



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY

The Director-General

Brussels  
HR/GI

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF ATHANASIOS KATSOGIANNIS  
CHAIR OF THE CENTRAL STAFF COMMITTEE**

**Subject: New EPSO competition model**

**Ref.: Your note Ares (2023)704508 of 31 January 2023**

I thank you for your note referred to in subject, whereby you shared the Central Staff Committee's (CCP) comments on the new EPSO competition model, which was on the agenda of the EPSO Management Board of 31 January 2023.

From the outset, I would like to assure you that DG HR fully shares your goal of ensuring that the high quality of the competition process is maintained and that the principles of fairness and equal treatment are respected throughout the competition and the recruitment stages.

I note that the issues raised by the CCP were discussed with the staff representation on the occasion of the information session which took place on 9 February 2023.

Firstly, and as you know, the review of the competition model is one of the main measures set out in the HR Strategy, in order to modernise and streamline the selection process.

Reflections on this topic had started several years ago and were set out in the report of an interinstitutional special working group, which was issued in 2019. The conclusions of a special report from the European Court of Auditors of 2020 were also taken into account during the process leading to the adoption of a new competition model.

Secondly, it should be stressed that the new competition model is fully in line with the provisions of Annex III to the Staff Regulations, as it will produce reserve lists with full legal effects, from which the institutions can then recruit laureates according to their specific needs and pursuant to their own recruitment procedures. The active and indispensable participation of staff representations in selection boards throughout the competition process and irrespective of the type of tests that will be organised according to the notices of competition, will continue to be ensured.

Thirdly, the fact that the assessment centre stage will no longer be part of the competition process is not expected to lead to a significant drop in the selectivity of the process. As already explained during the information session of 9 February 2023, open competitions for officials will remain highly selective and ensure that laureates of highest standards are made available to the institutions. Moreover, the fact that the new model will lead to longer reserve lists, possibly twice as long as at present, will not only be in full compliance with Article 5 of Annex III to the Staff Regulations, but will also allow for more diversity in the laureates' pool. That, coupled with the increased speed of the competition process will provide a better answer to the needs of services throughout our institution.

Fourthly, as you rightly point out, the adoption of a new competition model must be complemented by measures to strengthen our IT environment and that of EPSO, in order to support the selection and the recruitment process. DG HR remains committed to working towards finding the best alternatives to optimise the IT landscape.

I also take note of your concerns as regards the future role of permanent selection board members and, more generally, as regards the resources of EPSO.

As regards the first aspect, I can assure you that DG HR is fully committed to continuing the very fruitful collaboration with EPSO via the placing at disposal of permanent selection board members, the role of whom will, in our view, continue to be pivotal in order to ensure the consistency and quality of the competition process.

As regards the EPSO resources and the impact of the new model, and as discussed at the latest EPSO Management Board meeting, a thorough analysis will be carried out, taking into account the practical implementation aspects "on the ground".

Finally, I also share your view that the new competition model may also require additional measures to complete our recruitment processes, in order to ensure that they are efficient and also offer services the right tools to select the right candidate for the posts they have, while also ensuring the equal treatment of candidates. These measures will in any event be part of the reflections on our HR procedures, in line with the HR Strategy.

Various options are being considered at the moment as regards the recruitment stage, taking into account the in-house expertise in DG HR and the various inputs received from the HR Correspondents of different DGs. In this context, it should be remembered that recruitment interviews which assess a number of general competences already take place at the recruitment stage in all cases. It must be stressed however that the recruitment of laureates is in no way integrated into the competition process and it is based solely on Article 29(1)(c) of the Staff Regulation. The fact that EPSO is putting forward a series of services to assist the Institutions at the recruitment stage does not alter the distinct nature of recruitment compared to the competition process.

I take due note of the availability of the CCP to work together with DG HR in order to find the best practical solutions as we go forward with the implementation of the new competition model and, more generally, with the streamlining of our recruitment processes. I am looking forward to our continued constructive dialogue on all these important topics.

*[e-signed]*

Gertrud Ingestad

c.c.: Mr D. Müller, Cabinet Hahn  
Mr C. Levasseur, C. Roques, Ms D. Enjolras, Mr L. Duluc, DG HR  
Ms M. Vuorio, Mr M. Ohridski, EPSO  
College of the Chairs of Staff Committees  
Mr J.L. Stephany