



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION  
Staff Committee  
Local Staff Committee Brussels



# WORK PROGRAMME 2009-2012 OF THE LOCAL STAFF COMMITTEE BRUSSELS

Version 4.0

*"Change is the law of life.  
And those who look only to the past  
or present are certain to miss the future."  
(John F. Kennedy)*

Adopted during the plenary session of the LSC of 6 October 2009



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Le Comité Local du Personnel (CLP) de Bruxelles représente pratiquement 80% de l'ensemble du personnel à la Commission européenne. Son rôle et sa fonction est de participer à l'application et de s'assurer de la conformité de la mise en œuvre des règles de la politique du personnel négociées par les Organisations Syndicales et Professionnelles (OSP). Le CLP joue aussi un rôle consultatif ou de participation (consultation) à la gestion du personnel, en agissant à travers une série d'organes statutaires et administratifs de consultation et de participation (comités paritaires).

Ce document encadre et décrit en lignes générales le programme de travail du CLP pour la période de travail 2009-2012. La liste des dossiers dans ce document n'est pas exhaustive. Il est fort probable que d'autres dossiers importants s'ajouteront au cours du mandat. Chaque dossier sera élaboré en détail dans des documents séparés. La défense des intérêts du personnel et la préservation de droits acquis guideront le CLP dans son travail quotidien.

C'est ainsi que chaque membre du CLP s'engage à prendre ses responsabilités et à travailler d'une manière étroite et constructive avec d'autres membres sans jamais oublier le leitmotiv qui les unit tous, à savoir la défense des intérêts de chacun et de tous.

Le CLP, en tant qu'organe statutaire, s'engage à être un partenaire fiable et incontournable dans le cadre du dialogue social.

The Brussels Local Staff Committee (LSC) represents nearly 80% of the total staff in the European Commission. Its role and function are to participate in the application - and to ensure the conform implementation - of the staff policy rules which have been negotiated by the trade unions (OSP). The LSC also plays a consultative or participative role (consultation) in staff management through a series of statutory and administrative bodies (joint committees).

This document gives a general framework and description of the LSC's work programme for the working period 2009-2012. The list of dossiers in this document is non exhaustive as it is very likely that other priorities will be added during this mandate. Each dossier will be further elaborated in detail through separate documents. The defence of staff interests and the preservation of obtained rights will be the guides of the LSC in its daily work.

As such, each LSC member commits her/himself to take her/his responsibility and to work in a close and constructive way with the other members, without forgetting the leitmotiv which unites all: the defence of the individual and general interests of all.

The LSC, as a statutory body, commits itself to be a reliable and unavoidable partner in the social dialogue framework.

Le Bureau du CLP Bruxelles – The Bureau of LSC Brussels

## 2. WORK PROGRAMME 2009-2012

### 2.1. Priorities of the LSC 2009-2012

Defending the interests of staff can be best accomplished when all the various elements of staff representation: the Central Staff Committee (CCP), the LSCs and the OSPs work together for a maximum of synergy. Indeed, their roles are complementary and demand a constant and transparent interaction:

Staff Committees ensure that implementation of the rules for staff policy is in compliance with those negotiated by the OSPs. During this mandate, the Brussels LSC will contribute to the construction of this synergy and call upon the other actors to join in this effort, whilst continuing to respect the part each plays in the social dialogue.

To sum up: final responsibility for checking the correct application of some of the issues belongs to the LSCs, whilst other matters fall to the CCP. The OSPs undertake negotiations of the rules (modifications to existing rules or devising new ones).

At each level particular care will be taken to limit recourse to externalization or privatisation, even to the extent of proposing the re-integration of services which have already been contracted out to the private sector. The LSC also underlines its need to intervene when services are being re-organised. Moreover, the LSC will pay particular attention to the implementation of the various arrangements in place so as to improve the welfare of staff both in the office and at home (office accommodation, creches/nurseries, European schools, achieving a balance between private and professional life).

The schedules below are neither exhaustive nor placed in order of priority. Each issue will be discussed in specific detailed documents to ensure that progress on each particular issue can be rigorously monitored.

#### *2.1.1. Main priorities directly involving Brussels LSC*

- **Working conditions:** the LSC notes that the various norms for working conditions in place are increasingly flouted in practice, e.g. open-plan offices and office space allocation, flexi-time working, tele-working, part-time working and so on. Some of these issues are currently under evaluation by the Administration. The LSC will analyse the reports with the greatest attention with the aim of being able to propose to the OSPs the negotiation of possible modifications, and will continue to play its role in the management committee of OIB as described in the Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009 (point 4.3).
- **Crèches and nurseries:** the LSC will remain vigilant on progress on the subject of "recruitment of staff for the crèche/nurseries" given the real need for personnel and the existence of very long waiting lists for these facilities. The LSC will support all measures undertaken to resolve this situation. To reinforce the dialogue with the people directly responsible,

the LSC proposes once again to form a Delegation "Crèches and nurseries"; the previous one dating back to when the staff were still subject to Belgian contracts of employment. The LSC will monitor other work on this issue through the Joint Committee COCEPE (see also point 4.7 of the Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009.).

- **The Building Policy:** the finalisation of the guide to office accommodation is underway and the LSC will seek, through the specialist Group on Buildings Policy, and through the Committee for Health and Safety at Work, a guarantee that all staff of the Commission enjoy optimal working conditions. Many types of health risk are encountered in Commission buildings. The LSC considers that technical supervision, including that provided by independent experts, needs to be strengthened.
- **Canteens and cafeterias:** the LSC is very interested in the quality of meals and food provided as well as in the quality of the installation of canteens and cafeterias. The LSC will follow up on the implementation of the action plan with the OIB, as described in its Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009 (point 4.6).
- **Public transport:** for several years now, Commission staff in Brussels have been expecting some sort of financial help as an encouragement to use public transport for duty travel. As long ago as 2006, the Commission had announced the introduction of this from 2007, but supposed budgetary constraints continue to thwart any progress on this issue. The LSC is engaged in the constant struggle to obtain a healthier environment and will support any initiative to bring this about (such as reimbursement of season tickets, service bicycle parks, and minibuses for travel between Commission buildings...). The LSC thus reiterates its support as already shown in the Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009 (point 4.4) and will continue to lobby the Commission services responsible to get things underway.

The LSC also expects of the Commission to liaise with the local authorities to encourage them to do something about improving substandard public transport systems (SNBC and the STIB).

- **Personal Safety:** the LSC expects the Commission to signal to the local authorities, particularly the police, problems of personal safety suffered by staff in the "European quarter".
- **Training:** the LSC notes that the local offerings of training courses require urgent updating to better respond to the real needs of staff. The LSC will also continue to monitor the issue of language teachers, who suffer precarious working conditions, and who know full well the impact this has on the quality of language training. Finally, the LSC will pay particular attention to access to the training courses for the more vulnerable categories of staff, who are very reluctant to ask for training for fear of being refused permission by their immediate superiors.

### 2.1.2. LSC Priorities for matters depending directly on the CCP

Several matters, for which a non-exhaustive list is shown below, depend ultimately on the CCP. It is thus essential to become actively involved with constructive contributions being sent to our 6 colleagues in the CCP so that the interests of the staff represented are properly reflected in the final decisions of the CCP. Moreover, the LSC considers that defending the interests of the staff is strengthened by greater synergy between the various LSCs.

- **Career Development Policy:** the Brussels LSC must see to it that the same career prospects are offered to all colleagues recruited since 2004 and should support the measures designed for catching up on delays suffered at the time of their recruitment, without penalising other colleagues.
- **System of Evaluation and Promotion:** the LSC is asking the CCP for a thorough analysis of the results of the current exercise 2009 to assess the new system which entered into force in 2009. If the conclusion is negative, this should prompt the OSPs to ask the Administration to re-negotiate the system which we would recall, had been refused by all the OSPs.
- **Contract Staff:** the application of the system for contract staff, in place since 2004, still awaits its first major evaluation, despite encountering several specific problems, in particular regarding wage conditions, recruitment procedures, a system for promotions and a mobility scheme. A revision to the system is currently under negotiation by the OSPs, who await a “White Paper” from the administration setting out a vision for future years before continuing talks. The LSC will monitor with interest the final application of the new framework.
- **Selection and recruitment:** the monitoring of competition notices discussed under the auspices of the COPAR and of the COPARCO and the recruitment procedures planned by EPSO are important because they involve the first steps in the recruitment of colleagues.

Particular attention must be given to them to guarantee fair treatment as far as possible. Through the two committees, the LSC asks that the CCP rigorously monitors the new system of selection envisaged from 2010 onwards, with an evaluation exercise after one year in operation.

The LSC will also ask the CCP to apply rigorous checks on the practices of EPSO in order to correct the numerous imperfections such as *inter alia*, the geographical imbalance amongst successful candidates. Particular attention has also to be paid to the equitable selection of officials from the various Member States for management posts.

In pursuing the recruitment of specialists, EPSO must seek a good balance of well qualified and suitable staff. Care must also be exercised over the tendencies to privatize or to contracting-out activities. Essential

functions (*core tasks*) for the Commission have to be carried out by duly appointed established officials.

- **Mobility:** the LSC notes that the Committee on Mobility functions only partially and deserves to be re-activated given the difficulties that certain colleagues encounter when wishing to change post. When an opportunity arises the LSC will draft its ideas on this issue for the CCP to discuss.
- **Staff over 50:** negotiations by the OSPs seek the creation and application of a scheme to give to colleagues of 50 + career prospects and decent working conditions as quickly as possible. The LSC is aware of the difficulties that older colleagues can meet with from the age of 50 onwards and will closely monitor the evolution of this very important issue with the aim of finally ending discrimination against these staff.

This means seeing how to benefit to the utmost from the huge body of accumulated professional expertise using the experience of senior staff and the creativity of the newly recruited for a better management of resources. The LSC considers that a policy to lengthen the duration of professional careers has to be accompanied by more attractive career prospects.

- **Retired staff:** access to information for retired staff is very poor taking into account their generally being far away from Brussels and especially if they have no computer equipment at hand or only limited access and none at all to the Commission IntraComm. Replies to any questions they raise with the services take too long. This even applies to the payment of medical expenses which can lead some into serious financial difficulties. The Administration also provides very little information on taxation or on the rights of potential claimants to a pension where family circumstances change.

Lastly, the LSC considers the right to attend just a single course for preparing staff for retirement is totally inadequate. Since 2004 staff can work half-time for up to 5 years before taking their pension. The LSC argues in favour of a more thorough-going preparation for retirement during which it would wish to be fully implicated.

- **Social Benefits:** the LSC notes the risk of certain social provisions, in particular those such as the Joint Sickness scheme being dismantled as the PMO services responsible are currently examining such possibilities. The LSC requests that the CCP and the OSPs keep this development under review in a vigilant and rigorous manner to conserve the acquired rights of staff.
- **The European Schools** have been facing enormous management problems over recent years for matters such as physical location, in the number of inscriptions or over-crowding their lack of forward-thinking. In the interest of staff and of their children, the LSC will continue to attach great importance to progress on this issue in accordance with the interests of the staff represented.

- **Working conditions:** the various working-time arrangements and possibilities for taking leave on personal grounds are sometimes difficult to understand or give rise to problems in their daily management. The LSC will ask the CCP to re-instate the relevant Joint Committee and widen its powers to cover all aspects of working time, the different forms of leave, and especially - as an appeal body, - to deal with contentious cases.
- **Policy for the Disabled:** the LSC notes inadequacies in the policy for disabled staff right from recruitment up to access to Commission buildings. The LSC considers that the Commission itself must fully conform with the standards it imposes on the Member States.
- **Harrassment in the Workplace:** the LSC notes weaknesses in the provisions in force for the prevention of sexual or moral harassment, in particular, under the evaluation system where there is a heightened risk of psychological harassment occurring. The LSC asks the Administration to pay particular attention to ensuring that measures designed to combat the various forms of harassment are properly applied.

## 2.2. Communication Strategy

The effectiveness and visibility of every organization largely depends on the extent it communicates with the public it represents. An easy and speedy exchange of information is the key to success in this representativity. The Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009 describes the efforts already made.

For this mandate, the LSC has imperatively to build on this base and create a workable framework for internal communication.

The objective is to create a cell for internal communication within the secretariat of the LSC, which will prepare a communications strategy for the next few years. The creation of this cell and the degree to which this strategy can be applied will depend entirely on the budgetary and human resources placed at its disposal.

In this way, the LSC will gain in visibility and credibility with staff who will be able to better monitor (and understand) the work carried out by the LSC.

## 2.3. Operation of the different elements of the Brussels LSC

### 2.3.1. *The "Bureau"*

In accordance with Article 13 of the internal Regulation of the LSC, the Bureau acts as one body under the auspices of the LSC, on decisions taken by the LSC.

Subject to possible modification for any particular reason, the Bureau prepares the upcoming plenary session of the LSC during its Tuesday meeting ahead of this meeting.

For items requiring action, the allocation of work between Vice-Presidents (minimum one full member and one alternate) an equitable system is



intended to share out the work load whilst reconciling the availability constraints for each.

### *2.3.2. The plenary sessions*

The organization of the plenary meetings is described in Chapter 3 of the Internal Rules for the LSC.

During this mandate, and on the basis of past experience, members of the LSC are required to respect § 3 of Chapter 3, in particular of Articles 37..39 and 40. All members of the LSC undertake to discuss all agenda items as prescribed by Article 36. Each participant will limit his/her contribution to the strictly necessary. Where necessary, the Chair will fix a maximum duration and the number of contributions (Articles 39 and 40), and will apply Articles 43 to 48 if needed to lead the proceedings back to the points essential to the agenda.

In accordance with Articles 21 and 25 of the internal Regulation, each meeting will be opened at the scheduled time as soon as the quorum (possibly reduced) is reached.

Even if French is the working language usually used during plenary sessions, the introduction of simultaneous interpretation facilities in English will be necessary to render the following of discussions easier for those elected members who prefer this working language. As this will have a rather important budgetary impact, the LSC request a budget commensurate with its aspirations.

### *2.3.3. Joint Committees*

The LSC will pursue the current issues set out in the activity report for 2006-2009 (point 4).

Two problems arise in the operation of the various staff committees and participation of staff representatives therein.

Firstly, the designation of staff representatives to the various joint committees becomes increasingly difficult particularly for those not seconded as full-time staff representatives. Indeed, they are increasingly reluctant to accept a mandate as this leads to an excessive workload when added to their normal tasks, at the risk of a poor appraisal report by their hierarchy. Moreover, the evaluation system currently in force debars them from any form of reward for their work in the interest of their institution.

Against this, the LSC considers that any representation should form an integral part of a person's job description and should be reflected as one of the annual objectives.

This clear-cut approach will allow the person to explain absences to a superior, and facilitate the inclusion of an opinion of the ad hoc group in an evaluation report.

To this end, the LSC will ask the Administration (ADMIN. B5) to issue an instruction to the DGs and services.

The LSC will encourage staff representatives to check that this is included in their job description and in their annual objectives. Acknowledging that the LSC has to ensure appropriate representation in the various committees, the OSPs are enjoined to accompany each designation by a justification and CV for the person proposed.

The second problem concerns the exchange of information between the Joint Committees and the LSC. Indeed, for the majority of the Committees, the secretariat of the LSC is not informed of the schedule of meetings, or on the agenda. Together with this lack of transparency on their work, the official minutes of meetings are often received very late, even several months after a meeting, which precludes any response by the LSC or its ability to adopt a stance or mandate for its representatives on a particular issue.

To this end, the LSC will ask the Chair (and the secretariat) of each Committee to transmit their meeting schedules to the secretariat of the LSC together with a copy of the invitations for each meeting. Staff Representatives will be asked whilst awaiting the official minutes (often received very late), to prepare an e-mail report or oral presentation for the plenary session after the meeting.

The above procedure will be organized and monitored by the secretariat of LSC.

Lastly, the system of contact committees (COCOLO) between LSC and the Administration should be re-activated with a pre-established timetable. The LSC will request DG ADMIN to undertake this.

#### *2.3.4. The delegations depending on the LSC*

During this mandate, the LSC will try to links to and communication with the various delegations (interpreters, building managers, drivers, messenger staff, crèches and nursery schools) and networks (AST network). As a first step, the Bureau will organize a bilateral meeting with each delegation or network before the end of 2009, to register their needs and expectations.

The LSC will also continue to monitor progress on current issues, as described in the Activity Report of the LSC 2006-2009 (point 2.2).

Lastly, all the current delegations - including those which depend on CCP - have to be sustained by the LSC.

#### *2.3.5. The secretariat*

The secretariat assures administrative follow-up of the work of the LSC.

Accordingly under Article 10 of the Internal Rules of the LSC, the Secretary directs the secretariat of the LSC in conjunction with the President.

The administrative effort of the secretariat currently counts on two administrative secretaries and an archivist-documentalist.

During this mandate, the inauguration of an internal communication cell is foreseen (see point 2.2), which will probably affect the composition and operation of the secretariat.

The secretariat of the LSC is also the contact point for receiving Commission staff. Within its normal administrative framework, the secretariat is especially responsible for the effective first-line management of the LSC functional e-mail box and of correspondence to maintain appropriate and rapid follow-up.

On normal working days, the secretariat will maintain continuous staffing between 09.00hrs and 17.00hrs (16.00hrs on Friday or day before a public holiday). This schedule will be clearly posted at the door to the secretariat and on the LSC website, and will maximize LSC availability to staff.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

The working framework of the LSC 2009-2012 was prepared, at the request of its members, by the Bureau of the LSC and represents a major challenge to the elected staff representatives. This document summarizes what staff expect from their elected representatives to the LSC for the coming years, whilst reflecting the priorities of the campaign programs of each of the various OSPs.

The extent to which it is achieved will be largely dependent on the commitment of and on each of the individual staff representatives, at local level (LSC) as well as at central level (CCP), and of the political will of the OSPs.

The implementation of this program will be recorded by intermediate annual reports culminating in a final overall evaluation in the report of the activities of the LSC to be published as usual at the end of the mandate.

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