

A career at the EU institutions



March 2020

Please check the EPSO website for COVID-19 related updates:

<https://epso.europa.eu/>



DISCLAIMER

This presentation reflects my personal views as a Commission official. I am not representing the Commission, nor its DG HR or EPSO, in an official capacity.

Agenda

I. Introduction

II. Focus on permanent positions

III. Focus on traineeships

IV. Useful links

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III. Focus on traineeships

IV. Useful links

Where can an EU career lead you?

Centralised recruitment process via European Personnel Selection Office ([EPSO](#))



[European Commission](#)



[European Parliament](#)



[Council of the EU /
European Council](#)



[Court of Justice
of the EU](#)



[European External
Action Service \(EEAS\)](#)



[Committee of the
Regions](#)



[European
Ombudsman](#)



[European Data
Protection
Supervisor](#)



[European Court of
Auditors](#)



[European
Economic and
Social Committee](#)

Own
recruitment
process



[European Central
Bank / Banking
Supervision](#)



[European
Investment Bank](#)



[European
Investment Fund](#)

[EU agencies &
decentralised
bodies](#)

Which profiles do EU institutions need?



Law



European Public Administration



Languages



Communication



Audit



External relations



Information technology



Economics & statistics



Support staff



Finance



And many other profiles...

What does an EU career offer?

Interesting &
challenging work

International
working
environment

Travel

Training &
development

Work-life balance

Job mobility

Competitive
remuneration

Social benefits

Contribute to
European
integration

Who are EU institutions looking for?

Eligibility criteria

EU citizenship

(except for traineeships)

Proficiency in at least
two official EU
languages

Graduates &
non-graduates

General competencies

Analysis & problem-
solving

Delivering quality &
results

Communicating

Learning &
development

Prioritising &
organising

Working with others

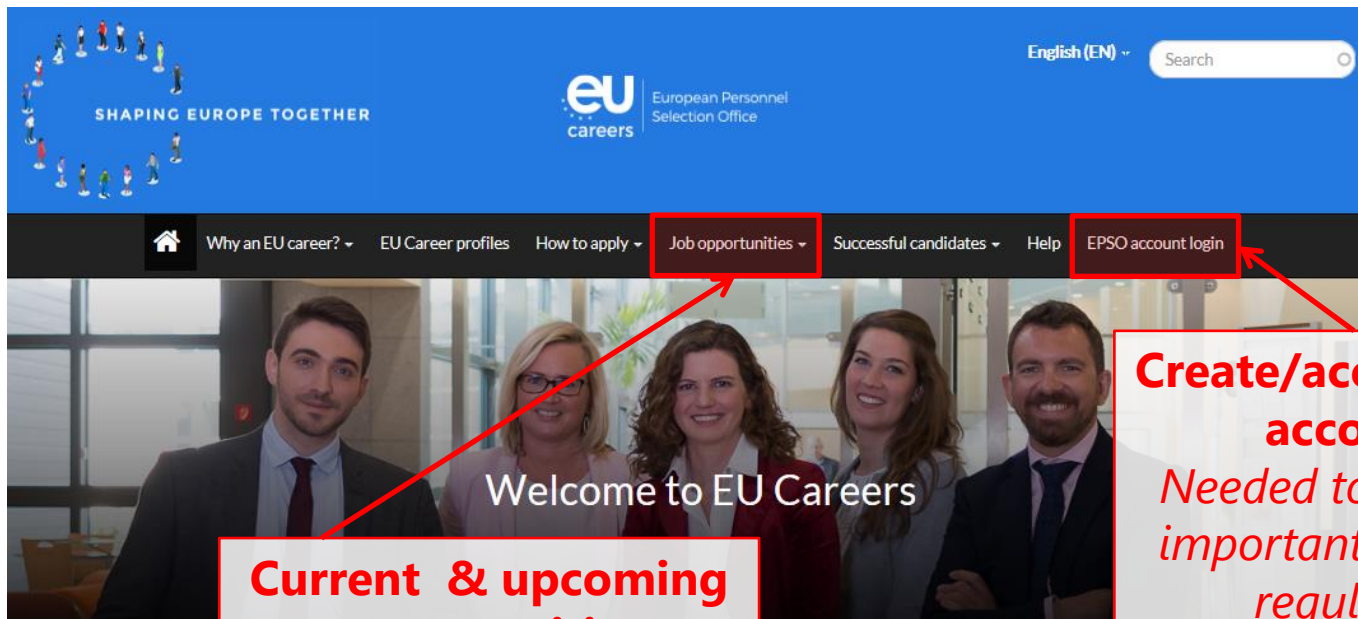
Resilience

Leadership

Finding information on opportunities

EPSO website & EPSO account

<https://epso.europa.eu/>



IT specialists



The European Commission is looking for IT specialists to work as temporary agents mainly in Luxembourg.

News
Computer-based booking system unavailable Post date: 07/02/2020 - 17:23
Disclaimer - Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU on 31 January 2020 Post date: 03/02/2020 - 09:34
Computer-based tests in China Post date: 31/01/2020 - 09:30
See all

Which contracts does the EU offer? (1/2)

Permanent officials

See part II of this presentation

Type of contract

- Permanent contract in a variety of fields
- Three function groups: AD, AST, AST/SC

Selection procedure

- Open competition (on basis of “Notice of Competition”) run by [EPSO](#)

Function group “Administrators (AD)”

- Engaged in policy formulation, EU law implementation, analytical and advisory work, and translation/interpretation
- Grades: AD5 - AD16
- Entry level:
 - AD5 (at least 3 years of completed university studies attested by a diploma; basic gross salary: ca. 4,900 EUR / month)
 - AD6/AD7 (similar to AD5 + work experience; for specialist profiles)

Function group “Assistants (AST)”

- Typically play an executive and technical role
- Grades: AST1 - AST11
- Entry levels:
 - AST1 (at least post-secondary non-university studies)
 - AST3 (at least short university course of 2 years)

Function group “Assistant-secretaries (AST/SC)”

Which contracts does the EU offer? (2/2)

Trainees

See part III of this presentation

Type of contract

- Contract of 3-18 months (in most cases: 5 months) in a variety of fields
- Most traineeships are remunerated (ca. 1 000 – 1 200 EUR / month)

Selection procedure

- Specific procedure for each EU institution ([overview](#))
-

Contract staff (CAST)

Type of contract

- Fixed-term contract (up to 6 years within one EU institution)
- Four function groups (FG): I, II, III, IV (increasing qualifications)

Selection procedure

- Advertised on the basis of a “Call for Expression of Interest” run by [EPSO](#)
 - Several “CAST Permanent” opportunities
 - Spontaneously via [EU CV Online](#)
-

Temporary & interim staff

Type of contract

- Fixed-term contract in a variety of fields

Selection procedure for temporary staff

- Specific procedure for each EU institution
- Spontaneously via [EU CV Online](#)

Selection procedure for interim staff

- Through temp agencies ([overview](#))

Agenda

I. Introduction

II. Focus on permanent positions

III. Focus on traineeships

IV. Useful links

Applying for permanent positions

Open competitions: introduction

- A series of competitive examinations, open to all EU citizens (who meet the specific requirements of the open competition in question)
- Organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)
- Typically several open competitions per year
 - Spring: graduate profiles / administrators (AD) (e.g. public administration, law, economics, audit, ...)
 - Summer: linguist profiles (translators, conference interpreters, ...)
 - Winter: non-graduate profiles / assistants (AST)
 - When needed: specialist profiles
- Open competitions are the only way through which you can apply to permanent positions at most EU institutions

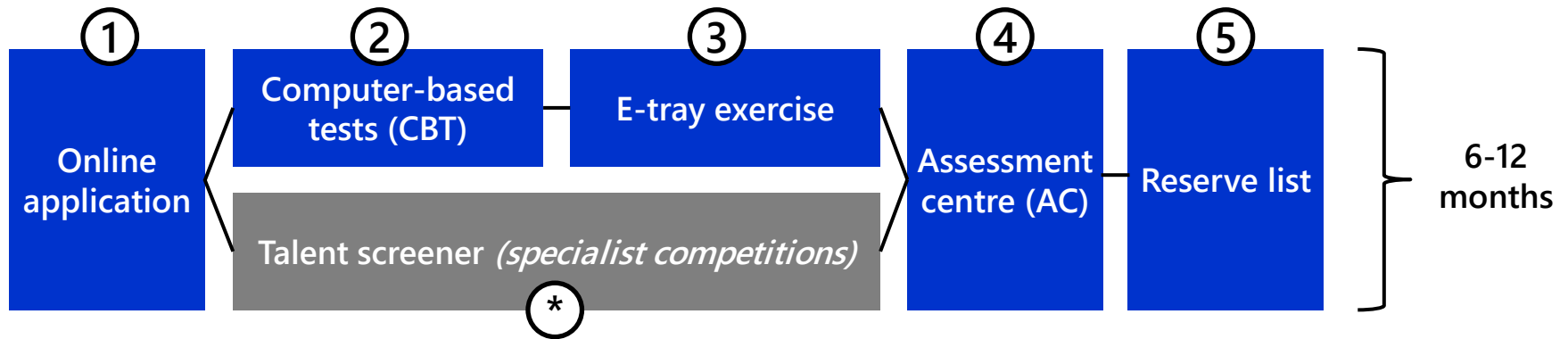
Applying for permanent positions

Open competitions: key documents

- "Notice of Competition" ([example](#)) contains all information specifically for the competition you selected
 - Function group, fields of expertise (if any) and grade
 - Deadline for registration
 - Envisaged number of laureates for reserve list
 - General and specific eligibility conditions
 - Phases of the competition and how general competencies are tested
 - Annex with "General rules governing Open Competitions"
 - General principles on open competitions
 - List of general competencies sought
 - Definition of general and specific eligibility requirements
 - How to apply and the subsequent possible phases in open competitions
 - Communication modalities and complaints procedure
- Your [EPSO account](#)

Applying for permanent positions

Phases & duration of an open competition



Example – 2017 Administrators (AD5) competition:

Phase	Deadline/period	# of candidates
① Deadline online application	31-05-2017	23 716
② CBT	07-06-2017 – 25-07-2017	-
③ E-tray exercise	03-10-2017 – 20-10-2017	2 218
④ Assessment centre: written case study	Mid-Dec. 2017 – 26-01-2018	251
Assessment centre: other tests	15-01-2018 – 22-02-2018	-
⑤ Publication reserve list	17-05-2018	126

Applying for permanent positions

(1) Online application

- **Apply to an open competition via EPSO account**
 - Complete non-eliminatory questionnaire “EU Career, My Career”
 - Complete non-eliminatory self-assessment tests (typically verbal/numerical/abstract reasoning and situational judgement)
 - Complete actual application with information on knowledge of languages, diplomas, experience, motivation, and specific skills and qualifications
 - Choose two test languages (from 24 official EU languages)
 - Language 1: typically only used for computer-based preselection test
 - Language 2: typically used for all other tests (constraints may be imposed)
 - Validate your application before the deadline indicated in the Notice of Competition
 - Do not wait until the last day!
- **After validation, check EPSO account at least twice a week (e.g. for test dates/locations or your test results)**
 - EPSO does not inform you proactively via e-mail of new messages!

Applying for permanent positions

(2) Pre-selection: computer-based tests (CBT)

- Initial “elimination round” to select the applicants which are admitted to the next phase
- It is the most selective phase – preparation is key!
 - Books (e.g. [“The Ultimate EU Test Book”](#))
 - Online (e.g. [“EU Training”](#))

Where?	Type of tests	Language	Result
A test centre in or outside the EU	Verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning	Language 1 <i>(see slide 15)</i>	Applicants with the highest scores move on to the next phase, provided that their application meets the eligibility requirements
	Situational judgement (sometimes)	Typically language 2 <i>(see slide 15)</i>	

Applying for permanent positions

CBT example: verbal reasoning

Human genetic testing: implications and recommendations

Although genetic testing in Europe is based on high-quality scientific know-how, it can suffer from a certain level of technical errors. Moreover, the reporting on these tests is sometimes of poor quality. In the context of healthcare, a test should only be offered when it has been proven to be reliable and when there is a sound medical reason to justify it. A test validation system should therefore be established. Public concern regarding genetic testing revolves around the fear of misuse of genetic data and inappropriate access to such data by third parties. The confidentiality and privacy of all personal medical data, including information derived from genetic testing, is a basic right that must be respected. The individual has the right to know about test results, but also has the right to decide not to know.

What is the present situation as regards genetic testing?

- A. Testing is frequently carried out without a valid medical prescription.
- B. Scientists have the right to decide whether or not to divulge the results.
- C. The reporting of genetic data is always of a poor standard.
- D. Despite the expertise in the area, reporting is not always perfect.

Possible setup:

Number of questions: 20

Time allowed: 35 minutes

Pass mark: 5/10

Applying for permanent positions

CBT example: numerical reasoning

Road density in EU-15 (km per 1 000 km²) (2000)

	EU-15	Country A	Country B	Country C	Country D	Country E
1980	340	180	360	90	216	120
2000	390	195	450	120	270	130

On average, by how much was the road density in countries A and B higher than in countries D and E in 1980?

- A. 102 km/1 000 km²
- B. 122.5 km/1 000 km²
- C. 204 km/1 000 km²
- D. 276 km/1 000 km²

Possible setup:

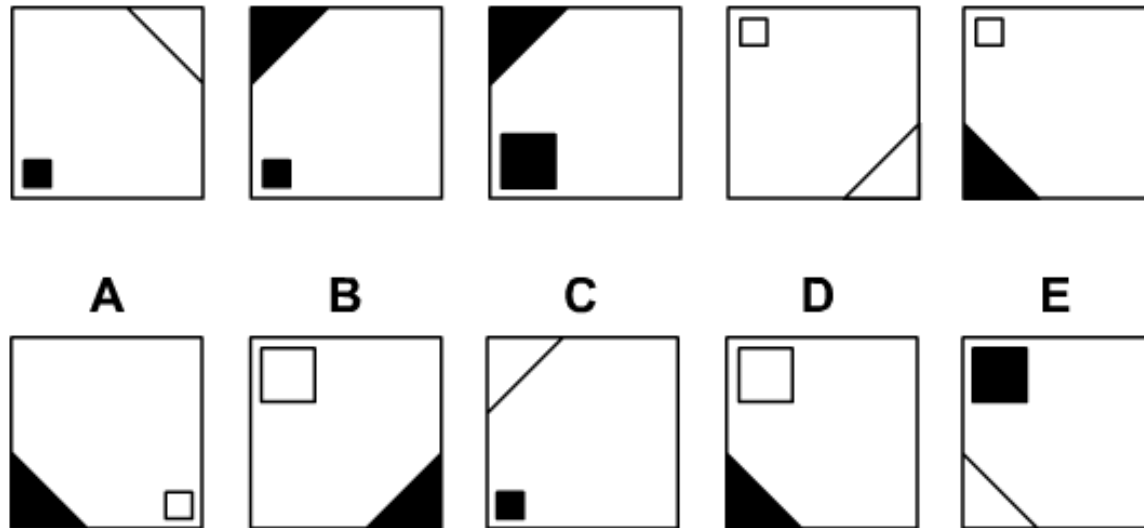
Number of questions: 10

Time allowed: 20 minutes

Pass mark: 5/10

Applying for permanent positions

CBT example: abstract reasoning



Possible setup:

Number of questions: 20

Time allowed: 20 minutes

Pass mark: 10/20

Applying for permanent positions

(3) Intermediate test: e-tray exercise

- Intermediary phase
- Tests the following general competencies:
 - Analysis and problem-solving
 - Delivering quality and results
 - Prioritising and organising
 - Working with others
- 10-11x targeted number of laureates invited to this phase

Where?	Type of tests	Language	Result
A test centre in or outside the EU	Computer-based test in which you are asked to answer a number of questions using the documentation provided in an e-mail inbox	Typically language 2 (see slide 15)	Applicants with the highest scores move on to the next phase, provided that their application meets the eligibility requirements

Applying for permanent positions

E-tray example

From: Aaren Sutton, Secretariat of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, EP
 To: Your name, Secretariat of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, EP
 Date: 10/10/201X
 Subject: Integrated proposal



Dear (Your name),

On 7 December 201X-1, the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council to set emission performance standards for new passenger cars. This initiative forms part of the EU's integrated approach to reducing CO₂ emissions from light-duty vehicles.

The first reading has been completed and now I have to collect the opinions of the different stakeholders in order to propose a compromise solution to our Head of Unit at a meeting on 27 October 201X.

However, after today, I will be out of the office for the next two months (for medical reasons) and therefore will be unable to attend the meeting with our Head of Unit myself. Could you go in my place?

As a first step, I have asked Giuseppe Caligiuri from the Council to meet you in order to brief you thoroughly on the Council's position on the Commission's proposal.

Thank you for your flexibility.

Kind regards,
 Aaren Sutton

From: Giuseppe Caligiuri, Council
 To: Aaren Sutton, Secretariat of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, EP
 Date: 10/10/201X
 Subject: Council position on Commission proposal 749



Dear Ms Sutton,

My apologies, but I am afraid that, starting tomorrow, I will be out of the office until 29 October 201X, which means I will not be able to meet you or your colleague in the next two weeks to give you a full overview of the Council's position regarding the Commission's proposal. However, to ensure you have some information to work with, I have briefly summarised our position on the main points of the proposal:

- Phase-in: 60 % of the vehicle fleet to reach 130 g CO₂/km in 201X+4, 75 % in 201X+5, 85 % in 201X+6 and 100 % from 201X+7 on.
- Long-term targets: Review in 201X+5 to reach a long-term target close to 95 g CO₂/km in 201X+12.
- Specific emission targets: we propose the same targets as the Commission proposes: targets should be based on vehicle mass.
- Penalties. Until 201X+7, penalties will be based on deviation from 130 g CO₂ as follows: penalty per exceeded gram will be €25 for any deviation of up to 3 grams; €40 for deviations of up to 6 grams and €80 for deviations exceeding 6 grams. From 201X+7, the rate per gram exceeded will be €25 for a deviation of up to 3 grams and €95 for any deviation exceeding 3 grams.

I hope this provides you with some of the information you need to propose a compromise solution. We can arrange a meeting when I am back from holiday if you have any further questions.

Kind regards,
 Giuseppe Caligiuri

Example

How do you deal with the problem of the limited information you received from Mr Caligiuri? Rate the following actions on a scale ranging from totally disagree (--) to totally agree (++)

A.	When taking account of the Council's point of view in my compromise proposal, I use only to the information I received from Mr Caligiuri, as it is sufficiently specific.	--	-	-/+	+	++
B.	I ask Mr Caligiuri if any of his colleagues could provide me with a more in-depth briefing.	--	-	-/+	+	++
C.	I ask Mr Caligiuri for more documentation, just in case the Council's proposal conflicts with those of the other stakeholders.	--	-	-/+	+	++

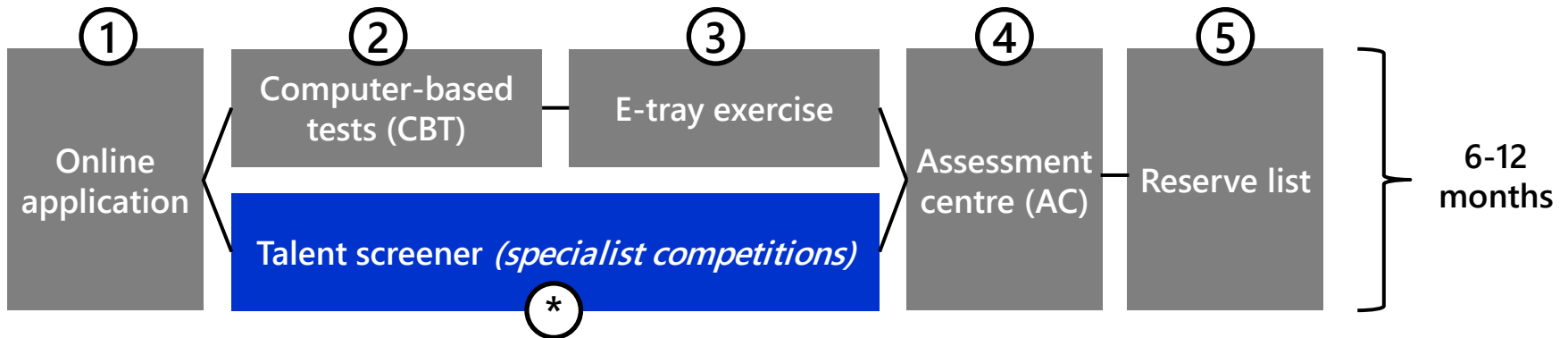
Help

Previous

Next

Applying for permanent positions

(*) Talent screener



- An alternative selection phase for specialist competitions, based on an assessment of your qualifications
- EPSO checks how well your qualifications match the duties and selection criteria in Notice of Competition
 - A number of questions, each given a weight
 - Assigned scores on a scale of 0 to 4
- Candidates with the highest total scores are admitted to the next phase of the competition (i.e. assessment centre, but sometimes still preceded by computer-based tests)

Applying for permanent positions

(4) Assessment centre

- Typically lasts an entire day
- Consists of several types of tests; all eight general competencies are assessed at least twice
 - Notice of Competition indicates which competencies are assessed during which tests (competency matrix)
- Preparation with books or private/public trainings
- 2-2,5x targeted number of laureates invited to this phase

Where?	Type of tests (non-exhaustive)	Language	Result
A test centre in or outside the EU	Written case study (in relevant field of expertise)	Typically language 2 (see slide 15)	Applicants with the highest scores are added to the reserve list from which EU institutions recruit
Brussels or Luxembourg	Group exercise Oral presentation Competency-based interview		

Applying for permanent positions

Assessment centre: an impression

YouTube video: "[A day at the assessment centre](#)"



Applying for permanent positions

(5) From the reserve list to a job



- **At the end of the open competition, a reserve list ([example](#)) is published from which EU institutions recruit**
 - Reserve list expiry date: typically 1 year after publication (but period of validity often extended)
 - Inclusion in a reserve list does not imply any right or guarantee of recruitment
 - Quota may apply typically for the first 3-6 months, restricting the EU institutions to which applicants can apply during this period

Applying for permanent positions

(5) From the reserve list to a job



- **“Laureates” can start applying to specific positions**
 - Laureates may be contacted directly by an interested service
 - Reserve list laureates also receive vacancy lists so they can spontaneously apply directly to a service of their interest (not to EPSO!)
 - Check organisation charts of EU institutions, agencies and other bodies and “EU Who is Who” to find out where you could apply (see [Useful links](#))
- **The final step: the job interview**
 - Typically a panel interview with direct manager
 - Usually 3-5 candidates are interviewed
 - Prepare by familiarising yourself with service’s activities

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IV. Useful links

European Commission traineeships

- **Most important EU traineeship programme**
 - 5-month traineeships (2 periods: March-July & October-February)
 - Ca. 950 trainees hired per period (out of ca. 11,000 applications)
 - Remuneration: ca. 1 200 EUR / month
- **Eligibility criteria**
 - University degree of at least 3 years (academic bachelor)
 - Very good knowledge of EN/FR/DE + another EU official language
 - No prior work experience at one of the EU institutions or agencies
 - No EU citizenship required and no age limit
- **Process**
 - Online application
 - Eligibility check & preselection ("blue book": ca. 3,000 candidates)
 - Recruitment from the blue book (ca. 950 trainees)
- **Next opportunity: March – July 2021 (apply in July 2020)**
- **Information & application: <http://ec.europa.eu/stages/>**

Other interesting opportunities (1/2)

- **Traineeships at other EU institutions:** [overview](#)
- **Junior Professionals in Delegation (JPD) at the European External Action Service (EEAS)** ([more info](#))
 - Traineeship of 9-18 months in an EU Delegation abroad
 - Remunerated
 - Next application opportunity: January 2021
- **Junior Professionals Programme (JPP) at the European Commission**
 - New 2½-year professional development & mobility programme
 - For junior staff with maximum 3 years of work experience and already working at the European Commission as blue-book trainee, contractual agent (function group IV), temporary agent or permanent official
 - 50 participants selected per year (in 2 cycles)
 - Remuneration of an AD5 permanent official

Other interesting opportunities (2/2)

- **Graduate Programmes**

- Several-year contracts, often with mobility within institution
- Open to recent graduates with no or limited work experience
- Much more selective than traineeship programmes
- Remunerated (comparable to entry-level permanent positions)
- Offered by the [European Central Bank](#) (Frankfurt am Main) and the [European Investment Bank](#) (Luxembourg)

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IV. Useful links

Useful links

Preparing for EU selection procedures

EPSO website:

- [European Personnel Selection Office \(EPSO\)](#)

EPSO on social media:

- [EU Careers on YouTube](#) (info videos & testimonials)
- [EU Careers on Facebook](#)
- [EU Careers on Twitter](#)
- [EU Careers on LinkedIn](#)
- [EU Careers on Instagram](#)

Resources to prepare for an open competition:

- [EU Careers e-learning platform](#)
- [Sample tests and training on the EPSO website](#)
- [The Ultimate EU Test Book](#)
- [EU Training](#)
- [The European Bookshop](#), Rue de l'Orme 1, 1040 Brussels
- [EU Publications Office](#)
- [European Parliament – Factsheets on the European Union](#)
- [EU Treaties](#)
- [European Union Newsroom](#)

EU staff policies:

- [EU Staff Regulations](#) (January 2020)

Other useful resources:

- [Working as an expert for the EU institutions](#) (EU experts database)
- [EU Trainee Bible](#) (2019 edition)
- [Werken bij de EU](#) (Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs)
- [VLEVA – EU-vacatures](#)
- [VLEVA – Tips voor een job bij de Europese Unie](#)

Useful links

EU institutions' organisation structures

Organisation structures of EU institutions

- [European Commission departments & executive agencies](#)
- [General Secretariat of the Council](#) (administration of the European Council & Council of the EU)
- [Secretary-General of the European Parliament](#) (administration of the European Parliament)
- [Court of Justice of the European Union](#)
- [European External Action Service](#)
- [Committee of the Regions](#)
- [European Ombudsman](#)
- [European Data Protection Supervisor](#)
- [European Court of Auditors](#)
- [European Economic and Social Committee](#)
- [European Central Bank](#)
- [European Central Bank – Banking Supervision](#)
- [European Investment Bank](#)
- [European Investment Fund](#)

EU staff directory

- [EU Who is Who](#)

Useful links

List of EU agencies & other EU bodies (1/2)

EU agencies and other EU bodies

- [Overview](#)

Of which: Agencies under Common Security and Defence Policy

- [European Defence Agency \(EDA\)](#)
- [European Union Institute for Security Studies \(EUISS\)](#)
- [European Union Satellite Centre \(SatCen\)](#)

Of which: Decentralised agencies (*continues on next slide*)

- [Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators \(ACER\)](#)
- [Agency for Support for BEREC \(BEREC Office\)](#)
- [Community Plant Variety Office \(CPVO\)](#)
- [European Agency for Safety and Health at Work \(EU-OSHA\)](#)
- [European Border and Coast Guard Agency \(Frontex\)](#)
- [European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice \(eu-LISA\)](#)
- [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\)](#)
- [European Union Aviation Safety Agency \(EASA\)](#)
- [European Banking Authority \(EBA\)](#)
- [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#)
- [European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training \(Cedefop\)](#)
- [European Chemicals Agency \(ECHA\)](#)
- [European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#)
- [European Fisheries Control Agency \(EFCA\)](#)
- [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\)](#)
- [European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions \(Eurofound\)](#)
- [European GNSS Agency \(GSA\)](#)
- [European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\)](#)
- [European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority \(EIOPA\)](#)
- [European Maritime Safety Agency \(EMSA\)](#)
- [European Medicines Agency \(EMA\)](#)
- [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction \(EMCDDA\)](#)
- [European Union Agency for Network and Information Security \(ENISA\)](#)
- [European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training \(CEPOL\)](#)

Useful links

List of EU agencies & other EU bodies (2/2)

Of which: Decentralised agencies (continued from previous slide)

- [European Police Office \(Europol\)](#)
- [European Union Agency for Railways \(ERA\)](#)
- [The European Securities and Markets Authority \(ESMA\)](#)
- [European Training Foundation \(ETF\)](#)
- [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(FRA\)](#)
- [European Union Intellectual Property Office \(EUIPO\)](#)
- [Single Resolution Board \(SRB\)](#)
- [Eurojust](#)
- [Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union \(CdT\)](#)

Of which: EURATOM agencies and bodies

- [Fusion for Energy \(F4E\)](#)

Of which: Executive agencies

- [Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency \(EACEA\)](#)
- [Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises \(EASME\)](#)
- [European Research Council Executive Agency \(ERCEA\)](#)
- [Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency \(Chafea\)](#)
- [Research Executive Agency](#)
- [Innovation & Networks Executive Agency \(INEA\)](#)

Of which: Other organisations

- [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#)
- [ECSEL Joint Undertaking](#)
- [Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2 Joint Undertaking](#)
- [IMI 2 Joint Undertaking \(IMI 2 JU\)](#)
- [SESAR Joint Undertaking](#)
- [Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking](#)
- [BBI Joint Undertaking](#)