

## THE LACK OF JOB SECURITY OF EUROPEAN OFFICIALS

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(simplified text..)

### **Introduction :**

- Speech concentrating exclusively on the situation in European institutions (Brussels, Luxembourg and other places)

- Some general figures :

European Commission : approx. 34 000

EEAS (European External Action Service) : approx. 3 500

European Parliament : approx. 6 000

Council and European Council : approx. 3 100

Other institutions and organs : approx. 1 500

Total approx 48 600 persons

### **The general structure**

**1. Officials with permanent status** : very well protected

+ 2 categories on a permanent basis

a) Manual jobs : since 2004.

Possible through the phasing out of these jobs as officials.

Permanent but can be fired much more easily

b) Temporary agents in the "Research field" : they kept their original name after negotiations gave them a permanent situation

**2. Many other people that do not benefit from job security**

Especially at the European Commission and the EEAS

Why ?

Because of the competences given to the Commission : a lot of jobs that are of limited duration

For the EEAS : a number of delegations (equivalent of embassies)

Other institutions : Generally for replacements (illness, maternity leave, part time)

**3. Different categories of non permanent staff<sup>1</sup>**

### **Temporary agents**

Are included in the establishment plan - almost as expensive as officials - on jobs considered non permanent

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<sup>1</sup> pm : the French text copied very largely from Wikipedia, with personal comments included

A special case : temporary agents working for a person fulfilling a mandate foreseen in the Treaties (Judge, Member of the European Commission, Member of Parliament, President...) : duration of job linked with the mandate. Can be renewed, or can work for another person.

### **Contractual agents**

- Are not in the establishment plan : result : numbers are not known by Member States.
- Their job :
  - Manual jobs of ordinary administrative support (category : function group I)
    - Observation : permanent jobs can be offered everywhere (but not automatically)
  - Agencies
    - Observation : Jobs in all categories. Can be permanent after a certain time (not always clear). Generally twice 5-year contracts, then indefinite. Many arbitrary situations
  - Other organisms created by legal acts of the Council. For example, the Paymaster's Office or the European recruitment centre called EPSO.
  - In delegations (= embassies)
    - Observation : to my knowledge staff is on non permanent basis

Other jobs in the European institutions with this status : at all levels but always limited in time : 3 years

- Secretarial or clerical tasks (function group II)
- Technical jobs requiring higher qualifications (III)
- Academic jobs (IV)

### **Local agents**

Recruited outside of the European Union according to local labour regulations.

- Can be hired at any level.

Observation : working conditions from very good to very bad.

### **pm : Special advisors**

Very highly qualified persons for very special jobs

## **4. Social protection at the end of working relation**

- Unemployment insurance scheme calculated pro rata of working period

a) Temporary agents

Minimum of 1176 €. Depends on salary and with ceiling after 6 months  
The allowance is reduced from 60 to 30 % within 3 years (maximum period)  
It cannot exceed one third of the total worked time.

Observation : in fact a person who has worked for a judge, or commissioner for example may work for a period of over 4 years, and will benefit from only 3 years' unemployment insurance scheme.

b) Contractual agents :

More complex situation : notion of "country of residence". In simple terms : first find out the country of residence and then ask the Commission. After a difficult start, it works.

Observation :

contractual agents, even on unlimited contracts, do not enjoy the same kind of social protection as officials. Their working contracts can be terminated more or less like in the private sector.

Very important : their unemployment insurance scheme is limited to 3 years, even if they could, in principle, have worked for 20 years (does not yet exist). So even worse than in some Member States

c) Concerning officials : End of contract is possible too. Only known case (years ago) at the European Parliament. In fact, it seems to have been by mutual consent.

The "firing" is more often used for higher officials, who have sometimes directly appointed by political decisions. Not a disciplinary measure.

Recent case in the Council :

For geographical reasons, a German high official left after the arrival of the German Secretary General.

**5. Increasing number of non permanent staff in the institutions and deterioration of employment conditions**

- A key date : May 2004 : a new Staff Regulations and the biggest ever enlargement of the European Union (10 new Member States at one stroke + 2 later)

- Political situation : enlargements at cost zero for administrative staff.. Future Member States (who attended as observers) agreed. Salaries seemed very generous, but after arrival of new colleagues there was a lot of frustration

- European Commission : increasing number of non permanent staff for financial reasons : the Commission underestimates its needs. Should now be 44 % of staff.

- A new deal : these colleagues set up a "lobby" to defend their interests. Important for trade unions as they have the vote.

#### **6. An unknown organ with non permanent working contracts : the Translation Centre of Organs of the European Union in Luxembourg**

- Translates texts on a page/pay basis.  
- Was created especially to translate texts from agencies, which do not have their own translating departments.

- Only non permanent contracts to my knowledge.

#### **7. Partial externalisation of translation work**

- By private translation companies.  
- Used on an occasional basis.  
- There is no social control of the staff used by these companies.

#### **8. Recourse to outsourcing**

- For non core jobs : cleaning of offices ; maintenance of buildings, canteens, language courses, security of buildings, day-nursery/crib.

- Some of these tasks had previously been covered internally (canteens, security of buildings, direct contract with language teachers).

- The use of private companies has partly resulted in considerable deterioration of the working conditions of people.

#### **9. The considerable deterioration of a whole category of staff (secretaries and clerical staff) in the context of foreseen changes to the current Staff Regulations in 2013**

- This category of staff will be downgraded to contractual agents (function group II) in the future.

- Situation : many secretaries on limited contracts (3 years).

- Commission offers a POSSIBILITY of permanent contracts but at the price of downgrading all future recruitments. No obligation from the Commission.

- Present secretaries would be "phased out" in the natural way (pension, death, resignation).

- Difference in salary : 27 % lower at the beginning of the career, 100 % lower at the end of career. Difference of salary between 710 € to 3000 € per month.
- 85 % women concerned : hidden discrimination.
- European Commission plays a Machiavellian part : knows that a number of secretaries on non permanent basis want to have a permanent job. Tries to play the game : "divide and reign".
- Not possible in 2004 : German Director General refused this game.
- Now : intense negotiations
- European Commission is also trying to play dirty tricks : trying to close each chapter whereas trade unions demand that nothing is finalised until all chapters have been examined.

## **CONCLUSION**

The attacks of public national administrations against their own officials are now heavily played in Brussels, using the argument of the obligations provoked by the crisis.

In fact this hides a questioning of the European model of integration with a highly qualified European Public Administration at the service of European citizens, which has worked for five decades, but which some States no longer want.

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Staff Committee  
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