



Brussels, 15 May 2023

**Note for the attention of Ms Gertrud INGESTAD,
Director General DG HR**

Subject: EPSO

On 29 March 2023, **EPSO's Director, with the support of the EPSO Management Board**, took the decision to cancel Competition EPSO/AST/154/22 – Assistants (AST3), Accounting, Finance and Communication.

The Common Front and the Central Staff Committee (CSC/CCP) alerted you and the EPSO director in December 2022 and January 2023 (15/12/2022 and 25/01/2023) about the problems experienced in both the remote testing ('remote proctoring') and in the first phase of the selection in this competition, based on feedback received by candidates. We highlighted particular issues with the instructions given by the contractor and with personal data processing.

The answer of EPSO's director (on January 17) was clearly to continue with this competition under the same conditions and to consider lessons learnt only for future competitions.

However, in the candidate letter informing about the cancellation of competition EPSO/AST/154/22, EPSO's Director explains that the decision was reached *"after a careful analysis, taking into consideration a number of accumulated difficulties surrounding the first phase of selection, in particular as regards the implementation of remotely proctored tests, including technical dysfunctions and data protection concerns. These difficulties compromised the expected overall standard of quality and the principle of equal treatment of the competition"*.

Moreover, EPSO's Director points out that the present decision about competition EPSO/AST/154/22 does not affect any other ongoing competitions without indicating what changes (if any) have been brought in to avoid the same problems in the future.

The Common Front considers that the decision to cancel the EPSO/AST/154/22 came too late. This decision was taken without considering either the impact on thousands of candidates, nor the substantial financial loss of cancelling the whole competition (some EUR 300 000). More specifically, those candidates who passed the preliminary tests acquired a legitimate expectation to carry on with the competition. At the same time, while financial resources are scarce, the Commission wastes so much money instead of using it, for example, to invest in existing staff e.g., to reclassify more contract agents.

Therefore, with respect for **all candidates**, the Common Front proposes to suspend all ongoing competitions and CAST, which are running under the same model that you currently recognise as unsatisfactory. At the same time, we ask you to reconsider the conditions applied to remote testing.

In view of the experience of the competition EPSO/AST/154/22, the Common Front requests that you organise a social dialogue to discuss how to ensure the principle of equal treatment for future competitions and CAST, including the ongoing EPSO/AST/155/22.

In particular, we would like to discuss, non-exhaustively:

- the list of remote-testing actions taken following the case of EPSO/AST/154/22 to avoid a reoccurrence with EPSO/AST/155/22.
- putting on hold new competitions based on the remote-testing model that have proven to be inefficient.
- about the pilot testing of new remote testing procedures before competitions with a smaller number of candidates (volunteers).
- reviewing of the new EPSO model that is supposed to be setup as from September 2023 including its second stage (recruitment) in the European Commission.
- possibly discussing the potential political liability.

The Common Front

C. Sebastiani / R. Trujillo, Alliance
E. Lieber, Generation 2004
N. Mavraganis, USF
G. Vlandas / H. Conefrey, RS- U4U/USHU

Copy:

M. C. Roques, Deputy Director-General HR
M. C. Levasseur, Director HR. B, Recruitment & Mobility
Ms M. Vuorio, Director EPSO
The Staff