



Joint Assessment Report
on
Action Plan on
Geographical Balance

PORTUGAL

2024

Assessment of the Joint Action Plans on Geographical Balance

Joint Conclusions

This is the first Joint Assessment Report completed on the Joint Action Plan on Geographical Balance for Portugal which was endorsed on 25 October 2023. As stated in the Action Plan, it is *'not to be seen as "a one-off reporting" but rather as a continuous, dynamic process made jointly by the Commission and the concerned Member State'*.

As outlined in the Joint Action Plan, the measures introduced by the European Commission, Portugal and jointly, aim to strengthen geographical balance in the Commission workforce¹. Portugal continues to develop and implement various outreach measures, as well as training, coaching, and networking events to promote EU careers at national level and support their candidates. Portugal calls for the introduction of nationality-based competitions to address its geographical imbalance, as referenced in the European Commission's Human Resources Strategy (2022) and in the Joint Action Plan on Geographical Balance for Portugal (2023).

In terms of underrepresentation as of 31 December 2023, Portugal falls below the 80% threshold of its guiding rate² in AD5-AD8 Officials. The analysis of the result indicators for the period 2021 - 2023 shows increased shares (and absolute numbers) in relation to AD5-AD8 Officials (+7 ADs), AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents (+25 ADs), and AD5-AD8 Officials and Temporary Agents (+ 32 combined ADs). Despite the measures implemented to date, the numbers in several staff categories remain a point for further detailed monitoring and analysis. Alongside the issue of underrepresentation, Portugal also faces an issue of outflow due to forecasted retirements. Without a proper inflow to counteract this, the situation of underrepresentation will further deteriorate.

The number of external competitions has been limited due to the difficulties EPSO has encountered. For that reason, the actions aiming at correcting the underlying causes of geographical imbalances through external competitions have also been impacted. The Commission will continue to support EPSO, through its participation in the EPSO Management Board. The Commission has also administratively supported EPSO in restarting testing with an interim contractor, while the Procurement Unit of DG HR has helped EPSO to publish a tender for a new contractor.

The Commission also continues to implement measures aimed at improving geographical balance and monitor the trends for permanent and non-permanent positions in a targeted way across the career journey. This is important for strengthening the pipeline for future Officials. The decision to publish vacancies for non-permanent staff externally is an important step for greater transparency and visibility of Commission vacancies. The forthcoming Temporary Agents Decision foresees, as a principle, that all vacancies for Temporary Agents positions will be published externally³. Member States will be duly informed once adopted.

¹ Article 27 of the Staff Regulations and Article 12 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants require that EU institutions recruit staff from the broadest possible geographical basis.

² The guiding rates, as defined in the European Commission's 2018 Report on Geographical Balance ([EUR-Lex - 52018DC0377R\(01\) - EN - EUR-Lex](#)), do not apply to management functions, as those functions are expressly excluded from the scope of that Report. The distribution of nationalities at management level is subject to distinct rules and practices and the monitoring of geographical balance at this level is conducted with regard to the limited size of the population concerned. The applicable legal basis in the Commission sets out the desirable objective that each nationality should hold at least one function corresponding to the basic post of Director-General.

³ The new decision will apply to Temporary Agents engaged under Articles 2(a), (b) and (d) of the Conditions of Engagement of Other Servants.

In parallel, the Commission will continue to prepare the legal basis for the introduction of additional measures (General Implementing Provisions (GIPs), Article 27 of the Staff Regulations). This will provide a robust legal framework and the continuation of a sustainable and “step-by-step” approach to improving geographical balance. Additional measures may be introduced once the legal basis to do so is established, at which point the recruitment trends will be taken into account. Any measures adopted will ensure that proportionality and merit continue to be the guiding principles underpinning recruitment in the Commission.

The Joint Action Plans, implementation and stocktaking of measures contained therein, and tracking progress by monitoring inflow and outflow trends, are crucial for improving geographical balance in the European Commission. With the long-term goals of the Joint Action Plans in mind, both the Commission and Portugal are committed to applying these measures strategically and with a focus on a sustainable approach. The stocktaking is not a one-off exercise; the Commission intends to continue the assessment on a regular basis. It is the combination of the Joint Action Plan measures and the potential measures anticipated by the GIPs, Article 27, that will enable us to address the imbalances in an efficient, sustainable, and proportionate way.

Member State:	Portugal	Guiding Rate:	3,1%	80% of Guiding Rate:	2,4%	Population Share:	2,3%
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Result indicators (EC)

Staffing	2021		2022		2023		Trend vs 2021*
	Absolute	Share as % of GR	Absolute	Share as % of GR	Absolute	Share as % of GR	
Blue Book Applications	874		887		854		
Blue Book Trainees	59	149%	55	111%	46	102%	↓
JPP Applications	44		43		48		
JPP Selections	1		0		3		
FGIII	33	78%	33	79%	38	91%	
FGIV	99	103%	112	111%	125	115%	
SNE	16	59%	20	68%	25	81%	↑
AD5-AD8 Officials	71	66%	75	72%	78	77%	↑
AD5-AD8 TAs	37	137%	50	142%	62	156%	↑
AD5-AD8 Officials + TA	108	80%	125	90%	140	100%	↑
AD9-AD14 (non-management) Officials	155	83%	144	76%	136	70%	↓
AD9-AD14 (non-management) TAs	3	81%	3	76%	3	72%	↓
AD9-AD14 (non-management) Officials + TAs	158	83%	147	76%	139	70%	↓
AD5-AD14 (non-management) Officials	226	77%	219	75%	214	72%	
AD5-AD14 (non-management) TAs	40	130%	53	135%	65	148%	↑
AD5-AD14 (non-management) Officials + TAs	266	82%	272	82%	279	82%	
AD Officials retirements	17		20		16		

FGIII, FGIV, SNE and AD staff figures exclude linguistic functions. AD Officials retirements include management and linguistic functions

*Significant difference in trend corresponds to 20% deviation for non-AD functions and 10% for AD function when comparing share as % of GR from 2021 to 2023

Transitions 2022					
Role as of 31/12/2021	Role as of 31/12/2022	FGIII	FGIV	AD5-AD8 TA	AD5-AD8 Off
External Recruitment		5	21	9	1
BB*		5	5	3	0
FGIII			4	2	0
FGIV		0		4	0
SNE		0	0	2	0
AD5-8 TA		0	1		3

Transitions 2023					
Role as of 31/12/2022	Role as of 31/12/2023	FGIII	FGIV	AD5-AD8 TA	AD5-AD8 Off
External Recruitment		8	22	10	2
BB*		5	2	3	0
FGIII			1	4	0
FGIV		0		5	1
SNE		0	0	0	0
AD5-8 TA		1	0		5

*Role as BB in the previous year during the March/October Session or March of current year

EPSO competitions	2021	2022	2023*
Number of specialist competitions started	15	13	8
Applicants	498	358	610
Share of Applicants	4,7%	3,5%	3,7%
Number of completed competitions	15	13	0
Laureates	18	19	
Pass Rate	3,6%	5,3%	
EU-27 Pass Rate	5,2%	6,8%	

Note: No Generalist Competitions initiated during this period.

* Note: NEW EPSO competition model

Output indicators 2023 data provided by Portugal (PT with COMM for joint measures)

Timeframe: 1st Jan 2021 - 31st Dec 2023

Indicator	Counts	Scope	Additional information / Comments
1. EU Career Events (webinars, career fairs, and EPSO outreach events)	2021 - 64 2022 - 44 2023 - 63 Total = 171	2021 - NA 2022 - 2.180 2023 - 2.794	There is no available data concerning the scope of these actions in 2021.
2. Website	NA	2021- 338 811 2022 - 441 283 2023 - 320 783	The numbers only cover the website pages related to EU Careers.
3. Social Media	NA	2021 - 44 638 2022 - 60 098 2023 - 67 905	Under this item we consider the aggregated number of follower per year of Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
4.Training -and Coaching Sessions for EPSO competitions	2023 - 3	2023 - 12	Taining sessions only took place in 2023.Other sessions were planned but they were cancelled since EPSO suspended competitions.
5. Helpdesk support (by email or phone)	NA	2021 - NA 2022 - 220 2023 - 886	There is no available data concerning the scope of this support in 2021.
6. Training and Coaching Session for Management Positions	2021 - NA 2022 - 6 2023 - 21 Total = 27	2021 - NA 2022- 6 2023- 21	The data reflects the Permenent Representation support to Portuguese Nationals candidates to executive positions. There is no available data for 2021.
7. Networking Events	2021 - NA 2022 - 5 2023 - 17 Total = 22	2021 - NA 2022 - 80 2023- 270	Includes networking events with Portuguese Nationals in the Institutions and Portuguese Trainees. There is no available data for 2021.
8. Scholarships to the College of Europe	NA	2021 - 6 2022 - 11 2023 - 11	

Footnote: The data presented above is provided by PT and is the sole responsibility of PT.

Joint Measures (initiated by PT/EC/EPSO)	Counts	Scope	Additional information / Comments
1. EPSO career staff ambassadors	12 people	NA	Numbers reported by the Commission's Representation in Portugal: 2021 - 8; 2022 - 6; 2023 - 8
2. EPSO career student ambassadors	2021/2022 - 8 2022/2023 - 7 2023/2024 - 8	NA	Numbers reported by Member State: 2021 - 8; 2022 - 8; 2023 - 8
3. EPSO outreach Events	2022 - 6 events 2023 - 15 events		
4. Information campaigns such as webinars or career fairs (by Portugal, Commission and EPSO)	2021 - 10 events 2022 - 13 events 2023 - 14 events	2021 - 253 participants 2022 - 807 participants 2023 - 807 participants	Under this item we consider the events held in coloboration with the Commission, EPSO and EU Student Career Ambassadors.
4.1 Information campaigns via social media (by Portugal, Commission and EPSO)	2023 - 64 posts	NA	The number of followers of these posts is not available. See above the combined number of followers of all social media (PT indicators).
4.2 Information campaigns via mailing lists (by Portugal and Commission)	around 36 000 emails	NA	
5. Social media references to European careers/blue book internships/EPSO competitions (by the Commission's Representation in Portugal)	2023 - 67		
6. Events on EU careers (by the Commission's Representation in Portugal)	2023 - 12	2023 - 1458	Some of these events were done in collaboration with EPSO.

Footnote: The data presented above is provided by PT, EC Representation and EPSO and is a joint responsibility of the aforementioned parties.

European Commission Measures	State of Play	Additional information / Comments
1. General Implementing Provisions of Article 27	progress	The Commission is preparing the legal basis for the introduction of additional measures (General Implementing Provisions (GIPs) Art.27 of the Staff Regulations). The draft GIPs will be subject to inter-service consultation and social dialogue as part of the decision-making process. The final decision lies with the College.
2. Blue Book guiding rates	completed	The application of guiding rates to the Blue Book traineeship database is creating a more geographically balanced Blue Book trainee population. The share of trainees from all 15 under-represented Member States combined reached 100% of the guiding rate in 2023, compared to 85% a year earlier.
3. Temporary Agents decision	progress	The Temporary Agents Decision is not designed to specifically address geo-balance issues. However, its structure will encourage applications from a large pool of candidates. The Decision foresees that, as a principle, all vacancies for TA positions will be published externally. Further, the duration of TA contracts and grading will be clearly defined providing applicants with a clear view of the key contract terms. The decision will go through the final stages of the social dialogue within the coming period and is intended to be adopted shortly after.
4. Publication of vacancies on a single page	completed	This is in pilot phase since November 2023 for the following categories: all non-linguistic TA 2b/d AD posts and CA 3a positions based in Brussels and Luxembourg. The forthcoming Temporary Agents Decision foresees, as a principle, that all vacancies for Temporary Agent positions will be published externally.
5. Interviewing 1 candidate from an under-represented MS	completed	Since the introduction (in September 2022) of the measure to interview at least one candidate from an under-represented Member State for certain categories of temporary staff (Temporary Agents at administrative grades and Contract Agents in Function Group IV), 39% of Temporary Agents at administrator-level recruited were from under-represented Member States in 2023, compared to 34% in 2022. Since 2022, 10 out of the 15 under-represented Member States have improved their share of AD5-8 Temporary Agents.
6. Exchange of best practices	progress	The Commission continues to encourage best practice and sharing of knowledge across the Member States.

Footnote: The data presented above is provided by EC and is the sole responsibility of EC.

