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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN PERSONNEL SELECTION OFFICE (EPSO)

GENERAL RULES GOVERNING OPEN COMPETITIONS

(2009/C 47 A/01)

These general rules governing open competitions are an integral part of the notice of competition and candidates must read them carefully.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. WHAT IS A COMPETITION?

Open competitions are selection procedures organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) ⁽¹⁾ in order to draw up reserve lists from which the European institutions can recruit highly qualified personnel according to their requirements. The procedure is designed to guarantee equal treatment for all candidates wishing to join the European civil service.

In a competition, the selection board makes a comparative evaluation of each candidate's performance to assess their suitability for the duties described in the notice. Consequently, it is not merely a question of assessing candidates' knowledge but of identifying those who are best qualified.

1.2. WHAT IS THE GENERAL PROFILE SOUGHT BY THE INSTITUTIONS?

The institutions attach particular importance to candidates' ability to grasp problems that are often complex and varied in nature, to react rapidly to changing circumstances, and to communicate effectively. Candidates are expected to show initiative and imagination and to be highly motivated. They should be able to work both independently and in a team and should be able to adjust to a multicultural working environment. They will also be expected to develop their professional skills throughout their career. Recruitment aims to secure for the institution the services of officials of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity, recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among the citizens of the Member States of the European Union.

1.3. WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS?

The two responsible bodies involved in a competition are:

1. EPSO
2. the selection board.

1.3.1. EPSO

- adopts and publishes the competition notices;
- appoints the members of selection boards who are designated by the institutions;
- examines whether applications are admissible;
- examines whether candidates fulfil the general conditions laid down in the competition notice;
- provides administrative support for the selection board;
- is responsible for the admission tests,
- organises the admission and competition tests,
- corresponds with candidates,
- transmits the reserve lists to the institutions,
- manages the reserve lists on behalf of the institutions.

⁽¹⁾ Decision establishing the European Personnel Selection Office (OJ L 197, 26.7.2002).

1.3.2. THE SELECTION BOARD

A selection board is appointed for each competition. Its members are designated by the institutions and their staff committees in equal numbers. The chair and members are then appointed by the Director of EPSO ⁽²⁾. The selection board has the task of selecting the best candidates on the basis of the conditions laid down in the competition notice.

The selection board:

- examines whether candidates fulfil the specific conditions for eligibility,
- draws up the questions for the written, oral, and practical tests, depending on the type of competition,
- evaluates candidates' performance in the various competition tests,
- draws up the reserve list and transmits it to EPSO at the end of the competition.

The selection board can call upon advisory examiners to assist it in its task. However, they cannot act in place of the selection board; the board alone has the right to determine the marks awarded to candidates in the competition.

The names of the selection board members are published on the EPSO website before the oral tests.

The proceedings of the selection board are secret. To ensure the board's independence, any contact with its members, either direct or indirect, is strictly forbidden and may result in disqualification from the competition. All correspondence must be addressed solely to EPSO, which will forward it to the selection board if the matter comes within the board's remit.

1.4. HOW LONG DOES A COMPETITION TAKE?

The entire procedure for a competition takes around 12 months, depending on the type of competition and the number of candidates who apply.

1.5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The European Union welcomes diversity in the broadest sense. The European institutions apply an equal opportunities policy and recruit staff without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Special arrangements are made to allow candidates with a disability to take part in competitions on an equal footing with other candidates and, at a later stage, to facilitate the actual integration of successful candidates in their new working environment.

The institutions apply policies aimed at ensuring an even gender balance as far as possible.

2. HOW TO APPLY

1. Create your EPSO account.
2. Check that you fulfil the eligibility conditions.
3. Apply on-line before the prescribed deadline.
4. Send in your application file by the prescribed closing date.

⁽²⁾ Acting in his capacity as appointing authority.

2.1. CREATING AN EPSO ACCOUNT ⁽³⁾

2.1.1. WHAT IS AN EPSO ACCOUNT?

An EPSO account serves as an electronic interface between EPSO and anyone interested in a career in the European institutions. It is used for communicating with candidates, storing and updating their personal data, and keeping track of their applications in compliance with point 9.2 of these rules.

2.1.2. WHEN DO I HAVE TO CREATE AN EPSO ACCOUNT?

You have to create an EPSO account before you can submit an application. The only way to apply for a competition is via your EPSO account. You are advised not to wait for a specific competition to be published before creating an EPSO account if you are considering a career in the European institutions.

2.1.3. HOW DO I CREATE AN EPSO ACCOUNT?

You must have a valid e-mail address. This will serve as your login to access your EPSO account.

Just follow the instructions for creating an account on the EPSO website <http://www.eu-careers.eu/>

You are responsible for keeping your e-mail address and personal details up to date in your EPSO account.

2.2. CHECKING YOUR ELIGIBILITY

Before submitting an application, you should carefully check whether you fulfil all the conditions for eligibility — both general and specific. This implies that you must first carefully read the competition notice and these general rules and that you accept the terms set out in them.

Competition notices do not set any age limit, but please note the retirement age laid down in the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities (which you can find on the EPSO website).

2.3. ON-LINE APPLICATION

2.3.1. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

If you decide to apply for a competition, you must do so via your EPSO account and fill in the on-line application form ⁽⁴⁾ for the competition, following the instructions on the EPSO website concerning the various stages of the procedure.

It is your responsibility to complete your on-line application before the deadline. We strongly advise you not to wait until the last few days before applying, since heavy Internet traffic or a problem with the Internet connection could lead to your on-line session being interrupted before you complete your application, thereby obliging you to repeat the whole process. Once the deadline has passed, you will no longer be able to submit an on-line application.

Please also note that the application procedure itself can take quite some time because of the amount of information you have to fill in. The information requested mainly covers:

- your diplomas/qualifications: the field, the periods of study, the level of your studies, and the date(s) when you obtained the diploma(s),

⁽³⁾ The term appears in three languages on the EPSO website:
DE (German): EPSO-Konto,
EN (English): EPSO account,
FR (French): Compte EPSO.

⁽⁴⁾ Available only in English, French, and German.

- your professional experience (if required): name and address of your employer, the nature of the duties performed, and their starting and ending dates,
- your knowledge of languages,
- your reasons for applying (to be specified).

You are therefore strongly urged to collect all this information **before** embarking on the procedure.

You should also note that it is very important to fill in this information with great care and to ensure that it is correct, since it will be verified against the supporting documents, as specified in the competition notice.

Depending on the competition you have chosen, you may be offered the opportunity of taking an interactive test to enable you to assess the level required for the admission tests.

When applying on-line, the first time you save any data, you will be assigned a number. This will be your reference number in case of a technical problem during the application process. Once you have completed the application form, you have to submit it by entering your password. You will be informed on-screen if this is successful. Your reference number will become your definitive application number, and you must quote it in all subsequent correspondence. If the on-screen confirmation does not appear because of some technical problem, you can reconnect to your EPSO account at any time, where you will be informed whether your application has been properly registered.

You can make changes to your application or cancel it at any time up to the deadline. However, if you decide to make changes, you will have to resubmit it by re-entering your password. You will not be able to make any changes once the deadline has passed. **Please note that only the most recent information saved and confirmed using your password will be taken into account.**

You must notify EPSO of any technical problem as soon as possible, using the contact form available on the EPSO website.

2.3.2. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TESTS

2.3.2.1. WHEN YOU APPLY

If you have a disability or if your current condition might make it difficult for you to take part in the tests, you should tick the corresponding box on the on-line application form and indicate what arrangements you consider necessary to make it easier for you to take the tests.

Please send either a medical certificate, or a certificate issued by a recognised body attesting your disability (as the case may be):

- either by e-mail to: EPSO-accessibility@ec.europa.eu,
- or by fax to: **(+32)2 299 80 81**, indicating 'EPSO accessibility',
- or by post to the following address:

European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)
'EPSO accessibility'
C-80
BELGIUM 1049 Brussels

When doing so you must quote the number of the competition and your application number.

After examining the supporting documents, special arrangements to suit each case can be made in order (as far as possible) to satisfy requests that are judged to be reasonable.

2.3.2.2. AFTER APPLYING

If the condition referred to in point 2.3.2.1 develops after the closing date for on-line applications, you must inform EPSO as soon as possible. Please state in writing what arrangements you consider necessary and send the relevant supporting documents by e-mail, fax or post to EPSO (to the address given in point 2.3.2.1).

2.4. SENDING IN AN APPLICATION

Besides your on-line application, you must send us by post an application file comprising your printed on-line application form accompanied by documents proving that you fulfil the general and specific conditions laid down in the competition notice.

2.4.1. WHEN?

The timing is specified in the notice for the competition you have chosen. Depending on the competition, you must send in your application:

- either in parallel with your on-line application by the closing date specified in the competition notice,
- or after the admission tests — if you are one of the candidates requested to submit an application file — by the closing date notified to you via your EPSO account.

Documents sent after the closing date will be disregarded.

2.4.2. HOW?

1. Print out, from your EPSO account, the on-line application form you submitted.
2. **Sign it** in the appropriate box.
3. Attach all the supporting documents required (see point 2.4.4) after first numbering them.
4. Attach a numbered index of all the supporting documents enclosed with your file.
5. Send the complete file by registered post to the address indicated in the competition notice by the closing date (the postmark will serve as proof of the date of dispatch). Documents sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted, as your application must bear your original signature.

2.4.3. WHEN IS AN APPLICATION FILE COMPLETE?

Your application file is complete when all the following conditions are met:

1. **you have signed your application form:** by signing it, you declare on your honour that all the information given in the application form is truthful and complete (an original handwritten signature is therefore essential);
2. **the application file contains all the supporting documents required** (see point 2.4.4).

2.4.4. WHAT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS?

2.4.4.1. GENERAL REMARKS

You need only send uncertified photocopies of these documents. References to websites do not constitute supporting documents for these purposes. Printouts of web pages are not considered as valid supporting documents but may be enclosed **for the purpose of providing additional information**.

When completing your application form, you must not simply give references to previous applications submitted or other documents enclosed with such applications. None of the documents enclosed with your application will be returned.

Please note that if you are placed on the reserve list and offered a post, before you can be recruited, you will be required to produce the originals of all the requisite documents, in particular diplomas, so that they can be certified.

2.4.4.2. FOR THE GENERAL CONDITIONS

To prove that:

— **you hold the required citizenship:**

please enclose a copy of a document proving your citizenship (e.g. your passport, identity card or any other official document specifying your citizenship, **which must be valid on the closing date for on-line applications**).

No supporting documents are required at this stage to prove that:

— **you enjoy your full rights as a citizen,**

— **you have fulfilled any obligations imposed on you by the laws on military service,**

— **you meet the character requirements for the duties in question.**

By signing the application, you declare on your honour that you fulfil these conditions. **This is why it is essential that you sign your application form.**

2.4.4.3. FOR THE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

It is your responsibility to provide the selection board, by the closing date specified in the competition notice, with all the information and documents it needs in order to verify that you fulfil the conditions laid down in the notice. The selection board cannot be expected to do the research itself in order to verify whether candidates fulfil all the conditions laid down in the competition notice.

1. **Diplomas** and/or certificates attesting successful completion of studies. In the case of post-secondary diplomas, you are advised to include as detailed information as possible, in particular as regards what subjects you studied and for how long, so that the selection board can assess the relevance of your diploma for the duties in question. If you have followed technical or professional training, or attended a further training course or specialisation course, you should indicate whether it was full-time, part-time, or an evening class, what subjects were covered, and the official duration of your studies.

The selection board will allow for differences between education systems. The EPSO website gives examples of the minimum diplomas required for each category, but you should note that these are examples only — the competition notice may lay down stricter requirements.

2. **Professional experience** (if required in the competition notice)

It is important that you specify the nature of the duties you performed in as much detail as possible so that the selection board can assess the relevance of your experience for the duties for which you are applying. All the periods of professional activity concerned must be covered by the following supporting documents:

- references from former employers and your current employer attesting that you have the professional experience required for admission to the competition; these references must indicate the nature of the duties you performed, their starting and ending dates, and their level;
- if you cannot enclose references from employers, photocopies of your employment contract(s) and your first and last pay slips may be supplied in place of employers' references, but they must be accompanied by a detailed description of the duties performed;

- in the case of non-salaried work (e.g. self-employed, liberal professions), invoices or order forms detailing the work performed or any other relevant official supporting documents may be accepted as evidence.

2.4.4.4. FOR KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES (IF REQUIRED BY THE COMPETITION NOTICE)

In general, no supporting documents are required, except in the case of certain competitions for linguists (please refer to the competition notice). In these cases the competition notice will state that you must provide evidence of your knowledge of the languages required in the form of a diploma or a written note explaining how you acquired your knowledge of them.

3. COMMUNICATION

To ensure that all general texts and all communication between you and EPSO are clearly understood on both sides, only **English, French or German** will be used for the invitations to the various tests and correspondence between you and EPSO.

3.1. EPSO: COMMUNICATION WITH CANDIDATES

All invitations and correspondence will be sent to you solely via your EPSO account. You can access it by entering your login and the password you chose when creating your EPSO account.

It is up to you to consult your EPSO account at regular intervals — **at least twice a week** — to keep track of the progress of the competition and to check the information relevant to your application.

If you are unable to do this, you must notify EPSO immediately by (see point 3.2 below).

General information on the successive stages of competitions can be consulted on the EPSO website (<http://www.eu-careers.eu/>).

3.2. CANDIDATES: COMMUNICATION WITH EPSO

For all correspondence, you can write to EPSO using the contact form available on the website, but please check first that the information you want is not in the competition notice, or in this document, or on the EPSO website, or in the under 'Frequently Asked Questions' ⁽⁵⁾.

To simplify administrative processing, whenever you write to EPSO concerning an application, please quote **your full name as given on your application form, the competition number, and the application number you received when your on-line application was registered.**

4. ADMISSION TESTS

4.1. WHAT IS AN ADMISSION TEST AND WHO CAN TAKE ONE?

Where competitions require it, EPSO organises tests for admission to open competitions on the terms set out in the competition notice. These are computer-based tests. The marks you obtain in the tests determine whether you can be invited to the next stage in the procedure; but they are not added to the marks for the subsequent tests.

As a rule, the decision to invite you to the admission tests is taken on the basis of the information you gave in your on-line application rather than on the basis of supporting documents. Supporting documents are examined at a later stage, if you are one of the candidates considered for the next stage in the procedure.

You will take the admission tests in the language specified in the competition notice.

⁽⁵⁾ Under the heading 'FAQ' on the EPSO website.

4.2. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE?

You will be informed of the precise procedure for attending the tests via your EPSO account. The procedure normally involves a reservation period and a test period.

If you have applied before the deadline and complied with all the requirements, you will be invited, via your EPSO account, to reserve a date in advance during a given period indicated in the invitation. As a rule, you will be offered several possible dates and centres.

The admission tests are held in one or more centres in the European Union that specialise in this kind of test. You will be sent a list of centres in the letter inviting you to make a reservation.

For organisational reasons you will not be able to switch to another venue after the starting date of the tests.

The tests will be spread over a period that varies depending on the competition and the number of candidates who have applied. You will be given all the necessary information, in particular the duration of each test, via your EPSO account.

To familiarise you with the computer-based test procedure, a hyperlink to a tutorial and a practice test will be included in the letter of invitation.

The admission tests are marked by computer.

5. SCRUTINY OF APPLICATIONS

Scrutiny

1. Admissibility of applications
2. General conditions
3. Specific conditions

You should note that you must satisfy all the eligibility conditions, both general and specific, on the date laid down in the competition notice.

In most competitions, applications will be examined for compliance with the general and specific conditions after the admission tests, on the basis of the information contained in the on-line application forms submitted. After the written tests, compliance with the conditions will be verified on the basis of supporting documents. These checks will be carried out as specified in the competition notice.

For other competitions, applications will be examined for compliance with the conditions solely on the basis of supporting documents.

Please refer to the competition notice to find out what arrangements apply to the competition you have chosen.

If it is found at any stage in the procedure that the information given in your application form is false, you will be disqualified from the competition.

5.1. ADMISSIBILITY OF APPLICATION FILES

EPSO examines whether your application file is admissible. Only application files submitted by the prescribed closing date and in compliance with the requirements laid down in the competition notice will be taken into consideration.

5.2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL CONDITIONS

EPSO examines whether, **on the closing date for on-line applications**:

1. you hold the citizenship required in the competition notice;
2. you enjoy your full rights as a citizen;
3. you have fulfilled any obligations imposed on you by the laws on military service;
4. you meet the character requirements for the duties in question.

See also point 2.4.4.2.

5.3. COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

The selection board examines whether, **on the closing date for on-line applications**, you fulfil the specific conditions regarding:

- Diplomas,
- professional experience, if required by the competition notice,
- knowledge of languages, if required by the competition notice.

See also point 2.4.4.3.

Only applications that satisfy the general and specific conditions laid down in the competition notice will be taken into consideration.

6. COMPETITION TESTS

Competition tests

- written tests,
- practical tests,
- assessment centre tests,
- oral tests,
- optional tests.

After the admission test phase (if there is one), competitions involve one or more of the above types of tests. Please refer to the competition notice for details of which ones apply in the competition you have chosen, what they involve, and how they will be marked.

All the necessary information, in particular the duration of each test, will be sent to you via your EPSO account.

6.1. WRITTEN TESTS

6.1.1. PROCEDURE

The written tests will be held simultaneously at one or more centres in the European Union. You will be informed of the centres available via your EPSO account.

The date scheduled by EPSO for the written tests cannot be changed at your request. You will be notified of the date when you receive your invitation to the tests via your EPSO account.

Examples of previous written tests can be consulted on the EPSO website.

6.1.2. HOW ARE THE WRITTEN TESTS MARKED?

Tests are marked anonymously, without reference to candidates' names. Copies of the written tests are sent by EPSO to markers with a secret number, so that candidates' identity is not revealed.

Tests are normally marked by two markers to reduce the impact of subjective assessments. Markers receive a clean copy of the test and evaluate it using the same objective criteria for all candidates, which are laid down in advance by the selection board. The markers are bound to observe strict confidentiality. The selection board takes note of all the copies and the markers' evaluations, and after deliberation determines the final marks, still without knowing the identity of the candidates. It fills in an evaluation sheet for each candidate.

The selection board then sends the evaluation sheets to EPSO, which matches each secret number with the candidate's identity.

6.2. PRACTICAL TESTS

These depend on the nature of the duties in question. The details will be specified in the competition notice.

6.3. ASSESSMENT CENTRE TESTS

If the competition notice provides for tests organised in an assessment centre before the oral test, the selection board will be informed of the result of these tests solely with a view to helping it to reach a decision. The test(s) will not be marked and will be returned to you at the end of the oral test.

For organisational reasons, these tests and the oral test are normally held on consecutive days.

6.4. ORAL TESTS

Oral tests are normally held in Brussels or Luxembourg. Oral tests combined with assessment centre tests are normally held in Brussels.

In cases of *force majeure*, and by way of an exception, it may be possible to consider a request to change the date for an oral test on duly substantiated grounds, in the light of which the selection board can decide as it sees fit. However, any decision to postpone a test will bear in mind the need to ensure the uniform assessment of candidates' performance in the oral test and to guarantee the smooth running of the competition.

6.5. OPTIONAL TESTS

In some competitions, mainly competitions for linguists, optional tests may be organised if you are placed on the reserve list. The results of these tests do not affect the reserve list but serve to help the institutions target their recruitment better. You will be informed of the organisational arrangements for these tests via your EPSO account.

7. RESERVE LIST

Following the competition procedure, the selection board draws up a reserve list containing the names of the successful candidates. The list is then sent to the institutions; responsibility for recruitment rests solely with them.

The reserve list and its expiry date are published ⁽⁶⁾ in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and on the EPSO website. The validity of the list may be extended in some cases. The decision extending a list will be published only on the EPSO website.

8. RECRUITMENT

If your name is included on the reserve list, you may be invited by an institution for an interview, but this does not mean you have any right or guarantee of recruitment by an institution.

Under the Staff Regulations, recruitment depends on posts and funds becoming available.

If you are one of the successful candidates, you may initially be offered a temporary contract, depending on the nature of the post concerned. In this case, your name will remain on the reserve list.

For more detailed information on recruitment, please consult the EPSO website.

8.1. MEDICAL EXAMINATION

Before you are recruited, you will be asked to undergo the medical examination required by the Staff Regulations to check that you are fit to perform the duties in question.

8.2. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

If you are recruited as an official, you will have to successfully complete a nine-month probationary period before you can be established in your post.

8.3. TRANSFER TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION

Under the Staff Regulations officials can request a transfer to another institution or agency at any time during their career. However, you should note that, in the interests of the service, newly recruited officials during their first three years of service can be transferred only in exceptional and duly justified cases. Any such transfer is subject to the agreement of both the institution or agency that originally recruited the official and the institution or agency to which the official requests to be transferred.

8.4. PAY AND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

Information can be found on the EPSO website.

9. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Travel and subsistence expenses
2. Protection of personal data
3. Requests for information
4. Requests for review
5. Appeal procedures
6. Complaints to the European Ombudsman

⁽⁶⁾ A successful candidate may explicitly request that his/her name not be published. Any such request must reach EPSO no later than two weeks after candidates are notified of the results.

9.1. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

No allowance for travel or subsistence costs is paid in respect of admission tests.

If you are invited to the written and/or oral tests(s) for a competition, you may be granted an allowance towards your travel and subsistence expenses under certain conditions.

You will be informed of the rules and rates applicable, via your EPSO account, when you are invited to attend.

9.2. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

As the body responsible for organising the competition, EPSO ensures that applicants' personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (*Official Journal of the European Communities*, L 8 of 12 January 2001). This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

9.3. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Candidates involved in selection procedures have the specific right of access to certain information concerning them directly and individually, as described below.

EPSO may accordingly provide candidates who so request with supplementary information relating to their participation in the competition at their request. Candidates must submit such requests on-line within 10 calendar days of being notified of their results in the competition. Requests will be dealt with taking account of the confidential nature of selection board proceedings under the Staff Regulations (Annex III, Article 6) and in compliance with the rules on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data.

The information provided is described below.

9.3.1. COMPUTER-BASED ADMISSION TESTS

Given the nature of the computer-based tests, the information provided regarding your results will not give the wording of either the questions or answers but merely the references of the answers you chose and of the correct answers. This information is sent to all candidates when they are informed of their results.

Please note that the database of questions used for these tests is managed entirely by EPSO, which is responsible for the consistency and integrity of its content. EPSO is assisted in this by an interinstitutional advisory committee, whose tasks include, in particular, examining any comments or complaints by candidates on specific questions.

9.3.2. WRITTEN AND/OR PRACTICAL TESTS

If you do not pass the written/practical tests and/or if you are not one of the candidates invited to the oral test, you can request a copy of your original tests and a copy of the individual evaluation sheet ⁽⁷⁾ drawn up by the selection board. If you abandon a test, your written/practical tests will not be marked.

9.3.3. ORAL TESTS

After the selection board has drawn up the reserve list:

- if you are placed on the reserve list, you will be informed that you are a successful candidate and you can, on request, be given the marks you obtained in the various tests,

⁽⁷⁾ See also point 6.1.2 .

- if you are not on the reserve list, you will automatically be informed of your marks in the various tests. You can also obtain a copy of your written tests as specified in point 9.3.2. In the case of competitions published from 5 March 2009 onwards, you can also obtain, subject to the same conditions, a copy of the individual evaluation sheet drawn up by the selection board for your oral test.

9.4. REQUESTS FOR REVIEW

EPSO and competition selection boards operate within the context of the general principles of Community law as interpreted by the courts. In assessing candidates' merits, selection boards observe the principle of equal treatment.

If you nevertheless believe that one of these principles has not been applied in your case, you have the right, within 10 calendar days from the date when the letter notifying you of the decision was sent to you on-line, to request a review by sending a letter stating your reasons:

- either on-line, using the contact form published on the EPSO website,
- or by fax to the following number: (+32) 2297 96 11.

Please quote in the subject line of your letter:

- the competition number,
- your application number,
- 'Request for review' or 'demande de réexamen' or 'Antrag auf Überprüfung' (your choice)
- what stage of the competition ⁽⁸⁾ your complaint concerns.

EPSO will forward it to the chair of the selection board if it comes within the board's remit, and you will be sent a reply as soon as possible.

9.5. APPEAL PROCEDURES

If, at any stage of the competition, you consider that your interests have been prejudiced by a particular decision, you can take the following action:

- You can lodge an **administrative** complaint under Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities, at the following address:

European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)
Open competition EPSO/(quote the competition number)
C-80
BELGIUM 1049 Brussels

Please quote in the subject line of your letter:

- the competition number,
- your application number,
- 'Complaint under Article 90(2)' or 'reclamation article 90, §2' or 'Beschwerde Article 90, Absatz 2' (your choice),

⁽⁸⁾ For example, non-admission, admission tests, written tests, oral tests, etc.

- what stage of the competition ⁽⁸⁾ your complaint concerns.

Please note that the Director of EPSO ⁽⁹⁾ does not have the power to amend a selection board's decision. The wide discretion enjoyed by selection boards is not subject to review unless the rules which govern the proceedings of selection boards have clearly been infringed.

- You can submit a **judicial** appeal under Article 236 of the EC Treaty and Article 91 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities to the:

European Union Civil Service Tribunal
Boulevard Konrad Adenauer
LUXEMBOURG 2925
Luxembourg

For details of how to submit an appeal, please consult the website of the European Union Civil Service Tribunal: http://curia.europa.eu/en/instit/txtdocfr/index_tfp.htm.

The time limits for initiating these two types of procedure (see Staff Regulations as amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 723/2004 of 22 March 2004, published in *Official Journal of the European Union* L 124 of 27 April 2004 — <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>) start to run from the time you are notified of the act allegedly prejudicing your interests.

9.6. COMPLAINTS TO THE EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN

Like all citizens of the European Union, you can make a complaint to:

European Ombudsman
1 avenue du Président Robert Schuman
CS 30403
67001 Strasbourg Cedex
France
<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu>

Please note that complaints made to the Ombudsman have no suspensive effect on the period laid down in Articles 90(2) and 91 of the Staff Regulations for lodging complaints or for submitting appeals to the Civil Service Tribunal under Article 236 of the Treaty establishing the European Community. Please note also that, under Article 2(4) of the general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties, any complaint lodged with the Ombudsman must be preceded by the appropriate administrative approaches to the institutions and bodies concerned.

⁽⁹⁾ In his capacity as appointing authority.