SEPS
SFPE
Seniors of the European Public Service
Seniors de la Fonction Publique Européenne

Bulletin

Information bulletin for members of the Association

June 2018

SEPS secretariat can be reached

by telephone: +32 475 472 470
Please leave a message if you have no answer

or by internet: info@sfpe-seps.be

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SEPS Administrative Board

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Bulletin editorial team

Nicole Caby; Serge Crutzen; Annie Lovinfosse; Brigitte Pretzenbacher; Hendrik Smets; Yasmin Soezen; Rosalyn Tanguy

Most of the articles of the Bulletin were written in French.
Translations are mainly from Yasmin Sözen

Membership fees : in 2019, they will have to be paid in January

and not anymore at the anniversary date of your registration to SEPS/SFPE

Modalities are given on page 11 of the Bulletin

Annual fees : €30 IBAN: BE 37 3630 5079 7728 BIC: BBRUBEBB

Changes of address

Many members forget to inform us of their change of postal address.
A telephone call to +32 (0)2 475 472 470, or e-mail or note to our secretariat would avoid several weeks' gap in receiving news.

SEPS/SFPE, 175 rue de la Loi, bureau JL 02 40 CG39, BE-1048 Bruxelles
105, avenue des Nerviens, bureau N105 00/010, BE-1049 Bruxelles
Tel : +32 475 472470 ASBL N°: 806 839 565
Email :info@sfpe-seps.be Web : www.sfpe-seps.be

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Dear Member,

We take the protection of personal data very seriously and are committed to complying with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Your contact data are used exclusively to ensure our responsibility for open and transparent information to you, as a member, about the actions conducted by the association as a result of the Management Board decisions.

The information we collect is subject to internal processing only. They are transmitted to third parties (PMO, DG HR, …) only on your request.

The Association undertakes to protect your data and prevent them being distributed, apart from when obliged to by law or in response to a request to do so by you, within the limits of the social purpose of the Association.

Of course, you have the right to access, rectify and erase these data. You may object to the processing of your personal data and you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time by sending us an email or a written note by post.

Serge Crutzen
For the SEPS/SFPE Management

Information Meeting and anniversary of the SEPS/SFPE ASBL

*Location :**Au Repos des Chasseurs*****

Avenue Charle-Albert, 11   1170 Bruxelles (Boitsfort) +32(0)26604672

Tuesday 11 October 2018   10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

According tothe traditional pattern:

- SEPS
- Social services
- **Lunch – Annyversary of SEPS/SFPE ASBL**
- Pension and JSIS information.(participation of PMO members)
- Problems encountered by members
- Questions

Don’t forget to contact the secretariat

- **To reserve your lunch (€35)**
- **To indicate the number of accompanying persons**

Payment can be made to the SEPS-SFPE bank account:
IBAN: BE 37 3630 5079 7728   BIC: BBRUBEBB

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I. Editorial

Every seven years the European Union decides on its future long term budget – the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF). The next budget of this nature, which will be launched on 1 January 2021, is the first of the European Union of 27 members, following BREXIT.

When presenting the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 to the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Claude Junker, declared "*The new budget is the occasion to create our future as a new ambitious Union of 27 Member States linked in a spirit of solidarity. With today's proposal we are presenting a pragmatic plan which defines the way in which we can do more with less. ... The ball is now in the court of the Parliament and of the Council. I really believe that we should aim for an agreement before the elections of the European Parliament which will take place next year.*"

Certain Member States have already made it known that they would like to see savings, especially within Chapter VII, which covers the administration. This is the chapter which concerns salaries and pensions.

If an agreement is to be obtained before the European Parliamentary elections, due end May 2019, it is probable that the staff representatives and the representatives of the pensioners will need to prepare themselves for social dialogue meetings during the coming months.

II. MFF – CFP 2021-2027

The Commission has presented the long term budget for the period 2021-2027 to the European Parliament just as BREXIT is going to leave a significant gap in the EU budget.

The Commission's proposal aligns the Union's budget with the Commission's political priorities whereby the emphasis is placed on areas where the Union is best placed to act.

Overall the Commission proposes a long term budget of **€1 135 billion in commitments** (at 2018 prices) for the period between 2021 and 2027, equivalent to **1.11% of the EU-27's gross national product**.

To finance new and pressing priorities, the **current levels of financing will need to be increased**. Investing today in such areas as **research and innovation, young people, the digital economy, border management, security and defence** will contribute in future prosperity, sustainability and security. By way of example, the budget allocated to Erasmus+ and to the European Solidarity Corps will be doubled.

At the same time, the Commission has critically examined the areas where savings can be made and where efficiency can be improved. The Commission proposes a moderate reduction in the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion Policy.

The Commission will, in the coming weeks, be submitting detailed proposals concerning the future financial sectoral programmes. The Council will, in due course, take the unanimous decision on the future long term budget of the EU, with the approval of the European Parliament. The negotiations will therefore have to be given the highest priority and an agreement will need to be reached before the European Parliament's elections and the summit of Sibiu, which will take place on 9 May 2019. The Commission will do all in its power for an agreement to be reached rapidly.

III. Where do pensions stand within the MFF-CFP?

Chapter VII (European public administration) of the MFF has been presented without a change (Annex 1) compared to the current budget. The relative weight of this chapter therefore reaches 6.7%. We can expect reactions from the Member States. In the March 2018 Bulletin the reaction of the Netherlands has already been reported:

"Administrative expenses cannot be exempt from the budgetary adjustments. In order to control expenditure, the Netherlands asks the Commission to propose reforms, including the pensions system of the EU. Measures should apply to all staff of the EU, as also to any transitional measures."

Article 83 of the Staff Regulations and its Annex XII define the notion of a virtual pension which is guaranteed by a debt of the Member States. Returning to a real pension fund by capitalisation would imply that the €67 billion of these virtual funds would have to re-materialise! Such a capital is probably better guaranteed by a debt of the Member States than by financial investments.

This footnote provoked a reminder of the discussions and of the actions during 2003 and 2004 as also our letters of 2011 to the President of the European Parliament and to Commissioner Sefcovic asking why this pension fund was no longer to be found in the active balance of the Institutions (Annex 2).

The representatives of both active and retired staff are in agreement about the necessity to maintain the current system of "a virtual fund guaranteed by Article 83: debt of the Member States". Mr Marc Oostens, former Chief Accountant of the Commission, proposed a note on this subject, which he has authorised us to publish hereunder:

IV. Our pension fund

Marc Oostens[1]

Background

"Our pension system can be considered to be an accounting fund inscribed in the public debt of the Member States[2]."

The financing of this pension system is assured by annual contributions and in order to maintain the equilibrium of the system, if necessary, the contribution rates are adapted annually, in accordance with the Staff Regulations. Each year these contributions finance the pension rights acquired by the civil servants during the year in question. These civil servants contribute one third of the financing of the pension fund. These annual contributions for the coverage of the pension rights are not capitalised in a "pension fund", but are kept by the Member States in the framework of the balance of the annual budget. As counterpart, Article 83 of the Staff Regulations provides that the Member States collectively guarantee the payment of the pensions. This remains true even beyond their membership of the EU as also beyond the existence of the EU.

The debt of the Member States

Until 2005, the accounts of the European Union registered on the passive side of the accounts a provision for the acquired pension rights of civil servants and on the active side, a debt to the Member States for the same amount (€26 billion in 2004).

In 2004, in the context of the modernisation of the accounting system of the EU, an international committee of experts proposed that the accounting rules of the EU should be aligned with international accounting standards. The new Accounting Regulation of 28 December 2004, after consultation with the accountants of all the Institutions and of all the European agencies, is published by the Commission's Accountant and confirms that the debt of the Member States is inscribed on the active side of the EU budget[3] .

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[1] Marc Oostens, former accountant at the Commission and treasurer of AIACE International, authorises us to publish his article

[2] "Notre régime de pension revisité" Ludwig Schubert, AIACE, VOX n° 102 – March 2016 Affirmation confirmed by the report of the Statistical Office – SWD(2016)268 final, pages 5 and 6

[3] Accounting Regulation N° 12 of the EU applying to all the institutions:"In the absence of a specific IPSAS norm dealing with the particular case of the debts linked to the pensions commitments and taking into account that the IFRS do not completely correspond to the particularities of the public sector, it has been decided to apply the rules currently in operation. In this way, the Member States, collectively guaranteeing the payment of the

For the experts, there is no doubt: the Member States capitalised these contributions and thereby have a debt towards the civil servants and the former civil servants. The debt of each Member State corresponds to its portion as established by the contribution rate for the financing of this expenditure[4].

The international accounting norms

In its report of 31 October 2006 the Court of Accounts notes that the Chief Accountant of the Commission has not respected its new Accounting Regulation N° 12. In its discharge of the accounts for the year 2005, the European Parliament regretted that the Commission had not respected the accounting regulations and requested that the debt of the Member States be posted on the active side of the balance sheet.

To justify the disappearance of the debt of the Member States (more than €67 billion today), the Chief Accountant of the Commission maintained that the accounting regulations for international accounts for the public sector had been respected; however, this was not reflected in reality.

Indeed, in 2004, in the absence of specific regulations for the public sector (IPSAS5), the Committee of experts (see above) decided to respect the regulations for the private sector (IAS6) with regard to the accounting for pension rights.

In October 2006 the International Public Sector Accounting Standard (IFAC) published a draft accounting norm for the posting of pension rights in the public sector. It repeats verbatim the norm foreseen for the private sector, but even specifies that "**for international organisations, where the Member States have committed themselves to paying pension rights, this commitment needs to be posted on the active side of the balance sheet**."

The International Public Sector Accounting Regulation is identical to that of the private sector and there was no valid reason not to respect it.

Creation of a pension fund by capitalisation?

"Within the context of the re-examination of the Multi-annual Financial Framework in 2023, the Commission will undertake a reflexion on the feasibility of creating a pension fund for the staff of the EU by capitalisation."[5]

The pension fund already exists, but it is capitalised in the national treasuries, not subject to the ups and downs of the financial market rates.

Moreover, the draft agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union (Brexit) stipulates that the UK will reimburse a part of its debt relative to the acquired

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pensions, on the basis of the agreed contribution rates for the funding of these expenses, will see a debt inscribed on the active part of the Budget, reflecting their commitment to pay."

[4] Staff Regulations, Art. 83

[5] Multi annual Financial Framework 2021-2027/COM(2018)321 final – Note n° 18, bottom of page, Chapter VII

pension rights *"the United Kingdom will contribute its part of the liability to the Union for the pension and other staff advantages on 31 December 2020. The payments linked to this liability will be transferred when the deadline for these amounts is due."*[6]

Even if the present non-respect of the accounting regulations in no way affects the very clear legal provisions in the Staff Regulations, we believe that this is the moment to insist on the respect of the international accounting norms and for the debt of the other Member States to be registered in the accounts of the European Union. In this way our pension fund will again become a reality in the EU's balance sheet. This will help to diffuse some of the useless confusion in the minds of some about our pension system.

V. Some decisions by the Administrative Board of SEPS/SFPE of 23 May 2018

1. The absence of a reply from Commissioner Oettinger to our letter of December 2017 on social dialogue

The Commissioner has, to this date, not replied to our letter of 7 December 2017. During the meeting of 27 March with the staff unions, Mr Oettinger did not speak about retirees.
The majority of the AB members accept that it is useless to insist further; All the more as we have no rights established by an agreement, as is the case of AIACE.
It will be necessary to participate at the social dialogue meetings "in another fashion"! (Cf 2, hereunder)

2. Agreement with the staff unions on collaboration and "joint affiliation"

This issue has been considered in the past without reaching a decision of any kind as the FFPE EC did not seem to be particularly interested.
Following informal discussions (SEPS/SFPE – FFPE Council of the EU) SEPS launched the idea of a collaboration which could be based on exchanges: publications of SEPS (Bulletin, Vade-mecum, ...) and the support of the unions for the participation of SEPS at all meetings of interest. For example, for the past 8 years, the participation of SEPS (Serge Crutzen) at meetings of the GTR (technical group on remunerations) is based on an official invitation to FFPE EC and to Save Europe (alternately) sent by DG HR.

Unofficial exploratory discussions were held with three unions, essentially between the presidents or the secretary generals (FFPE Council, Save Europe, R&D).

The sharing of the membership fee appears to be difficult or complicated. For example, at the Council, this would run against the regulation concerning the obligatory amount to qualify for being representative: 0.2% of the basic pension in the case of the FFPE Council.

[6] Draft agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of 19 March 2018 – Article 135.2

After discussion, it has been decided, that for a period of more or less one year (whilst waiting for the Commission to effectively revise the social dialogue process) that any pensioner or member of a union 55+ years old, who wants to become a member of SEPS (or is invited to do so by his union) needs to fill out the SEPS/SFPE application form; he/she will be considered to be an associate member[7] of SEPS/SFPE and no membership fee or any financial contribution will be required.

In the future, once the Commission has revised the regulations concerning social dialogue, the absence of membership fees to SEPS could be converted into a contribution by the union on the basis of the documents established and sent out (Social dialogue reports, Bulletin, Vade-mecum, ...) This contribution[8] (or compensation) for the work of SEPS/SFPE would be considered to be a global membership fee by the union for those of its members who are inscribed at SEPS. This procedure could be applied with variations.

Following discussions with the president of R&D, the SEPS proposal to establish a link with the Alliance[9] of Independent Unions of the Commission has been welcomed and will be discussed within this Alliance.

3. Training in Information Technology

Mrs Guetta left Europe at the end of May 2018. She had been providing training on the use of simple informatics tools.
The solution found by Philippe Bioul has been adopted: Mrs Anna Primo is taking over this task.
Contact:

- By telephone: 0495 82 8 46 or
- By email: ana@connectes.be
- Price for a group (a minimum of 2, maximum 8 persons) : €100 for 2hrs of training focused on a theme which has been determined beforehand – global price to be divided by the number of persons inscribed
- Price for individual courses: €70 for 2hrs of training

Training can also be organised at home or at the offices of SEPS (avenue des Nerviens 105).

[7] Regulations of SEPS/SFPE – Article 6 – Composition of the Association
§4 Associate members
Any third person who has a link with the Association (sympathiser, volunteer , donor, ..) is recognised as such by the Association
§5 Honorary members and associate members are not required to pay a membership fee and cannot become members of the Administrative Board
[8] This is not about purchase, since the Bulletin is published free of charge by the OIB.
[9] Serge Crutzen was the secretary general of this alliance in 2002 and in 2003

As far as timetable goes: between now and mid-September Anna Primo is available on Tuesday morning and Thursday morning and afternoon. From mid-September onward she will be available only Thursday afternoon.

4. Court action against the overbilling for health care in Luxemburg

On 28 February 2018 the Administrative Board of SEPS decided, in application of Article 15§3 of its Internal Rules, to request its president to undertake the necessary steps to link the Association as plaintiff to case n° T – 737/17, Wattiau/Parliament, currently pending at the European Court of Justice, with a view to defending its members, former civil servants and agents of the European Institutions who are all covered by the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme (JSIS). The lawyer Orlando had submitted the petition on 7 November 2017.

This case will need the introduction of a supplementary budget "Lawyers' fees". A modified budget will be submitted to the General Assembly.

5. Article 90§2 and possible court action to obtain adjusted work conditions subsequent to invalidity and recognised handicap

The Commission needs to change its stance relative to a return to work in adjusted circumstances, without salary loss, after a period of invalidity. This represents simple respect for the United Nations Convention on the rights of handicapped persons and for the jurisprudence which is currently evolving, notably in Belgium.

Adjusted work conditions or reasonable arrangements could constitute such as part-time telework and the establishment of achievable output objectives. Our Staff Regulations would allow such a decision:
"the principle of equal treatment does not prevent the appointing authorities of the institutions to maintain or adopt measures which offer specific advantages intended to facilitate the exercise of professional activities by handicapped persons or to prevent or compensate for the disadvantages of their handicap in their professional career".

Hendrik Smets and Monique Breton are actively following this case for us, which has been languishing since 2015.
An Article 90§2 case is currently pending and may be followed by court action.

6. Duty station at N 105 and on the telephone – call for more volunteers

The group of volunteers who man the duty stations at N105 on Tuesdays and Thursdays still needs reinforcing; as does manning the telephone of SEPS.
Volunteers need, of course, to be able to reply to the habitual questions or transfer them to someone who can (use of Vade-mecum part 3, the health insurance file, knowledge and professional relations).

It is evident that whoever volunteers should be available as regularly as possible. Experience demonstrates that it is impossible to readjust the duty station roster every time.

Currently the group consists of

- Patrizia, Giustina (Tuesdays)
- Helen, Nadine (Thursdays duty station and telephone)
- Filomena, Anna (Wednesdays or replacement for Tuesdays or Thursdays)
- Brigitte, Nadine, Serge (for the telephone)

In the event of sickness, mission, travel, other....We need to be able to reorganise the duty station roster.

7. Membership fees: Decision for payments to be made in January and its consequences

The proposal retained by the Administrative Board of 28 February, proposed to the General Assembly in June, is to ask that membership fees be paid in January, knowing that

- Whoever registers with SEPS/SFPE after 30 June will not be asked to renew membership the following January, but the January thereafter
- Whoever registers before 1 July will receive a request for renewal the following January.

The AB has taken the dates of 30 June and 1 July as the pivotal dates.

Example: whoever registers in July 2018 will be covered for membership until January 2020.

Reminders for the payment of membership dues which needed to be sent after Easter will be sent after the decision by the General Assembly (28 June 2018).

This new regulation will be communicated to all members via the Bulletins of June and October 2018. The call for membership fees will be sent out as a separate letter together with the December 2018 Bulletin.

8. 10th Anniversary of the SEPS/SFPE Association

The SEMPS/SFPE Association was created on 3 October 2008.
The anniversary of the Association will therefore be celebrated on 11 October, on the occasion of the next information meeting. The details on the organisation of this meeting will be communicated at a later date.

VI. Ambassadors for PMO

SEPS/SFPE volunteers who man the telephone need to be able to reply to questions or contact others among us who can reply to the questions.

AIACE and PMO have thought to name several volunteers “Ambassadors for PMO”. A proposal was made to PMO to nominate SEPS/SFPE volunteers Ambassadors for PMO. This initiative was very welcome.

Their task consists essentially of serving as interpreter to explain the notions, the regulations or the administrative terminology in a comprehensible fashion for the layman. This, in turn, allows them to understand some of the problems encountered by their colleagues which they can then relay to the staff of PMO.

These volunteers benefit from privileged access to PMO (Tel and e-mail).

The SEPS/SFPE Ambassadors for PMO are, initially, the 4 persons who currently man the telephone (n° +32 475 472 470) and who are familiar with the rules of PMO, mainly of JSIS. They are Helen James, Brigitte Pretzenbacher, Nadine Froment, Serge Crutzen. This nomination was approved on 16 May 2018. Many documents need to be studied (in fact the General Implementation Provisions – GIP – of JSIS) and a training seminar to be attended.

VII. Safeguarding of personal data
Protection of the membership list

On 14 April 2016 the European Parliament took a decision which is far reaching for the businesses of the 28 Member States of the EU. As from 25 May 2018, the entry into force of the GRDP (General Regulation on Data Protection) will oblige them to further enhance the protection of personal data of individuals. The objective: to put in place a regulatory system against data leaks and to give European citizens more control over data that has never circulated so massively before.

Requests for the consent of the consumer before any data collection, impact studies on private life, the right to eliminate data, obligatory notification in case of leakages: these provisions of the GRDP are as numerous as they are demanding. The principle of “security by default”, for example, obliges companies to integrate data security provisions from the moment a product, services or another system for data processing of this sensitive information is conceived.

More concretely, this means adapting at all levels. Firstly at the level of information technology, by opting for secure systems, which should protect both against cyberattacks and the internal dissemination of data. At the human level by designating a data protection officer and by making colleagues more sensitive to this new type of problem. At the administrative level also, by putting in place a registry for the processing of data. However, because not all information will be neutralised, European companies will also be obliged to destroy all hard discs and confidential documents which may contain personal data.

NOT RESPECTING THE GRDP WILL GIVE RISE TO HEAVY FINES

As from 25 May one single person will be responsible for the Membership list: Marc Maes. He will need to assume the role of data protection officer, even though our association is not involved in the manipulation of important personal data.

The persons authorised to use this Membership list are: the president, the secretary and Patrizia De Palma.

This list can, however, not be kept on a PC which is not under the permanent control of these persons.

This list cannot be used freely. Any communication with a member needs to come from one of the authorised persons. No information about a member can be supplied to another member or to someone outside.

A message to be addressed to several members will systematically need to be undertaken by using the option 'cci'.

It needs to be clearly understood that addresses, telephone numbers, internet addresses, date of birth, pensioner number, ... all constitute personal data.

When a person asks us to help them relative to PMO, all information received must be considered to be personal data and cannot become part of a forwarded message.

A declaration is contained in the Bulletin (page 3).

VIII. Court case on the adjustment of salaries and pensions for 2011 and 2012

The on-going situation was highlighted in the December 2017 Bulletin: SEPS/SFPE (plaintiff: Serge Crutzen) joined the staff unions of the Institutions and AIACE (plaintiffs: Ludwig Schubert, Pierre Blanchard) in the case against the Council decision relative to the adaptation of salaries and pensions in 2011 and 2012, which were limited to 0% for 2011 and to 0.8% for 2012, instead of 1.7% for each of the two years.

This case was delayed by the fusion of the Tribunal for the European civil service with the Tribunal of the EU and suspended due to a similar appeal introduced by a staff union.

The appeal was taken up again at the end of 2017 and is now reaching its conclusion. The audience of 26 February 2018 marked a turning point in the judges' consideration of the merits of the case. As stated in the report, Ludwig Schubert was able to convince the judges about several essential aspects of the file.

"The Tribunal invites one of the plaintiffs, Mr Ludwig Schubert, former deputy director general of the General Directorate ECFIN – Economic and Financial Affairs - of the Commission – to express himself on certain aspects of the lawsuit, in the presence and under the control of Messrs Flandin and Bernard-Glanz, in accordance with Article 110, paragraph 4 of the procedural regulations."

The economic arguments applied at that time, as pointed out by Ludwig, demonstrated that the Council did not have the right to speak about deterioration to justify the non-application of the method.

Ludwig Schubert appears fairly optimistic about the conclusion of this case, but even if the Staff Unions and the pensioners' associations win, the budgetary problem is very real!! The Commission is certain to appeal or try to find a compromise.

IX. Social assistance finances available to pensioners[10]

Be aware: the credits available to satisfy requests are very limited and are consequently reserved for the neediest cases

1. Article 76 and Article 1.e. of the Staff Regulations

a. Assistance for dependency and supervision of a sick child

(Commission decision of 07.08.2018)

As a former civil servant or member of the family, in certain circumstances like the death of a pensioner or of his/her spouse with a dependent child, sick or convalescent following an accident, or in a state of dependency, or any other situation recognised by the Social Services of the Institution from whom the pensioner originates, you may experience the need for family assistance (house keeping duties: cleaning, washing, ironing or preparation of meals or some shopping) or a sitter for a sick child (excluded are health care or home nursing, which are reimbursed by JSIS).

- Dependency assistance is granted to staff whose net monthly family income is below or equal to the basic emolument of a permanent official grade AST 1/1 (±€3000) increased by 10%
- Supervision of a sick child: available to staff whose net monthly family income is less or equal to the basic emolument of a permanent official grade AST 1/1, increased by 50%.

The maximum duration of this assistance is 6 months, renewable for another 6 months and then again for 12 months if the difficult situation of the beneficiary persists.

[10] The present text is a summary of a detailed presentation about these aids, which can be obtained from the secretariat of SEPS/SFPE

Except where an increase is duly justified, the amount allocated as from 1 January 2018 is as follows:
a) Dependency assistance: €7.2578 per hour of work
b) Assistance for the minding of a sick child: €9.3592 per hour of work

In both cases there are limitations:

- Maximum 100 hours over 10 consecutive days
- From the 11th day onwards, a maximum of 12 hours per week for the whole period

The application form and its annexes provide details about the nature and the medical or social reasons for the requested assistance and stipulate the number of hours per day or per week and the period during which such assistance is deemed indispensable.

b. Social assistance to pensioners

Pensioners who experience particularly difficult and serious ad hoc problems, due to exceptional circumstances beyond their control, can make a request during the current budgetary year for exceptional social assistance.

There is an application form to be filled out very precisely, taking care to explain the reasons for the requested social assistance and provide the necessary documentary justifications to assist in a positive evaluation of their personal situation.

Reimbursement of exceptional primary or secondary education costs (Administrative Instructions N° 17-2017 of 18.07.2017)

This reimbursement can be obtained by active and retired staff, with limited income, confronted with very high educational costs due to educational difficulties with their children. Such difficulties need to be recent and justified by convincing documentation to be annexed to the request.

Financial conditions:
a) The monthly income cannot exceed €9,418.62, including the salary of the spouse or any living allowances.
b) Educational costs, minus the education allowances or other reimbursements or allowances, taking account of all the educational costs of all the children at school, must exceed 20% of the net annual income of the household.
The amount will depend on the income.

The Commission, each year, publishes in the administrative information notices the necessary information for the introduction of such requests.

Where to send such requests?

Send requests and their justifying documentation in an envelope marked “Exceptional Education Costs” to:

PMO-Office for the administration and the payment of individual rights
Mrs Chantal VAN CANEGEM AN 88 04/11 tel: +32 2 299 37 47
Mrs Elisabeth MATRONE AN 88 04/01 tel: +32 2 296 48 67

2. Assistance to the surviving spouse (Article 76.2 of the Staff Regulations)

Article 76.2 of the Staff Regulations foresees that the surviving spouse afflicted by a serious or long-term illness or suffering from a handicap which may call for a complementary pension to be paid by the Institution for the duration of the illness on the basis of an examination of the social and medical conditions of the person concerned. Such assistance can cover the costs not reimbursed elsewhere, without the total of the assistance giving rise to more than the costs incurred.

On the basis of a detailed declaration of his/her situation, his/her revenue, his/her expenses, his/her situation is analysed by a social assistant who may propose the granting of a complement to the pension, taking account, inter alia, of income.

Hendrik Smets
SEPS/SFPE Vice-President in charge of legal matters

For all requests for assistance of the kind mentioned above (except for the reimbursement of exceptional educational expenditure) please contact:
European Commission, Unit HR D1
Assistance to Pensioners
11 rue de la Science, 1049 Brussels
Tel: +32 2 296 50 67

X. Over-billing for medical care in Luxemburg, in the Netherlands and elsewhere

Medical over-billing: PMO enters the battle!!

Following requests from the Staff Committee of the Court of Justice sent to PMO in 2016, the newly nominated Director of PMO, Mrs Gaffey, has decided to take up the battle against the discriminatory prices which are applied to us.

For the very first time in 2017, PMO has set up a technical commission to undertake calculations on the cost prices. This task requires tenacity given the resistance of hospitals to transparency.

Mrs Gerikaite, head of the settlements office in Luxemburg, and leader of this commission, has presented her initial ideas for transitory measures whilst waiting for more detailed results.

Mrs Gaffey and Mrs Gerikaite are both determined to see directive 2011/24/UE applied to cross-border health care.

PMO is now resolute about obtaining a substantial positive revision in the prices currently being practiced.

We recommend that you always inform yourselves in advance about the costs you would have to bear and to be wary when you are unable to obtain clear information. If you have access to it, do not hesitate to use the possibilities offered by your own national health system.

Reminder: Participation of SEPS/SFPE in the court case T-7373/17

In the meanwhile, Francis Wattiau[11], pensioner of the European Parliament in Luxemburg, has launched a court appeal against the over-billing to which he has been subjected (Case T-737/17).

This appeal is supported by the pensioners associations:

- AIACE is providing financial support
- The AB of SEPS/SFPE decided to take a more direct approach to this appeal by becoming one of the plaintiffs (lawyer Orlandi – March 2018) (Cf III.4 above)

Follow-up on the mail of Commissioner Oettinger to the Netherlands authorities

The letter of the Commissioner to the Netherlands authorities was published in the March 2018 Bulletin[12] . Contact has been made to see how our health system can become recognised and be able to access the same tariffs as the Dutch. In the Netherlands the health system is based on four large companies. The State has affiliated its civil servants and agents to one of these companies. The Dutch will see how they can have our system recognised among the care givers and will check how other non-nationals are treated.

XI. Changes in JSIS Discussions at the CGAM

(May 2018) On the basis of a report from Monique Breton

[11] President ff of AIACE International

[12] March 2018 Bulletin, Annex 1

What is the legal nature of the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme (JSIS)?

The Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme is an obligatory legal system, based on public law, un-attached to the system which coordinates social security schemes. It finds its roots in the treaties and in the Staff Regulations of the European Union. Active staff and pensioners are affiliated to it without option.

The basic principle is to guarantee for this population of nearly 90,000 persons, double with the ancillary beneficiaries, to subscribe to a health insurance equivalent to any high level insurance offered in any ofl the Member States. To ensure this, there exist coefficients of equality, which operate only in a positive sense to increase the reimbursements. The ceilings are calculated against the base of Belgium. For all the other Member States, the real costs are subject to calculations destined to provide reimbursements of equivalent level.

Why is JSIS separate from the national health systems?

If JSIS were attached to the system of coordination of social security schemes, its autonomy would vanish entirely, since all persons would be affiliated to the national system of their country of residence. EU staff is disbursed among several countries, even outside the European Union; JSIS is intended to insure the staff of all the European Institutions throughout the world. Depending on good or bad fortune, the staff of the institutions would then have access to a system which covers costs at a high level in one country or at a low level of reimbursement in another. The system would no longer have anything in common. The Institutions and the insured would be paying their dues to the national treasuries. Such a situation would create serious inequalities of treatment.

What about an insurance card for affiliates?

The absence of a card is an increasingly onerous handicap when trying to access health care. We cannot have a card of a national insurance scheme for the reasons given above. However, we could have a European Health Insurance card if the Commission decided to affiliate us to the list of hundreds of primary health insurances which exist in the European Union. This idea is beginning to gain traction (although talk of an insurance card has been going on for years). Having such a recognised card would represent a vast improvement when trying to prove to health providers (especially hospitals) that we are affiliated to a real health insurance.

Additionally, not just the affiliates of JSIS, but agents from other international organisations such as the EIB, Eurocontrol,... are also affiliated to non-national health schemes.

Revision of the 2007 General Implementation Provisions (GIP)

The staff unions would like that the GIP be revised in order to improve the reimbursement levels to adapt the “ceilings” to the evolution of prices, so as to respect the rates of reimbursement of 80%, 85% and 100% as provided in Article 72 of the Staff Regulations. The financial freedom of PMO is however limited, even through using part of the reserve.

The idea is to first define the aspects the CGAM wants to revise and above all avoid opening the debate up to the point of provoking a potential Pandora's Box situation.

During its plenary meeting in May 2018, the CGAM settled on the principle of revising certain GIP, where some provisions need to be reviewed. A few simple mechanisms to adapt JSIS to the reality of 2018 are foreseen, starting by certain ceilings to take account of inflation.

This revision work is expected to last for about two years. The time is required to inform, train, debate, in order to find a stable and robust legal basis for the future and the best scheme possible for the affiliates and their families, while at the same time guaranteeing its sustainability.

A working group has been created to establish the priorities and the timetable: the CGAM should very rapidly create sub-working groups to examine each chapter.

The working group consists of
Sybren Singlesma and Antonio Lacerda (President and Vice President of the CGAM)
From the administration:
Mr Feddersen (EMA), Massimo Bebich (Commission), Mrs Tejedor (Court of Auditors)
From the staff representation:
Kim Slama (Commission-U4U), Lukasz Wardyn (Commission-LSC Brux), Monique Breton (LSC-Court of Justice Lux)

Bruno Fetelian (Head of unit PMO3-JSIS) believes there are four big themes to be addressed: Dentistry, hospitalisations, handicap and long term care/dependency, technical modernisation.

The main concern relative to dental health costs is that every increase in our reimbursements is immediately confiscated by the dentists who increase their tariffs.

Envisaged developments

Mr Fetelian intends to have applications for smartphones developed, initially for simple functions, but with a view to enable affiliates to introduce their reimbursement requests straight from the surgery or the chemist, so that reimbursement become very rapid (2 days) rendering the system of third party payer superfluous.

PMO intends to develop a link with the main Belgian hospitals in order to receive bills in electronic form instead of having to recopy everything manually.

Annual Account for 2017

PMO has presented balanced accounts after having had discussions with DG BUDG about how to define provisions, given that in 2017 PMO had mopped up a substantial delay which

created a great increase in expenditure. There is no deficit: the balance sheet shows an surplus of almost €400,000 (instead of almost €15million in 2016).
The reserve represents about 11 months of expenditure. For Bruno Fetelian, the high level of reserve is indispensable. The staff unions however consider this level of reserve to be too high.

Preventive Medicine

The expenditure in 2017 has stagnated relative to 2016 because of the poor level of the programs. Clearly many people are waiting for the new programs and there is consequently a risk that there will be a strong increase in expenditure as soon as they become available in autumn 2018.

Checking of the bills by affiliates after direct billing

PMO does not wish to submit bills to affiliates for them to check the expenditure, considering that the affiliates are not capable of doing this. Additionally, it could happen that the patient has died in the meanwhile.

PMO intends to ask affiliates only if they have effectively been treated at the intended hospital and what type of room they had chosen and occupied.

New form for dental treatment

PMO has prepared a new form for estimates and for statement of fees. The draft has been approved and will be translated into all the languages.

XII. Thoughts about coverage for dependency

Monique Breton, member of our Administrative Board, wrote an article in the March 2018 Bulletin on the subject saying that "*In the northern countries, children have no obligation to provide living allowances to their antecedents. It should not be suggested that consideration should be given to the contributions children make to their parents. Otherwise, according to the rules of civil law, sometimes the children should contribute, sometimes not. This would be a factor of inequality and complications*."

I believe that to understand this phrase it is necessary to speak two languages.
Two situations need to be distinguished.
The first is the request for direct payment by the institution. It is clear that in this case, the author is right: It should not be suggested that the contributions of children to their parents be taken into account.

The second concerns the proof of net income in order for the institution to determine how much needs to be paid. In this situation, it would in fact create a factor of inequality if the contributions of the children were not taken into account. These contributions are sometimes quite significant and reduce the net income of the children. If the northern countries do not recognise this obligation, then this type of contribution will simply not be taken into account. The dependency assistance is granted case by case, and those who face living allowance obligations towards their old parents should be allowed to have such contributions recognised since they reduce their net income, which will form the basis for the assistance to be granted. It will simply be up to the person who faces such obligations to prove that he/she has them.

This is all the more necessary since, under the reform of Belgian succession rights, ascendants can no longer inherit; this has been replaced by a living allowance debt, to their benefit, on the legatees, usually their children.

Hendrik Smets
SEPS/SFPE Vice-President in charge of legal matters

XIII. Important information

The majority of these items of information in the Bulletin are based on the experience of members of SEPS/SFPE who man the permanent telephone line.

The requests for assistance justify the transcription into the Bulletin and into the Vade-Mecum of several texts taken from My IntraComm, knowing that many members consult My IntraComm either infrequently or no longer at all.

This information is adapted by SEPS/SFPE to the situation of members of the association, who often prefer to receive a document through the post rather than having to search for it on the internet.

This information may also replicate information already provided in previous SEPS/SFPE Bulletins. It is however important to insist on some rules and regulations and to remind members of them.

1. PMO-Pensions address

The "Pensions" Unit of the Commission has communicated the address of the mailbox for PMO 4 Pensions : PMO-PENSIONS@ec.europa.eu

This mailbox, intended for pensioners, will progressively replace the individual mailboxes of the persons responsible and will centralise the questions concerning pensions. This mailbox will help to improve the details and the quality of responses.

2. SYSPER Pensions – Reminder

Currently 12,000 pensioners out of 24,000 have an EU Login account (they do not necessarily use it regularly).

The access to SYSPER Pensions can only be granted to the pensioner who has an EU login account: this is accomplished via My Remote (https://myremote.ec.europa.eu/) which is the new point of entry to all the applications accessible to pensioners: SYSPER Pensions, JSIS on-line, My IntraComm[13].

Pensioners who have access to SYSPER Pensions have the possibility to consult and print their pension pay slips for the year 2017 (earlier years are not available on-line). A notification is sent to the email address of the pensioner as soon as his/her pension pay slip is available on FO.

SYSPER allows pensioners to print their fiscal declarations. Pensioners can download and print the same version of the certificate as that which is sent by post. It is also possible to generate certificates for tax authorities in other countries, in a language of choice, with or without mention of amounts.

The pensioner can refuse the paper documents: The use of the OPT-OUT of the paper version of the documents available under SYSPER Pensions has been available to pensioners since the morning of 29 June 2018.

This option applies to all documents available at SYSPER Pensions, i.e. declarations of life, pension bulletins and fiscal attestations. It is not possible, for example, to receive the pension bulletin in electronic form and the declarations of life and fiscal attestations in paper form.

The pensioner can change his choice at any time. Even after having opted for the electronic version of the documents, the pensioner can ask his pension administrator to send him/her the paper version.

There are many benefits to asking for the electronic version of the documents:

- √ Availability: wherever you are, you can access it via your smartphone or ipad.
- √ Security: your documents are available only to you. You avoid the loss of mail, postal errors. In this way you are no longer exposed to the risk that your administrative mail may be read by unauthorised persons.
- √ Protection of the environment

How to access SYSPER Pensions

You can access SYSPER Pensions if you have an external EU Login account by connecting via the link https://myremote.ec.europa.eu , then clicking on "I have a private device" and proceeding as for JSIS on-line or My IntraComm.

3. Public procurement by Afiliatys for Hospi Safe

[13] WARNING: Currently access to JSIS on-line requires double identification so as to better protect your medical data. We are working on a more straight forward solution, which is also more effective. You will be the first to be informed when a new connection is operational.

The framework contract which governs the insurance policy Hospi Safe (Cigna-Allianz BE) ends on 31.12.2019.

A public procurement procedure was launched by Afiliatys at the end of February 2018 in order to ensure the continuation of this complementary health insurance, Hospi Safe, for the 22,900 present subscribers.
The closure of the procedure took place at the end of April. Three Afiliatys officers analysed the offers in May 2018 and the Governing Board took a decision on 19 June 2018 publicised by the General Assembly on 3 July 2018:

Allianz Care[14] will be the insurance company to manage the policy Hospi Safe in replacement of Cigna, starting on 01.01.2020.

Hospi Safe as such remains in force.

The present management of the insurance policy (Cigna) remains in force until 31.12.2019.
https://www.eurprivileges.com/en/hospitalisation-active-staff

4. Application of the legal obligation to be a national from one of the Member States of the Union for the members of staff who will no longer fulfil this condition due to BREXIT

The Commission has decided to undertake the following commitments:

1. In the case of civil servants of British nationality, who will no longer fulfil the requirement to be a national from one of the Member States of the Union following the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the appointing authority will not use the discretionary powers granted to it by Article 49 of the Staff Regulations, except where this is duly justified in specific cases such as conflict of interest or for reasons of international obligation.

2. In the case of temporary or contractual agents of British nationality, who will no longer fulfil the requirement to be a national from one of the Member States of the Union following the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the Commission is legally bound to undertake a case by case analysis to authorise duly justified exceptions to the nationality rule foreseen under the system applicable to other agents. The Commission commits itself however to ensure that the authority to conclude contracts makes a generous and transparent use of this possibility to derogate from the rule: its appreciation shall be based on the needs of service.

5. The Appeals Court of Brussels confirms that persons who are entitled to the special

[14] Allianz Care (AWP Health and Life) Allianz Partners, Place du Samedi, 1, BE-1000 Brussels

residence permit may obtain Belgian nationality

Written by Caitlin Moens (publication: 02 May 2018)

Since several months, persons who work for the European Institutions or their family members, beneficiaries of a special residence permit, who have introduced requests for Belgian nationality, have received a negative response from the Royal Prosecutor, on the grounds that their special residence permit does not constitute “legal residence” in the sense of the Code on Belgian nationality.

According to the Royal Prosecutor, the list of documents to be taken into consideration as proof of legal residency in the sense of Article 7.2, §1, 2° of the Code on Belgian nationality, as established by Article 4 of the Royal Decree of 14 January 2013, is exhaustive, but the special residence permit is not registered among these documents.

The Family tribunal, a first instance tribunal, considers that the list of documents is indeed exhaustive, but that the article in the Royal Decree listing these documents needed to be set aside by virtue of Article 159 of the Constitution. In fact, according to the judge, this article creates discrimination between foreigners who hold a legal title of residency as listed in the Royal Decree and the foreigners who hold other titles for legal residency, and this would be contrary to Articles 10, 11 and 191 of the Constitution.

By a ruling of 29 March 2018 the Court of Appeals confirmed the reasoning of the first instance Tribunal and ruled in favour of a request for Belgian nationality from an European lady who held a special residence permit.

Incidentally, certain persons, holders of a special residence permit domiciled in Ixelles were confronted by a motion of inadmissibility on the part of this commune, who refused to forward their dossier to the Public Prosecutor’s office for the same reason, notably “absence of proof of legal residence”. The Ixelles commune considered that the dossier was incomplete since it did not contain one of the documents listed in the Royal Decree.

Appeals were introduced in parallel to the State Council and to the Family Tribunal. By a judgement of 17 April 2018, the latter declared itself competent, considering that the Commune of Ixelles violated a subjective right by refusing to register the request. It also applied Article 159 of the Constitution to rescind the motion of inadmissibility of the Commune, ordering it to transmit the dossier to the Public Prosecutor’s office. The appeal addressed to the State Council is still pending, and there will probably be discussions as to whether there is still interest in pursuing it.

Following the long awaited ruling of the Appeals Court, the Public Prosecutor would need to change his handling of cases pertaining to Europeans who hold a special residence permit and cease to emit negative opinions on this basis. One can hope that the Commune of

Ixelles will also change its practices and finally submit the dossiers to the Public Prosecutor for analysis.

6. Project of the Social Services of Woluwé St Lambert

During the next 15 years one should expect:

- An increase in the population aged between 65 and 79. This population is generally autonomous or semi-autonomous. In order to avoid admission to a retirement home it is essential for alternatives to be available. Short stay and residences with services are among such alternatives.
- Stagnation in the population aged 85 and over, afflicted by the onset of increasing dependency and confusion. The development in retirement homes (RH) and retirement homes with services (RHS) of closed wings – where the adapted care of the person is ensured – is becoming an urgent necessity.

There is a limited offer of RHS available. Additionally, the public sector – which takes care to offer moderate tariffs – represents no more than 8.3% of this sector.

The Social Services of Woluwé Saint Lambert have for the past 30 years been developing offers of the following nature:

- Semi-residential (day care centres)
- Residential alternatives to RH (grouped homes of the Andromeda Antenna)

In order to create a specialised pole within the care, health and welcome establishments for the aged in the perspective of the horizon 2022, the Social Services of Woluwé St Lambert plan to diversify and expand their offer through:

- The creation of residences with services
- The development within the existing units of RH and RHS of units for the care of confused persons (without increasing the total number of beds available)
- The creation of a unit for short stays

To this day the Social Services have already submitted a draft construction plan to the Cocom to open 22 short stay beds within the framework of a private partnership (partner from the peripheral hospital care sector). This type of partnership diminishes the costs for Social Services and creates dynamic groupings which can respond to the common challenge of an ageing Brussels population.

Whoever is interested can ask for more details about this project from the SEPS/SFPE secretariat.

7. The Women of Europe (Les Femmes d'Europe) AISBL

This Association was created in 1976 and consists of about 950 women volunteers, citizens of Europe living in Belgium, who collaborate in a spirit of friendship and solidarity. Its 40th Anniversary was celebrated in 2016.

It is a generous and pleasing idea whose purpose is to facilitate small-scale humanitarian projects for the most vulnerable in the world, and also in Belgium. The priority lies in the area of education, in training and in health care for women and children who have been "forgotten" by the national authorities or by NGOs.

The Women of Europe organise manifestations, exhibitions, cultural and recreational events, gala diners, simple buffets, a Christmas and an Easter Bazaar, the benefits of which are used for the financing of projects conscientiously selected by them.

The Women of Europe are organised into national groups, but there is also a multinational group. These groups meet regularly in a spirit of joy and conviviality, to propose and organise all the events, which are detailed monthly in a free Newsletter addressed to members by post.

If you have a little of your precious time to donate, we invite you to join this Association or, simply to participate with your friends at the proposed events. In this way you can, for example, contribute to the purchase of a water pump for a little village in Africa or to the purchase of educational aids for deprived children in Belgium. Moreover, several members of SEPS/SFPE are already members.

Honorary President: Irène Timmermans

Additional information: Brigitte Pretzenbacher
Or directly:
Association Femmes d'Europe: tel. 02 660 56 96
Email: info@assocfemmesdeurope.eu Website: www.assocfemmesdeurope.eu

8. SEQUOIA network

Sequoia Day at the Citadel of Namur – Saturday 2 June 2018

This first edition of "Sequoia Day" was a huge success.

About 60 members and friends took part on Saturday 2 June at the first Sequoia Day at the magnificent site of the Citadel of Namur. After sharing a convivial meal, the 'artist' participants (painters and sculptors) showed us their art and explained their passion for it. Subsequently, an actress – Odile Crouigneau – enchanted us with a musical spectacle, currently showing at the "Théâtre de la Contrescape" in Paris. She sang enchantingly, accompanied by her guitar about how to use our talents and achieve our objectives in life. A simple and effective communication strategy!

Remember, Pierre Degand, the creator of **Sequoia**, came to present us this beautiful initiative at our preceding SEPS/SFPE information meeting. The Sequoia network proposes to us 50+ a means to expand our social network. It develops members' particular strengths and accompanies them in their projects.

If you are keen to take part in the numerous activities offered by the "ambassadors" of Sequoia, anywhere in Belgium and/or if you want to offer your own passions for the service of others and become an "ambassador" yourself, subscribe!

If you are looking for a new activity or want to volunteer, this is also the right address.
The SEQUOIA network website: https://www.sequoiaways.be, https://www.sequoiaways.fr
or phone **Pierre Degand Sequoia Network**: +32 497 59 13 26

Brigitte Pretzenbacher

9. Contribution to the SEPS/SFPE Bulletin

Every member of SEPS is invited to contribute to the Bulletin, either i the form of an article or of a commentary to be published (on condition of approval by the Editorial committee)

10. PMO – Opening hours

The opening hours of the Welcome office of PMO at MERO (41 avenue de Tervueren, 1040 Brussels) have changed as from 3 January 2018:

Monday – Friday: 09h30 to 13h00

Availability of PMO services at the telephone during the summer: 10 am-12 am

Do not forget that SEPS/SFPE can help you solve certain problems.

11. Non transfer of pension rights – Reminder

Accumulation of a Community pension with a national pension – Reminder
I would like to draw the attention of members to my article on the same subject, which have appeared in earlier versions of our Bulletin.

European officials who have not transferred their pension rights to the Community system and who benefit from a Community pension, can now introduce a request for a pension for the years they have spent working for a national employer.

This is also valid for those who may already have introduced such a request, but who have so far been denied a pension.

I remain available for all those who need guidance in their approach to this issue.

Hendrik SMETS
Vice-President in charge of legal matters

XIV. Annexes

Annexe 1

MFF 2021-2027 Chapter VII.
EUROPEAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Investing in: An efficient and modern public administration at the service of all Europeans

The European public administration is small in comparison with national and even many regional and local administrations. However, it plays a crucial role in helping the Union to deliver on its priorities and to implement policies and programmes in the common European interest.

In recent years, the European administration has undergone deep reform. As part of the agreement on the current Multiannual Financial Framework in December 2013, the reform of the staff regulations introduced significant efficiency measures[17]. In addition, institutions undertook to reduce staffing levels by 5%. The Commission has implemented this commitment in full and other institutions, bodies, and agencies are also implementing this reduction, leading to a decrease of the relative share of the Commission's staff in all European bodies. The Court of Auditors has recently concluded that the reduction has broadly been achieved by all institutions and bodies.

It should be noted that these reforms were made at a time when the Union's staff needed to intensify work, take on new tasks in new priority areas, and address unforeseen challenges such as the migration and refugee crises.

The European public administration should seek to operate as efficiently as possible. The Commission is continually seeking to make the most of synergies and efficiencies. However, the administration must be adequately resourced to deliver on its essential functions. The need to invest in information technologies and the upgrading of buildings will not disappear in the future. The withdrawal of the United Kingdom will result in a limited reorientation of some functions within the administration but the scope of activities will not change – and in some new priority areas will be intensified. Translation and interpretation services in the English language will also remain unaffected.

The ceiling set for the Union's administrative expenditure in 2020 represents 6.7% of the overall Multiannual Financial Framework. This covers the administrative expenditure of all EU institutions, pensions and the costs of the European Schools. Following the significant efforts made notably by the Commission in the current period, a further reduction would call into question the functioning of the EU institutions and efficient policy delivery and implementation. A strong European Union with many additional tasks entrusted to it by the Member States needs an efficient and agile civil service, capable of attracting talented people from all Member States to work for the benefit of all Europeans. The Commission therefore proposes to maintain the situation of administrative spending at its current level[18].

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17. These reforms included a two-year salary freeze accompanied by an increase of working time to 40 hours a week without compensation, the creation of a more moderate salary scale for secretarial and clerical jobs, and the reduction of annual leave. The reform also substantially affected pension entitlements by means of a reduction in end-of-career salaries, a higher retirement age and reduction of the pension accrual rate.

18. In the framework of the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework in 2023, the Commission will reflect on the feasibility of the creation of a capital-based pension fund for EU staff.

Annexe 2

Bruxelles, 28 February 2011

Parts of a letter (February 2011) to the attention of Mr. Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament

Dear Mr. Buzek,

Would the European Parliament demand for a fifth time that the European Commission enters the MSs' liability for financing the pensions of European Civil Servants in- accordance with the international standards? (€ 37 500 million).

The Commission's Accounting Officer had been entering enter the MSs' obligation to finance pensions in the receivable column up to and including 2004.

In 2005 the Commission's Accounting Officer decided – for whatever reason - to remove the MSs' debt (€ 33 000 million) from the EC's annual accounts. Since then, the European Parliament has repeatedly, rightly requested, in its resolutions on the implementation of the European Union's general budget, in accordance with the principles of accrual accounting practice, as confirmed by the Commission's Accounting Officer on 28 December 2004 and on the basis of the opinion of the Advisory Committee on accounting standards, that : "Since the Member States guarantee the payment of staff pension benefits collectively according to the scale fixed for the financing of this expenditure, the MSs' debt can be entered as an asset to reflect their commitments (accounting rule n° 12").

……..

Therefore, there can be no doubt that the internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector call for the Member States' debt to be entered in the accounts as assets, as requested [repeatedly] by the European Parliament since 2005.

…

The pension is a deferred salary. This accumulated part of the salary must be recorded as assets in the accounts.

In conclusion, before granting the discharge the European Parliament should demand that the MSs' formal commitment to fund pension liabilities (€ 37 500 million) appear again as assets in the EC accounts, as was the case in 2005. The pension is a deferred salary. This accumulated part of the salary must be recorded as assets in the accounts.

If a real, and no longer virtual, pension fund were created2 then, logically, it would mean that this sum would be considered to be actually available in fact.

As Staff Representatives, we feel it in the interest of all concerned that public account properly reflects the financial situation of the European Union.

Yours faithfully,

Luigia DRICOT DANIELE Political Secretary of Solidarité Européenne	Philippe COLART President SAFE	Serge CRUTZEN President SEPS

Copy :
Mssers. Jorgo Chatzimarkakis - Rapporteur for Discharge 2009 / Christofer Fjellner – Shadow Rapporteur on Discharge procedure 2009 / Jutta Haug - Chair of Policy Challenges Committee / Catalin Ivan - Shadow Rapporteur on Discharge procedure 2009 / Mrs. Iliana Ivanova - Shadow Rapporteur on Discharge procedure 2009 / Messers Soren Bo Sondergaard - Shadow Rapporteur on Discharge procedure 2009 / Csaba Ory - Rapporteur for Opinion on Dicharge in The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs / Maros Sefcovic - Vice-President of Inter-Institutional Relation and Administration / Klaus Well - Secretary General of the European Parliament / Mrs Carmen Castillo del Carpio - Head of Unit Budgetary Control Commission

Annex 3

In memoriam

See French version overleaf: annex 3

Annex 4

Files and documents available. Order form

Please send this reply slip to the secretariat

I should like to receive the English edition of the following documents

	by Post / Email
SEPS Vade-mecum	
Part 1 (Procedures – edition august 2015 FR only)	O / O
Part 2 (forms /pers. data)	O / O
Part 3 (addresses PMO – ADMIN. …) Ed. June 2018	O / O
Part 4 (reimbursement forms – RCAM/JSIS) (January 2018)	O / O
Supplementary health insurances Edition May 2017	O / O
Invlidity allowance and survival pension (Hendrik Smets)	O / O
Orphan survivor's pensions (Hendrik Smets	O / O
EU Officials and taxation (Me. J Buekenhoudt)	O / O
Inheritance (Me. J Buekenhoudt) (May 2018)	O / O
JSIS Guide (was sent by poste to all pensioners)	O / O

Please send these documents (by Post or by Email) to *:*

Surn*ame*…………………………………………………………………………. ….

First name …………………………………………………………………………..

Address :
…………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………….. ……………………

Email address: ………………………………………………………………

Date : ……………………… Signature : ……………………….. ……..

To be sent to

SFPE – SEPS
175 rue de la Loi,
Bureau JL 02 40 CG39,
BE-1048 Bruxelles

GSM: +32 (0)475 472470

Email:

info@sfpe-seps.be

CA/SC/GD/1403EN

APPLICATION FORM

I, THE UNDERSIGNED (1) ....

Maiden name for married women (1)…………………………………………………

PERSONNEL / PENSION N°: ....DATE OF BIRTH (dd/mm/yy): ....

NATIONALITY: ....   Language desired for documents (2): FR/EN

HOME ADDRESS (1)..

....

HOME Tel: ....   GSM*: ....

E-mail: ....

FORMER STAFF MEMBER OF (Institution + DG or Dept.): …………………………

If still active: number of years' service: ....

HEREBY DECLARE MEMBERSHIP OF THE "ASSOCIATION OF SENIORS OF THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC SERVICE " (SEPS), by sending this completed form to SEPS and paying the membership fee..

HEREBY DECLARE THAT I AGREE TO SEPS REGISTERING AND STORING MY ABOVE PERSONAL DATA and to it being kept for the length of my membership.
The Association undertakes to protect your data and will prevent it being distributed, apart from when obliged to by law or in response to a request to do so by you, within the limits of the social purpose of the Association.

DONE AT:...............................

DATE: ....   SIGNATURE: ....

The annual subscription of **€30** is payable on 1 January. New members joining after 30 June will not be required to pay their second subscription until the second January following their enrolment.

SEPS Bank account N°:
ING bank, Brussels   **IBAN BE37 3630 5079 7728   BIC: BBRUBEBB**
Communication: **Annual subscription + names and pension Nr.**

Please return this application form to:
SEPS/SFPE   Office 02 40 CG39   175, rue de la Loi,   B-1048 BRUSSELS
Or info@sfpe-seps.be

(1) Capital letters please   (2) Please cross out where appropriate   (*) optional

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*If you choose to pay by standing order (see below), please send the slip **YOURSELF direct to your bank.***

To be sent to

SFPE – SEPS
175 rue de la Loi,
Bureau JL 02 40 CG39,
BE-1048 Bruxelles

GSM: +32 (0)475 472470

Email: info@sfpe-seps.be

STANDING ORDER

(Please send direct to your bank)

I, the undersigned, ...

HEREBY INSTRUCT ....(Name of bank)

to pay on .... (date) and on the same date each year, until further notice, the sum of : € **30**

by debit of account N° .... ……………………

to: **SEPS - SFPE**
JL Office 02 40 CG39
175 rue de la Loi 175
B 1048 Brussels

Account N° **IBAN BE37 3630 5079 7728** **BIC BBRUBEBB**

ING Bank Brussels

Reference: Annual subscription + Names and personnel/pension number

DATE: .... SIGNATURE: ....

To be sent to your bank