

INFOCUS

The challenges of an EU career for young people

C4EP analysis on the subject – *Youth employment with the institutions of the EU – a highway for the youth towards the future or a Brussels cul-de-sac?*

“The European Union is a vast organisation, in constant need of employees. Its institutions (not only the main institutions, but altogether 76 institutions, bodies and agencies) employ tens of thousands of individuals, with the exact number hard to be determined. A simple Google search brings around 60.000 employees, while a recent, more elaborate and detailed research brings the current number close to 80.000 employees. This army of employees is organised in various ways and some parts of that are – or should be – focusing on providing opportunities for young experts.

During the past decades, “European civil service” has become a reality. What is often referred to as just “Brussels bureaucracy” is an employment system, which is practically a supra-national, European version of the employment systems that all EU member states operate for themselves.”

[click here](#)

Too many boomers in Brussels? EU goes big on its age problem

[click here](#)

EU staff categories

[click here](#)

Traineeships in the EU institutions, bodies and agencies

[click here](#)

How many people work for the EU institutions in 2023?

[click here](#)

How to join the EU bubble - Brussels careers by the numbers

[click here](#)

“This time I’ve voted”, but am I represented? Addressing the underrepresentation of young Europeans through the adoption of youth quotas

[click here](#)

Age representation in parliaments: Can institutions pave the way for the young?

[click here](#)

C4RECAP

European Commission backs talks on Ukraine and Moldova EU membership

[click here](#)

'Historic result': European Parliament and member states reach deal on Nature Restoration Law

[click here](#)

EU weighs sanctions against Iran over Israel-Hamas war

[click here](#)

The Brief – Fixing the EU economy: Mission impossible?

[click here](#)

Josep Borrell: The EU's undiplomatic top diplomat

[click here](#)

Poland's parliament convenes as two opposing camps claim victory in its national elections

[click here](#)

European Parliament and EU countries agree on 2024 EU budget

[click here](#)

EU plan for new Russia sanctions to go to members this week – Borrell

[click here](#)

C4REPORT

EPC: EUrope reimagined: Exploring European reform options – 6 November 2023

„The recent 'EUrope Reimagined' conference sparked intense discussions on the imperative need for reform within the European Union and emphasized the urgency of reforming in the face of global conflicts, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The discussion primarily revolved around the ambitious reforms required to make the EU more effective, democratic, and ready for the challenges ahead.”

[click here](#)

The Brussels Binder: Championing Gender Equality Together: Engaging Men as Allies – 7 November 2023

„The aim of the event, organized by The Brussels Binder in collaboration with Potentia and Google Belgium, was to explore the critical need for engaging men as allies in the pursuit of gender equality. Throughout the event, the discussions delved into a range of important themes, including identifying the barriers to gender equality, strategies for persuading other men to become allies, the business case for promoting gender equity, and the pivotal role of legislation.”

[click here](#)

CEPS: European Commission's 2023 enlargement package and Moldova's European path – 8 November 2023

„After a short introduction, minister Popescu has mentioned his close connection to the place and the organiser CEPS, being a partner to the long process of Moldavia towards a possible future membership. He has added, that this day is especially important in this process as the European Commission has adopted its 2023 enlargement package, recommending to open negotiations with Moldova and being very favourable towards the country.”

[click here](#)

European Movement International and European Women's Lobby: Women of Europe Awards 2023 – 9 November 2023

„The 8th edition of the Women of Europe Awards organised jointly by the European Movement International and the European Women's Lobby took place in the BELvue Museum on the 9th of November. The event was hosted by the European affairs correspondent and TV Host for Euronews, Méabh Mac Mahon. There were five categories in which exceptional women from all over Europe were nominated and awarded. In an unconventional way, we are going to shift our main focus from the event itself to the shortlisted women, who all deserve recognition.”

[click here](#)

C4EPOSITION

[Anastasia Tsougka](#), Former Schuman Trainee, Current Programme Officer at Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS)

The EU institutions can be a great place for young professionals: attractive salaries, sense of purpose, and many opportunities for personal growth.

However, the bureaucratic nature of EU institutions may inadvertently create barriers for young professionals seeking employment – one has to be armed with patience and perseverance. Employment processes are usually long and the waiting time unpredictable.

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) manages general competitions that cover a wide range of profiles. Aspiring EU officials must succeed in a competition. There are different types, linked to different contracts. All competitions test numerical, abstract, and analytical thinking skills, as well as knowledge linked to the specific roles.

The AD5 Generalist Competition targets mainly entry-level professionals, but not only, as it is the ticket for a permanent position within the institutions. Beware that candidates can sit the exam from around Europe and you will have to compete with individuals that have previously worked with the EU or other international organisations. The AD5 Competition hasn't been organised since 2019 and the new edition was recently postponed for debatable reasons.

In addition, CAST competitions are designed for recruiting contract agents, offering fixed-term employment contracts. These are ongoing opportunities, but you will need an invitation to sit the relevant exam. Moreover, there are opportunities for specialists, which can be hired through separate procedures.

The EU's emphasis on creating a diverse range of job opportunities within its institutions and agencies can be very attractive for people starting their professional journey.

The notion that the EU employs only political science graduates and other social scientists is mostly mistaken as many units look for professionals from other walks of life. This diversity is essential to the EU for harnessing the varied skills necessary for the twin transition and innovation in a variety of strategic sectors.

Succeeding at an EU competition does not guarantee a job placement, but rather a place in the EU's talent pool. As a result, successful candidates might wait for months or even years before they score an actual job. If you succeed, the best tip is to find units within the Parliament, the Commission or one of the EU agencies and make yourself visible to your potential recruiters.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that EU traineeships are a young professional's best bet when seeking a career with the EU. Consider traineeships as a means to acquaint yourself with the inner workings of EU institutions. The EU has some of the best paid internships out there and most of the time you will not be making photocopies or coffee. Approach the application process with a nuanced understanding of potential challenges which are similar to the hurdles of a real job – minus the long process.

In addition to traineeships, explore mentorship possibilities within EU institutions. Connect with other professionals who can provide valuable insights into the organisation. Remember that the EU environment is very dynamic and based on building relationships and networks.