

FLASH FEBRUARY 2026

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Brace yourselves - the staff appraisal season has started!



Colleagues are again navigating through the long, complicated, resource-intensive and sometimes conflictual appraisal process. This is a crucial process, as your appraisal report will significantly affect your chances in the related 2026 promotions exercise.

For more than a decade, **Union Syndicale** has been advocating a system that would greatly simplify the appraisal and promotions process, save resources and time and ensure greater fairness, transparency and predictability. However, to date, the Appointing Authority has not agreed to amend and improve the system.

Union Syndicale stands ready to **help colleagues during the appraisal process**. This support is available in particular for our members, but also for newer members of staff who may not yet understand the system well. If you are interested, please feel free to send a message to union.syndicale@consilium.europa.eu.

Mobility contribution



Union Syndicale wrote to [the Secretary-General on 18 November](#) on the shortcomings of the current contribution to the public transport costs. The figures have remained frozen since the introduction of the revised system in 2022. This contrasts with the 70% reimbursement rate under the previous system, which entailed automatic adjustment in line with fare increases.

In our letter, we showed how colleagues in the lower grades (AST/SC grades, contract agents and those on short-term contracts) are under increasing financial strain. We believe there is a growing need to amend the current system. **The mobility contribution needs to be brought into line with inflation and the amount paid to colleagues on lower salaries needs to be increased.** Our institution has a duty of care especially towards those colleagues in the lowest grades, many of whom are obliged to come to the office to perform their tasks. As time passes, there is less incentive to use public transport. This also undermines the GSC's environmental credibility.

The [response from Administration](#) was disappointing and, we believe, it missed the point.

Union Syndicale has repeatedly raised this issue, placing it on the agenda of the Staff Committee and in our exchanges with the Administration. We strongly urge our Administration to raise the mobility contribution.

Recruitments in 2025

Union Syndicale analysed the GSC's external recruitment figures for 2025 and the data reveal a significant imbalance: the number of colleagues hired on temporary contracts exceeds permanent recruitment figures by around five times.



Why do we have temporary contracts?

The GSC recruits temporary staff in cases where a selection procedure to recruit an official has been unsuccessful or to meet an urgent need under exceptional circumstances. Services need to fill posts quickly in the interests of business continuity and the wellbeing of other team members. In addition, recourse to staff on fixed-term contracts has been a symptom of EPSO's difficulties in producing enough laureates. Recruiting temporary staff is thus in the short-term interest of our institution and all staff.

However, the number of staff on temporary contracts has become far too high. This has led to negative side effects such as job insecurity and a lack of meaningful career prospects. Services with large numbers of temporary staff risk a lack of business continuity when those colleagues, having just been trained and integrated into work procedures, leave their posts. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to reverse this trend.

What can be done to reverse this trend?

To reverse the negative trend:

1. There are clear criteria for situations where temporary and contract staff may be hired. To ensure that these criteria are respected and applied, staff representatives should be included in the selection procedure of these staff categories.
2. EPSO appears to be back on track with a schedule including the long-awaited AD 5 Generalist, AST and an AST/SC competitions and competitions for certain specialist profiles. This will create the necessary conditions to recruit more permanent staff directly from the EPSO list.
3. Internal competitions remain the best way in which to reduce job insecurity and offer temporary and contract agents decent career prospects. **Union Syndicale** welcomes the institution's decision to hold internal competitions, and we encourage our Administration to continue organising internal competitions and to improve the test conditions for all candidates. In addition, GF1 colleagues should also be allowed to take these competitions.

Why is this important?

Permanent posts in the European civil service are essential for its stability, accountability and integrity. Institutional knowledge plays a key role in ensuring long-term continuity in services, policies and operations. This is vital for preserving the integrity of public services. Permanent positions also promote greater motivation, accountability and loyalty among staff, which is crucial for maintaining public trust in our institution.

For more information, read the [full article](#) on our website.

Threat to Belgian/EU mixed pensions



Have you worked in Belgium and retained your pension rights under the Belgian system? Has your spouse worked in Belgium and will your spouse receive a pension from the Belgian system? Then you are affected by the Belgian government's latest attack on our pensions.

In breach of the Protocol on Privileges and Immunities (an integral part of the Treaties), Belgium has decided to take into account the pension amount paid by international organisations (particularly the EU) to limit, or even eliminate, Belgian pensions.

Several measures will affect you if the total amount of your Belgian and European pensions (current or future) exceeds €8,300, €5,200, or €2,000 per month.

Contractual employees of the GFI Group are among those most affected, as they have no incentive to transfer pension rights they may have accrued before starting their employment.

The Commission has reportedly "made contact at the political level with the Belgian authorities to discuss this issue." Let's hope the Commission's initiative proves successful before Belgium also decides to tax our salaries...

For more information, visit [our website](#).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact union.syndicale@consilium.europa.eu.

No news yet regarding the correction of the 2025 adjustments

In a [recent Tract](#), **Union Syndicale** had informed you of an issue regarding the calculation of the 2025 adjustment for our salaries, pensions and allowances, due to a delay by the German legislator in raising the salaries of its national civil servants. The required German law has still not been passed and is not in effect. As a result, there is no basis yet to request consideration for our adjustment. **Union Syndicale** is closely monitoring the situation and will take the necessary actions when the time comes.

About Union Syndicale

Last autumn, **Union Syndicale** members elected their new Executive Committee. At the inauguration meeting in December, Niels Bracke from the EEAS was designated as President and Bernd Loescher as General Secretary of US Brussels



The newly elected members of the Council section are: Frances McFadden, Bernd Loescher, Kerstin Reinhardt, Michael Humphries, Agnès Lahaye and Pedro Alvito. In addition, four of the candidates will be associated: Aida Pascu, Mohamed Merhzaoui, Roderick Sant and Felix Geradon.

Together we look forward to defending the rights of our members and all GSC staff.

For any question or comment, send **US** a message: union.syndicale@consilium.europa.eu .

If you think that we do a useful job, join **US**, we are stronger together!