
 For fresh insights into

European **Voice.com**

AN INDEPENDENT VIEW OF THE EU

[Regulars](#)
[Archive Article](#)

Vol. 14 No. 11 : 19 March 2008

Home

 Current News
 - News in Brief

 Business & Industry
 - Business Brief

 Special Reports
 - this week
 - future
 - archive

 EU at Fifty Supplement

 Features

 Analysis

 Opinion
 - Viewpoints
 - Europa
 - MediaMarket
 - Different Voices
 - Wilder Europe
 - Voice from the North
 - Europe Inside Out

 Profile

 Letters

 Entre Nous

 EV Crossword

 Archive

[PolicyVoices](#)
[Diary \(searchable\)](#)
[Diary 1 Apr 2008:](#)
[EP Committees & Conciliation Committee](#)
[Liberation Day](#)
[EV Info](#)

About EV

 EV Subscription Centre

 EVents

 Advertising Info


 Special Reports

 Mobile Edition

 EU Institution Subscription

[EU Services](#)

EV Classifieds
 - Jobs
 - Education
 - Contacts EU
 - Market

 [print friendly](#)

Training eurocrats to hit the ground running

Ian Mundell

Staff at the European Administrative School discuss how they train recruits to the EU institutions.

The welcome given to new staff joining the EU institutions is variable. While many will be carefully trained in the tasks they have to perform and the foibles of the organisation they are joining, some will just be shown a desk and told to get on with it. But within three months of coming to Brussels or Luxembourg to work for the EU, everyone, regardless of grade, is meant to attend an induction course organised by the European Administrative School.

"We help them integrate, not just in their particular jobs but also in the new culture," says Elena Pascual Jiménez, training and development adviser at the school. "The European institutions have got a very specific culture, so people need not just information but also a feeling of belonging." The school was established in 2005, with a remit to provide training across the EU institutions. As well as the induction course, it runs management training for officials and the longer programme of certification for assistants hoping to become administrators.

Last year 1,483 people attended the induction course. Over three days it explores topics such as networking, diversity and multi-cultural awareness, and how to communicate in a multicultural environment. Skills addressed range from the practical, such as teamwork, to more personal topics, such as goal-setting and resilience to stress. Participants also return within three to four months of attending the course for a further day during which they take stock and exchange experiences.

Each group has 30-35 participants. Some may be graduates, entering an international working environment for the first time, others may be veterans with 20 years of experience. This mix can be challenging for the trainers, two of whom work with each group.

"Although we tell our trainers to adapt to the rhythm and wishes of the group, sometimes it's difficult to fulfil individual needs because we have this vast amount of people, all institutions mixed, all types of jobs and nationalities," says Pascual Jiménez.

It is also noticeable that these newcomers are already under stress. "They say that they can't come tomorrow because they have an important meeting, or they can't say 'no' to their boss," she says.

"They have just started and they already feel overloaded."

The school sees the induction course as a starter-kit, which helps new staff identify where they might need further training. At present this must be sought elsewhere, but in the future the school itself will offer a more extensive range of courses.

It already has half-day sessions on issues such as social security, pensions and sickness regimes, and these will soon be joined by a course on the history of European integration. "I'm sufficiently long in the tooth to have lived through that process," says David Walker, head of the school, "but many people who arrive now are either too young to have lived through it or have come from traditions where the EU wasn't quite on their political agenda."

But the major development will be a series of eight skills-based modules, each lasting two to three days. These will cover practical tasks, such as problem-solving and effective communication, and personal effectiveness topics such as time-management and getting the best out of colleagues.

"Although those kinds of training programmes exist here and there in pockets in the institutions, there's never been a package that specifically targets new staff," Walker says.

While the school develops and designs the courses, most are delivered by external contractors. Tendering for the new range of courses is currently under way, so a whole new population of trainers will be needed soon.

- Where to start: the European Administrative School has a staff of 22 – some designing and developing training activities, others handling planning and organisation. For job opportunities contact the school: (http://europa.eu/eas/index_en.htm).

The bulk of training is carried out under contract and it is these companies that recruit trainers to work in Brussels or Luxembourg. At present, training for newly recruited staff is provided by



Management & Education Services in Vienna (www.mindandmore.at). Training for staff with management potential is provided by GreenHouse Group BVBA, Ottenburg, Belgium (www.greenhouse-group.com). Other management programmes are run by Educationtrend AG in Hamburg (<http://www.educationtrend.com>). The certification training programme is delivered by International Training Service, of Coleshill in the UK (www.itsconsult.com). The contractor chosen for the extended programme for newcomers will be announced on the EAS website in due course.

© Copyright 2008 The Economist Newspaper Limited. All rights reserved.

An Economist Group business

[HOME](#) | [CURRENT ISSUE](#) | [NEWS IN BRIEF](#) | [LETTERS](#) | [ENTRE NOUS](#) | [DIARY](#) | [ARCHIVE](#)
[ABOUT EV](#) | [EV SUBSCRIPTION CENTRE](#) | [EVENTS](#) | [ADVERTISING INFO](#) | [SPECIAL REPORTS](#) | [MOBILE EDITION](#) | |

Copyright © 2007 The Economist Newspaper Limited. All rights reserved.
Site designed & maintained by [EMG Online](#).
[Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#)