



EUROPEAN UNION

COMMUNITY PLANT VARIETY OFFICE

## **SOCIAL REPORT OF THE CPVO 2007**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Social Report of the CPVO 2007 is the second in a series of annual reports. Its' purpose is to highlight the turn-over, the work environment and the social aspects of the CPVO. It is also used to compare information from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

### **THE CPVO**

#### *Mission:*

The mission of the CPVO is to implement and apply a system for the protection of plant variety rights, which was established by Community legislation in 1994. This system allows intellectual property rights, valid throughout the Community, to be granted for plant varieties.

#### *Structure:*

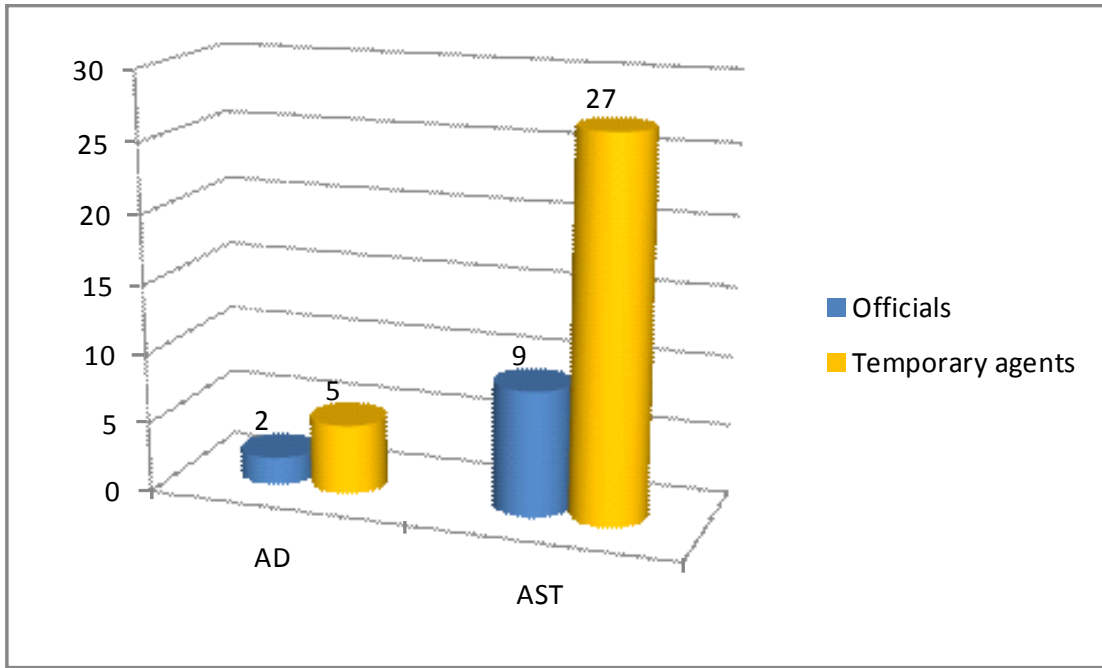
The CPVO is managed by its President, who is nominated by the Council of the European Union. The President takes all necessary measures in order to produce the budget of the CPVO and to ensure its correct implementation in the framework of the powers conferred to him under the Community Regulations. He is assisted by a Vice President, to whom he has delegated some of his duties, and who ensures his replacement in case of impediment.

The CPVO is organized internally into two units (the Technical Unit and the Finance and Administration unit) and three support services dealing with legal, personnel and IT matters.

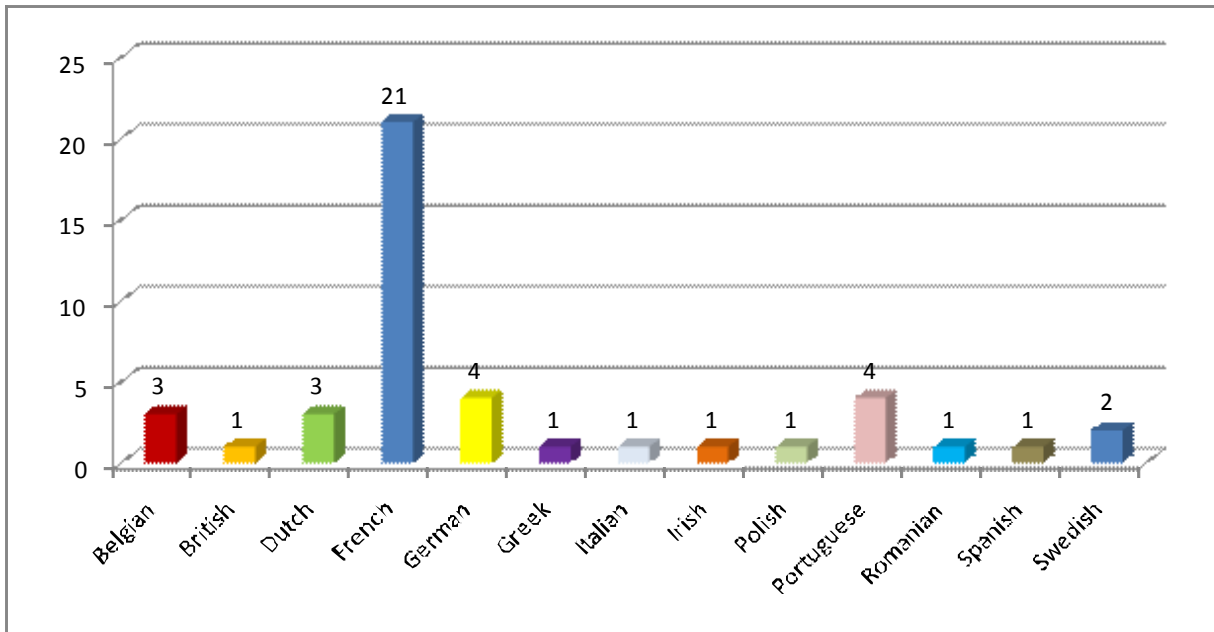
### **EMPLOYMENT**

#### *Staff members:*

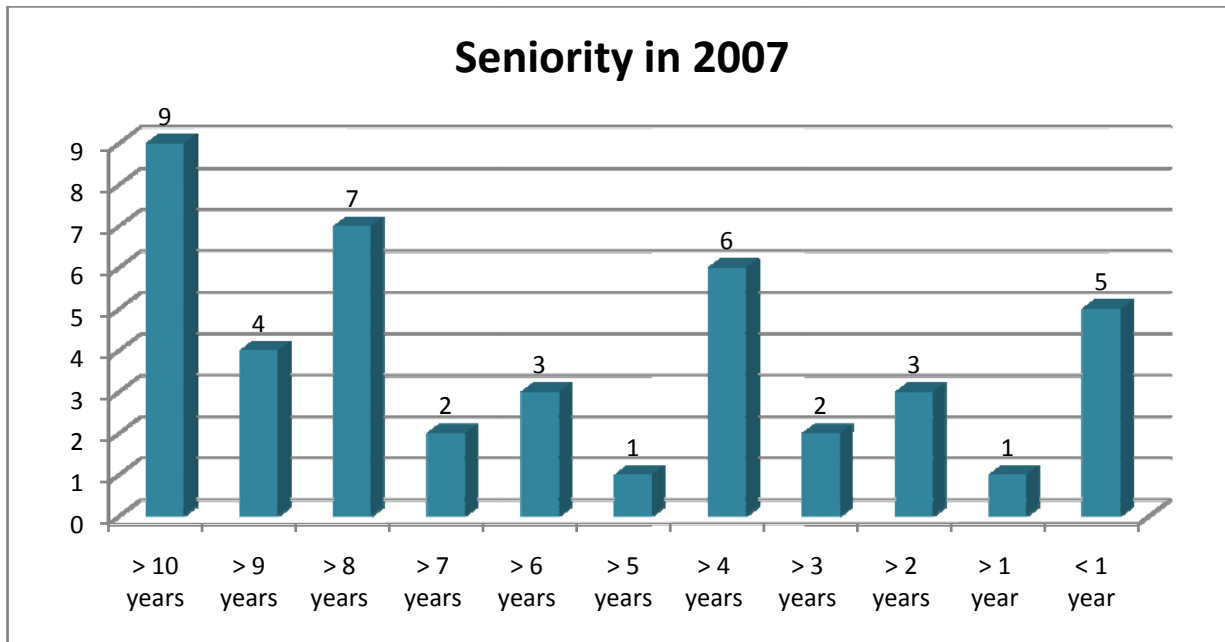
By the end of 2007, 43 staff members were employed at the CPVO comprising of 11 officials and 32 temporary agents (2 on half-time employment). The representation in function groups AD and AST was as illustrated below:



13 nationalities were represented as illustrated below.



## Seniority in the Office:



### *Recruitment procedures organized in 2007:*

No recruitment procedures were launched during 2007.

### *Staff that joined the CPVO:*

Five new temporary agents were recruited in 2007. An **Accountant** and a **Secretary in Accountancy** took up office on 1 January 2007 for an initial period of four years. A new **Vice President** took up office on 1 April 2007 for an initial period of five years. An **IT Developer** took up office on 1 June and an **Administrative Secretary** took up office on 1 October 2007, both for an initial period of four years.

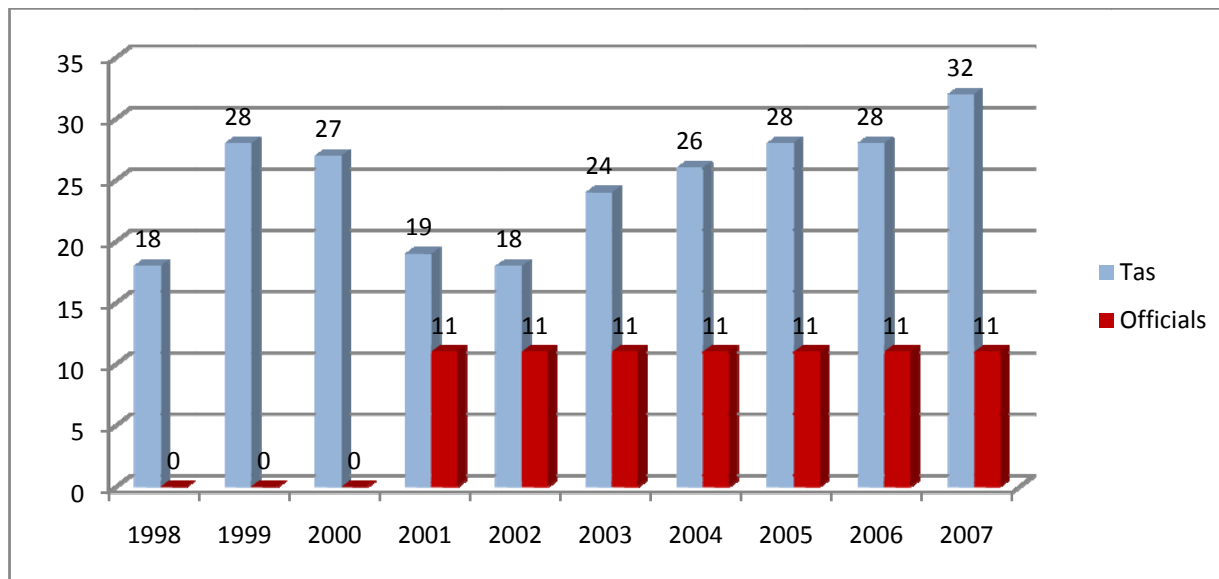
Four *interim agents* were recruited for determined period of time for replacement of sick leave (16-18/07/07 and 16/08/07 to 26/10/07), for assistance to the communication service (04-05/05/07), for replacement during internal reorganization (04/06/07 to 31/10/07) and for replacement of holidays (02-03/05/06 and 14/05/07 to 21/05/07).

### *Staff that left the CPVO:*

One temporary agent went on retirement from the post as Vice President and left the Office on 28/02/07.

Two auxiliary agents left at the end of their contracts on 15/01/07 and 30/09/07.

### *Temporary Agents/Officials over the past 10 years*



### *Career development reports:*

The ability of the CPVO to achieve its objectives depends on its staff members. Their skills and abilities in carrying out their responsibilities determine how successful the CPVO as a whole will be. Career development reports are a means of formally recognizing, evaluating and providing feedback on each staff member's performance and contribution as a member of a team.

The career development report is an important means of communication between management and staff, as well as to identify training needs, and a vital tool for career development. In this process, staff members have a continuing opportunity to inform management about how they feel about the work and identify professional goals and interests. Managers in turn convey their commitment to each staff member's career success by communicating information concerning the staff member's performance in relation to the CPVO expectations and action needed to meet these expectations and to advance the staff member's career at the CPVO.

Career development reports provide a link between the CPVO objectives and a staff member's performance and should also enhance accountability for results.

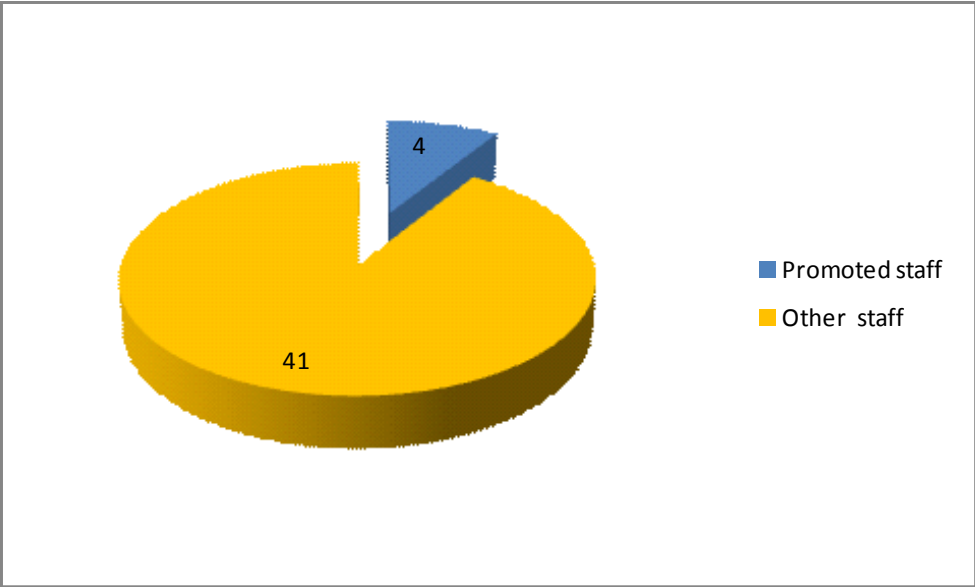
Career development reports are drawn up once a year for all staff members, except the President and Vice President. This will change though, as the Commission is currently working on implementing rules on the evaluation of Heads of Agencies. Once this decision will be adopted by the Commission, the CPVO will have to adopt the same, or a similar, decision. The President and Vice President should be evaluated, according to these new rules and in line with the Basic Regulation of the CPVO, by the European Council.

The CPVO has adopted implementing rules for the annual appraisal procedure foreseen in Article 43 of the Staff Regulations. The main changes in this new procedure are that the Vice President is the countersigning officer for all reports, except for the ones of which he is responsible, that a formal dialogue shall take place

between the job holder and the reporting officer, and that a Joint Evaluation Committee has been created in order to make sure that the procedure is carried out correctly and to be an appeal instance in case of appeals.

*Promotions:*

A total of seven staff members were awarded a promotion to the next grade in their career with retroactive effect from 01/01/2007. This represents 16% of the staff.



*Absenteeism:*

The Staff Regulations of the European Communities stipulate that staff members of the CPVO do not have to present a medical certificate until the fourth day of absence. This absence of three consecutive days without a medical certificate can be repeated four times during a calendar year. All absences after that must be covered by a medical certificate. During 2007, no staff member of the CPVO was absent 12 days without a medical certificate.

The total number of days lost for medical reasons was 298.5 days (which includes one long sick leave of 141 days for one staff member). This represents 3.2% of the total working days during 2007 and makes an average 7.1 days per post

If the long sick leave is disregarded, a total of 157.5 days were taken as sick leave, which represents 1.7% of the working days and which gives an average of 3.8 days per post.

total calendar days	365
weekend days	103
CVPO official holidays	19
average annual holidays	28
working days	215
persons in year 2007	43
total working days	9.245

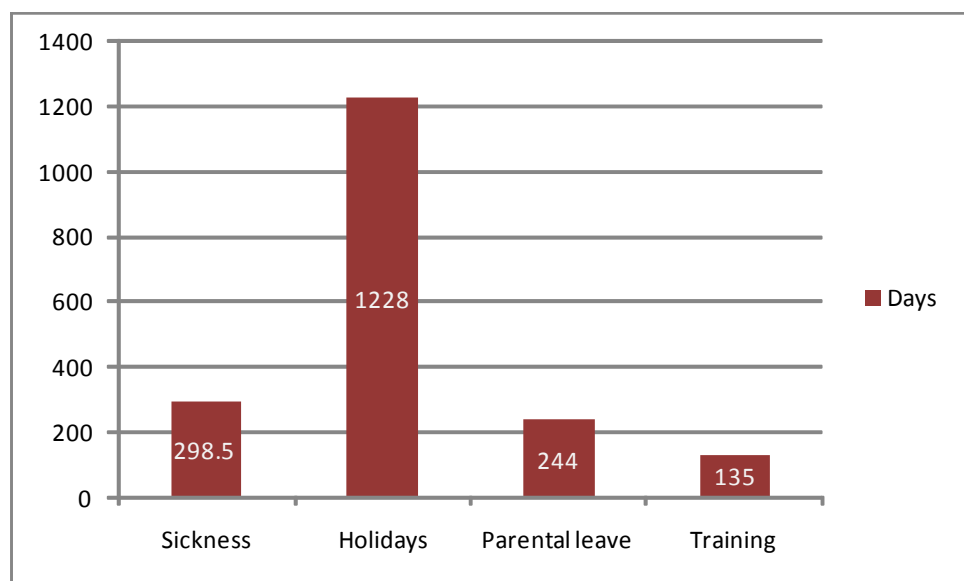
medical leave	days off	% of working days	number of posts	average number of days per post
absence	298,5	3,2%	42	7,1
excluding long leave	157,5	1,7%	42	3,8

For comparison:

In 2005, a total of 262 days was lost for medical reasons, which represents 3.0% of the working days.

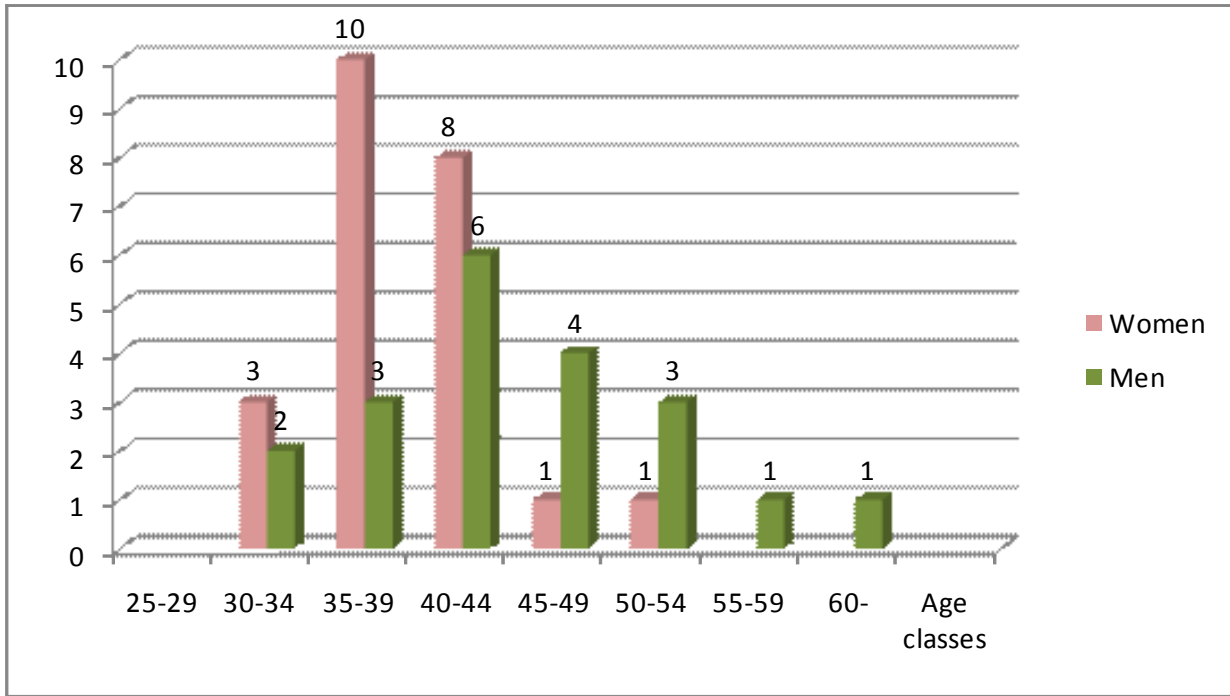
In 2006, a total of 639 days was lost for medical reasons, which represents 7.6% of the working days. This includes seven rather long absences of 497.5 days.

**Total absences in 2007**



### *Gender balance:*

The gender balance amongst CPVO staff is almost 50-50, slightly weighted towards female staff;



## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

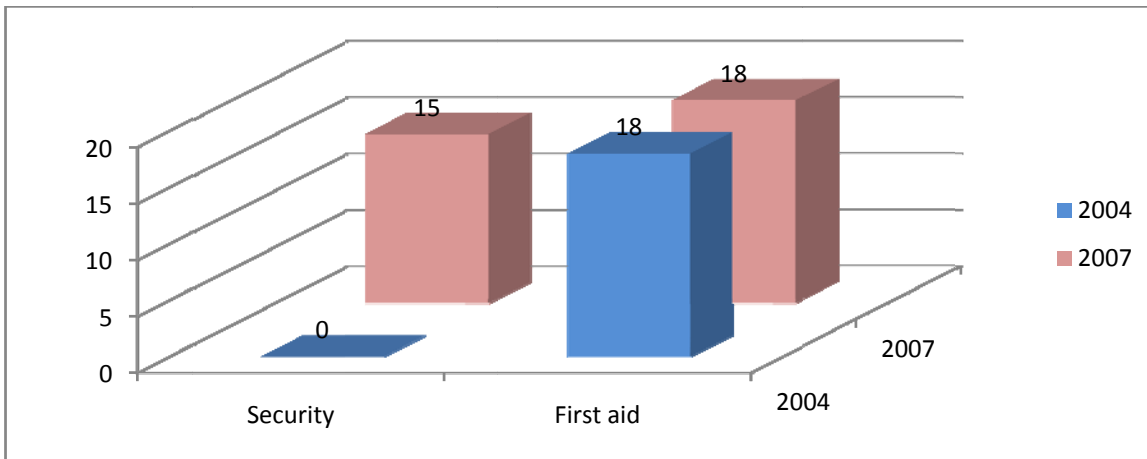
### *Hours worked*

The working week of the CPVO is 37.5 hours with a minimum of 7.5 hours worked per day Monday through Thursday, and a minimum of 6.5 hours worked on the Friday.

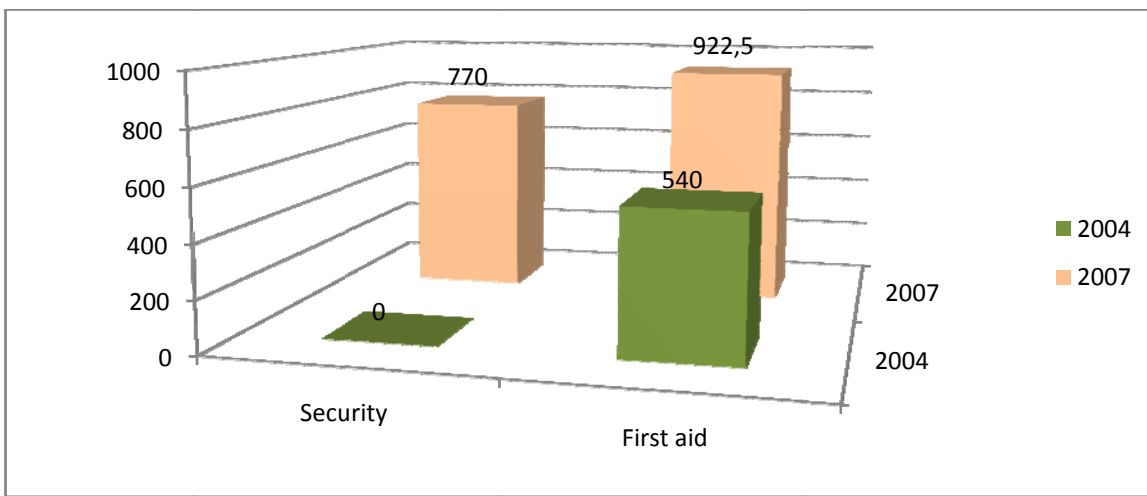
### *Security and prevention of occupational hazards*

The CPVO did not experience any accidents, occupational hazards or risks to its security during 2007. However, trainings are organized in these fields in order for the staff members to have knowledge about the actions to take in case anything happens.

Number of staff participating in security and first aid training over the past 5 years



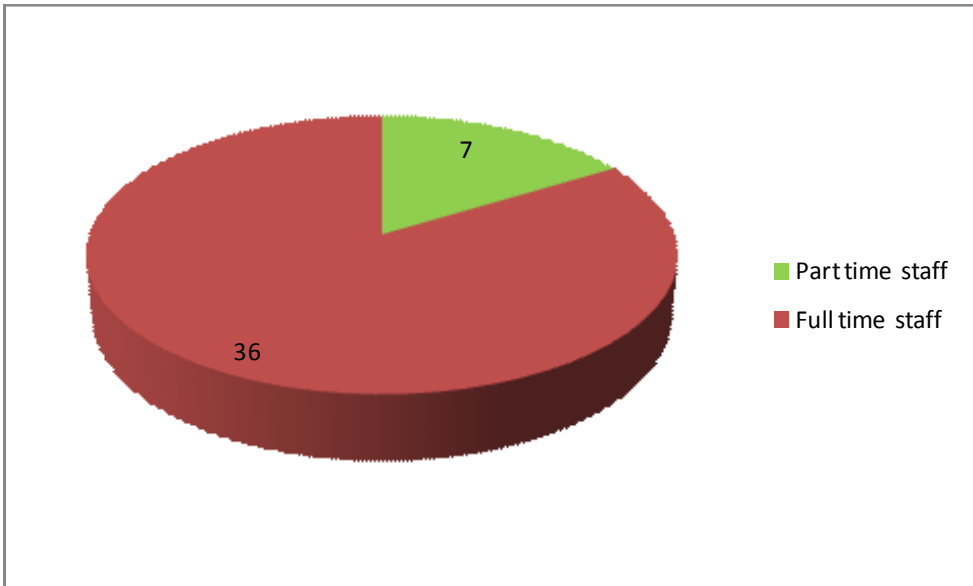
Cost for training in security and first aid over the past 5 years (in Euros)



*Part time*

The Staff Regulations of the European Communities give the right to staff members to work part-time. The CPVO adopted the Commission implementing rules on part-time work by analogy in April 2006, to give effect to these rules. These rules stipulate that staff members have the right to request to work part-time (50, 60, 70, 80 or 90%) under certain conditions. In 2007, four staff members were granted the right to work part-time at 80% in order to take care of their young children, and one staff member was granted the right to work part-time at 80% in order to prepare for retirement. Two staff members were working half-time on two half-time posts created to this effect.

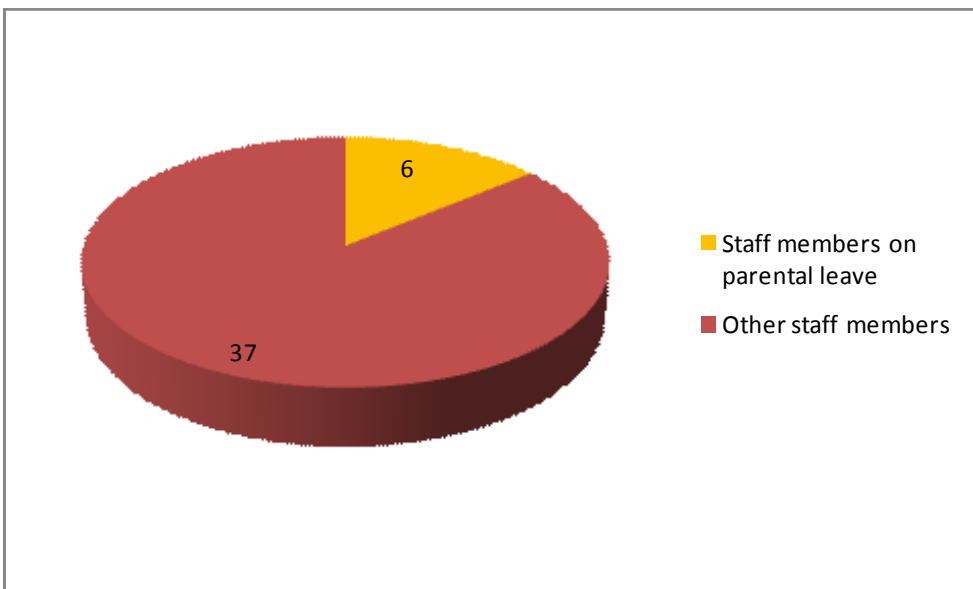




*Parental leave*

Parental leave is also a right established in the Staff Regulations. In 2004, the CPVO adopted by analogy the Commission implementing rules on parental leave. These rules stipulate that staff members have the right to request parental leave for up to six months per child until the child reaches the age of 12. The leave can be taken right after the maternity leave or at any other time. It can be taken all at once (six consecutive months) or be divided into a minimum period of one month at a time.

In 2007, six staff members took parental leave for a total period of 8 months.



## TRAINING

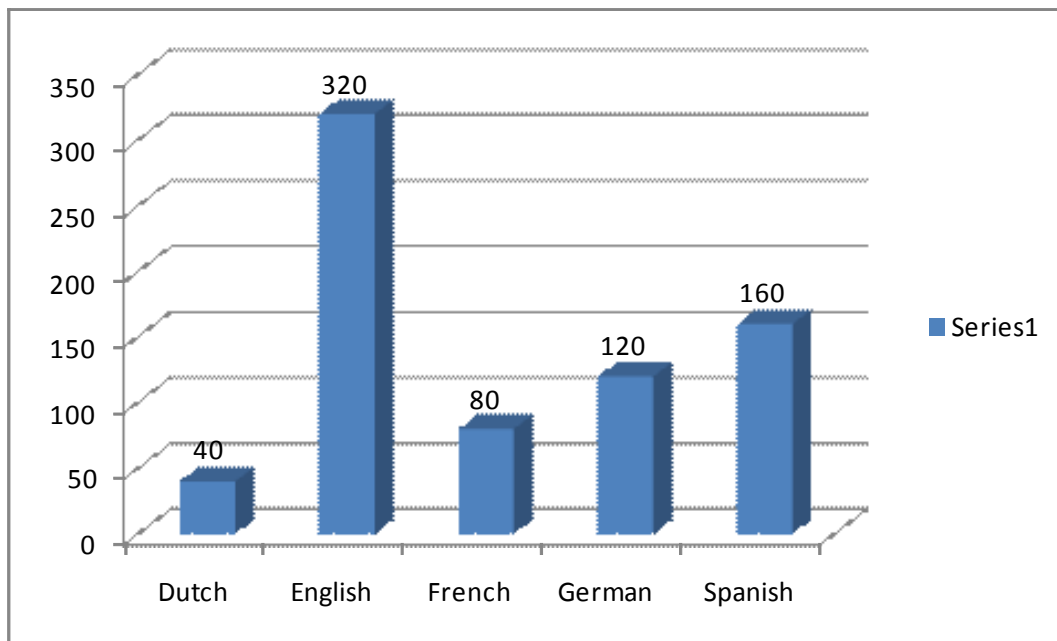
Training is an integral part of the human resources policy of the CPVO and it serves the interests of the individual as well as of the CPVO. Training should serve to improve individual competencies, professional effectiveness and commitment at the workplace so that each staff member can contribute optimally to the achievement of the CPVO's goals. By developing relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes, training should further help staff members to make desired career moves, both laterally (mobility) and vertically (promotion, including change of category). Learning is both a right and a duty for all persons working in the CPVO.

In 2007, a budget of 80 000 € was allocated for training. A total of 61 501.09 € was committed, which represents 76.9 % of the budget.

A total of 135 days were spent in training, which gives an average of 3.1 days per post. The European Commission has put up as a target of 10 days per year and post, so there is room for improvement before the CPVO reaches this target.

### *Language courses*

In 2007, 17 staff members followed language courses. A total of 720 (=720/7.5=96 days) hours was spent in these courses, divided in English (320 hours), French (80 hours), German (120 hours), Spanish (160 hours) and Dutch (40 hours) language courses. 44 960 € was committed, which represents 73.1 % of the budget.



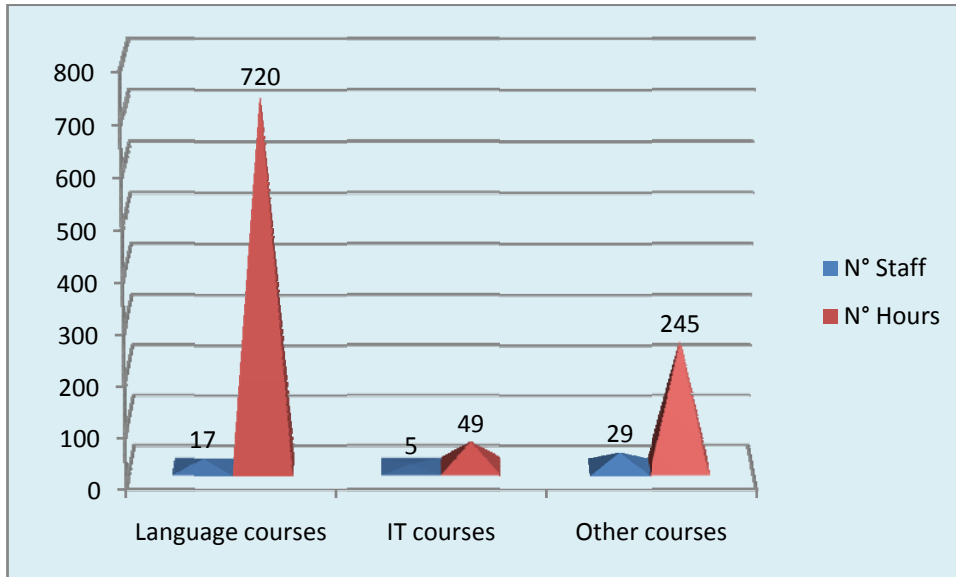
### *IT Training:*

5 staff members followed IT training courses (advanced Excel and Windev), which amounted to a total of 49 hours (=6.5 days). 2 290 € was committed, which represents 3.7 % of the budget.

## Other training

29 staff members followed other training courses (introduction course, anticipate and handle conflicts, professional interviews, administrative writing, taking notes and writing minutes, accounting norms IPSAS, handling difficult personalities in a professional environment, first aid training, information course to an examination office) which amounted to a total of 245 hours (=32,7 days). 14 251, 09 € was committed, which represents 23.2 % of the budget.

In this amount is also included the costs for the Service Level Agreement for trainings with the Commission and language training for family members.



## PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

### Staff Committee

There exists a Staff Committee in the CPVO, which is elected by the staff members every three years and which should represent the different grades and categories of staff. In March 2006 a new Staff Committee was elected, which consists of three persons of the assistant function group. There were no candidates from the administrator function group.

The role of the Staff Committee is to be a means of communication between the staff and the management of the Office. Once every other month, the Staff Committee and the management meet to discuss issues which have been brought forward by staff members, and which are deemed to be of concern for everybody. The Staff Committee seeks explanations and solutions to questions and problems experienced by staff members.

The Staff Committee also participates actively in the work of adopting internal staff related decisions of the CPVO. Its opinion and agreement is sought before adopting any such decision. The Staff Committee also plays a role in designating members of various internal committees of the Office.

Finally, the Staff Committee has a social role to play within the CPVO. It organizes a social day per year, which is the occasion for the staff members to meet outside the Office in an environment which changes from year to year (castles, museums, expeditions, etc.). The Staff Committee also organizes a Christmas party for the children of the staff members and a Christmas lunch for the staff and their spouses. All these events help to create bonds between staff members and they are highly appreciated.

### *Conclusion*

The CPVO has a good working climate with very low absenteeism. Part-time possibilities are well taken up and allow a more flexible work organization and better reconciliation of work and family life. The investment into training has been rather limited until now, which is in line with the limited needs identified in the career development reports.