



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

LIFE

Directorate-General for Agriculture, Fisheries, Social Affairs and Health



“ *Make the most out of LIFE* ”

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OUR MISSION

DG LIFE is one of the seven political DGs of the General Secretariat of the Council. Our core business consists in assisting the Council and its preparatory bodies when carrying out legislative and non-legislative work in the areas under our competence.

As members of DG LIFE, we support **two Council formations** – ‘Agriculture and Fisheries’ (AGRIFISH) and ‘Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs’ (EPSCO). This leads us to deal with a number of very concrete **policy areas**: agriculture, fisheries, veterinary questions, plant health, food, forestry, employment, social policy and health.

Some of the topics we cover are particularly in the spotlight and subject to **public attention**. We have recently completed the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, which is the longest-serving Union policy and receives the highest share of the EU budget. We are at the core of the implementation of some of the most visible EU strategies, namely the European Green Deal and ‘Farm to Fork’. We follow closely the topic of food security, which has taken a prominent place at the core of the global debate following the invasion of Ukraine. Furthermore, we cover health and working conditions, which were not only crucial issues in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, but are also key for the wellbeing of citizens and society as a whole.

WHAT WE DO

To fulfil our mission, we provide logistic support and policy advice in the areas under our competence. Amongst other things, we contribute to the organisation of meetings, give advice to the Presidency on policy matters and assist it during the meetings of the Council and its preparatory bodies. In a nutshell: we are the main interlocutors of the **rotating presidencies and delegations** throughout the lifespan of a file and our role is to guide them through the Council's decision-making process and procedures, including protocol matters, thus ensuring the continuity of the work of the Council. At the same time, we also interact with the **other EU institutions** (particularly the Commission and the European Parliament) and have regular contacts with certain **agencies and international organisations**. In addition, we provide briefings and advice to the President of the European Council as needed.

We have four main areas of activity:

- We work on **legislative proposals** in the policy areas under our competence, irrespective of whether they are subject to the ordinary legislative procedure or to a special legislative procedure.
- We contribute to **shaping EU policy** via other activities such as the adoption of Council conclusions and recommendations, and we often interact with other DGs for cross-cutting matters such as the environment, climate change and fisheries.
- We deal with groups and meetings on **social dialogue** in the context of our support to the EPSCO Council.

- We support presidencies and Member States in a number of **international meetings** where it is key for the EU to present a cohesive position.

One specificity of DG LIFE is that we do not support only Coreper, but also the **Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA)**, which prepares the work of the AGRIFISH Council in matters related to the Common Agricultural Policy.



PROFILES AND SKILLS WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Working for a policy DG can be challenging but is highly rewarding. We look for colleagues with a **genuine interest** in the policy areas we deal with and with a clear **service orientation**, as we need to support a variety of stakeholders in the best possible way. Key qualities in our staff include dynamism, team attitude and flexibility, because we might need to deal with some unexpected circumstances even when we do our best to plan ahead and anticipate possible challenges. We welcome **specialists** in the matters covered by DG LIFE, as we can highly benefit from specific knowledge in these fields, as well as **generalist** colleagues who are eager to learn about new policy areas.

These are the main skills and qualifications we are looking for:

Political Administrators (AD)



SKILLS

- ▶ Able to work with a high level of independence / initiative
- ▶ Good attitude to team-working
- ▶ Able to provide high-quality work, including when under time pressure
- ▶ Able to work on multiple files in parallel
- ▶ Good drafting skills
- ▶ Keen sense of political dynamics
- ▶ Good communication, interpersonal and organisational skills



TASKS

- ▶ Assisting in drafting legislative texts, policy papers and EU positions
- ▶ Advising and working closely with the presidencies
- ▶ Drafting minutes, reports and replies to the European Parliament
- ▶ Analysing political files
- ▶ Writing briefing notes for Coreper/the SCA and the Council
- ▶ Preparing working party meetings and trilogues
- ▶ Communicating with internal and external parties



OTHER

- ▶ Experience with Council/EU procedures or a specific policy area is an asset

Coordination / Secretariats (SC/AST)



SKILLS

- ▶ Ability to work flexibly and methodically to provide effective coordination and support
- ▶ High level of quality standards
- ▶ Proactivity, strong sense of responsibility and adaptability
- ▶ Good organisational and IT skills
- ▶ Ability to work independently and in a team



TASKS

- ▶ Preparing documents for working parties, Coreper/the SCA and the Council
- ▶ Using IT tools (DocuWrite, Workflow, Agora, eConsilium, Outlook)
- ▶ Drawing up agendas
- ▶ Organising missions
- ▶ Requesting translation and legal/linguistic finalisation



OTHER

- ▶ Knowledge of the workings of Coreper/the SCA and the Council is an asset

WHAT WE OFFER

We are called DG LIFE because we deal with key policy areas that shape our lives: amongst others, the agricultural and fishery products we eat, the state of our forests, the well-being of animals, employment and health issues. We are a diverse team of around 65 professionals that brings together a mix of young and experienced colleagues, both specialists and generalists, some coming from other institutions.

Against this backdrop, we offer a **dynamic working environment** that allows you to get a **first-hand insight** into such topics and contribute to shape EU action in these domains. Working in DG LIFE also means having the opportunity to get a **wider perspective** of other policy areas that are directly related to the ones under our responsibility, particularly when the environment, climate change and food security are at stake. Contacts with other DGs are a daily reality, and cross-sector files are more and more frequent.

Work in DG LIFE is characterised by:

- the **diversity** of our file portfolio and of the activities that each of our teams deals with;
- the proximity of the policy areas and activities we cover to our everyday life (e.g. cross-border healthcare, working conditions, the safety of the food we eat, the sustainability of fisheries);
- the **international** aspects of the work, as we support the EU and its Member States in their work in a number of international committees and organisations (e.g. within the United Nations framework);
- the very good **team spirit** among staff and the positive collaboration between Directorates, facilitated by a cohesive structure and fairly small-sized teams.

WHAT DO OUR STAFF SAY ABOUT US

‘Working in DG LIFE means contributing to the European peace project by improving many practical aspects of EU citizens’ life. It means contributing to ensure for instance that high-quality food is produced in sufficient quantities at affordable prices, fish stocks are preserved, animals and plants are protected from diseases and pests, working conditions and social protection are improved, and citizens benefit from a high level of health protection.’

‘I joined the agriculture team of DG LIFE almost two years ago after having spent most of my working life dealing with agriculture at the Commission and in my native country. What I enjoy the most is the variety of topics and files we deal

with, ranging from food security to financial and budgetary questions. In addition, working closely with each presidency makes for an enriching cultural experience.’

‘Even when joining from a non-policy area of the house one can still find one’s way and start contributing meaningfully quite quickly due to the very thought-through portfolio allocation and pairing with more experienced colleagues. Furthermore, in our policy area we follow societal developments and can always picture the direct effect the policies we work on will have on people and their families. I find this very motivating, even on the busier days.’



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