

SOCIAL REPORT OF THE CPVO 2016

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the 2016 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.

1. THE CPVO

1.1. 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 Union 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.

1.2. 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 a balanced budget for the Agency 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 Administration Unit and the Legal Unit) and support services dealing with human resources and public relations. 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. This service reports directly to the Administrative Council of the CPVO.

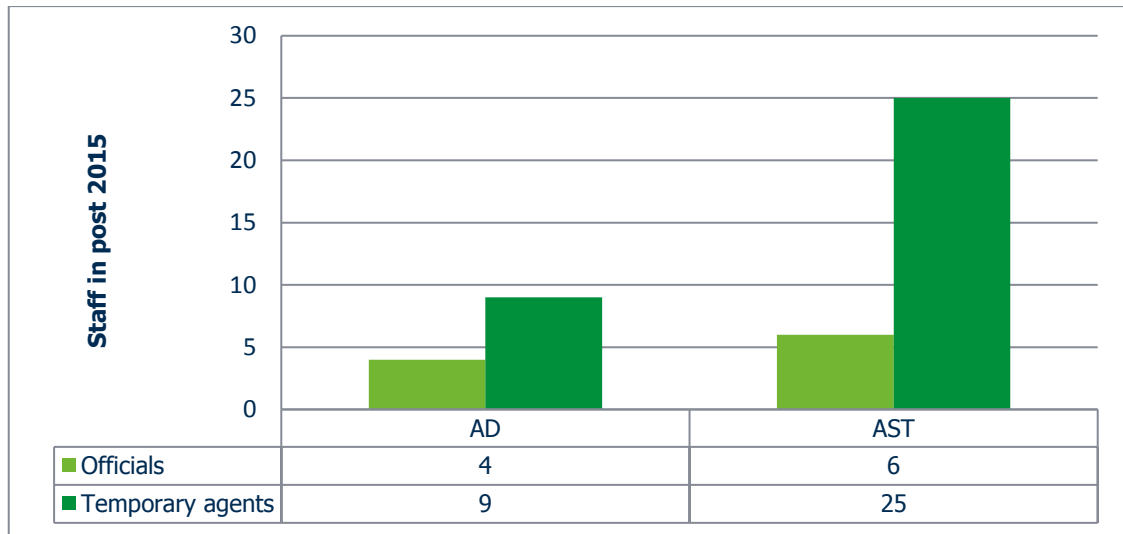
2. EMPLOYMENT

2.1. Staff members

By the end of 2016, 44 staff members were employed at the CPVO comprising of 10 officials and 34 temporary agents (of which 4 were standard part-time employments of 80% or 90%). The representation in function groups AD and AST was as illustrated below.

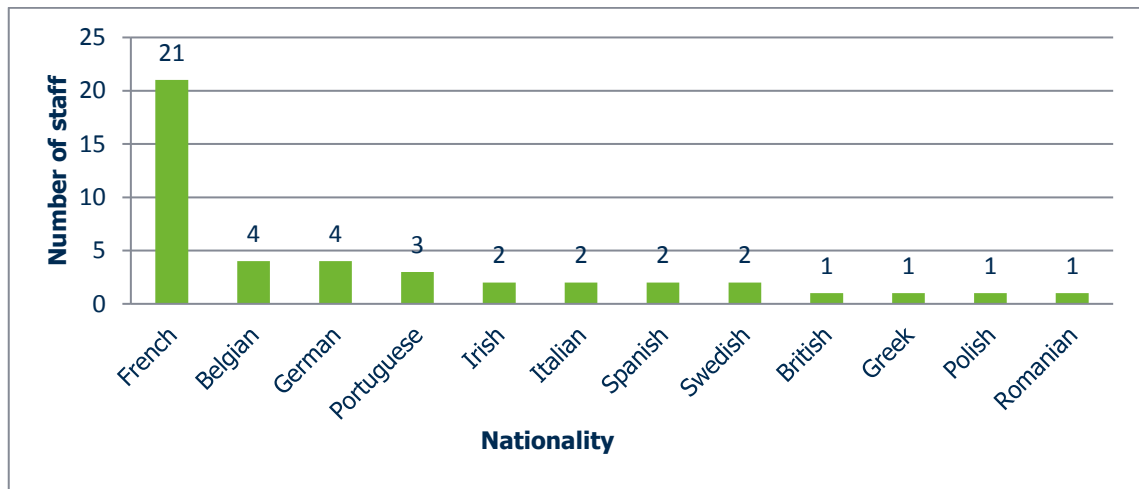


Figure 1 - Function Groups



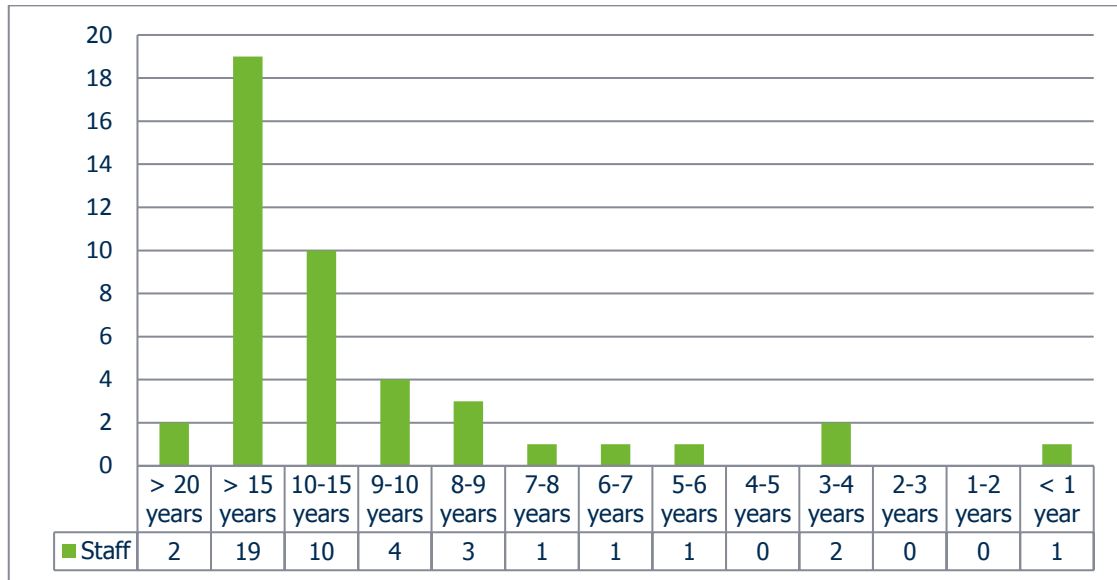
12 nationalities were present in the Office with a majority of French nationals.

Figure 2 - Nationalities



The Office has a low turn-over and 70% of the staff has been working for more than 10 years.

Figure 3 - Seniority in the Office in 2016



2.2. Recruitment procedures organized in 2016

Two recruitment procedures were launched during 2016 for contract agents (2 IT developers and 1 Database Administrator), and one selection of a contract agent for the post as Deputy Accountant was made from the EPSO reserve list. In addition, one temporary agent for the post of Legal Advisor was recruited following a selection made from the reserve lists of the EU-IPO.

2.3. Staff that joined the CPVO

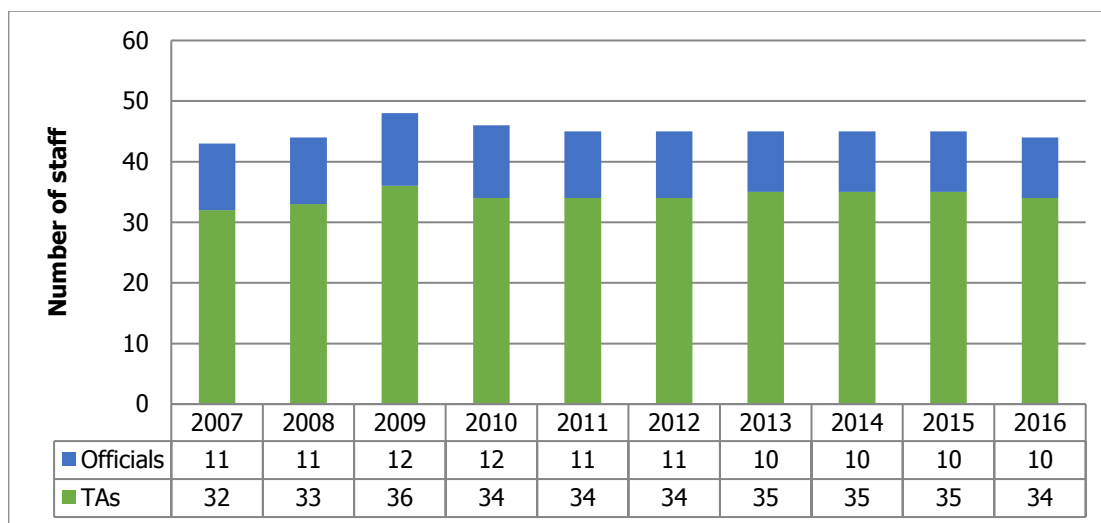
Three *interim agents* were recruited during 2016 for a total period of 20 months, in order to cover for a replacement of maternity leave, of sick leave and to cope with an increased workload in the Legal Unit and in the Presidency due to the departure of two staff members (one in 2015 and one in 2016).

One temporary agent was recruited in the Legal Unit.

2.4. Staff that left the CPVO

One staff member left in 2016. The number of staff has been stable the last 3 years with 45-46 staff members.

Figure 4 - Evolution of Temporary Agents/Officials over the past 10 years:



2.5. 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's expectations and action needed to meet these expectations and to advance the staff member's career at the CPVO.

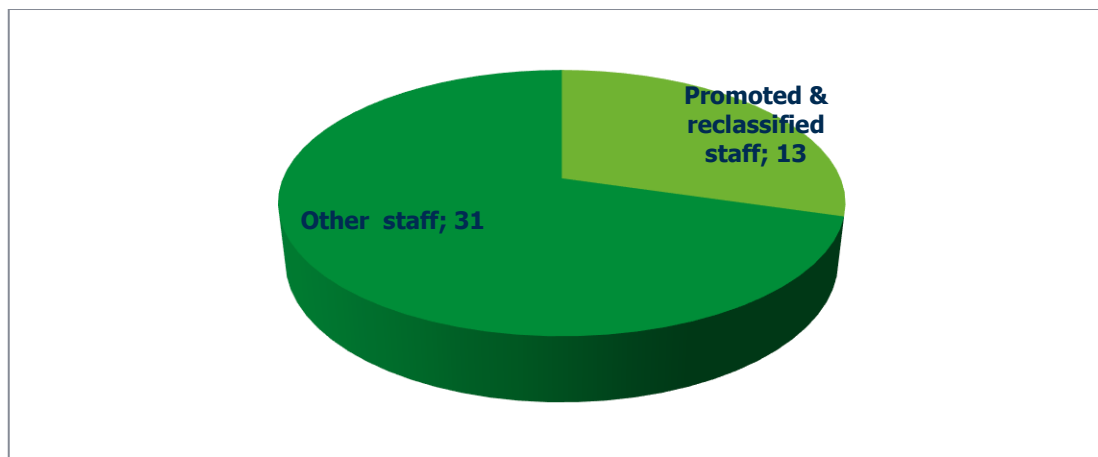
Career development reports provide a link between the CPVO's objectives and a staff member's performance and should also enhance accountability for results.

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

2.6. Promotions and reclassifications

A total of 13 staff members were awarded a promotion or reclassification to the next grade in their career with retroactive effect from 01/01/2016. This represents 30% of the staff.

Figure 5 - Promotions and reclassifications in 2016



2.7. Absenteeism

The Staff Regulations of the European Communities, applicable to CPVO staff, stipulate that staff members 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 2016, 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 562 days (which includes three long sick leaves of 77 days, 126,5 days and 151 days respectively). This represents 5.9% of the total working days during 2016 and makes an average of 12.8 days per post.

Description	Days
Total Calendar Days	365
Weekend Days	104
CPVO Official Holidays	17
Average Annual Holidays	26
Working Days	218
Staff Present in Office in 2016	44 ¹
Total working days	9 592 ²

¹ includes staff with short-term contracts, replacing temporarily staff on long-term contracts

² no distinction made between part-time and full time

Year	Days off	% of working days	Avg. days per post
2016	562,0	5.9%	12.8
2015	157.5	1.6%	3.5
2014	240.5	2.5%	5.1

Figure 6 - Absenteeism over the past three years

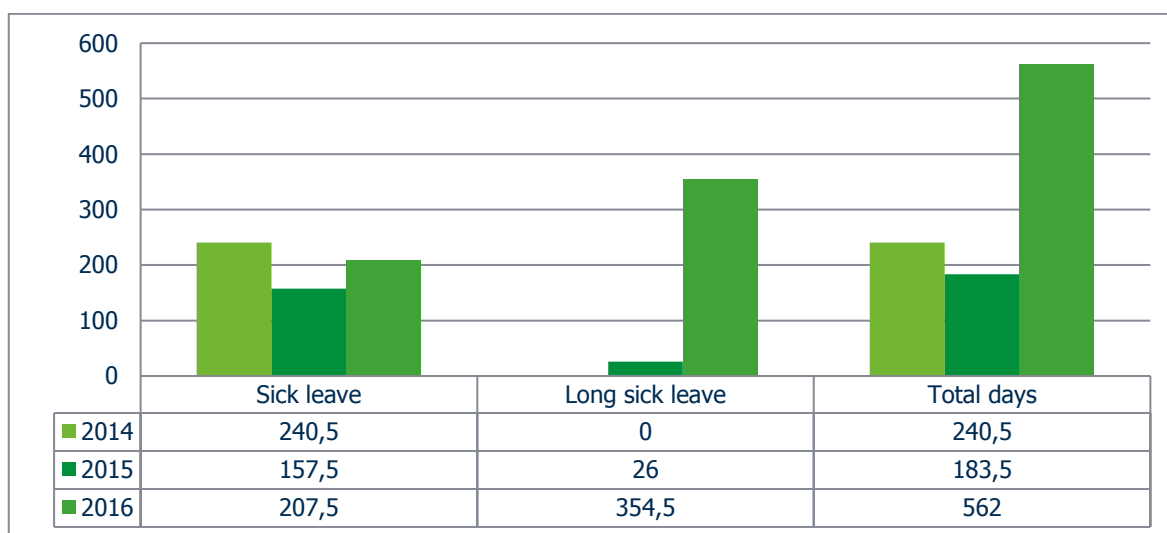


Figure 7 - Total days of absences in 2016



2.8. Gender and age balance

The gender balance amongst CPVO staff is 60-40, with the weight towards female staff. It should be noted that almost 60% of the staff of the CPVO is presently in the age range between 40 and 49, and 34% is over 50. This situation should be monitored in the medium-long term period to ensure continuity and transfer of knowledge.

Figure 8 - Gender & age balance

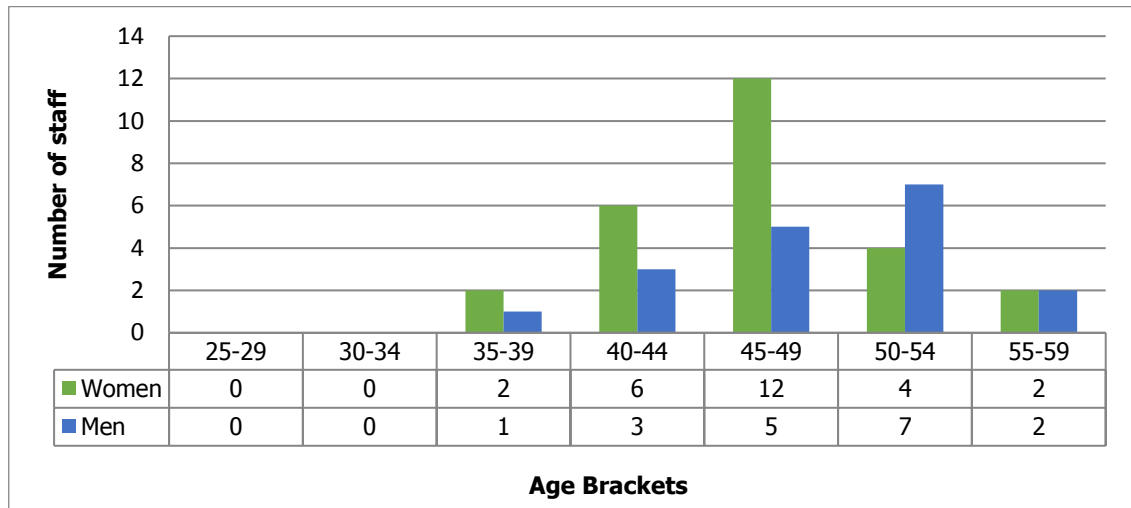
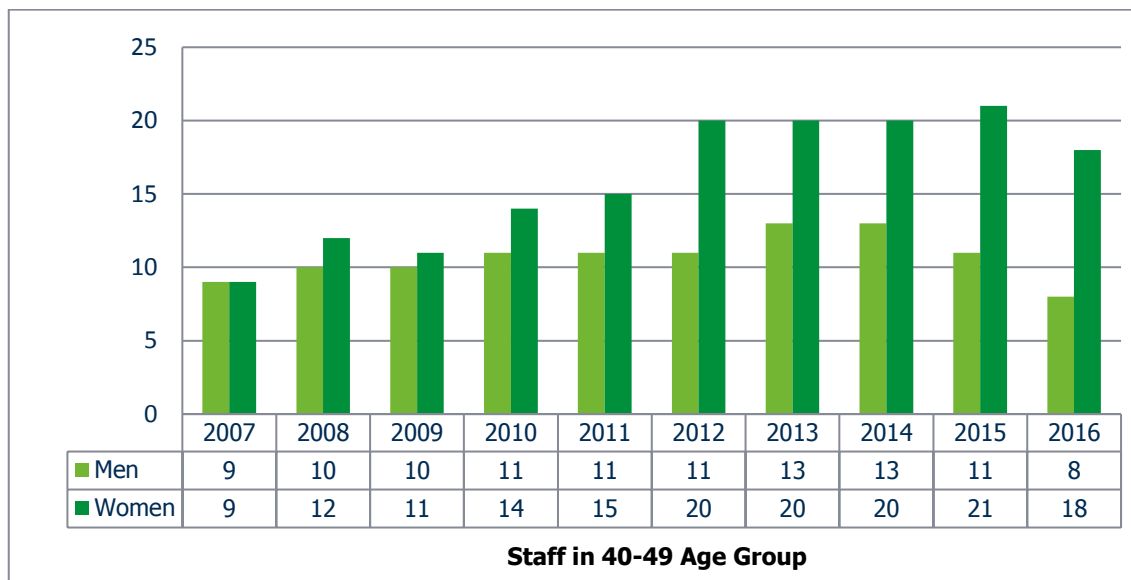


Figure 9 - Age group 40-49 evolution



3. 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 and put into practice the knowledge they have acquired during their studies or professional careers, to the benefit of the CPVO.

The CPVO adopted in 2013 a procedure for the traineeships within the Office, governed by the decision mentioned above. According to this procedure eventual traineeship's will be advertised in April and September (advertisements posted on the CPVO web page and message sent to the AC members). The traineeships are planned to begin at 2 intervals during the year, in March and September, and will last for 6 months at a time. This procedure was followed in 2016 and 8 advertisements were published as a consequence. Cooperation Agreements were also signed with the University of Alicante (Magister Lvcentinvs) and the University of Strasbourg (CEIPI) to offer the same traineeship possibilities of 6 months renewable. Moreover in 2016 the CPVO has signed an agreement to join the Pan-European Seal Project in partnership with the EUIPO and the EPO to offer internships to highly specialized young graduated in the field of Intellectual Property. The agreement will be implemented as from 2017.

The CPVO also offers the possibility for younger students to do an internship of 2-4 months. These internships are not governed by the decision mentioned above but by a convention signed between the CPVO and the school.

In 2016 the CPVO had all in all nine trainees present for a total of 40,5 months.

4. WORKING CONDITIONS

4.1. Hours worked

The working week of the CPVO is 40 hours, spread out over the 5 working days (from Monday to Friday), respecting the following core working hours 9:00 to 12:30 and from 14:15 to 16:30 (16:00 on Wednesdays and Fridays).

4.2. Security and prevention of occupational hazards

The CPVO did not experience any accidents, occupational hazards or risks to its security during 2016. However, training courses are organized in these fields in order for the staff members to have knowledge about the actions to take in case anything happens. In 2016, 12 staff members participated in a training course on how to use a fire extinguisher.

4.3. Flexi-time and teleworking

The new implementing rules on working time gives staff members the possibility for flexi-time. This means that if staff works more than the regulatory hours during a month, they can work the corresponding time less in the following month. If the overtime worked exceeds 4 hours, staff can recuperate half a day in the following month, and if the overtime worked exceeds 8 hours they can recuperate a whole day, until a maximum of 2 days in a given month. No more than 20 hours can be carried over from one month to another.

In 2016, 33 staff members worked overtime and took put 168,50 days in total under the flexi-time arrangements.

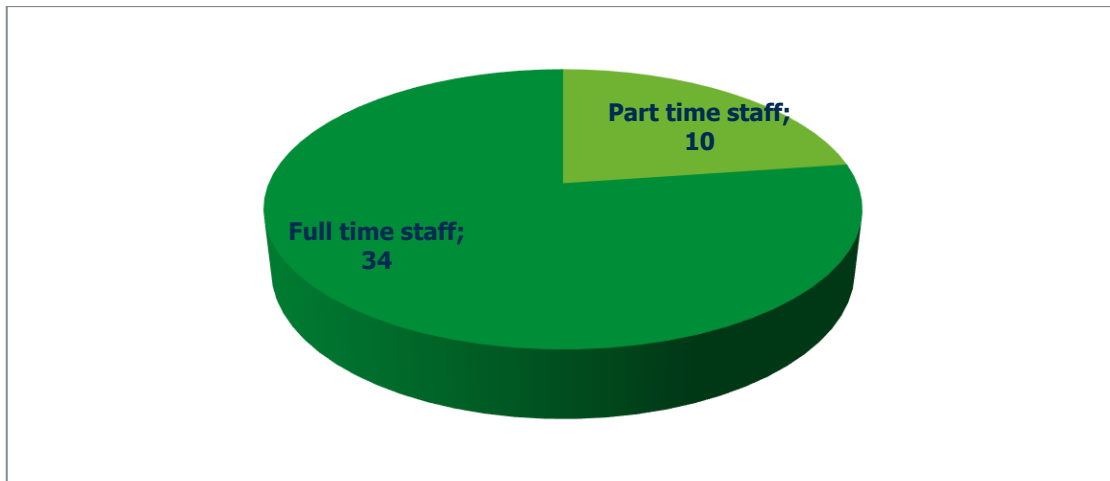
Several staff members have been teleworking during 2016, either on an ad hoc basis (6 staff members) or under a teleworking agreement (6 staff members). The feedback is very positive; both from the staff side and the CPVO's side.



4.4. 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 2016 ten staff members were granted the right to work part-time at 80% or 90% in order to take care of their young children and to better balance private and professional life. They did not all work part-time throughout the entire year.

Figure 10 - Part time in 2016

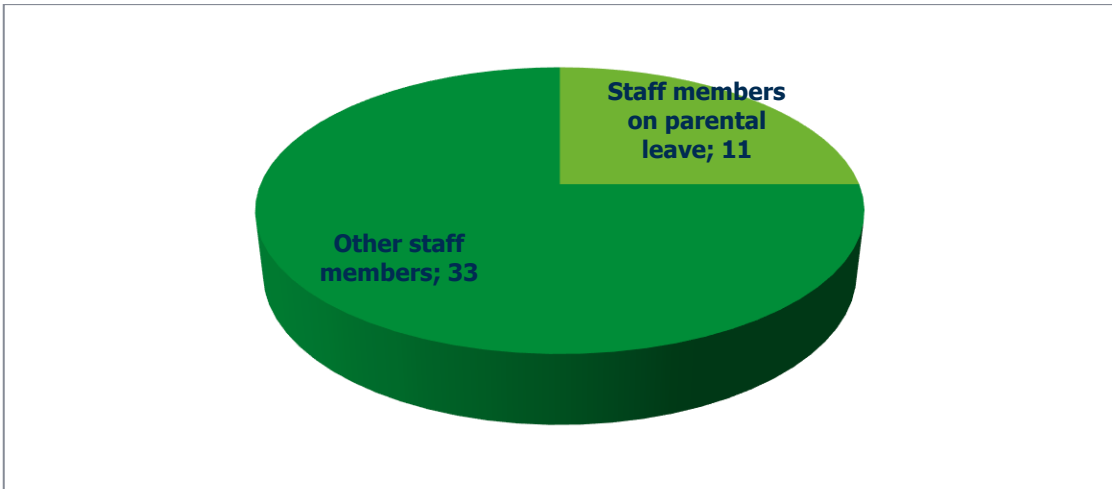


4.5. Parental leave

Parental leave is also a right established in the Staff Regulations. In 2011, the CPVO adopted by analogy the new 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. Parental leave can be taken as full-time or half-time.

The New Staff Regulations has introduced a possibility to take an extra 6 months per child with an allowance reduced by 50%. In 2016, eleven staff members took parental leave for a total period of 11 months.

Figure 11 - Parental leave in 2016



5. 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.

The CPVO staff has been given free access to the Learning Portal of the EUIPO Academy and can enroll in training courses as they please, under condition that there are places available.

In 2016, a budget of 98 000 € was allocated for training. A total of 50 336,31 € was committed, which represents an execution level of 51.36 % of the budget.

A total of 249 days were spent in training, which gives an average of 5.7 days per post.

Figure 12 - Evolution of training days over the past five years

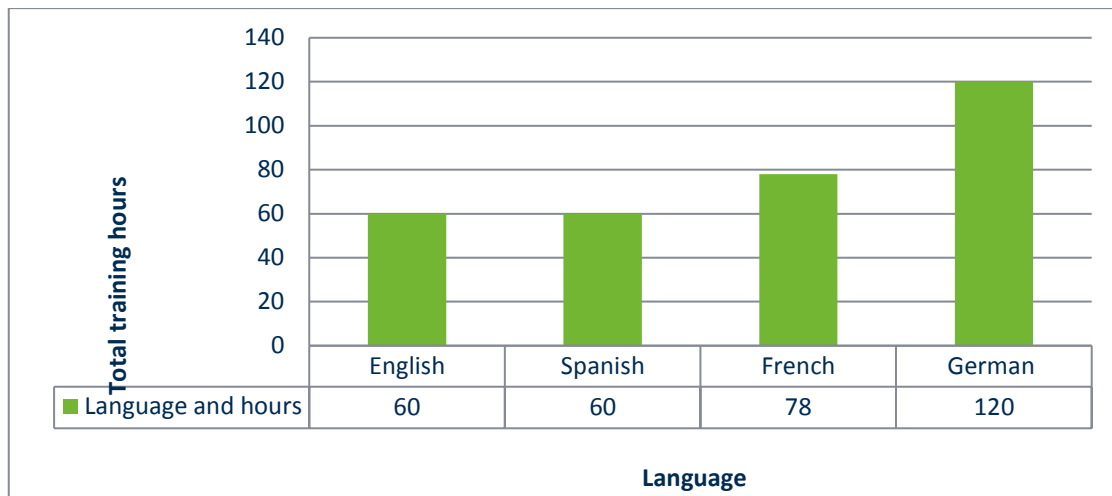
YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS	DAYS PER POST
2012	337.5	7.3
2013	350	7.3
2014	376.5	8.4
2015	317.25	7.1
2016	232	5.7

5.1. Language courses

In 2016, 5 staff members followed language courses. A total of 318 hours (=300/8=39,75 days) were spent in these courses, divided in English (60 hours), German (120 hours), Spanish (60 hours) and French (78 hours). 18 107,40 € was committed, which represents 18.48 % of the training budget.



Figure 13 - Language courses in 2016



5.2. IT Training

5 staff members followed IT training courses (PowerPoint, Linux/Unix, electronic archiving), which amounted to a total of 72 hours (=9 days). In addition to this, 30 staff members followed on-line trainings on Lynda.com for 274 hours (=34,25 days). 4 430,00 € was committed, which represents 4.52% of the training budget.

5.3. Writing e-mails and writing minutes

38 staff members participated in a training on how to better communicate via e-mail and 19 staff members followed a training in writing meeting minutes, which amounted in a total of 304 hours (=38 days). 3 600,00€ was committed which represents 3,67% of the training budget.

5.4. Certification

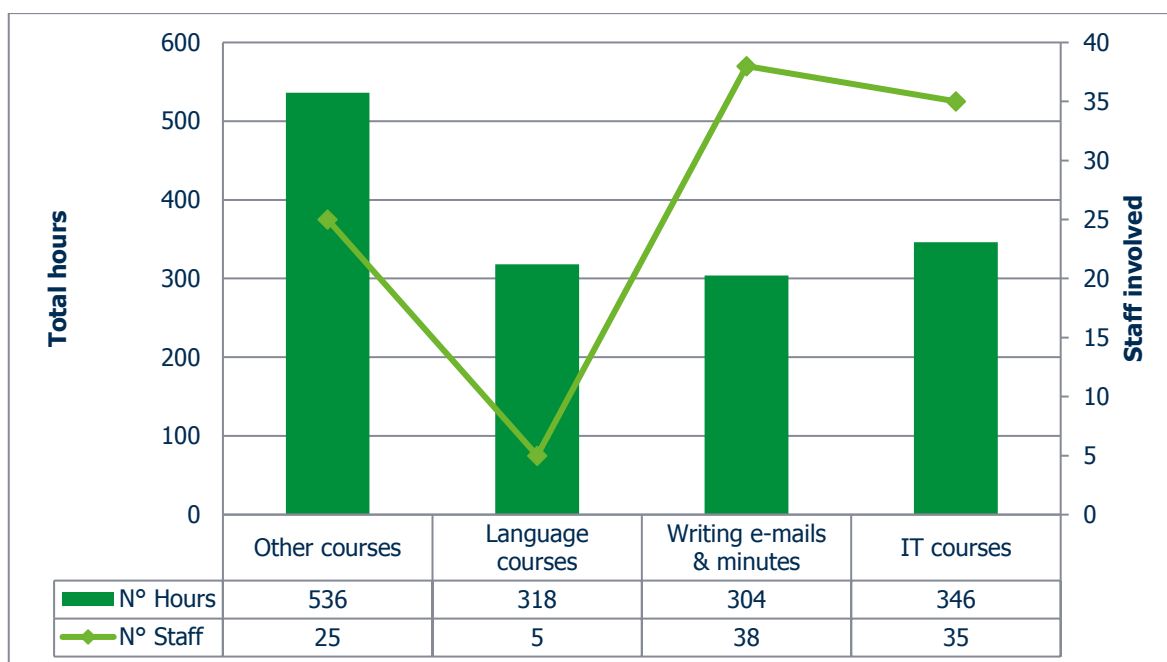
Two staff members participated in the certification procedure, organized by EPSO. A total of 496 hours (62 days) were spent on that procedure and 12 800,00€ was committed, which represent 13,06% of the training budget.

5.5. Other training

25 staff members followed other training courses (communication & management, human resources, technical expertise and diverse other courses, including the utilization of fire extinguishers) which amounted to a total of 536 hours (=67 days). 9 422,91 € was committed, which represents 9,62% of the training budget.

1 976,00€ were paid for the Service Level Agreement with DG HR, which represents 2,02% of the training budget.

Figure 14 - Total training in 2016



6. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

6.1. Staff Committee

The role of the Staff Committee is to be a means of communication between the staff and the management team of the Office. Once every other month, the Staff Committee and the management team 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. Apart from these main events, the staff committee also organizes a common coffee break once a month, which is a good occasion for staff to meet together. All these events help to create bonds between staff members and they are highly appreciated.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The increasing workload and the restriction of recruiting additional staff members have had as consequence that the absenteeism increased in 2016. The possibility to recruit contract agents will hopefully improve the working conditions. Part-time possibilities are well taken up and allow a more flexible work organization and better reconciliation of work and family life. The new decision on working hours,

with the possibility of flexi-time, and the decision on teleworking, offering the possibility to work from home, will also improve the balance between work and family life.

The increase in the average age of staff, and the lack of mobility within the CPVO, are two aspects which will require the attention of management team and possible actions in the near future.



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