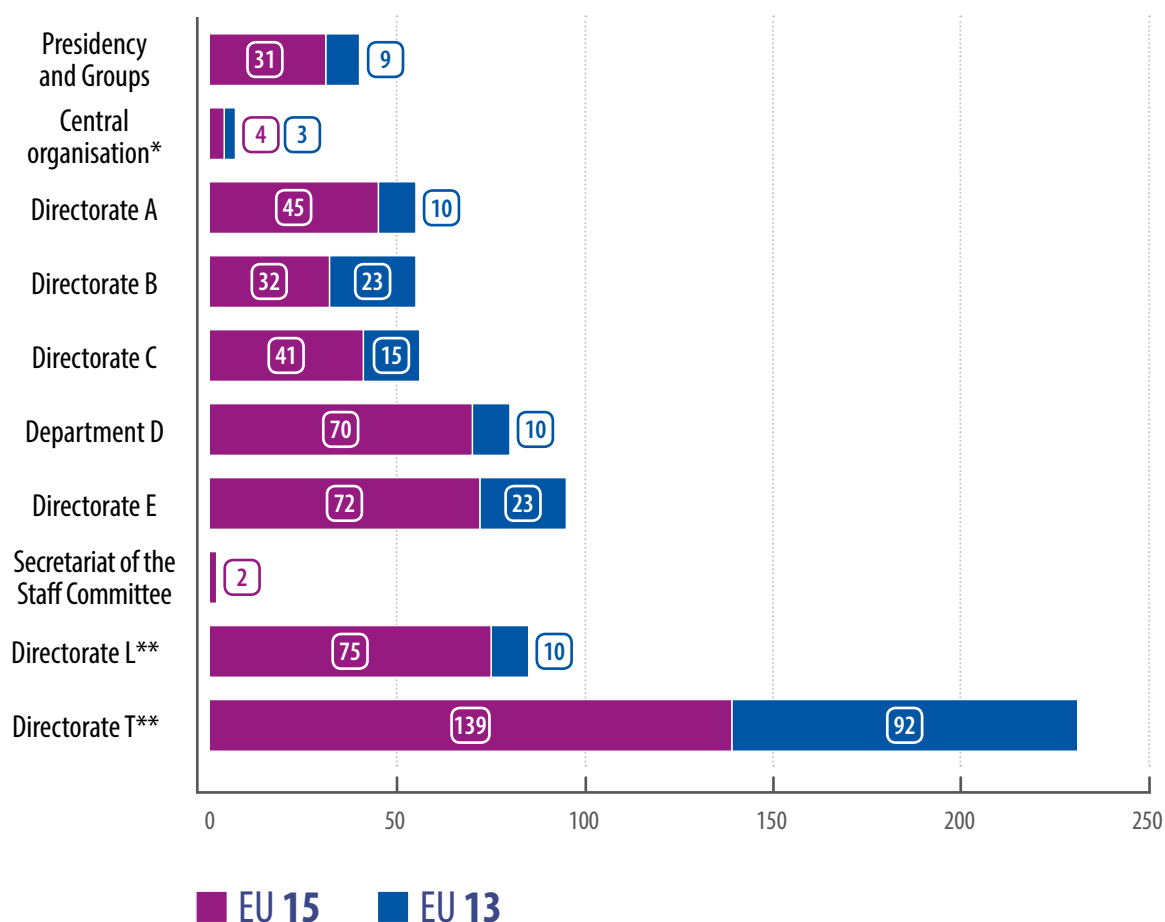
(**) Joint Services (Directorate for Logistics and Directorate for Translation) – only EESC staff are taken into account.

8. Staff by nationality



AT	Austria	10	1.4%	IE	Ireland	11	1.6%
BE	Belgium	128	18.1%	IT	Italy	75	10.6%
BG	Bulgaria	15	2.1%	LT	Lithuania	15	2.1%
CY	Cyprus	1	0.1%	LU	Luxembourg	1	0.1%
CZ	Czech Republic	15	2.1%	LV	Latvia	8	1.1%
DE	Germany	36	5.1%	MT	Malta	11	1.6%
DK	Denmark	17	2.4%	NL	Netherlands	11	1.6%
EE	Estonia	13	1.8%	PL	Poland	27	3.8%
EL	Greece	36	5.1%	PT	Portugal	31	4.4%
ES	Spain	55	7.8%	RO	Romania	28	4.0%
FI	Finland	19	2.7%	SE	Sweden	13	1.8%
FR	France	50	7.1%	SI	Slovenia	13	1.8%
HR	Croatia	11	1.6%	SK	Slovakia	19	2.7%
HU	Hungary	19	2.7%	UK	United Kingdom	18	2.5%
				Total		706	100,0%

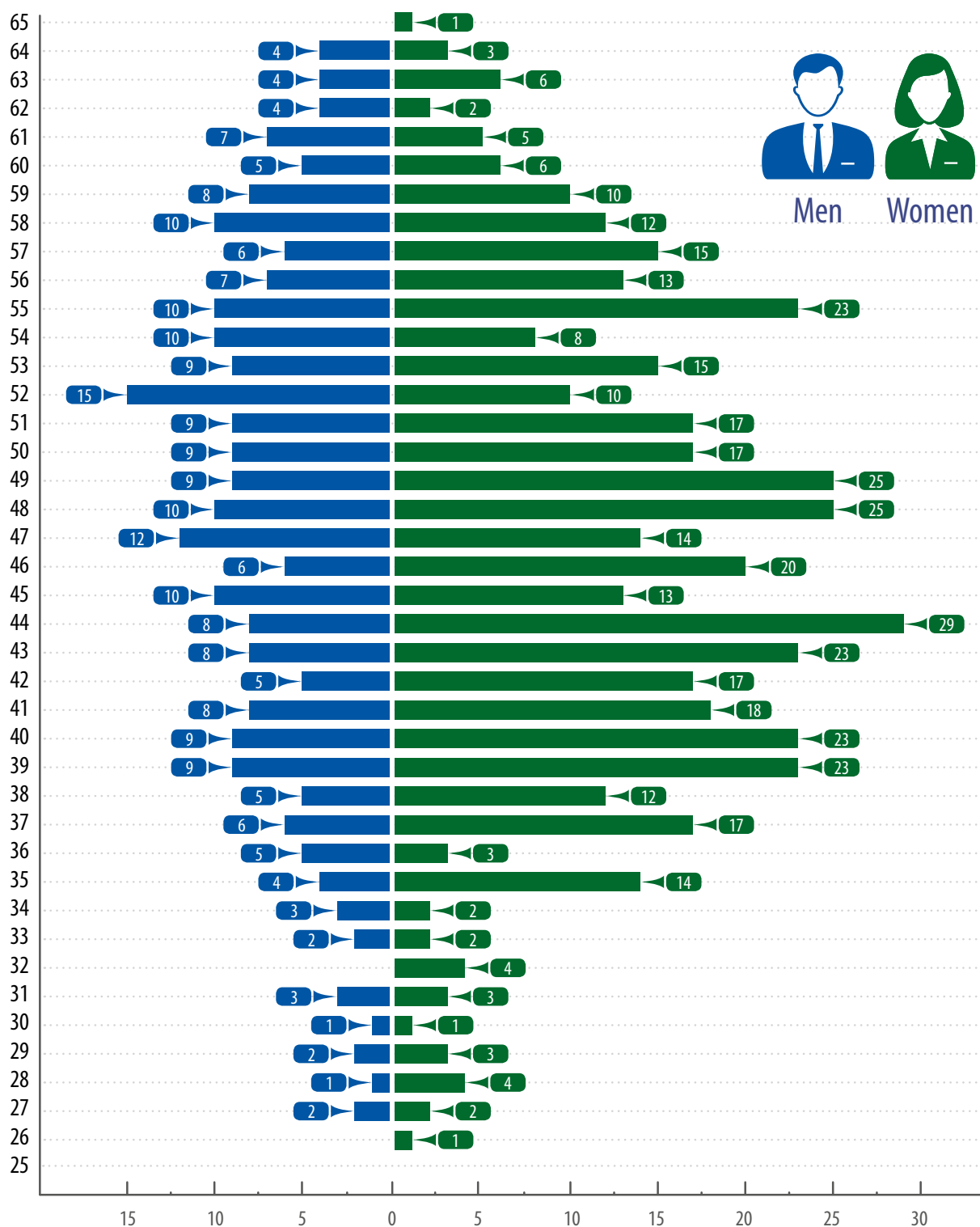
9. EU 15 and EU 13 staff by assignment



(*) Central organisation: Secretary-General and his secretariat, as well as Internal Audit, attached for functional purposes to the President and for administrative purposes to the Secretary-General.

(**) Joint Services (Directorate for Logistics and Directorate for Translation) – only EESC staff are taken into account.

10. Staff by age



11. Staff by age, gender and function group

Age	M-AD	M-AST	M-AST/SC	Total	F-AD	F-AST	F-AST/SC	Total
61-65	11	7	1	19	7	10	0	17
56-60	20	13	3	36	20	36	0	56
51-55	35	17	1	53	35	36	2	73
46-50	25	17	4	46	45	49	7	101
41-45	20	14	5	39	43	52	5	100
36-40	16	16	2	34	30	37	11	78
31-35	8	2	2	12	13	10	2	25
25-30	0	2	4	6	4	5	2	11

M Male **F** Female

Part III **Appendices**



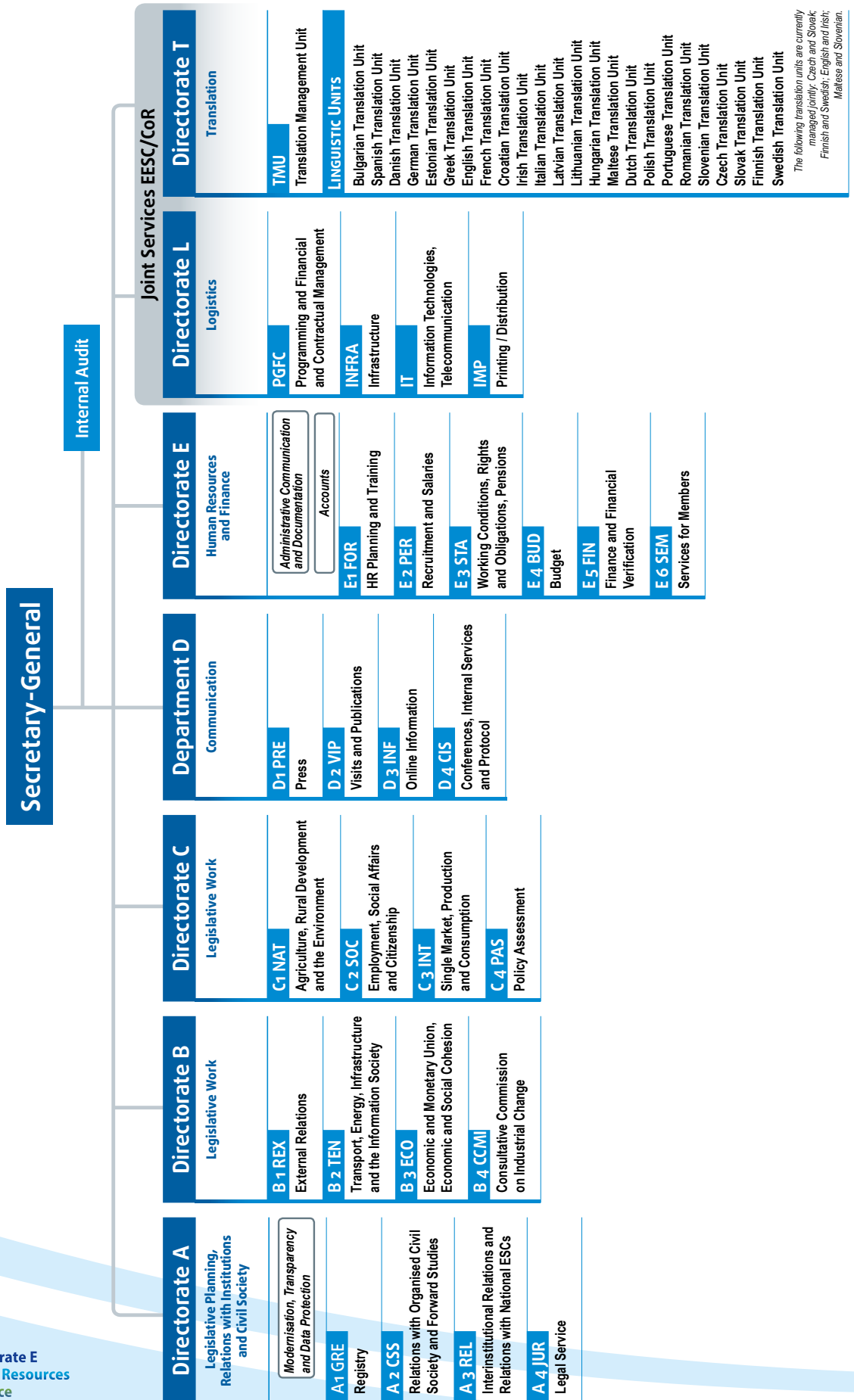
1. List of abbreviations

AD:	Administrator
AIACE:	International Association of Former Staff of the European Union
AST:	Assistant
AST/SC:	Secretary/Clerk
CAST PERMANENT:	Selection procedure for contract agents (Contract Agents for Specific Tasks)
CBT:	Computer-based test
CCA:	College of Heads of Administration
CdP:	Comité du Personnel/Staff Committee
COPECs:	Joint Committees for Equal Opportunities
CoR:	European Committee of the Regions
CPQS:	Preparatory Committee for Staff Regulations Questions
CS:	Conseiller spécial/Medical adviser
CT:	Contract agent
Directorate A:	Directorate for Legislative Planning, Relations with Institutions and Civil Society
Directorate B:	Directorate for Legislative Work
Directorate C:	Directorate for Legislative Work
Department D:	Department for Communication
Directorate E/DHRF:	Directorate for Human Resources and Finance
Directorate L/DL:	Directorate for Logistics
Directorate T/DT:	Directorate for Translation
DPO:	Data Protection Officer
EDPS:	European Data Protection Supervisor
EIGE:	European Institute for Gender Equality
EMAS:	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
EP:	European Parliament
EPSO:	European Personnel Selection Office

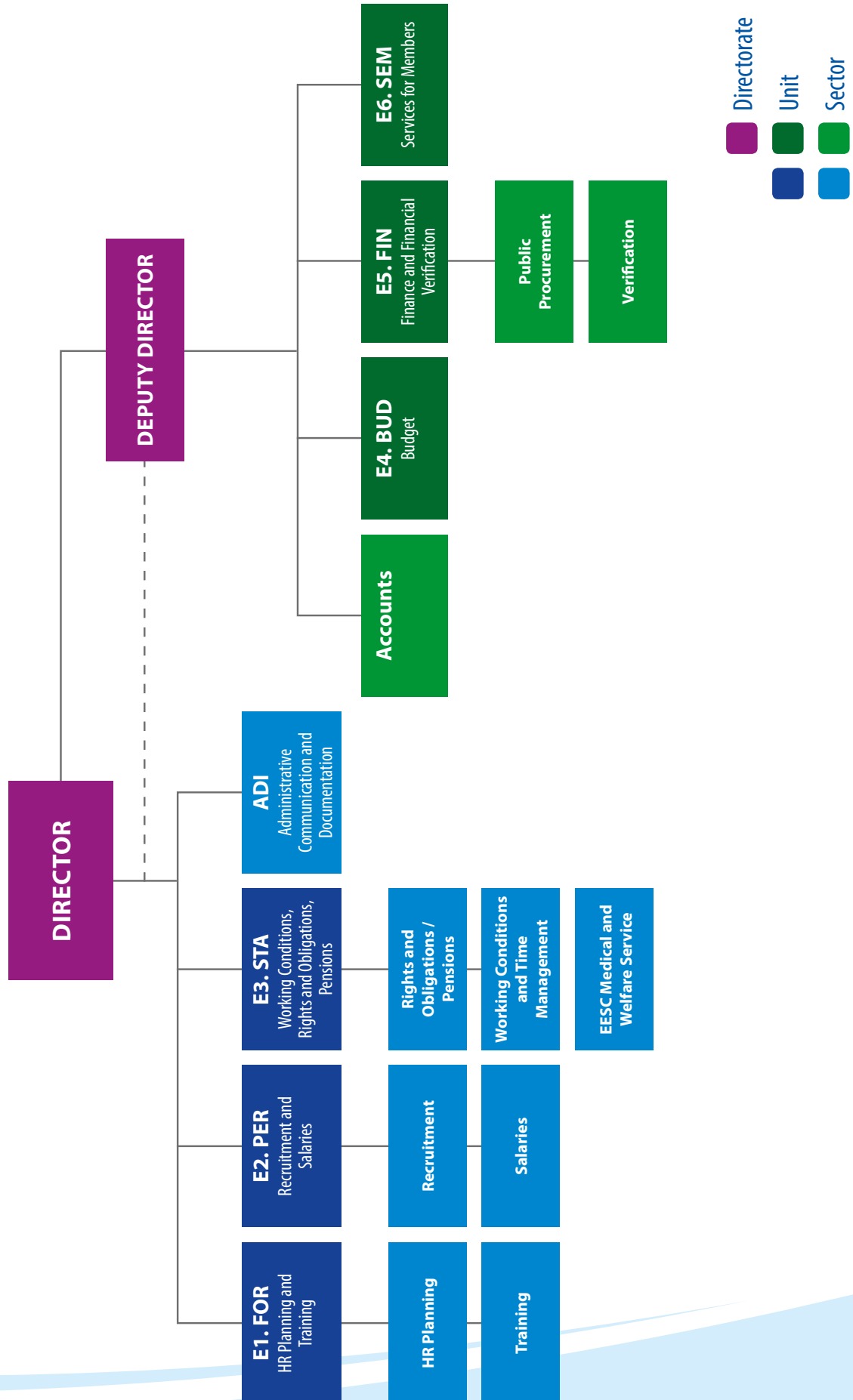
EUSA:	European School of Administration
EU 13:	The ten Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) which joined the EU on 1 May 2004, Bulgaria and Romania which joined the EU on 1 January 2007 and Croatia which joined on 1 July 2013
EU 15:	The EU before the 1 May 2004 enlargement
F:	Female
FG:	Function group
FT:	Fonctionnaire titulaire/Established official
GIPs:	General Implementing Provisions
HR:	Human Resources
IDAHOT:	International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia
IDPD:	International Day of Persons with Disabilities
LGBTIQ+:	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queers
M:	Male
OSP:	Oganisations syndicales et professionnelles/Staff unions and staff associations)
PMO:	Office for Administration and Payment of individual entitlements of the European Commission (Paymasters' Office)
PSR:	Psychosocial risks
SLA:	Service level agreement
SNE:	Seconded national expert
SYSPER:	Computerised human resources management scheme
TP:	Temporary agent
WCAG:	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

2. Organisational chart of the EESC General Secretariat

Organisation Chart - EESC General Secretariat



3. Organisational chart of the Directorate E





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in a respectful working environment

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