



**CPVO**

Community Plant Variety Office

## SOCIAL REPORT OF THE CPVO 2011

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the 2011 CPVO Social Report is to highlight the turn-over, the work environment and the social aspects of the CPVO during the reporting year. It is also used to compare information from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

## 2. THE CPVO

### 2.1 Mission

The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) is responsible for the management of the Community Plant Variety Rights System. This system provides protection with an intellectual property right for new plant varieties on European Community level. The system, based on the 1991 act of the UPOV Convention, became operational in 1995. The mission of the CPVO is to foster innovation in plant varieties by high quality processing of applications for Community plant variety rights at affordable costs while providing policy guidance and assistance in the exercise of these rights for the benefit of stakeholders.

### 2.2 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 EU 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 three units (the Technical Unit, the Finance and Administration Unit and the Legal Unit) and two support services dealing with human resources and IT matters. A Quality Audit service was created in 2008 with the aim of verifying that technical examination offices meet the quality standards required for providing services to the CPVO in the area of testing compliance of candidate varieties with the distinctness, uniformity and stability (DUS) criteria in addition to novelty. This service reports directly to the Administrative Council of the CPVO.

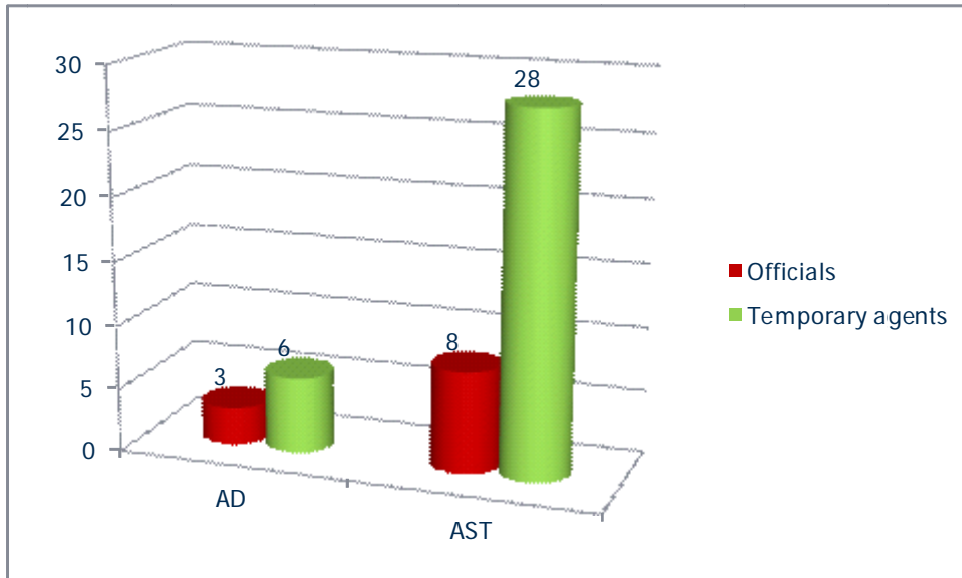
## 3. EMPLOYMENT

### 3.1 Staff members

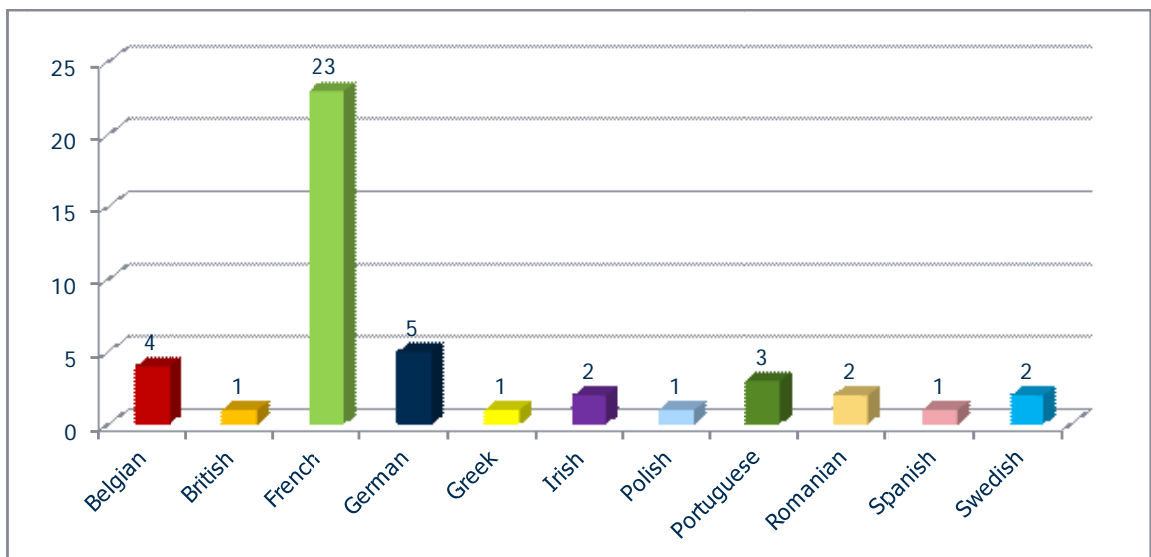
By the end of 2011, 45 staff members were employed at the CPVO comprising of 11 officials and 34 temporary agents (of which 5 were part-time employments). The representation in function groups AD and AST was as illustrated below:



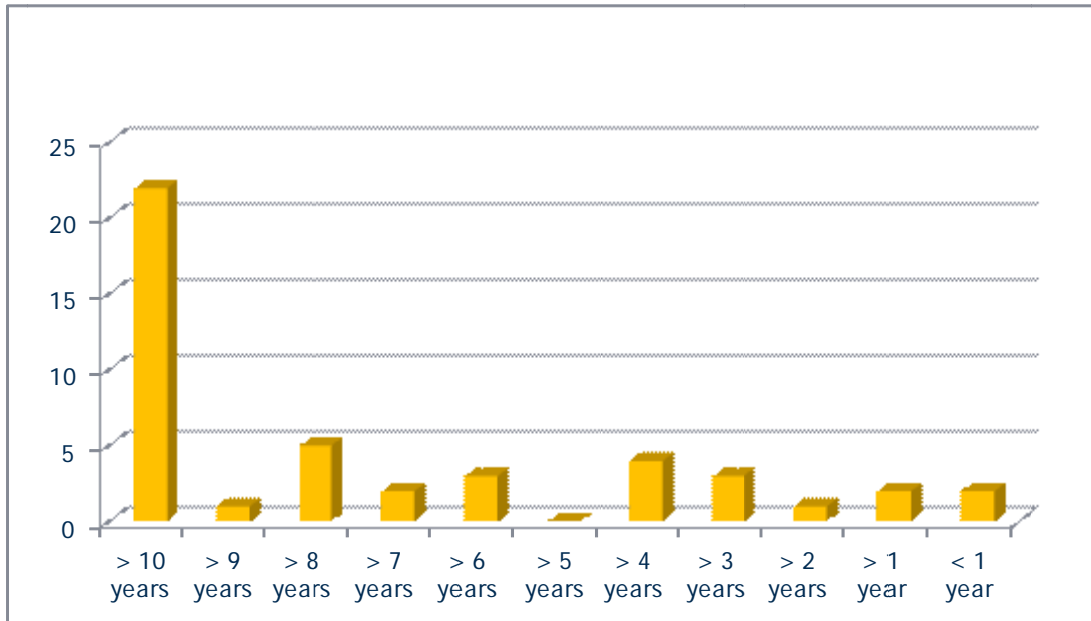
Function groups:



Nationalities:



### Seniority in the Office in 2011:



### 3.2 Recruitment procedures organized in 2011

Three recruitment procedures were launched during 2011: DPO assistant, register assistant and lawyer (external publications).

### 3.3 Staff that joined the CPVO

Three new temporary agents were recruited in 2011. A **Register assistant** took up office on 1 February 2011 for an initial period of four years, a **DPO assistant** took up office on 1 May 2011 for a determined period of 8 months and another **Register Assistant** took up office for an initial period of 7,5 months (replacement for a maternity and parental leave)

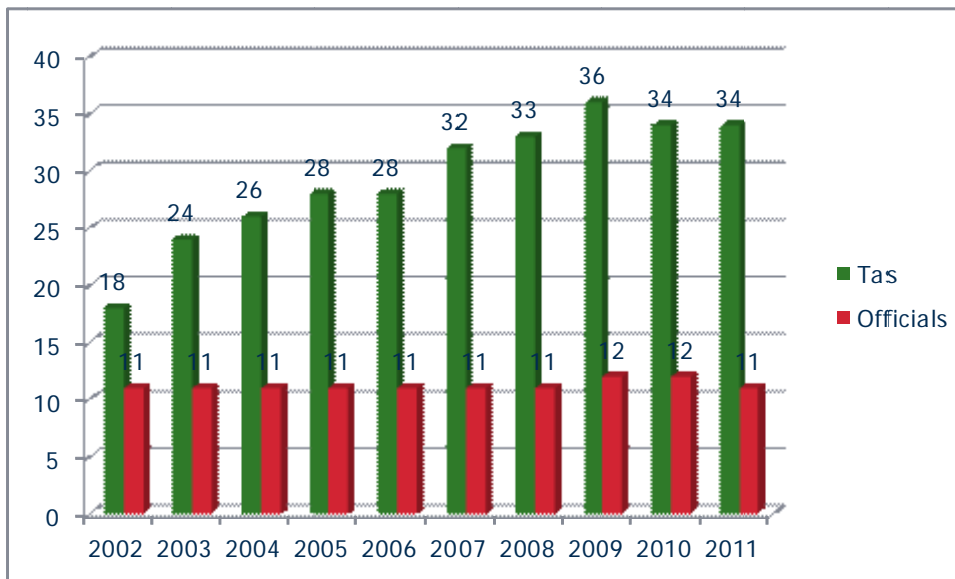
Two *interim agents* were recruited during 2011: One for a period of 2 weeks to scan the personal files in the Human Resources Service and the other one for a period of 3 weeks to temporarily cover the departure of a staff member in the Register.

### 3.4 Staff that left the CPVO

Three temporary agent contracts came to an end, one on the 30/06/11, one the 31/07/11 and another one on the 31/12/11, and were not renewed. One temporary agent left the Office to go on pre-retirement (01/09/11).



### Evolution of Temporary Agents/Officials over the past 10 years:



### **3.5 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.

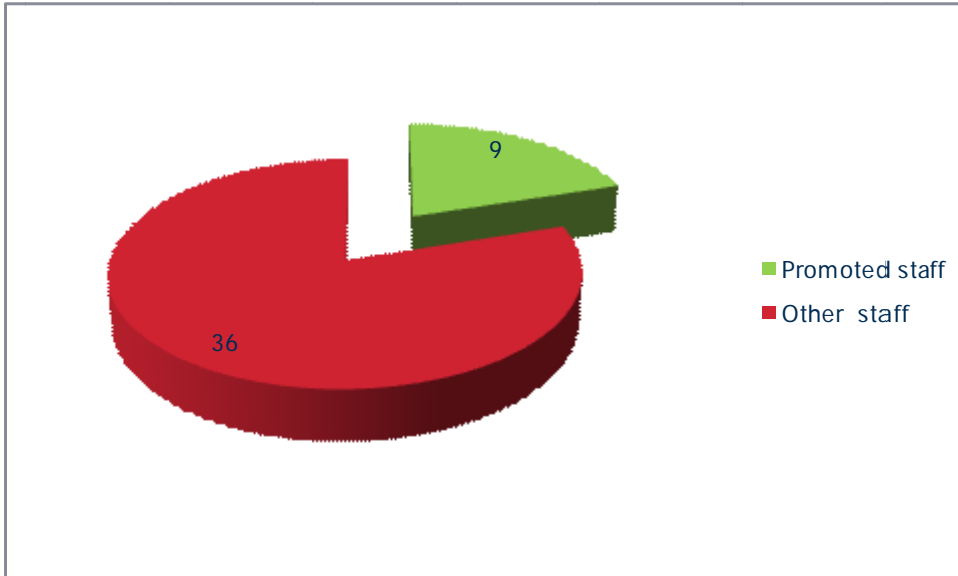
Career development reports are drawn up once a year for all staff members, including the President and Vice President.

### **3.6 Promotions and reclassifications**

A total of 9 staff members were awarded a promotion or reclassification to the next grade in their career with retroactive effect from 01/01/2011. This represents 20% of the staff, which is in line with the Staff Regulations and the average rate applied by the Commission.



### Promotions in 2011:



### 3.7 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 2011, no staff member of the CPVO was absent more than 12 days without a medical certificate.

The total number of days lost for medical reasons was 212 days. This represents 2.0% of the total working days during 2011 and makes an average of 4.6 days per post

total calendar days	365
weekend days	104
CVPO official holidays	17
average annual holidays	26
working days	218
persons present in year 2011*	48
<u>total working days **</u>	<u>10.464</u>

\*includes staff with short-term contracts, replacing temporarily staff on long-term contracts

\*\* no distinction made between part-time and full time

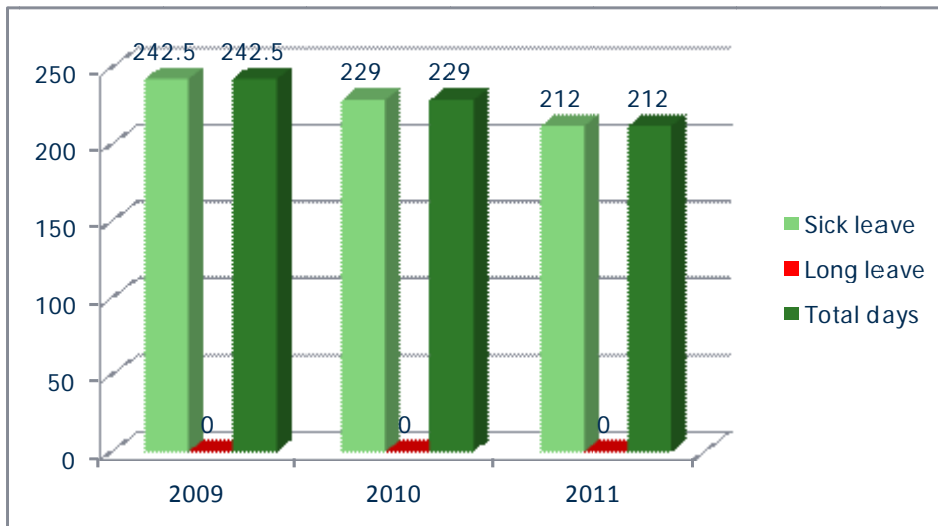
medical leave	days off	% of working days	number of posts	average number of days per post
absence	212	2,0%	46	4,6

For comparison:

In 2010, the total number of days lost for medical reasons was 229 days. This represents 2,1% of the total working days during 2010 and makes an average of 5.0 days per post.

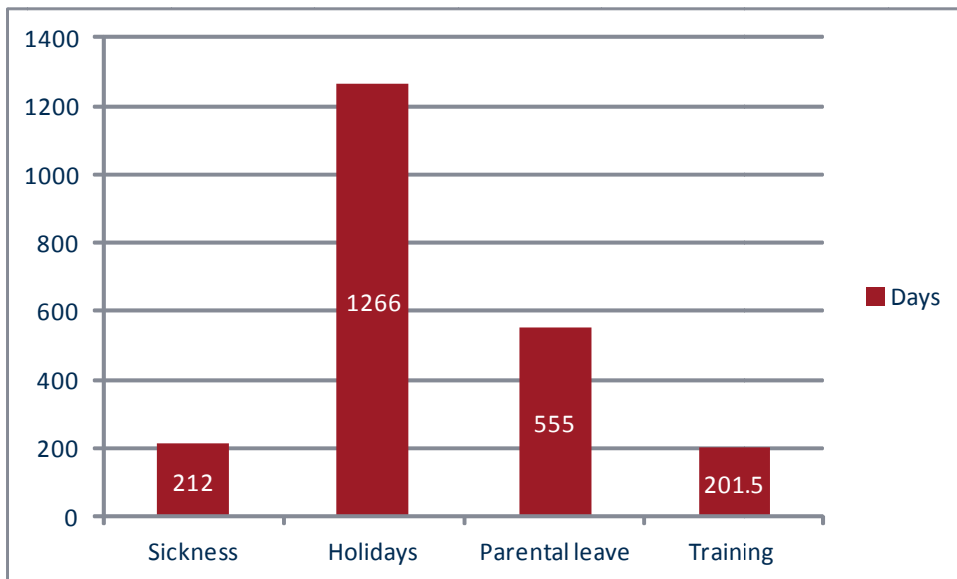
In 2009, the total number of days lost for medical reasons was 242.5 days. This represents 2.3% of the total working days during 2009 and makes an average of 5.3 days per post

*Absenteeism over the past three years:*





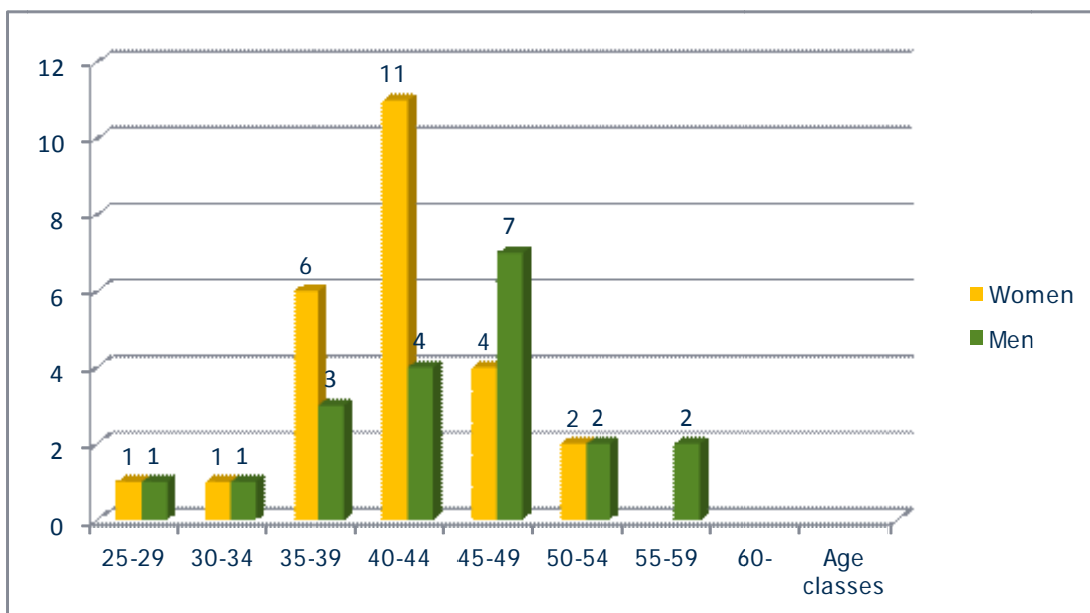
Total absences in 2011:



3.8 Gender and age balance

The gender balance amongst CPVO staff is almost 50-50, slightly weighted towards female staff. It should be noted that more than 50% of the staff of the CPVO is presently in the age range between 40 and 59. This situation should be monitored in the medium-long term period to ensure continuity and transfer of knowledge.

Gender & age balance:



## 4. TRAINEES

In January 2009 the President of the CPVO adopted rules governing in-service training at the CPVO. The purpose of the in-service training with the CPVO is to give external people an opportunity to learn about the CPVO and its role within the European Union, to provide them with practical knowledge of the work at the CPVO, to enable them to acquire personal experience by means of the contacts made in the course of their work, to enable them to further and put into practice the knowledge they have acquired during their studies or professional careers, and to make use of this knowledge to the benefit of the CPVO.

In 2011 the CPVO had two trainees in the Legal Unit, for a total period of five and a half months. These persons were charged with assisting the Legal Unit in dealing with legal questions concerning the application procedure for Community plant variety rights; in dealing with contracts with third parties, public procurement, legal questions on labour law, personal data protection and public access to documents; and informing stakeholders and the legal community on the enforcement of Community Plant Variety Rights by organizing seminars and creating and maintaining various databases.

## 5. WORKING CONDITIONS

### *5.1 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.

### *5.2 Security and prevention of occupational hazards*

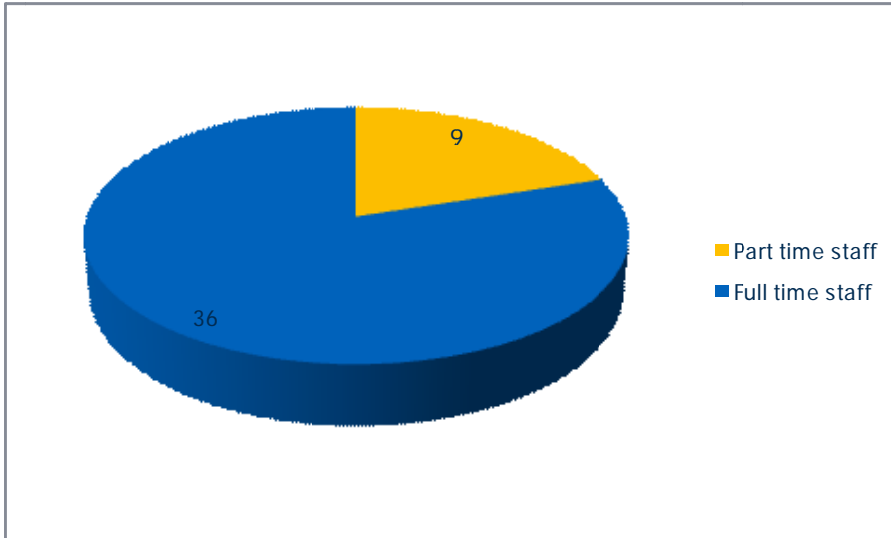
The CPVO did not experience any accidents, occupational hazards or risks to its security during 2011. However, trainings are organized in these fields in order for the staff members to have knowledge about the actions to take in case anything happens. A fire drill has been organized in 2011 and it is foreseen to have a training in first aid and security during 2012.

### *5.3 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 2011, seven staff members were granted the right to work part-time at 80% in order to take care of their young children and to better balance private and professional life, one staff member was granted the rights to work at 90% to take care of young children, and one staff member was granted the right to work part-time at 60% in order to prepare for retirement.



Part time in 2011:

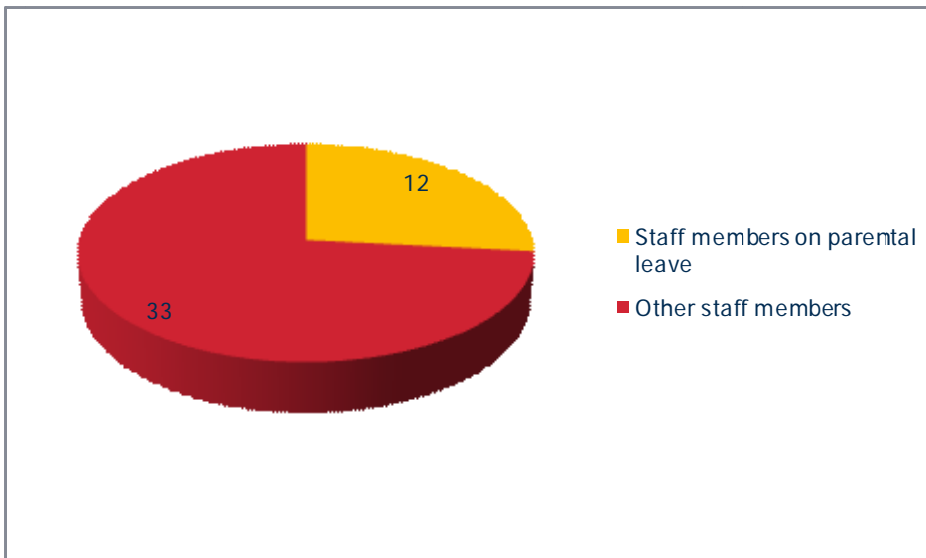


5.4 Parental leave

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 2011, twelve staff members took parental leave for a total period of 18.5 months.

Parental leave in 2011:



## 6. 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.

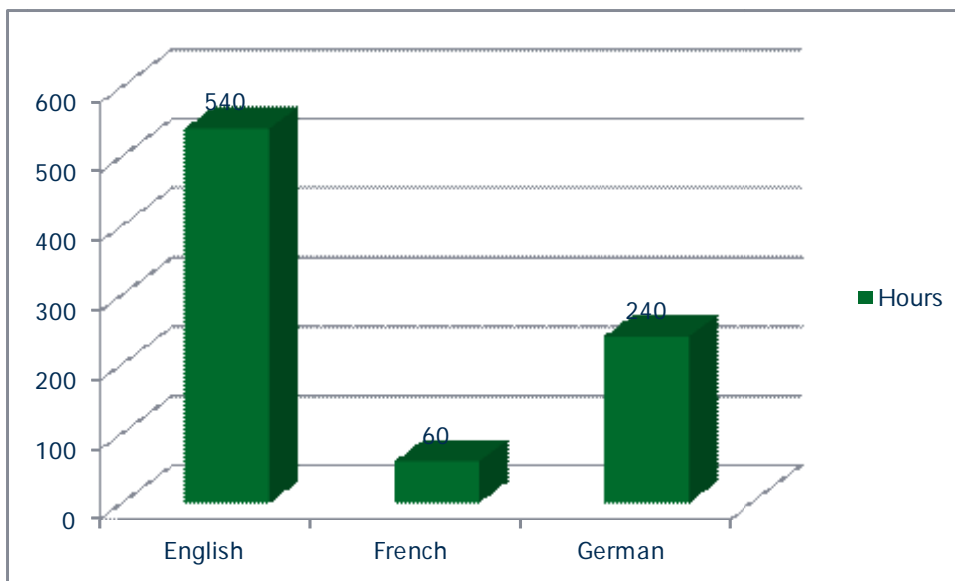
In 2011, a budget of 80 000 € was allocated for training. A total of 78 915€ was committed, which represents an execution level of 98.6 % of the budget.

A total of 201.5 days were spent in training, which gives an average of 4.4 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.

### 6.1 Language courses

In 2011, 13 staff members followed language courses. A total of 840 hours (=840/7.5=112 days) were spent in these courses, divided in English (540 hours), French (60 hours) and German (240 hours) language courses. 54 154 € was committed, which represents 67.79 % of the training budget.

#### Language courses in 2011:



### 6.2 IT Training

13 staff members followed IT training courses (Excel 2007 advanced, Desktop basis and advanced, SharePoint 2010, Enterprise Vault 9x, XML, Framework Zend), which amounted to a total of 270 hours (=36 days). 9 590 € was committed, which represents 12.5 % of the training budget.

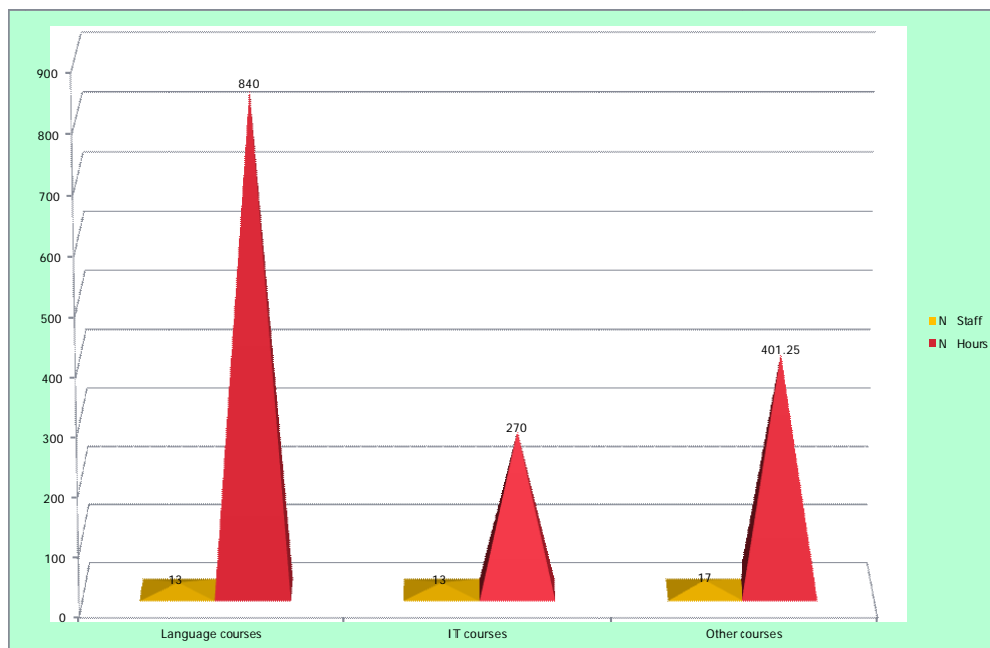


### 6.3 Other training

17 staff members followed other training courses (finances, human resources, technical expertise, communication, management and preparation for retirement) which amounted to a total of 401.25 hours (=53.5 days). 15 171 € was committed, which represents 19 % of the budget.

This amount also includes the cost for the Service Level Agreement on training concluded with the Commission.

#### Total training in 2011:



## 7. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

### 7.1 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 December 2011 a new Staff Committee was elected, which consists of three full members and two alternates. Four of these staff members come from the assistant function group and one 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 where the children and spouses of the staff members are invited. All these events help to create bonds between staff members and they are highly appreciated.

## 8. CONCLUSION REMARKS

The CPVO has a good working climate with very low and decreasing 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.

