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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN PERSONNEL SELECTION OFFICE (EPSO)

NOTICE OF OPEN COMPETITION

EPSO/AST/134/14

ASSISTANTS (AST 3) IN THE FIELD OF PARLIAMENTARY WORK

(2014/C 434 A/01)

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) is organising an open competition, based on qualifications and tests, to draw up a reserve list from which to fill vacant posts for officials as 'Assistants' (*) in the European Parliament.

Before applying, you should carefully read the General Rules governing open competitions published in Official Journal of the European Union C 60 A of 1 March 2014 and on the EPSO website.

These General Rules are an integral part of the competition notice and will help you to understand the rules governing the procedure and how to apply.

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(*) Any reference in this notice to a person of the male sex must be deemed also to constitute a reference to a person of the female sex.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. Number of successful candidates sought	30
2. How to apply	<p>You must apply online, following the instructions on the EPSO website and particularly on the online application manual.</p> <p>Deadline (including validation): 13 January 2015 at 12.00 (midday), Brussels time.</p>

II. DUTIES

The European Parliament (EP) is looking for experienced, multi-talented and highly motivated staff to work for one or more of the following sectors relating to parliamentary assistance:

A. ASSISTANCE IN PARLIAMENTARY WORK

- Assist Administrators in a Parliamentary Committee Secretariat: prepare, format and check official European Parliament (EP) documents (legislative files/reports, opinions, etc.) in accordance with current EP models and (internal) rules with the help of specific/in-house IT applications and tools/macros; send finalised documents for translation via the internal system of translation on demand and ensure the follow-up prior to publication onto the EP website (strictly plan and stick to translation deadlines as a means of fulfilling Parliament's policy on multilingualism).
- Receive amendments to legislative texts tabled by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) via the EP established-channels, check their conformity with the reception criteria and process them via a specific drafting tool, managing a specific macro to establish provisional voting lists.
- Assist the Head of the Parliamentary Committee Secretariat and Administrators in establishing timetables for the legislative dossiers handled by the Parliamentary Committee.
- Assist in planning and organising Committee/Delegation meetings (annual planning of meetings in accordance with other parliamentary activities as defined in the official EP calendar, drafting of agendas/orders of business, compiling dossiers for the Members to have at their disposal — in paper and via the Intranet channels — during the Committee meeting (e-Meeting/Paperless EP-related tools), etc.).
- Assist in overseeing and handling the administration and smooth running of: (1) Committee and Delegation meetings (liaise with other EP departments: scheduling, logistics, ushers, interpretation, technical equipment, records of attendance and minutes, etc.); (2) public hearings; (3) other Committee/Delegation events such as joint parliamentary meetings, informal meetings and trilogues involving interinstitutional actors in the context of ordinary legislative procedures and preparatory meetings at staff/technical level;

The above duties will occasionally require you to welcome experts, national authorities etc. (from EU and non-EU countries) who will take part as speakers in the Committee/Delegation meetings, hearings and other events and to ensure the reception of other invited visitors.

- Assist with the organisation of Parliamentary Committee/Delegation missions and other events outside the three places of work of the European Parliament (Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg).

- Keep electronic registers and files and circulate the appropriate documentation relating to (reasoned) opinions by national parliaments, implementing measures and delegated acts/comitology.

B. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

- Assist in drafting explanatory texts for the general public as well as for internal use in the form of keywords, headings, background notes, etc., in your first language and in English, French and/or German, and supplement textual information with multimedia components.
- Produce and finalise page layout (proofreading/checking language quality, compliance with standards, etc.) for document publication.
- Regularly update the Parliamentary Committee/Delegation or Unit website on the internet (Comparl) and Intranet (e-Committee).
- Draft the Parliamentary Committee/Delegation or Unit newsletter and regularly update the list of subscribers.
- Search other institutions'/agencies' websites for press releases and the Factiva press database.

C. CORRESPONDENCE AND MAIL MANAGEMENT

- Process the generic functional mailbox of the Committee/Delegation/Unit by acknowledging receipt of mail relating to legislative dossiers and to non-Plenary related activities carried out by the Committee/Delegation; update and file new mail in the electronic file;
- Produce and send, via the specific channels of the EP, standard internal letters and notes for the signature of a Committee Chair, of the President of the European Parliament and/or other governing bodies, as well as other standard correspondence (invitations to public hearings organised by the Committee, replies to citizens, etc.).

D. SUPPORT TASKS RELATING TO THE DAILY WORK OF A COMMITTEE/DELEGATION/UNIT SECRETARIAT

- Ensure the smooth daily running of the Committee/Delegation or Unit secretariat as regards practical arrangements and information flow to and from the secretariat.
- Assist management in an area or areas of functional and/or operational responsibility, assisting on various issues in order to facilitate decision-making.
- Follow all activities in the organisation structure, passing information up and down the hierarchy, facilitating interdepartmental relations and maintaining contact with staff.
- Provide administrative support where needed.

These duties will require you to liaise frequently with different services within your Directorate-General and with various departments of the European Parliament and other European institutions, with the parliamentary assistants, political groups' officers and with outside stakeholders.

The specific knowledge and skills in the various areas indicated above and the technical specifications for the European Parliament's IT environment and specific IT tools require good IT-literacy skills.

These duties may require travel away from Brussels on a monthly basis, namely to Strasbourg during the European Parliament's part-sessions.

III. ELIGIBILITY

On the closing date for online applications, you must fulfil all the following general and specific conditions:

1. General conditions

- (a) You must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union.
- (b) You must enjoy your full rights as a citizen.
- (c) You must have fulfilled any obligations imposed on you by the laws on military service.
- (d) You must meet the character requirements for the duties involved.

2. Specific conditions

2.1	<p>Qualifications and professional experience</p> <p>Post-secondary education attested by a diploma relevant to the nature of the duties, followed by at least three years' professional experience, at least two of which must be relevant to the nature of the duties.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education, followed by at least six years' professional experience, at least five of which must be relevant to the nature of the duties.</p>
2.2.	Knowledge of languages ⁽¹⁾
Language 1	<p>Main language (minimum required level: C1)</p> <p>A thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union.</p>

⁽¹⁾ See the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) — (<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Downloads/CEF/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid.csp>).

Language 2	<p>Second language, must be different from language 1 (minimum required level: B2)</p> <p>A satisfactory knowledge of English, French or German.</p> <p>In the light of the judgment given by the Court of Justice of the European Union (Grand Chamber) in Case C-566/10 P, Italy v Commission, the EU institutions wish to state the reasons for limiting the choice of the second language in this competition to a small number of official EU languages.</p> <p>Candidates are informed that the second language options in this competition have been defined in line with the interests of the service, which require new recruits to be immediately operational and capable of communicating effectively in their daily work. Otherwise the efficient functioning of the institutions could be severely impaired.</p> <p>It has long been the practice to use mainly English, French, and German for internal communication in the EU institutions and these are also the languages most often needed when communicating with the outside world and dealing with cases. Moreover, English, French, and German are the most common second languages in the European Union and the most widely studied as a second language. This confirms what is currently expected of candidates for European Union posts in terms of their level of education and professional skills, namely that they have a command of at least one of these languages. Consequently, in balancing the interests of the service and the abilities of candidates, and given the particular field of this competition, it is legitimate to organise tests in these three languages so as to ensure that all candidates are able to work in at least one of them, whatever their first official language. Assessing specific competencies in this way allows the institutions to evaluate candidates' ability to be immediately operational in an environment that closely matches the reality they would face on the job.</p> <p>For these same reasons, it is reasonable to limit the language of communication between candidates and the institution, including the language in which applications are to be drafted. Furthermore, this ensures uniformity when comparing candidates and checking their application forms.</p> <p>To ensure equal treatment for all candidates, everyone — including those whose first official language is one of the three — must take some tests in their second language, chosen from among these three.</p> <p>None of this affects the possibility of later language training to enable staff to work in a third language, as required under Article 45(2) of the Staff Regulations.</p>
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IV. ADMISSION TESTS

Computer-based admission tests are organised by EPSO only if the number of candidates exceeds a certain threshold. The threshold will be determined by the Director of EPSO, as the appointing authority, after the deadline for applications; you will be informed of the threshold via your EPSO account.

The selection board decides on the difficulty of the tests (described in the table below) and approves their subject matter on the basis of proposals made by EPSO.

1. Invitation	<p>You will be invited to sit the tests if you have validated your application on time (see Section I.2).</p> <p>NB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By validating your application you declare that you meet the general and specific conditions listed in Section III. 2. You must reserve a date to sit the tests. This must be done by the deadline notified to you via your EPSO account.
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2. Nature and marking of tests	A series of tests comprising multiple-choice questions to assess your reasoning skills:	
Test (a)	Verbal reasoning	Marking: out of 20 Pass mark: 10
Test (b)	Numerical reasoning	Marking: out of 10
Test (c)	Abstract reasoning	Marking: out of 10
		The aggregate pass mark for tests (b) and (c) is 10.
3. Language of the tests	Language 1	

If admission tests are not held, these reasoning tests will form part of the assessment centre (see Section VI.2).

V. ADMISSION TO THE COMPETITION AND SELECTION BASED ON QUALIFICATIONS

1. Procedure

Initially, checks for compliance with the general and specific conditions and the selection based on qualifications will be carried out on the basis of the information given in your online application.

- (a) Your answers to the questions concerning the general and specific conditions will be processed to determine whether you can be included in the list of candidates who fulfil all the conditions for admission to the competition (see Section III).
- (b) The selection board will then screen the candidates eligible for the competition on the basis of their qualifications to identify those whose profile (particularly their diplomas and professional experience) best matches the duties and selection criteria set out in this competition notice. Selection is carried out **solely** on the basis of the information given in the 'Talent Screener' tab, using the following marking scheme:
 - each selection criterion (see point (2)) is weighted between 1 and 3, according to how important the board considers it to be,
 - the selection board then examines candidates' answers and awards 0 to 4 points for each answer, according to the candidate's qualifications. The points are then multiplied by the weighting for each question and added together to give an overall score.

If prior admission tests are organised (see Section IV), compliance with the general and specific conditions will be checked in descending order of the marks obtained, until the number of candidates who:

- have passed the admission tests with the highest marks, and***
- satisfy the eligibility conditions,***

reaches the threshold defined by the appointing authority ⁽²⁾.

Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be included in the selection phase based on qualifications (see (a) and (b) above). Online applications of candidates below the threshold will not be examined.

The selection board will then draw up a list of candidates in the order of the overall scores awarded. The number of candidates invited to the assessment centre ⁽³⁾, will not exceed **3 times** the number of successful candidates sought ⁽⁴⁾. This number will be published on EPSO's website (<http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eu-careers.info/>).

2. Selection criteria

For the selection based on qualifications, the following criteria will be taken into consideration by the selection board:

1. professional experience in the production, review or quality control of documents or texts to ensure the correct application of formats or internal rules for their subsequent publication on official online channels or distribution during official meetings;
2. professional experience in planning or organising meetings or events in an international or multilingual context (either EU or non-EU) involving contacts and coordination with different actors or services;
3. professional experience in organising business trips abroad for a manager or director or for a group of colleagues, including budgetary forecast or commitment of expenditures;
4. professional experience in assisting management in the fulfilment of their functional or operational responsibility or role in order to facilitate decision-making;
5. professional experience in compiling information extracted from different sources or documents or summarising the information flow within a Unit or Division or Department;
6. Professional experience in drafting explanatory texts, short summaries, etc. in your first language and in English, French or German aimed at different audiences (for example: internal briefings to hierarchy, online diffusion, etc.);
7. professional experience in training or giving technical advice to new staff or relaying guidelines, instructions or information in your area of responsibility;
8. professional experience in organising or administering a department's archive (paper or electronic);
9. professional experience in drafting notes or letters related to a department's activities (this professional experience must be different from that requested under points 5 and 6).

⁽²⁾ This is the threshold referred to in the first paragraph of Section IV.

⁽³⁾ Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be invited to the assessment centre.

⁽⁴⁾ Candidates who are not invited to the assessment centre will be sent the results of their assessment and the weighting applied by the selection board to each question.

VI. ASSESSMENT CENTRE

1. Invitation	<p>If you are one of the candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — who, according to the information given in the online application, fulfils the general and specific conditions listed in Section III, <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — who obtained one of the highest marks in the selection based on qualifications, you will be invited to the assessment centre which will normally be held in Brussels over the course of one or two days ⁽⁵⁾. <p>If you are invited to the assessment centre, you must bring your full application file including all supporting documents of your qualifications and professional experience with you when you attend ⁽⁶⁾.</p> <p>Procedure: See point 2.1.7 of the General Rules governing open competitions.</p>
2. Assessment centre	<p>You will sit three types of assessment tests, the content of which is validated by the selection board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Your reasoning ability (if not already assessed in admission tests) will be assessed by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a verbal reasoning test; (b) a numerical reasoning test; (c) an abstract reasoning test. — Your specific competencies will be assessed by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) a structured interview on your competencies in the field, <i>based on the information given in the 'Talent Screener' tab of your application.</i> — Your general competencies ⁽⁷⁾ will be assessed by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) a case study; (f) a group exercise; (g) a structured interview.

Each general competency will be tested as follows:

	Case study	Group exercise	Structured interview
Analysis and problem-solving	x	x	
Communicating	x		x
Delivering quality and results	x		x
Learning and development		x	x
Prioritising and organising	x	x	
Resilience		x	x
Working with others		x	x

⁽⁵⁾ Organisational constraints may make it necessary to hold the reasoning tests in centres in the Member States, separately from the other assessment centre tests.

⁽⁶⁾ You will be notified in good time, via your EPSO account, of the date when you have to attend the assessment centre.

⁽⁷⁾ More information on these competencies can be found in point 1.2 of the General Rules governing Open Competitions.

3. Language for the assessment centre	Language 1 for tests (a), (b) and (c) Language 2 for parts (d), (e), (f) and (g)
4. Marking and weighting	<p>Reasoning ability</p> <p>(a) Verbal: marked out of 20 Pass mark: 10</p> <p>(b) Numerical: marked out of 10</p> <p>(c) Abstract: marked out of 10 Aggregate pass mark for tests (b) and (c): 10</p> <p>Tests (a), (b), and (c) are eliminatory, but the marks will not be added to the marks of the other assessment centre tests.</p> <p>Specific competencies (part (d))</p> <p>Structured interview on your competencies in the field: Marked out of 100 Pass mark: 50</p> <p>Weighting: 50 % of the overall mark</p> <p>General competencies (parts (e), (f) and (g))</p> <p>Marked out of 10 for each general competency Pass mark: 3 for each competency and an aggregate of 35 out of 70 for all 7 general competencies</p> <p>Weighting: 50 % of the overall mark</p>

VII. VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION GIVEN BY CANDIDATES

Following the assessment centre tests, and in the light of the results, the information given by candidates in their online applications will be verified against the supporting documents they have provided; this will be done by EPSO for the general conditions, and by the selection board for the specific conditions.

The applications of candidates who have passed parts (d), (e), (f), and (g) with the highest aggregate marks will be verified in descending order of merit. Those candidates must also have obtained pass marks in tests (a), (b), and (c), where applicable. Verification will continue until the number of candidates who can be placed on the reserve list and who are actually eligible reaches the threshold. The files of candidates below the threshold will not be examined.

In assessing qualifications, supporting documents will be taken into account only to confirm the information already given in the 'Talent Screener' tab. If verification shows that the information given is not borne out by the appropriate supporting documents, candidates will be disqualified.

VIII. RESERVE LIST

1. Candidates placed on the reserve list	The selection board will place your name on the reserve list: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— if you have passed parts (a) to (g) with one of the highest aggregate marks in parts (d), (e), (f) and (g) (see number of successful candidates sought, Section I.1) ⁽⁸⁾,— and if your supporting documents show that you meet all the eligibility requirements (see Section III).
2. Classification	The list will be drawn up in alphabetical order.

⁽⁸⁾ Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be placed on the reserve list.