

A SALARY REPORT BY ELLWOOD ATFIELD **MOST SENIOR STAFF AT EU ASSOCIATIONS ARE HAPPY**

According to an in-depth remuneration report, almost three-quarters of senior staff at EU associations are happy or very happy in their jobs, and most of the EU association staff are relatively well paid in Belgium.

Ellwood Atfield, a specialist corporate affairs and association leadership headhunting firm in Brussels with more than 10 years' experience in placing many senior candidates in associations, has amassed considerable data on compensation packages in a new European Association Remuneration Report.

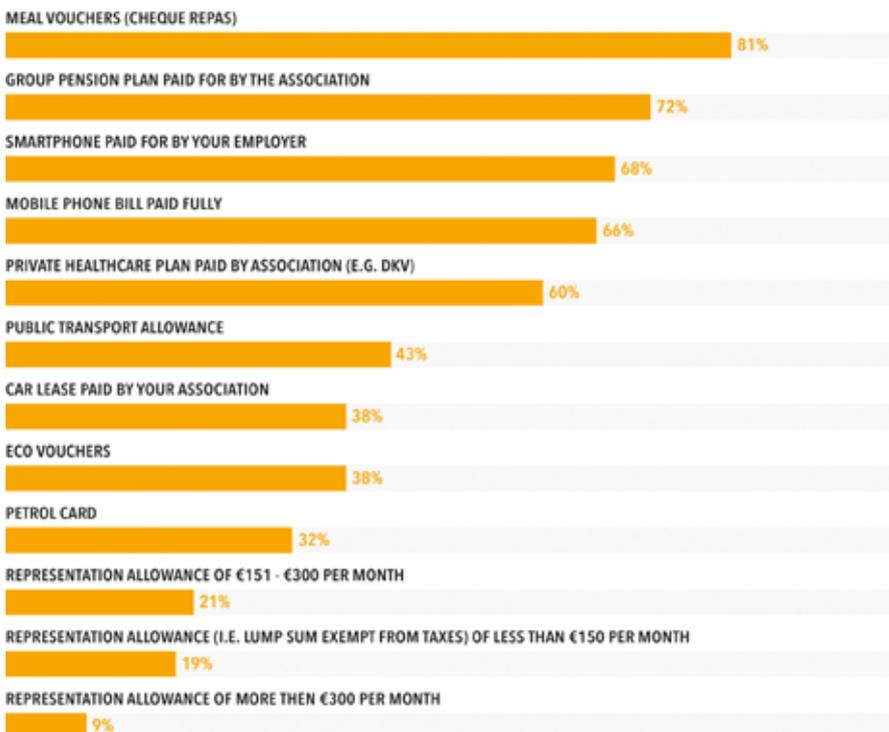
The report is dedicated to the 2,265 associations based in and around Brussels, which have a total estimated annual income of €2.9 billion and employ 13,400 people.

OVERALL HIGH SATISFACTION AMONG SENIOR STAFF

One key finding of their previous remuneration analysis was that salaries in Brussels vary enormously, which is found to be the case with associations across all levels of seniority this year. Notably, according to the 2017 study of senior staff in Brussels-based European associations, almost three-quarters reported being happy or very happy in their jobs. In their one-to-one interviews, tremendous satisfaction is reported amongst association leaders who benefit from more freedom to operate and long-term thinking in their working environments, especially compared to their corporate counterparts.

EU ASSOCIATION STAFF RELATIVELY WELL PAID IN BELGIUM

Overall, European association salaries are considerably higher than those found in the general Belgian economy, reflecting the premium paid for European affairs positions, which attract high-calibre staff from around the European Union. Although association staff are relatively well paid they are also highly taxed; data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development shows that Belgium has the highest income taxes in the developed world. Belgian taxation partly explains why associations do not tend to have a strong bonus culture. According to their research, almost half of secretariat staff receive no bonus whatsoever, and only about 15% receive more than a 10% annual bonus. However, a number of perks and benefits are available to association staff in Belgium, a practice that is not as common elsewhere. For instance, it's fairly common to reward senior employees with the free use of company cars with the free use of fuel due to their relatively favourable tax treatment.



The earning power of EU association leaders and staff While some Brussels DG (Director General) salaries may seem high, they are not the highest in the world. On a recent visit to meet their Washington DC headhunter associates at Lochlin Partners, Ellwood Atfield discovered that the average DG/CEO of a US trade association earns in excess of US \$650,000. Indeed, the US Chamber of Commerce CEO earns more than US \$6 million in base salary and bonus per year. DGs can also earn very high salaries in other European jurisdictions, especially when running international associations in Geneva. In the UK, Ellwood Atfield recently partnered with the Trade Association Forum to survey salaries from 102 trade associations that together employ 1,530 staff. According to the research, DGs in the UK typically earn £73,000 to £124,000 with a number earning up to £332,000 per annum excluding bonus. The detailed report is available on request. Whether salaried or independent, the DG of a European association earns on average €144,550 income per year, statistically speaking. Around one-quarter of DGs are employed as independent contractors, with the rest operating as salaried employees of the association.

Although around half of independent DGs earn €120,000 up to €210,000, over 40% of Independent DGs surveyed in the report earn €210,000 – €350,000 per annum, with a fortunate few earning more than €350,000.

Of the salaried employee DGs, just over a quarter earn less than €100,000, almost 40% earn €100,000 – €160,000, and just over 30% earn €160,000 to €300,000 with only a very few earning higher amounts. Salaried DGs enjoy the highest amounts of benefits with the majority having meal vouchers, group pension plans, smartphones, private healthcare, car leases and petrol cards.

According to the report, the majority of heads of policy or public affairs in trade associations are highly experienced, with almost 70% having between 10 and 20 years' work experience since leaving university. Around 85% are salaried employees and 15% are self-employed. Almost two-thirds of Heads of Policy earn under €100,000, while only around one-fifth earn €120,000 to €200,000, with a fortunate few earning higher amounts normally as independents.

Furthermore, 85% of policy officers in trade associations have less than 10 years' work experience, and nearly all are salaried employees. The vast majority of policy officers or public affairs managers earn less than €80,000 per annum. The average salary for this category is around €45,000 with around 40% earning less than €40,000 per annum.

WOMEN DOMINATE COMMUNICATION POSITIONS

Interestingly, around two-thirds of heads of communications are women, and the majority are highly experienced with over 15 years' of work experience. Around 70% earn less than €100,000 as a gross salary, and only 20% earn more than €120,000. Communication managers are less experienced, with around three quarters having less than 14 years' of experience. Salaries are much lower, with the vast majority earning less than €70,000 per annum. The overall average salary for communications managers is around €55,000.

However, money is only one of the many factors that affects one's overall job satisfaction. Other attributes should be addressed too, such as positive colleagues and bosses, work-life balance, job autonomy, career development opportunities, job security, and possibly even a higher purpose to what you do. European association jobs typically tick many of these boxes.

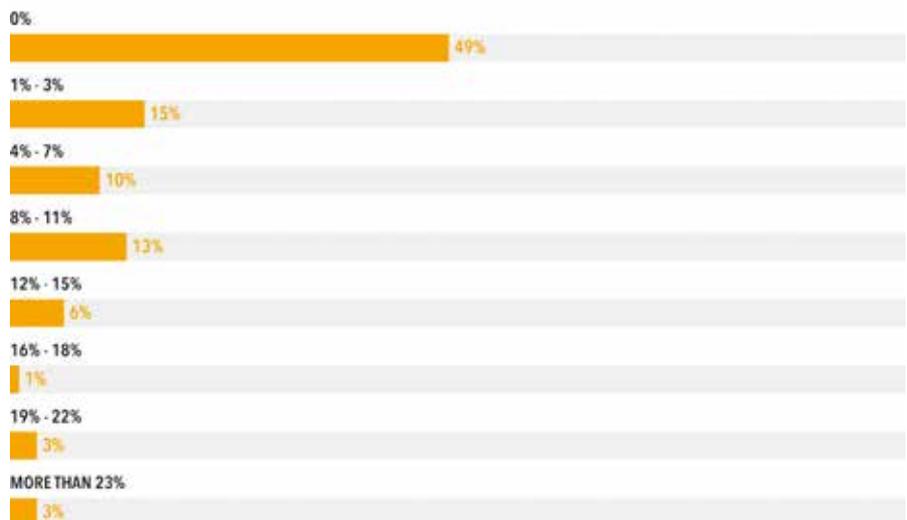


Adapted from a report by MARK DOBER, Senior Director of Ellwood Atfield.

A 28-PAGE REPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR FREE DOWNLOAD AT

[HTTP://ELLWOODATFIELD.EU/ASSOCIATION-REMUNERATION/](http://ellwoodatfield.eu/association-remuneration/)

ANNUAL BONUS AS % OF GROSS ANNUAL SALARY



ELLWOOD ATFIELD ASSOCIATION SURVEY QUESTION: HOW HAPPY ARE YOU IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE AT YOUR EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION?

