



Seniors of the European Public Service

Seniors de la Fonction Publique Européenne

Bulletin

Information bulletin for members of the Association

April 2015

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Important notices

Bank account for the annual subscriptions:

IBAN: **BE 37 3630 5079 7728**

BIC: **BBRUBEBB**

Please don't use the Post bank account any more

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.

Your Internet address

Please don't forget to let us know your e-mail address.

Many SEPS messages are sent by e-mail.

The address used is info@sfpe-seps.be

**The annual subscription has been increased to
minimum €30**

Decided at the AGM of 13 December 2013

Forthcoming General Meeting and Information Meeting

Room VM18 -1/32¹ – 18, rue Van Maerlant, 1040 Brussels
Maelbeek metro stop – take exit Chaussée d’Etterbeek.

Thursday 11 June 2015

Following the usual agenda of the meetings : from 11.00 to 16.30

- Statutory General Meeting
- Lunch (buffet) at the Brasserie Van Maerlant
- Information : JSIS – Relations with PMO
- Information (SFPE – Pensions)
- Aid to pensioners
- Problems encountered by members
- Questions

Don't forget to contact the secretariat to reserve your lunch (€25)

Secretariat: e-mail info@sfpe-seps.be ; fax : +32(0)2 2818378

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Payment for the lunch can be made in situ or to the SEPS ING account (See page 2)

There are 3 parking spaces available for persons with severe handicap if reserved 15 days before the meeting.

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¹ Rue Van Maerlant 18, due to unavailability of room VM2.

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Most of the articles were written in French. Translations are from Rosalyn Tanguy and Yasmin Sözen.

I. Letter from the Editor

During the information meeting organised by SEPS-SFPE on 12 March 2015 in Brussels (Van Maerlant, 18) there were many members present who expressed incredulity and outrage at the declarations made by the staff union “Generation 2004” in its newsletter of January 2015 about official staff and agents of the Commission recruited before the Staff Regulation reform of 2004.

SEPS-SFPE had proposed offering an article in its bulletins of November 2014 and February 2015.

The present information Bulletin is dedicated in part to this generational split between officials of the institutions, particularly of the Commission. It is indeed necessary to understand the dimensions of this difficulty which the former staff will have to face in the near future, and if possible, in a democratic fashion in order to achieve a strategy which can limit, if not eliminate this split entirely between these generations.

Serge Crutzen

II. “Generation 2004” affaire – continuation

In the Bulletins of September and November 2014, we offered articles on the rift amidst the staff of the Institutions: “Generation 2004” recruited after 1 May 2004 opposed to the “fat cats” recruited before 2004.

In the Bulletin of February 2015, an analysis of G2004’s Newsletter N° 11 explains the ideas this staff union has for achieving a rebalancing of their pensions on the backs of the current pensioners.

The analysis of the pensions system which the “Generation 2004” committee made in its newsletter (N°11 – January 2015) is interesting and very worrying. It is detailed, often pessimistic and sometimes even malevolent. It identifies the disadvantages which the staff recruited after 2004 will be confronted with.

The solutions explored by G2004 are geared towards reducing the advantages which the “fat cats”, notably the current pensioners and those colleagues who will be retiring in the near future, enjoy.

Beyond the analysis of Generation 2004’s affirmations, undertaken in the February 2015 Bulletin, SEPS-SFPE has written two letters:

- **A letter to the president of “Generation 2004”.** This letter, in Annex 1 (28.02.2015), reproaches this union for publically calling a section of their colleagues “fat cats” and for aligning itself with a particularly malevolent section of the press with regard to the European Civil Service. Such an attitude is inadmissible and runs counter to Article 12 of our Staff Regulations. SEPS-SFPE also invited G2004 to defend its pension system and careers without provoking a rift between one part of the staff against the other.
- **A letter to the Vice-President of the Commission, Kristalina Georgieva,** in charge of the Budget and Human Resources, in Annex 2 (03.03.2015), in which SEPS-SFPE expresses its reproaches of G2004, whose declarations are unacceptable in the light of the rules of the Staff Regulations (Articles 17§2, 11 and 12)
SEPS-SFPE ends by insisting that:
Limits be imposed on the intrigues of G2004, which merely create a rift between the staff.
The future claims of G2004 should be fair and that they can be defended by all the staff, including the “pre-2004”.

Reply of “Generation 2004” (18.03.2015)

Annex 3, the letter sent by G2004 to Vice-President Georgieva in response to our actions.

This reply reproaches SEPS-SFPE with attempting to intimidate the Vice-President and gives us no clue about the further intentions of G2004. It confirms their desire for a change to their statutory work and pensions conditions, thanking the Vice-President, in advance, for the decisions she may take in their favour.

The response of Vice President Georgieva to our letter

Following the letter of protestation SEPS-SFPE sent to Vice-President Georgieva, a reply reached us on 25 March 2015 (Annex 4).

The Vice-President replied to our main criticisms in a single paragraph:

“Although I understand your arguments, you will understand that it is not for me to take position on the different public declarations made, even if they are wrong or partial, by the staff unions, who enjoy freedom of speech in the entire field which concerns the working conditions of the staff of the European civil service.”

The staff unions are therefore able to express whatever they wish in their publications, even the most preposterous falsehoods. The declarations of G2004 commit only that organisation, even when such declarations are made in the public place, in the media of the Member States.

However, is it admissible that such union freedom allows for a part of the staff to be called “fat cats”?

We believed that it is for the Vice-President to ensure the respect of the rules and in particular those fixed by Articles 11, 12 and 17 of the Staff Regulations. In our understanding of things, freedom of speech is limited by these provisions. In the view of SEPS-SFPE it is for the Vice-President to recall these provisions, so that the Community allegiance and solidarity does not become a commitment voided of substance... We had added in annex the letter Mr Grech had sent to the political leaders of his country and which, according to Article 17, §2.2, required a prior authorisation from the appointing authority, an authorisation which Mr Grech has almost certainly not requested. However, the Vice-President, no doubt in the name of union freedom of speech, has ignored “this detail”.

In as far as the ‘pensions’ aspects covered by Newsletter N° 11 of G2004, the Vice-President declared:

“As you will know, as Vice-President in charge of human resources and the Budget, I am also in charge of questions relating to the pensions scheme, and in this context, my role is to ensure that the system remains balanced.”

The analysis “Generation 2004” has developed in its Newsletter n° 11 on the pensions scheme commits only this staff union and in no way constitutes an official position of the Commission on this subject.”

We hope that the proposals of G2004 are not taken into account by the Commission, but unfortunately, G2004's ideas could influence those Member States, who may feel they have an ally in a part of the staff for their vague desire to reduce our pensions, without in any way offering any form of compensation to the post-2004 colleagues.

Expected response from the Vice-President to the letter of G2004

We do not yet know what the reaction of Vice-President Kristaline Georgieva has been to the steps taken by Stefan Grech, president of G2004. We have communicated to Stefan Grech the response of the Vice-President to our letter. He has promised to inform us should there be a response to his letter.

Conclusion

It is becoming increasingly important that pensioners are well represented within the groups involved in social dialogue.

III. G2004's motivation and hopes

What attitude should we adopt in future?

“Generation 2004” is basing its arguments on Article 6(2) of the 2004 Staff Regulations:

“To ensure equivalence of the average career in the career structure before 1 May 2004 (hereinafter ‘old career structure’) and as from 1 May 2004 (hereinafter ‘new career structure’) and without prejudice to the principle of promotion based on merit ...”

The equivalence in question was to be guaranteed by the promotions procedure and a periodical evaluation of the situation. However, according to G2004, promotion rates (cf Annex 1B to the Staff Regulations) did not lead to equivalence and there were too many promotions to grades AD12-14 and AST9-11, ‘to the point where the number of high-grade officials without managerial responsibilities has become impossible to justify before the EP, the Member States and European citizens’.

Meanwhile, still according to G2004, new recruits have been classified at the bottom of the scale regardless of age, qualifications or experience. This has been the case for virtually all nationals of the new Member States.

G2004 is also pessimistic regarding pensions. Its members think that, in the light of the increase in European civil servants since 2004 (officials taken on at the foot of the ladder and thousands of contract staff), the Member States will not agree to pay more for pensions than for salaries. They say there will be a drastic reduction of pensions (in 2022?) and that they will be the main victims.

G2004 is counting on the new Commission, in particular on its President and its Vice-President with responsibility for the European civil service, Kristalina Georgieva, to have the political courage to push things forward beyond the “denial decade” and face up to this major problem which indirectly affects all policy areas, ... They now have the duty,

responsibility and moral obligation to fight this injustice and restore unity within a European civil service that is deeply divided.

Probable developments

The number of pre-2004 officials in active employment will decrease rapidly as time goes by. Post-2004 staff will dominate, if we count out staff on contract. It is more than probable that staff on contract will be more in sympathy with "Generation 2004" than with pre-2004s.

The elections to the Staff Committee this coming summer will show how much influence Generation 2004 will have in all negotiations and coordinating meetings related to our salaries, promotions and pensions. They obtained 20% of votes at the last elections, to which we must add the post-2004 candidates elected, spread over all the other unions' lists.

The weight of post-2004 members on the Central Staff Committee, joint committees and within the social dialogue generally may well make its impact rapidly, unlike the remainder of pre-2004s in active employment and those now retired who were admitted - without voting rights - to these committees and working parties. For we must not forget that retired officials do not take part in Staff Committee meetings. They are "represented" (but usually forgotten) by staff elected via the unions. Hence, the unions will turn to officials and other servants recruited after 2004 to ensure their survival!

Despite the growing number of retired officials (perhaps some 30 000 in a few years' time - all Institutions included) their rights will be defended by representatives of staff in active employment who are not very motivated to do so, especially since they have no vote (unless the Staff Regulations are changed)! In the long term, all staff representatives will be officials or other servants recruited after 2004!

What attitude should we adopt?

Many SEPS members have told us how surprised, worried and even angry they are about G2004's declarations and proposals concerning our pensions. All of them are convinced that the schism between post- and pre-2004 staff, created by G2004, is weakening the staff in general and providing arguments for Eurosceptic.

Following the opinion of a very large majority of its Administrative Board, SEPS did react promptly by contacting the Commission.

However, the tone adopted in its letters to the Commission Vice-President and the chairman of G2004 is moderate in relation to an indefensible, injurious and disrespectful attitude towards our Staff Regulations. The tone could become more open if G2004 were to change its attitude and enter into a dialogue.

One member of our Board, followed shortly by two others, would have preferred suggesting talks in the hope of bringing the parties closer together, thus reducing the cleavage. We must adopt a wise choice:

- We must dismantle their reasoning regarding the pension scheme, using facts and precise explanations.

- As for the insults, we should simply ask them, in future, to avoid this kind of rude language and invite them to talk things over with us. We shall not be long in knowing if they have understood that they stepped over the mark by calling pre-2004 staff “fat cats” and “Edith Cresson generation”.
- We must set an example by contributing to avoid, within our Institutions, the classic cliché of the cleavage between generations!

In fact, certain unions have suggested carrying out a calm analysis with a view to dialogue with all parties concerned. In their opinion, the only responsible way would be to reply to the questions raised simply and in a detailed manner. They think that complicated matters such as our pension system should not be allowed to become controversial, full of speculation and a tool for dividing the staff or, what is worse, for setting us all against one another. It is clear that all aspects must be dealt with rigour, in the hope of reaching satisfactory conclusions for all.

The SEPS Board or even members present at the Annual General Meeting on 11 June, will decide whether to take part in attempts aimed at reviving the dialogue between G2004 and pre-2004.

IV. PMO and communication

SEPS has been repeating this for three years already, but here we go again:

Information is the essential condition for optimum understanding between the PMO and members of the JSIS. It must be remembered that 10 000 pensioners do not use (or use badly) internet. Only 50% of pensioners have requested access to My Intracomm.

Information for pensioners on the JSIS has been considered inadequate up to June 2014! Putting information in VOX is a beginning but not always complete and sometimes after the fact.

SEPS uses its twice-monthly Bulletin but it is sent to members only. What is more, any information obtained by our representative on the Joint Committee comes to our attention too late: the decisions have already been applied.

Ever since 2012 SEPS has been expressing its disappointment about the lack of communication with retired staff.

It was not until June 2014 that an initiative of HR C1 DG came to fruition : Info Senior.

The PMO Newsletter has been sent straight to the associations since the end of 2014 to be furthered for info.

But still, one is obliged to draw attention to lack of or delays in communication and, what is more serious for a good many colleagues, the tightening-up of certain rules without prior information, warning or transitional period.

Administrative notice N° 45, in which it was made official that a receipt (tax receipt in Belgium) for medical fees had to be submitted as from 1 January 2015, was not received by our pensioners in Belgium and elsewhere until around 15 January 2015!

SEPS has received recently despairing messages from several members about their being no longer covered by complementary insurance whereas, had they been informed in time, they would have been able to find a solution without having to go through a not inconsiderable period during which they were not insured.

Others were surprised to learn of the limited reimbursement rules for certain countries where medical costs are high, especially our colleagues in Ispra who often call upon medical treatment in Switzerland. (cf VII.8 below.)

No-one has understood the true motivation behind the new form "limited to five lines". It has been compulsory since 31 March 2015. Pensioners without computers were informed of it too late (Cf VII.7 below).

The PMO must improve its information strategy to provide information on a new decision well before it comes into force.

V. PMO-JSIS and deficit - 2014²

The information received by the JSIS management committee about the 2014 accounts in the annual report of 16 March 2015 shows that the continuing deficit of previous years, which Vice-President Šefčovič described as structural, turned out to be a surplus in 2014.

The operating and overall result of the year has substantially improved during 2014: it has gone from a loss of € 6 291 000 in 2013 to a gain of € 7 570 000 in 2014.

This increase is due mainly to an improvement in the results of operating costs combined with a surplus from non-operating expenditure.

The limited deficit in operating costs is a considerable improvement compared to the 2013 loss, an improvement due to additional contributions and a reduction of the operating expenses resulting from cost-reduction measures.

Hence, the result can be attributed partly to the PMO's careful attitude but at the price of much bother, non-reimbursements or reductions of same, for a good many retired colleagues. There were tens of claims directed at the PMO in 2014 under Article 90(2). In addition, several colleagues simply gave up on their reimbursements because of this increased severity or request for additional supporting documents. The members' lassitude

² Ref. Ares(2015)1139830 - 16/03/2015 . Annual Accounts of the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme 2014
SEPS-SFPE April 2015 Bulletin EN 10

is reflected in a drop in claims, as reported at the latest meeting of the management committee.

VI. 29 April - EU Day of Solidarity between Generations

AGE³ is involved in an awareness-raising campaign to attract the attention of politicians at European, national, regional and local levels on how to rethink the concept of solidarity and cooperation between the generations.

This campaign was launched in 2008 and is now supported by a [growing coalition of European Organizations](#) active in various sectors and representing different citizens groups and stakeholders.

Objective of this campaign: make the European Union more age-friendly and better adapted to our ageing population, as well as have intergenerational solidarity high on the EU agenda.

In 2014, AGE joined forces with some MEP candidates from major European political parties to commit to promoting greater solidarity and cooperation between generations during the present European Parliament's mandate.

AGE members organized [events all over the EU](#)

VII. Informations – Questions des membres

1. Social service for pensioners

During the 12 March 2015 SEPS-SFPE information meeting in Brussels, Monique THEATRE⁴ presented in some detail the social services of the Commission in Brussels.

The contact details of the social workers are available in the SEPS-SFPE Vade-mecum, part 3 for the various institutions, by location and can also be found on My Intracomm.

The references for Brussels are:

Tel. +32(0)2 295 90 98

Internet: HR-BXL-ASSISTANCE-SOCIALE-PENSIONNES@ec.europa.eu

My Intracomm summarises the social assistance services in the following terms:

³ AGE Platform Europe (formerly "AGE - the European Platform of Seniors") is a European network that includes nearly 167 organizations of people aged 50+ representing directly over 30 million older people in the European Union. AGE aims to voice and promote the interests of people aged 50 and older in the European Union and to sensitize policy issues related to aging.

⁴ Monique Théâtre: responsible for the sector 'Relations with pensioners', also responsible for the implementation of the social policy in relation to pensioners

Community pension holders can receive assistance in case of personal, administrative or financial difficulties.

The social workers of the Commission can also assist pensioners to adapt to change after their retirement, in case of family problems, health problems, sickness, disability or mourning.

You can discuss your plan of life after retirement, and find assistance to adapt to this new phase of your life. Together, we can address the different aspects of your life plan and assist you in this new step of your life.

Social workers can also provide you with useful information, as well as support and professional guidance. We offer confidential interviews to help resolve difficulties.

NB: in case of questions regarding your pension or sickness insurance, please contact first the PMO Contact on line.

Who can contact the social service for pensioners?

Social assistance can be provided to:

- recipients of a retirement pension
- recipients of a disability allowance
- recipients of a survivors's pension
- recipients of an orphan's pension
- heirs of a deceased pensioner
- family members of a recipient of an EU retirement pension.

2. Reminder:

Assistance insurance during trips abroad

It is unfortunately necessary to remind readers regularly about the reimbursement of medical expenses incurred in case of sickness or accident, while on a trip abroad. It is important not to forget to subscribe to assistance insurance when travelling abroad.

For official staff and agents of the European Institutions, the partial or entire reimbursement of medical care is ideally based on four “pillars”:

- *The Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme – the JSIS*
- *Accident insurance (valid only for active members of staff)*
- *Complementary insurance to JSIS*
- *Assistance insurance for travel abroad*

The JSIS and the complementary health insurances to JSIS (Hospi Safe (Plus), High Risk and Accident, ...) are limited, occasionally even severely limited, when health care is

provided outside the European Union and in particular in such countries like the USA, Canada, ... Several complementary insurances limit their reimbursement to €25,000 per year for the USA.

JSIS does not reimburse the repatriation of members who fall ill whilst abroad. The majority of complementary insurances to JSIS follows the same rules as the JSIS and does not reimburse repatriation either.

Those who wish to be covered during a trip outside the EU or even simply outside of his/her country of residence, needs to subscribe an assistance insurance of the kind “Europe Assistance”, which will cover the costs of repatriation if needed as also those of immediate health care required on the spot, in any of the countries being visited, up to a limit of €1,000,000.

Several credit cards offer assistance insurance, but it is essential to understand their respective general conditions, limitations and exclusions before needing to call on them.

3. JSIS – Reminder - Coverage of a partner

As already indicated in the SEPS Bulletin of September 2014, all pensioners have received N° 25-2014 of the administrative notices. It is important to insist on this, given the disappointments of some of our members. This information concerns the conditions for obtaining the household allowance and on how to obtain complementary medical coverage from JSIS.

If the family allowance and/or the complementary health insurance coverage have been granted to you, as a function of the income of your spouse or recognized partner, you need every year to submit to PMO a declaration on his/her activity or professional income.

AIACE’s Belgian section has published a very comprehensive document on the subject of **“Health insurance coverage of spouses of affiliates of JSIS – From primary to complementary coverage”**

The entire document with extracts from legal texts is available on request from the SEPS secretariat and, of course at AIACE.

4. Reminder:

Vanbreda International has become Cigna Eurprivileges

On 2 February 2015, Vanbreda International officially became Cigna Eurprivileges.

Cigna has provided its affiliates access to a large network of doctors and hospitals in more than 205 countries and jurisdictions. This network comprises more than 185,000 health professionals in the entire world. Cigna insures 870,000 persons. www.cignaglobalhealth.com

For the complementary health insurances to JSIS (Hospi Safe/Plus Afiliatis and High Risk and Accidents AIACE), for life insurance, mortgage coverage, supplementary pensions and travel insurance Cigna Eurprivileges (ex-Vanbreda Int.) remains your broker: the same contact details and the same persons. The complementary insurances remain Allianz BE policies.

The offices of Vanbreda at rue Stévin no longer deal with complementary health insurances.

Contact with Cigna (former Vanbreda International) can be made in the following way

- By telephone: +32 (0)3 217 65 76
- By email: info@eurprivileges.com
- By post:
Cigna eurprivileges c/o Cigna International Health Services BVBA
Plantin en Moretuslei 299
BE- 2140 Antwerpen
- By asking for an appointment (at the above address) for a meeting with a representative of Cigna (ex Vanbreda) in Brussels at the offices of Afiliatys, SC29 0/26.

5. Vanbreda Risk and Benefits, **Afiliatys dedicated insurance broker**

To study which insurance policies are likely to correspond best to your personal, family and financial situation. **(Residence in Belgium)⁵**

The strategy adopted by Afiliatys and seconded by Vanbreda Risk and Benefits is based on the following essential principles:

- *The value of an insurance policy is its capacity to cover a risk, which has been assessed methodically and reliably. The cost of the insurance policy is of course also a consideration, but not the main one.*
- *The party concerned is not always well informed about the risks to be considered nor about the possible insurance policies and their limits*
- *The party concerned should be able to rely on a reliable broker to guide him/her in his/her choices*
- *In the event of a disaster, this broker should follow a repair claim through to the end. This task confers greater responsibility on the broker for the advice he gives relative to the choice of insurance.*

The main insurance policies which are considered are as follows:

- For your property

⁵ Une proposition du même type est en discussion pour Luxembourg
SEPS-SFPE

- Classic fire, theft and all risk
- For your various responsibilities
 - Family civil liability, household staff, specific civil liabilities (hunting, riding, ...)
- Legal protection
 - Legal protection car
 - Legal protection private life
 - Articles 90§2; appeals to the European Civil Service tribunal
- Vehicle/car
 - Third party liability
 - Omnium or partial omnium
 - Passenger / Driver
 - Breakdown assistance

Vanbreda Risk and Benefits regularly undertakes a “benchmarking” study and evaluates the quality-price relationship of its offers relative to the market.

Vanbreda Risk and Benefits offers you the following services:

- Exclusively for members of Afiliatys: evaluation of situations and advice also outside normal working hours (08H30-17H00), i.e.: on Thursday evenings between 17H00 and 19H00 at the offices of Eurinsurances (only by appointment, telephone hereafter)
- Free personal analysis/audit of the existing portfolio of a member of Afiliatys at the offices of Eurinsurances, taking account of his/her social/tax/legal status, of current affiliations to collective contracts and of his/her personal situation
- Exclusive product for members of Afiliatys: Accident insurance for young children (Youth Protection Plan)

The offices of Vanbreda Risk and Benefits, “Eurinsurance offices”, are situated in the heart of the European quarter at Rue Stévin 144 (behind the Berlaymont), 1000 Brussels Tel: 02 230 16 60
www.eurinsurances.be

6. Medical expenses: what documents are needed for reimbursement? (Newsletter of the PMO).

The supporting documents you attach to your requests for reimbursement must comply with the legislation in force in the country in which the care was provided.

Receipts and invoices must include the following information:

- the patient's full name;

- the nature of the treatment;
- the dates and fees paid for each medical treatment;
- the name and official references of the healthcare provider.

For Belgium only:

- Members of the medical and paramedical professions (such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, nurses, etc.) have an INAMI registration number (Belgian National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance). They must provide you with a certificate of treatment ('attestation de soins'). Only this certificate counts as a receipt. The JSIS requires it for all treatment carried out since 1 January 2015. What's more, this certificate must not be detached from the stub, which must show the price you paid.
- The other liberal professions not recognised by INAMI (psychologists/psychotherapists, osteopaths, acupuncturists, podiatrists, chiropodists, etc.) must also provide a receipt that complies with the legislation of the country in which it was issued. In the case of Belgium, the standard format is laid down by the Ministry of Finance. The JSIS will also accept an invoice/statement of fees accompanied by proof of payment issued by a bank.

What about dentists?

You must include with your claim the certificate of treatment.

For treatment other than preventive care, the JSIS bill for dental treatment should be included in your claim. This bill is required in order to provide the JSIS with additional information.

7. JSIS – Reimbursement delays (Annex 5)

New reimbursement request form⁶

The JSIS Director, Marc Lemaître, has informed SEPS that reimbursements of medical charges have been abnormally slow since December 2014, especially for claims submitted in paper form, lasting, in certain cases, as long as seven to eight weeks. This is because there have been major changes to the computer management system.

Therefore, PMO is requesting all colleagues to make every effort to use online facilities for future JSIS requests as far as possible. However, the paper forms will remain entirely acceptable.

Moreover the form itself has been changed in that there are only five lines and it no longer provides the possibility of combining different currencies on the same form. This new form has been rendered compulsory as from 31 March 2015!!! Unfortunately, retired officials without computer were informed too late.

You may use JSIS online (via internet) once you have obtained an external ECAS account. Please call +32 (0)2 2976888 / 9 for information.

⁶ PMO newsletter -March 2015

NB : Remember, please do not send in the same reimbursement request online and in paper form. This instruction applies to all kinds of requests - prior authorization, dental estimates, direct billing, acknowledgement of serious sickness and so on.

Do not send supporting documents in paper form when you have sent an online reimbursement request unless you have been selected for a conformity check.

8. Info from the PMO – JSIS⁷ (Newsletter of the PMO)

Canada, Norway, Switzerland, USA: Limits on reimbursements !

The JSIS reimburses (partially) the cost of medical treatment no matter where in the world. In certain countries outside the European Union these costs can be especially high (25% more than the average within the European Union).

Where these countries are concerned, a weighting is applied to the calculation of the reimbursement. The weighting is calculated on the basis of the average cost of comparable treatment within the EU. It guarantees that you will be reimbursed according to the rates set out in the Staff Regulations.

New weightings for these countries came into force on 1 January 2015:

Country	Weighting
Canada	1.3147
Norway	1.5936
Switzerland	1.5587
USA	2.4351

These weightings apply to all treatments that are without ceilings in the EU, such as hospital stays, tests and analyses, births, etc.. For example, daily hospital and maternity costs will be limited by the weighting to the following:

Country	Maximum daily reimbursement for hospital stay	Maximum reimbursement for birth
Canada	€899	€7 349
Norway	€1077	€8 909

⁷ PMO newsletter - March 2015
SEPS-SFPE

Switzerland	€1 054	€8 713
USA	€1 646	€13 613
Calculation reference	EU average per day in hospital	EU average in maternity
Averages in the EU	€676	€5 990



NB : To prevent you having to pay large sums of money out of your own pocket, we recommend that you take out insurance (e.g. Europe Assistance) to top up the JSIS and even your supplementary insurance policies such as Hospi Safe, Serious Risks and Accidents, Eurosanité and so on, if you are travelling privately to these expensive countries (and even to any other country).

9. No agreement with CIREC clinics

As announced previously, an agreement (convention) exists with the ST LUC and ERASME clinics in Brussels.

Unfortunately, C.I.R.E.C. reuses the PMO proposal.

10. JSIS - Funeral expenses

JSIS pays out a lump sum upon death of a member as well as that of someone insured under a member's cover (spouse, recognized partner, dependent child). Anyone who can prove payment of funeral expenses for a member may also claim payment of the lump sum - just send the death certificate to the member's settlements office to obtain it.

If a member's funeral expenses have been paid by a third party, proof of payment should be sent to the member's settlement office.

The lump sum amounts to €2 350.

In the case of death of a person benefiting from complementary cover by the JSIS, the lump sum will be reduced by the amount paid for the same purpose by the primary source. To obtain the supplement, please send in a document from the primary body or a bank statement showing the amount received.

When a member dies the sum is paid to the spouse or recognized partner, children/ heirs or anyone else able to prove payment of the funeral expenses, provided that there is no outstanding debt payable to the Institutions (unredeemed advances on medical expenses can be deducted from the lump sum).

In these difficult moments it is sometimes useful to call upon outside help. We suggest you read the brochure on what to do when someone dies, available from our secretariat upon request.

11. RCAM - If the reimbursement request is refused

When a reimbursement request is turned down via JSIS online or through the post - because a document, bill or prescription is missing, for example - the claim is considered settled. You must then renew the claim and send in all the supporting documents, including the missing ones. Do not send the missing documents by post, e-mail or by PMO Contact. Making a completely new request is by far the most rapid method of obtaining the reimbursement.

12. Legal advice - Change in procedure

Should you require legal advice concerning problems with Commission departments (application of the Staff Regulations) or personal problems (inheritance of tax problems), help will be available from Hendrik Smets, who has a doctorate in law and is Vice-president of SEPS responsible for legal matters: he can advise you in complete discretion, respecting the upright conduct of a former European civil servant.

You can get in touch with Hendrik Smets by e-mail: hendriksmets@yahoo.fr or by telephone : +33 563.67.88.83

Hendrik will make a preliminary analysis of the question and will either propose a solution, suggest you **consult a barrister/advocate free of charge for fully paid-up members**. The consultation will be limited to **30 minutes maximum; anything over that will be charged to the customer**.

La coordination of these visits to a lawyer in Brussels will be in the hands of Brigitte Pretzenbacher (Vice-president SEPS Brigitte.Pretzenbacher@ec.europa.eu).

The barrister proposed by SEPS is Maître Jean-Noël LOUIS (LOUIS EUROPEAN LAW) in Brussels.

13. Reminder: Use the proper form

Use the correct form for your dental estimates. You must submit an estimate before starting certain types of dental treatment such as orthodontic, periodontal, or fitting an implant or false teeth. In order to speed up the processing of your estimate, the PMO suggests you use the existing forms.

For requests for direct billing, prior authorization, special reimbursement and so on, use the latest forms available on My Intracomm-Ext.

The PMO has changed several forms over recent months. When in doubt, please ask the SEPS secretariat to provide them.

VIII. Annexes

**Memo for Mr Stefan Grech,
president “Generation2004”**

We have read “Generation 2004’s” Newsletter N° 11 which was generously distributed this January to all Commission staff and which remains in the spirit of the October newsletter Nr 8.

You have every right to exercise the freedom of expression given to all staff unions, but we, the Seniors of the European Institutions, (Association SEPS-SFPE), are obliged to express our severe disapproval of the attitudes you have adopted and the recommendations you have made in these epistles.

Allow us to be extremely frank at the outset: referring in public to a section of your colleagues, whom you are supposed to defend as a whole, as “fat cats” amounts to a serious professional offence. Such an attitude is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. You should know that Article 12 of our Staff Regulations tells an official to “*refrain from any action or behaviour which might reflect upon his position*”. Therefore, we must request that you avoid any such divergence in future.

Should you wish to criticize the fact that recruitment terms and, hence, career and pension prospects have deteriorated for a good many colleagues recruited after May 2004 (not necessarily for all, however,) you are fully entitled, as a union delegate, to do so and to seek ways of offsetting the effects of the situation and you would find us supporting your efforts.

Nevertheless, we would remind you that the deterioration of recruitment terms has been the result of a negative attitude on the part of a majority of Member States vis-a-vis the Institutions and their staff. At that time, the unions did their utmost to oppose the reform.

We refuse to accept your fallacious allegations and your discriminatory attitude, which does not help your cause; quite the contrary, since we could be acting in cooperation with one another. We should be obliged if you would change your attitude and reveal in your forthcoming efforts an approach more in keeping with the joint ethics of European civil servants and their mission.

We invite you to defend all colleagues without seeking to pitch one section of the staff against another: we have after all fought similar battles for decades before you came on

the scene. If you plan to moderate your attitude, we would be happy to obtain a better understanding of your claims during an informal meeting.

On behalf of SEPS- SFPE and the members of its Administrative Board

Serge Crutzen
President

Copy : DG HR & S, Unions of the Commission, AIACE

Annexe 2

CA/SC-All/1506
28.02.2015 EN Org. FR
(Sent on 03.03.2015)

Letter for Madam Kristalina Georgieva, Commission Vice-president

Madam

“Generation 2004’s” January 2015 Newsletter N° 11, was a severe shock for our pensioners as was the October Newsletter N° 8 (Annexes 1 and 2). The members of SEPS-SFPE are asking me to react to the insulting, malicious and even Machiavellian statements made about our pension system and present-day pensioners.

A good number of the assertions made require verification. Notwithstanding, G2004’s words are aimed at incriminating officials in active employment and pensioners recruited prior to 2004 for having benefited from more advantageous conditions than those prevailing for those recruited after that date. This is a malicious process and can lead only to a schism within the staff.

Can our older colleagues really be held to blame for the problem of which the members of G2004 deem themselves victims? G2004 members were perfectly aware of the new Staff Regulations before sitting for the recruitment competition and before their official appointment. They have, therefore, de facto accepted these conditions. The staff, now referred to as “pre-2004” and “fat cats” did their best to defend all officials’ interests during the 2004 and 2014 reforms.

It is highly improbable that G2004 would be able to benefit directly from any kind of reduction in “pre-2004” staff pensions. However, in behaving thus, G2004 is attacking staff unity and reducing its ability to resist external pressure. It is quite certain that, sooner or later, our pension system will come under attack again. Five Member States⁸ already made this clear when the 2014 reform was concluded. This G2004 Newsletter - which

⁸ Statement by AU, CZ, DK, NL, UK) (02.07.2013 and 10.10.2013)

emanates from within our Institutions - can only encourage those who wish to criticize and reduce our pensions.

However, this is not all. The Chairman of G2004 has presumed to request help from political authorities and is informing the Press without regard to the damage that these allegations can do to the entire staff. Annexe 3 is a good example. Is it legal to behave in such a manner with regard to our Institutions? These doings are in flagrant violation of Articles 11 and 12 of the Staff Regulations. Was there any authorisation given by the Authority, as per article 17bis §2, for this publication?

It is essential that limits be imposed upon G2004's malevolence, which can only lead to a schism within the staff. All future demands from G2004 must be fair and defensible by the entire staff – the "pre-2004" included.

Sincerely yours,

On behalf of SEPS-SFPE and the members of its Administrative Board

Serge Crutzen
President

Copy: HR&S DG, Unions of the Commission, AIACE International, Generation 2004.

Annexe 3

Reg: G20042015/005
Brussels, 18 March 2015

Note for the attention of Mrs. Kristalina Georgieva, Vice-president of the European Commission.

Subject: Letter of 01 March from Mr Serge Crutzen – President of the SEPS-SFPE Administrative Board

Dear Vice-President,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of Generation 2004 on behalf of the said staff association.

I was both shocked and 'relieved' to read the letter sent to you by Mr Serge Crutzen – President of the SEPS-SFPE Administrative Board – on 01 March, to which I was also put in copy.

Firstly, as Chair of Generation 2004, I was shocked to hear an ex-official with long years of service in the European institutions and former union leader, call upon you to somehow censor a staff association which represents a very sizeable portion of your staff, which representativeness has been confirmed and indeed expanded over successive staff elections over the past three years.

Over the past years, Generation 2004 has stood mostly alone against all odds and currents in its struggle on behalf of post-2004 colleagues. In this respect, attack, slander and veiled threats are nothing new for us. However, Mr Crutzen's letter attains new levels of attempted intimidation in exhorting a Vice-President of the European Commission to muffle the voice of a legitimate staff association. Why? Simply because it is raising issues which whilst uncomfortable to some, affect the well-being of the whole Commission and EU civil service now and for the longer term for that matter?

Indeed, what post-2004 colleagues are challenging is the political wisdom of perpetuating a system that tries to preserve these differences against all logic and against all external criticism for exaggerated remuneration and privileges; insisting that the employment conditions of pre- and post-2004 staff need to converge over time. Whilst one can debate about the timeframe and method, there is no plausible argument which can hold against the desperate need for this convergence.

As we in Generation 2004 have communicated publicly, on more than one occasion over the past months, your arrival as Commissioner for staff matters and the advent of the Juncker Commission in general have given us post-2004 officials a new hope, particularly through your disposition to listen, your declared awareness of the problem and your apparent willingness to address the situation in the best way possible.

I was thus 'relieved' in that Mr Crutzen's letter has probably presented you with the starkest possible evidence of the severe schism among the staff which you have inherited and of which you will surely appreciate that Generation 2004 was not the cause, but the natural offspring of a then-mistreated minority which by 2015 has become a very frustrated and demotivated majority.

In this respect, alas, it is now a bit too late to warn about "staff schism" when such a schism has been growing relentlessly over a decade in which "staff unity" at the Commission has become nothing more than an empty buzzword.

It is only when we have agreed upon embracing unequivocally a principle very dear to President Juncker, namely the principle of "equal pay for equal work"; and equal pensions for equal careers, that we can start talking seriously of "staff unity" and jointly defend and promote the highest possible level of working conditions (including pay and pensions) for all of us; enabling us to prove day after day that we are worth every cent of our salary and even much more.

The letter goes on to give you the clearest examples of the standard arrogance with which we post-2004 have been faced since our first day in the Commission, particular with assertions that we have "de facto accepted these conditions" when we joined the Commission.

Dear Vice-President, in this respect, whilst reminding that the very free choice we were offered at the time of our recruitment was: "accept it or leave it" the fact that each of us, individually, accepted discriminatory terms of employment can in no way be taken as justification for a generalised discrimination against a much larger group, particularly when this group encompasses almost the whole intake into the EU civil service from thirteen new Member States.

Subsequently it is imperative to recall what exactly all of us accepted under law: the promise of equivalence between pre and post – 2004 careers.

Unfortunately, not only was this promise never fulfilled as provided under the 2004 regulations, but relevant reporting and obligations were systematically ignored by the Administration year in year out (with the silent assent of the contemporary staff representation) until finally being in a position to decapitate the uncomfortable provisions (namely Art 6.) under the 2014 reform.

Whilst basing on your positive, public declarations upon these issues so far, Generation 2004 stands convinced of your will to address this situation and I hereby reiterate our disposition to work with you towards attaining this end. An end which will surely feature as a prime achievement in your legacy.

(Digitally Signed)
Stefan Grech
Chair, Generation 2004

Copy: Director-General HR & Security, all Unions and OSPs, AIACE, SEPS-SFPE, Generation 2004

Annexe 4

Reply of Mrs. Kristalina Georgieva to SEPS-SFPE

The reply was in FR only and can be found in annex 4 of the FR version of the Bulletin.

Annexe 5

Message (Email PDF) of the PMO Directeur

The message is in FR only and can be found in annex 5 of the FR version of the Bulletin.

Annexe 6

In memoriam

<i>Name</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Instit</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Instit</i>
ALBRECHT Ernst	29-06-30	13-12-14	COM	PHILIPPE Gilberte	13-08-23	10-02-15	COM
BROCK Denis	08-06-50	22-12-14	PE	FROST Carsten	03-12-56	10-02-15	PE
BRIAND Andrée	07-11-24	04-01-15	PE	CONTINI Luigi	27-09-21	13-02-15	COM
CASTILLO BAIGES José Luis	24-08-61	07-01-15	CM	ENGELS Johannes	04-11-37	14-02-15	COM
HUBRICH Bernd	18-10-44	15-01-15	COM	ADAM Celestine	16-07-26	14-02-15	CES
OPP Margarete	02-02-38	20-01-15	COM	REHBERG Karl-Heinz	19-11-28	16-02-15	PE
MOSTADE Maguy	06-09-39	21-01-15	CM	DE ROP-THIRIONET			
LAANEN Willem	25-10-43	22-01-15	CES	Fernande	12-03-35	17-02-15	COM
CHAPUIS Michel	03-09-37	28-01-15	COM	OLIVANT John	18-07-22	19-02-15	CM
CASAGRANDE Remingo	31-08-35	28-01-15	PE	VAN RAIJ Paul	05-08-30	20-02-15	PE
VOGT Heinz	31-10-42	28-01-15	COM	DEBUS Guillaume	25-12-27	23-02-15	COM
LEITE DE MAGALHAES				PICCHI Franco	22-03-34	24-02-15	COM
Antonio	20-02-39	30-01-15	COM	BAUDOUX Edouard	20-01-32	25-02-15	COM
COHEN Hartag	17-12-17	31-01-15	COM	OLTHOFF Willem	09-03-35	26-02-15	COM
CENGARLE Primo	01-01-31	01-02-15	PE	D'ARCY Stephen	11-03-52	26-02-15	EAS
VACCAREZZA Jacques	21-02-31	03-02-15	COM	VOSSEN Heinrich	11-12-23	27-02-15	COM
VON HARDENBERG Astrid	14-05-25	04-02-15	COM	BRAMBILLA Enrico	24-08-32	02-03-15	COM
DALEIDEN Gero	09-03-30	08-02-15	COM	LECUYER Henri	09-07-24	02-03-15	COM
MASSARO Bruno	12-09-36	09-02-15	COM	DE ROOSE Cecile	07-01-45	03-03-15	ENV
GARZOLA Fernanda	08-01-24	11-02-15	COM	PANNIER Michel	30-06-22	05-03-15	COM
RUEDL Erico	23-10-25	11-02-15	COM	BOUHA-WAAGE Randi	02-03-29	06-03-15	COM
VAN DER SANDEN Emerence	07-05-29	12-02-15	COM	WAUTHIA Karin	26-06-58	06-03-15	COM
VANDECRAEN Antonio	10-06-30	13-02-15	COM	MEIGNANT François	09-10-51	08-03-15	CC
SCHWICKERT-KAHR Sylvie	18-05-52	13-02-15	PE	SPEZIALE Arturo	11-09-22	10-03-15	COM
GEISS Friedrich	25-02-32	14-02-15	COM	MICHELS Jean	06-06-31	12-03-15	CC
DESHAYES Christian	09-08-37	15-02-15	COM	TASMAN Herman	23-11-30	13-03-15	COM
VASTESAEGER Victor	26-08-39	20-02-15	CM	RIEF Herbert	23-08-30	13-03-15	COM
FREISTEDT Eberhard	02-05-34	20-02-15	COM	MARTIN Monique	02-09-30	14-03-15	CC
SOUILLART Claude	29-09-37	20-02-15	COM	DAUTZENBERG Hubertus	11-12-27	15-03-15	CJ
WILCOX Cecile	06-12-20	21-02-15	COM	BARONIO Pietro	03-01-28	17-03-15	COM
FAVRESSE Emile	11-11-38	22-02-15	COM	ENGLISH Maurice	20-10-38	17-03-15	COM
GILLOT Roland	08-04-23	22-02-15	COM	FORSTER Elena	18-08-36	21-03-15	COM
TOSI Dario	22-08-23	23-02-15	COM	COLGAN BILICZKY Maria	19-09-48	22-03-15	CES
BLOEMARTS Joseph	16-03-42	21-11-14	COM	SCHALLAHAUSER Anette	18-04-48	22-03-15	PE
VAN OVERSTRAETEN Petrus	14-09-28	06-01-15	CM	OVERBURY Henry	13-01-31	23-03-15	COM
GERONNE Birgit	24-05-32	03-02-15	PE	SERVAIS Alice	21-02-17	30-03-15	CM

Annex 7.

**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

SEPS Vade-mecum

- Part 1 (Procedures)
- Part 2 (forms /pers. data)
- Part 3 (addresses PMO – ADMIN. ...)** Edition March 2015
- Part 4 (reimbursement forms – RCAM/JSIS) (April 2015)

Summary of the SR reform (DG HR - 12 pages)

Supplementary health insurances Edition April 2015

Invlidity allowance and survival pension (Hendrik Smets)

Orphan survivor’s pensions (Hendrik Smets)

EU Officials and taxation (Me. J Buekenhoudt)

Inheritance (Me. J Buekenhoudt)

JSIS Guide (was sent by poste to all pensioners)

Please send these documents to :

Surname.....

First name

Address :
.....
.....

Date : Signature :

To be sent to

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

Fax: +32(0)2 2818378

GSM: +32 (0)475 472470

Email:

info@sfpe-seps.be

APPLICATION FORM

I, THE UNDERSIGNED:

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HOME Tel: GSM: Email:

FORMER OFFICIAL OF (Institution + DG or Dep.):

IF still active: date of birth and number of years of service:

HEREBY APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE "ASSOCIATION OF SENIORS OF THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC SERVICE " (S.E.P.S).

NATIONALITY: DATE:..... SIGNATURE:

The annual subscription is €30, payable every year on the date of joining.

Bank account No. of SEPS: **363-0507977-28** **ING bank** Brussels
IBAN BE37 3630 5079 7728 **BIC BBRUBEBB**
 Communication: **Annual subscription + 1st and 2nd names**

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 Office 02 40 CG39
 175, rue de la Loi,
 B-1048 BRUSSELS

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

(Please send direct to your bank)

I, the undersigned,

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to pay on(date) and on the same date each year, until further notice, by

debit of account N° the sum of : € **30** **to:**

SEPS - SFPE JL Office 0240CG39,
rue de la Loi 175
B 1048 Brussels

Account N° **363-0507977-28** **ING Bank** Brussels
IBAN BE37 3630 5079 7728 **BIC BBRUBEBB**
Reference : Annual subscription (+ first name and surname)

DATE : SIGNATURE :

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BE-1048 Bruxelles

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GSM: +32 (0)475 472470

Email: info@sfpe-seps.be
