



Comments of the European University Association (EUA) on the 'Public consultation on the draft statement of public service principles for EU civil servants'

The European University Association (EUA) represents 850 universities and 34 national rectors' conferences across Europe. EUA and many of its members have intensive working relations with European Union institutions, both through contribution to policy development and through active participation in EU funding programmes.

In this regard EUA welcomes the Ombudsman's initiative to launch a statement of public service principles for EU civil servants.

We find the concrete suggestion to propose and promote *Commitment to the European Union and its citizens, integrity, objectivity, respect for others and transparency* as the basic principles for the work ethos of any European civil servant very much appropriate.

While all of these are highly important and relevant, EUA would like to emphasis three of them:

1. *Commitment to the European Union and its citizens:* This is the most important principle in EUA's opinion, because sometimes the amount of work can make civil servants loose the focus that the Union's institutions exist in order to serve the interests of the Union and of its citizens.
2. *Objectivity:* Europe is based on diversity. Consequently, there are many different opinions on how to best serve the interests of the people. Therefore civil servants should be open-minded, guided by evidence, and willing to hear different viewpoints in order to come up with balanced and evidence-based proposals.
3. *Transparency:* As European regulations affect the daily lives of all European citizens, civil servants should be willing to explain their activities and to give reasons for their actions, as these are often not as straightforward or evident for the citizen.

EUA would like to declare its active support to this initiative and, once finalized, would be very much pleased to promote the principles among its member institutions.