



**Union Syndicale
Fédérale
Luxembourg**



VOTE THE CHANGE



Luxembourg, 6th September 2016

LANGUAGE COURSES: NEW RESTRICTIONS?

During the summer period, DG HR discreetly published new rules for training in accordance with its all-purpose “Learning and development” strategy. As the language lessons will resume soon, we invite DG HR to inform staff about the new rules in force now:

- Language learning under Article 45.2 of the Staff Regulations, i.e. the third language required for promotion, remains a priority and the conditions remain unchanged;
- Multilingualism is no longer considered a priority. Languages other than FR, DE and EN are — unless justified by service reasons— deemed to be followed out of personal interest, even if they can be very useful in promoting integration in the country of employment.

In practice, this means that the training must be approved by the superior and that time spent attending such courses will not be considered as working hours. In other words, the language student must work 4 hours of overtime per week!

Under these conditions, it is predictable that certain courses will no longer have a sufficient number of participants and that they may no longer be organized in Luxembourg. Will colleagues from Luxembourg then have the opportunity to travel to Brussels to attend the language courses of their choice? As the interest of the service is critical to the Commission, there is a high risk that most requests will be rejected.

Language training is an important tool in the development and construction of professional networks within the Commission. Clearly, the new policy does not go into that direction. How then will we get the results hoped for by Vice-President Georgieva in her new ‘talent management’ strategy?

It might well be that the elimination of a large number of language lessons is only the top of the Luxembourg-is-a-disadvantaged-site iceberg. In the near future other training opportunities are likely to disappear which will continue to make Luxembourg a more and more unattractive site with limited possibilities compared to Brussels.

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