



# Action Plan on Geographical Balance

**MALTA**

**2023**

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# 1. Introduction

In line with the 2018 report on Geographical balance<sup>1</sup>, the new HR strategy<sup>2</sup> “**Communication to the Commission: A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission**”<sup>3</sup> highlights the importance of geographical balance of all staff, which is to be strengthened, and foresees the development of Action Plans together with under-represented Member States. This Action Plan represents a joint political commitment by the Member State and the European Commission (Commission) to strengthen geographical balance and takes the form of measures to be undertaken by the Member State, the Commission as well as joint measures.

As a rule, discrimination based on nationality is prohibited by the Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the Staff Regulations. At the same time, the EU Staff Regulations require that EU Institutions recruit staff from the broadest possible geographical basis.<sup>4</sup> In 2014, the co-legislators introduced a new legal basis for each institution to adopt appropriate measures where a significant imbalance between nationalities of Officials is observed and is not justified by objective criteria.

The methodology for defining the objective to be reached has been the subject of several communications<sup>5</sup> over time. It has taken the form of guiding rates or reference values, as well as indicative recruitment targets for enlargements.<sup>6</sup> In its 2018 report on geographical balance<sup>7</sup>, the Commission considers that a significant imbalance can be observed if the share of nationals of one or more Member States amongst staff is lower than 80% of the relevant guiding rate and is focusing on AD staff occupying non-management functions excluding linguists. The Commission regularly reports on the state of play on presence by nationality among its staff. Measures have been adopted by EPSO and the Commission when imbalances were observed. However, these measures have not always provided results in line with the objective. Under-representation in many staff categories is still observed in several nationalities, including Malta.

More recently, the Commission committed in its HR Strategy that it will prepare specific action plans, together with the Member States concerned, to address this issue and take into account the specificities of each Member State.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the HR Strategy indicates that, in line with Article 27 of the Staff Regulations, the Commission will consider adopting General Implementing Provisions to enable actions aiming at improving geographical balance.

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<sup>1</sup> [COM\(2018\)377final/2](#)

<sup>2</sup> [C\(2022\) 2229 final](#)

<sup>3</sup> According to the Communication to the Commission: *A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission*, [C\(2022\) 2229 final](#), ‘On geographical balance at all levels, though by law we need to recruit staff on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Union, there are categories of staff for which certain Member States are currently under-represented. [...] In 2022, specific Action Plans will be developed together with these Member States to improve their balance, keeping in mind that by law, no posts should be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State.’.

<sup>4</sup> See in that sense Article 27 of the Staff Regulations and Article 12 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.

<sup>5</sup> Commission Communication of Mr Van Miert SEC(1994)844 of 17 May 1994 at the occasion of the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden; Communication of Mr Kinnock concerning the recruitment of Commission officials from the new Member States of 14 February 2003 C(2003)436/5, adopted on 19 February 2003; Communication of Mr Kallas C(2006)5778 concerning the recruitment of Commission officials and Temporary Agents from Bulgaria and Romania of 24 November 2006, adopted by Written Procedure on 1 December 2006 (SEC(2006)1574/5); Communication of Vice-President Šefčovič concerning the recruitment of Commission officials and Temporary Agents from Croatia of 12 July 2012, (SEC(2012)436 final).

<sup>6</sup> The indicative recruitment targets refer to nationals from Member States joining the EU on the occasion of enlargements.

<sup>7</sup> [COM\(2018\)377final/2](#)

<sup>8</sup> According to the Communication to the Commission: *A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission*, [C\(2022\) 2229 final](#), ‘On geographical balance at all levels, though by law we need to recruit staff on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Union, there are categories of staff for which certain Member States are currently under-represented. [...] In 2022, specific Action Plans will be developed together with these Member States to improve their balance, keeping in mind that by law, no posts should be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State.’.

## 1.1. Developments in 2022

To address the geographical imbalance of Malta (both structurally and in the shorter term), the Director-General for HR and the Permanent Representative of Malta agreed on 13 June 2022 to jointly prepare this Action Plan, based on the specific situation of Malta. The aim of the Action Plan is to outline the reasons for Malta's low representation, and to set out measures to be undertaken by Malta, the Commission, and EPSO, as well as measures to be undertaken jointly in order to address it. The implementation of some measures has already commenced in 2022 and is ongoing. The assessment of the results will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2024.

However, in line with the Staff Regulations, all work to address geographical imbalances is to be done in the context of no posts reserved for nationals of a specific Member State, and merit remains the primary selection criterion.

## 1. Malta: challenges and outlook

### 1.1. Geographical balance snapshot as per 31/12/2022

Malta's presence is below 80% of the guiding rate at the AD5-AD8 (Officials) level (Figure 1) whose share had been consistently declining since 2016 but showing increases from 2021- 2022 (Figure 2). Malta is at its guiding rate among all AD5-AD16 non-linguistic Administrators (including management)<sup>9</sup>. Since 2016, the non-linguist AD staff (non-management) has been steadily increasing, and the AD5-AD8 staff has been decreasing until 2021 but has seen an increase in the past year (Figure 2). Malta is below 80% of the guiding rate, amongst Contract Agents (Figure 3). Malta is above 100% of its guiding rate for Middle Management level and below 100% of its guiding rate for Senior Management level. The trended presence of non-permanent positions is depicted in Figure 3. The figure also shows that the participation by Maltese in EPSO competitions is above the average of its population size, but that their pass rate remains low.

#### Detailed analysis:

For a guiding rate of **0,60%** underrepresentation is defined as below 80% of the guiding rate which for Maltese nationals<sup>10</sup> corresponds to **0,48%**:

- Above 80% of the guiding rate for all Commission staff (0,73%) and for AD non-linguists (including management) (0,62%). Regarding the population of all ADs, 15,6% are Temporary Agents;

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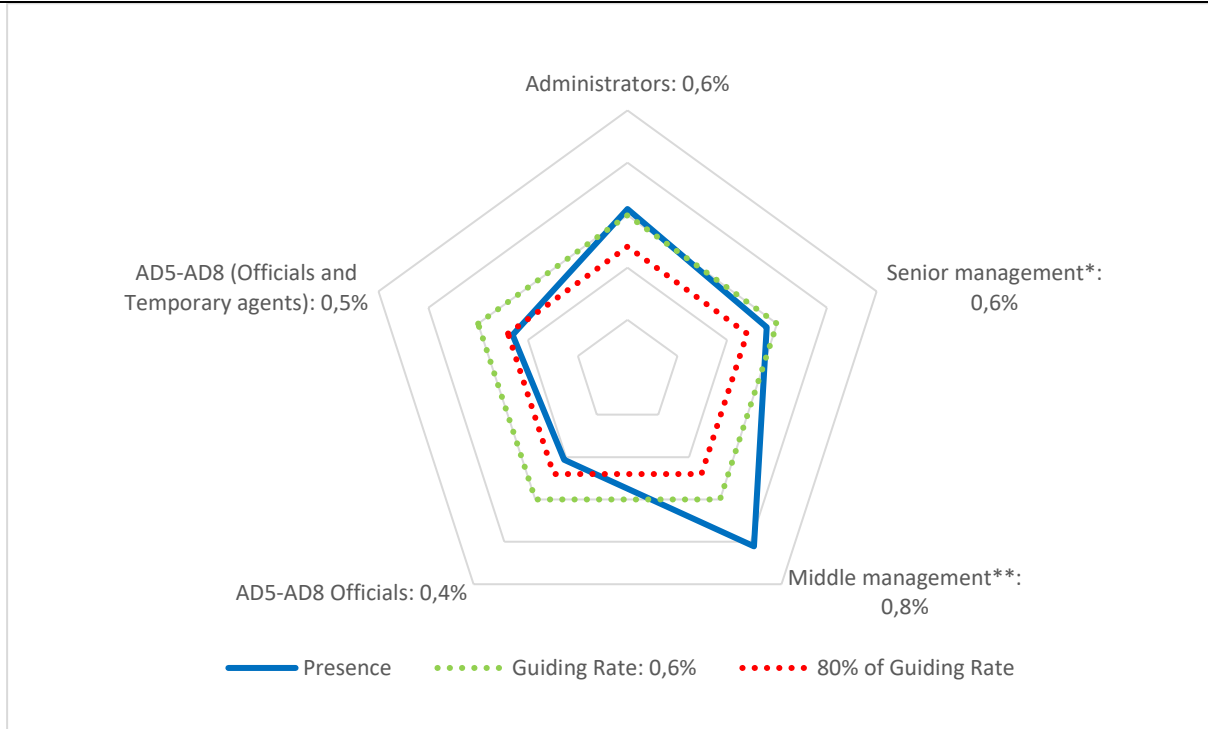
<sup>9</sup> According to the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council pursuant to Article 27 of the Staff Regulations of Officials and to Article 12 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (Geographical balance (COM(2018)377final/2)), only the distribution of staff occupying non-management functions is considered. The report excluded management staff from its scope and the guiding rates defined for non-management staff are not therefore directly applicable. Indeed, the only relevant legal basis referring to geographical balance in management staff in the Commission, the Compilation Document on Senior Officials Policy (SEC(2004) 1352) only refers to functions of Director-General or equivalent (i.e. Deputy Director-General or Hors Classe Adviser) stating that the Commission considers it a desirable objective that each nationality should hold at least one function corresponding to the basic post of Director-General.

<sup>10</sup> This Action Plan concerns EU-27 nationalities and guiding rates without the UK from the Geographical Balance Report COM(2018)377final/2. Managers that changed their first nationality from British to one of the EU-27 nationalities after 29/3/2017 are considered to have kept their British nationality in line with section 2, 1.2.2.1 of the Report.

- Below 80% of the guiding rate among AD5-8 non-linguists (0,46%), of which 33,3% are Temporary Agents;
- Above 80% of the guiding rate at AD9-14 grades when excluding management (0,71%);
- Above 100% of the guiding rate at Middle Management level (0,82%) and below 100% of the guiding rate for Senior Management level. Malta also has 2 Deputy Directors General which belong to the DG-DDG category (0,56%) although there is no Maltese Official at Director level or holding the position of DG currently.

**Figure 1. Maltese presence of permanent staff (including Temporary Agents) at the EC on December 31, 2022**

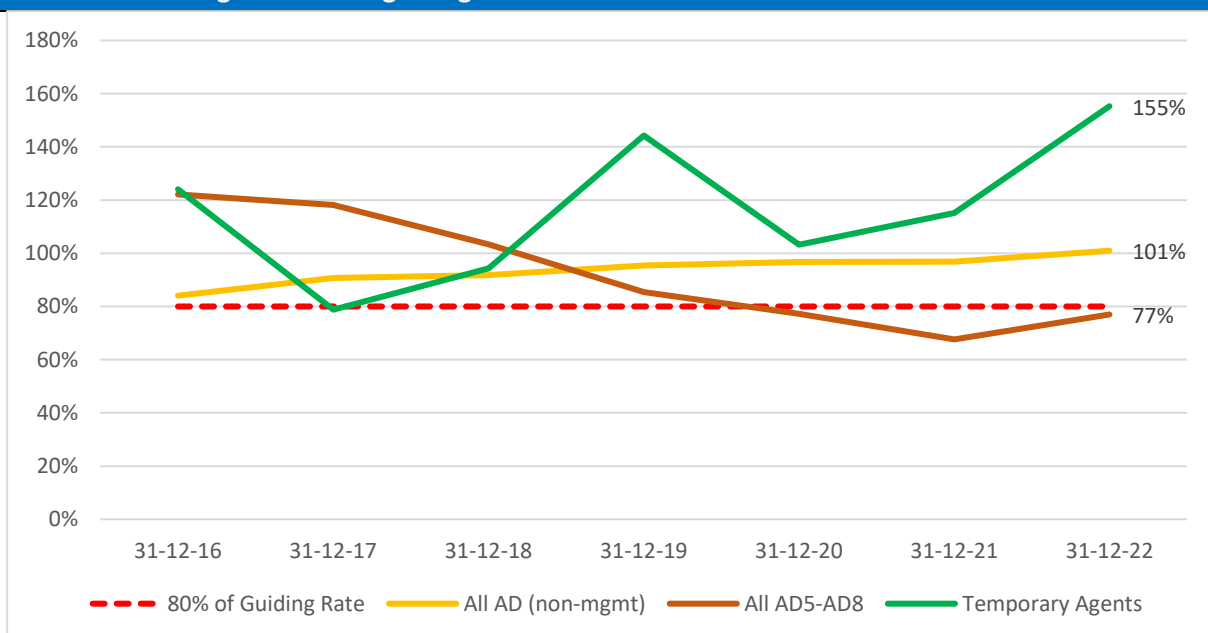
(N.B. A nationality within a Staff category is considered as sufficiently represented when it is at/above 80% of the guiding rate of the Member State - i.e., the red dotted line; it is considered as under-represented, when it is below 80% of the guiding rate).



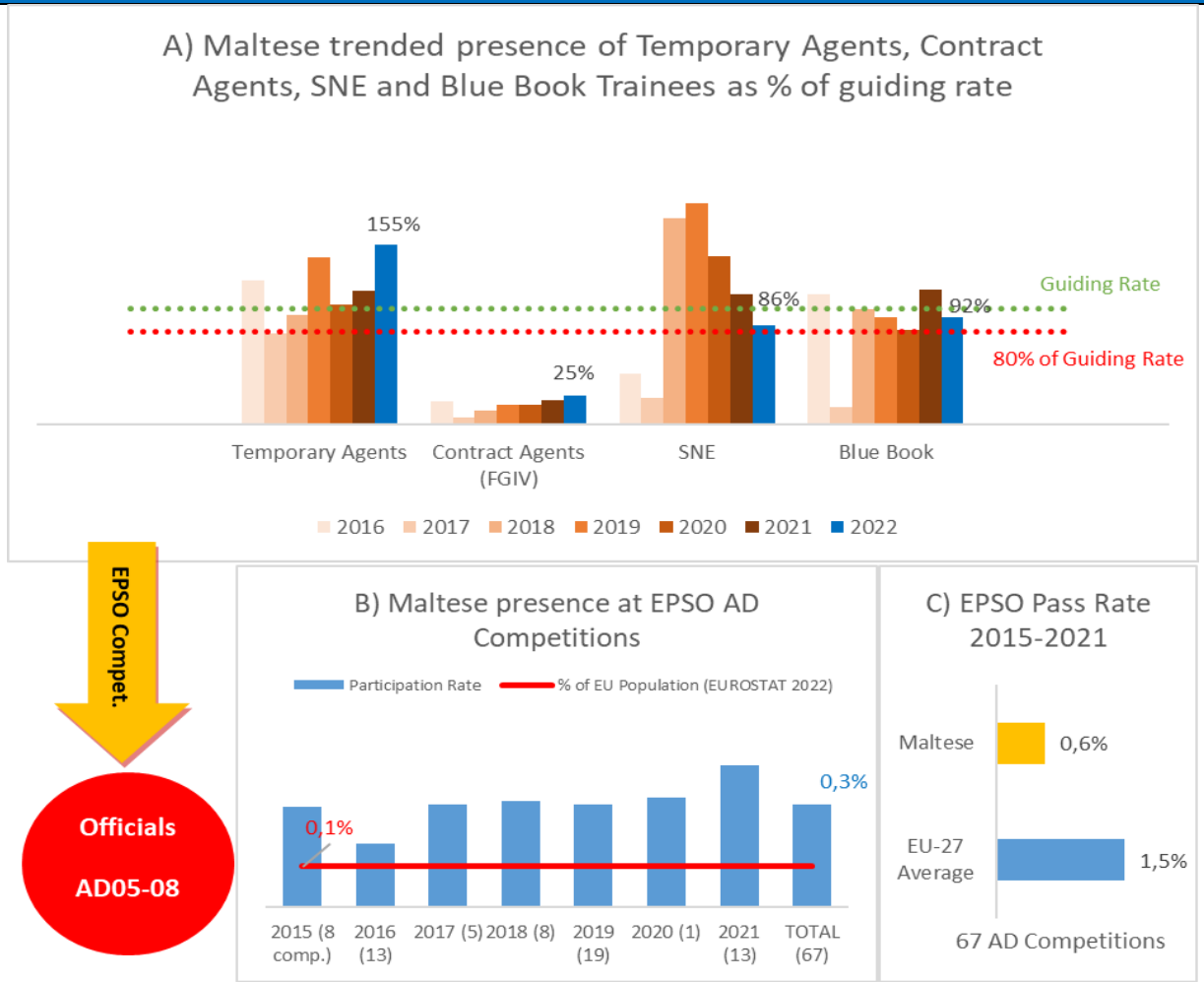
\*Include Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, Hors Classe Advisors, Directors, and Principal Advisors.

\*\*Include Heads of Unit, Heads of Departments, Heads of Task Forces.

**Figure 2. Maltese trended presence of All AD (non-management), All AD5-AD8, Temporary Agents as % of guiding rate**



**Figure 3. Factors influencing Maltese presence at the EC**



**A)** Non-permanent Staff of Maltese nationality, apart from Contract Agents, is above 80%, and in case of Temporary agents, above 120% of the guiding rate in 2022. Together with external candidates, they have access to EPSO (external) competitions that could lead to permanent contracts (Officials AD5-AD8). In addition, Temporary Agents and Contract Agents are eligible to apply for internal competitions. Although Seconded National Experts (SNEs) do not fall within the parameters of the Staff Regulations; the Commission, however, takes them into account as a possible relevant entry point for the categories of staff as per the EU’s Staff Regulations (such as Contract Agent (CA), Temporary Agent (TA) and Administrators (AD) positions).<sup>11</sup>

**B)** Participation in EPSO AD competitions of Maltese candidates initiated between 2015 and 2021 is above the expected rate based on the size of the population.

**C)** The pass rate of EPSO AD competitions initiated between 2015 and 2021 is much lower than the EU average.<sup>12</sup> The results from measures targeting EPSO competitions will depend on the frequency of these competitions.

<sup>11</sup> Across the Commission, 74% of SNEs are funded jointly by the Commission and the Member State (so called, “shared cost” or “co-financed” SNEs) whereas 26% are paid in full by the Member State (“cost-free” SNEs).

<sup>12</sup> The indicated EPSO participation-and success rate refers to an aggregated average of all AD competitions initiated between 2015-2021.

## 1.2. Outlook

Finally, the picture should also be interpreted considering the following additional elements:

- Malta's education system is similar to that in the UK, where families with children often find it difficult to relocate to Brussels given the different system of education, particularly the teaching of certain subjects in a foreign language. Moreover, the fact that Maltese is taught only in very few European schools, tends to discourage people from applying for jobs in European Institutions;
- Maltese citizens learn English as L2 from an early age along with the Maltese language (L1). Children are taught core subjects (namely Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities and so on), mostly using textbooks in English, although the delivery is often done in Maltese. This may pose as a challenge for Maltese candidates when they sit for certain tests and competitions, such as EPSO. If candidates use MT for CBT tests, translations can be problematic. Maltese children are generally not exposed to additional foreign languages (apart from EN) in primary school. In fact, Maltese children/youths only start learning foreign languages, i.e., L3 such as French, Italian, German and Spanish from Yr7 onwards. If candidates sitting for EPSO competitions use EN for CBT, their fluency in a third language is often not at the level as those who would have FR, ES, IT, DE as a second language (given that for MT nationals, these are likely to be third languages);Linguistic issues (translation of the EPSO computer-based tests into Maltese) and more limited access to information in preparation for the competitions (e.g. sample tests) in Maltese due to the relatively small size of the market;
- Lengthy and complex EPSO selection procedures, as a deterrent for youths since they can find jobs offering competitive salaries in Malta. The new EPSO Competition Framework was adopted at the end of January 2023 and is aimed at shortening and simplifying selection procedures and ensuring greater predictability in the running of competitions.

## 2. Measures to address under-representation

### 2.1. Malta's actions and initiatives

#### 2.1.1. Current (updated by Malta)

- Over the past year, Malta has taken an active role in promoting EU Careers at a national level with the aim of increasing awareness and knowledge on career opportunities in the EU;
- In 2021, Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM), a government agency, was identified to promote EU careers and offers the necessary support for candidates applying for different EU Traineeships and EPSO competitions, by organizing seminars and webinars both independently, but also in collaboration with academic institutions and the EU Careers Student Ambassadors;
- Malta is also working with EPSO to address issues in relation to translation of EPSO competitions and sample tests;
- The following are several external outreach activities that Malta has undertaken and plans to continue implementing:



- Active promotion and dissemination of information about different EU Career opportunities (EPSO open competitions and EC traineeships), and upcoming events across the different social media pages managed by SEM and EU Careers Malta. Support is also provided to Brussels-based Maltese nationals through social media outreach, such as LinkedIn;
  - Promotion of open EU Career opportunities and streams to students through collaboration with Academic Institutions (University of Malta and MCAST) and student organisations. Collaboration includes delivering seminars and participating as panel speakers at events on career opportunities;
  - Support and engagement with the EU Careers Student Ambassadors at the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the University of Malta (UoM);
  - Participation in large-scale events, including student fairs, both at the University of Malta and MCAST, in collaboration with the respective Student Ambassadors;
  - Reaching out to the public and increasing awareness in general on EU Careers, through webinars and in-person workshops on different career opportunities in the EU, supported by the participation of Maltese EU Careers Staff Ambassadors and former Blue Book Trainees;
  - Hybrid events for Traineeships within the EU Institutions is conducted twice a year, wherein trainees are debriefed regarding the role of the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU (PREU) and EU Careers, including information on SNEs and other internal recruitment as well as the opportunity for a ‘meet and greet’ with the Permanent Representative and other PREU Officials. These events are organised jointly with the Capital;
  - Speed dating sessions organised in Brussels amongst SNEs and NEPT. Hybrid events and exchanges are held for the network of SNEs and NEPTs to reach out to all SNEs working in the EU Institutions and Agencies. A network of MT SNEs and informal discussions are held regularly;
  - Hosting of study visits to Brussels by the PREU and providing students with information on EU Careers and at times collaboration with EPSO also takes place. Going forward these visits will be held in conjunction with the Capital, to provide additional information on other EU related calls; and,
  - Reaching out to the Maltese Community to encourage participation in the EU Careers Staff Ambassador programme. Participation of trainees in the pre-selection of the JPD<sup>13</sup>.
- The following are several internal measures that the Government has been undertaking and plans to continue implementing to strengthen representation of Maltese Officials in EU institutions:

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<sup>13</sup> One Junior Professionals in Delegation (JPD) per Member State for the Commission and one JPD per Member State for the European External Action Service (EEAS). In addition, Member States can offer to finance additional JPDs assigned to one Institution or the other depending of their priorities. Joint Decision JOIN(2012)17 of 12.06.2012 of the Commission and the High Representative of the EEAS establishing a High Level traineeship Programme in the Delegations in partnership with the Member States as amended. The programme is under the overall management of the EEAS and implemented with the Commission. Trainees are assigned to both the EEAS and the Commission that are responsible for the selection procedure of their respective JPD.

- Regular updating e-Government procedures to reflect changes in selection and recruitment procedures at the EU level, as and where necessary. This is usually applicable to officers serving within the Public Administration;
- Malta has supported Maltese nationals to participate in programmes and initiatives such as SNE and NEPT, especially in those areas where there are no Maltese nationals; both on a co-financed and cost-free basis regarding the SNEs.

### 2.1.2. Future (updated by Malta)

- The following are several upcoming outreach and communication initiatives related to EU Careers that Malta plans to undertake by the end of 2022 and throughout 2023:
  - Publication and promotion of set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)s on EU Careers that are based on queries received from Maltese nationals. This document serves as an important tool for prospective applicants and shall be easily available on Government social media platforms and website;
  - In January 2023, a dedicated EU Careers section was launched on [SEM's official website](#) to include information on the various career streams on one single platform. A hyperlink has also been included in the MFET and PREU website for ease of access of information. This section features information about the different positions, traineeships, where to find employment opportunities, FAQs etc. A dedicated playlist on EU Careers will also be included on [SEM's YouTube Channel](#);
  - Once the Generalist Competition by EPSO, with the new Competition Model is launched, including language skills required, internal discussions within Government shall take place to offer support to Maltese nationals and address under representation at the entry level;
  - Reaching out to Maltese traineeship applicants (including those who are rejected) across the different EU institutions. A database shall be created and maintained for outreach purposes and support on EU Careers.
- Following are internal measures that the Malta Government will seek to implement:
  - The Maltese Government will continue with its endeavours to enhance capacity building in connection with EU careers.

## 2.2. European Commission's measures

To strengthen geographical balance, the Commission will adopt measures considering the specificities of Malta.

### 2.2.1. Actions aiming at redressing the observed imbalances in the short term, with impact on long term

In the short-term, actions aimed at improving geographical balance will mainly consist of promoting underrepresented nationals in the recruitment process of non-permanent staff as statistics show that a significant part of successful candidates in external competitions belong to these categories.

Actions focussed on non-permanent non-linguistic AD level recruitments (which are valid both for the short and the longer term) consist of the following:

- DG HR launched in September a pilot project aiming to increase the share of Temporary Agents (TA) from underrepresented Member States. DG HR is currently working with DGs to see how to increase the visibility of job vacancies, possibly yielding more applications from these Member States. The take-up of this initiative would need to be assessed, also in view of new IT solutions to handle large number of applicants. Commission DGs will be asked to **interview at least one candidate** from under-represented Member States when organising the selection of non-permanent staff as of September 2022;
  - These actions are expected to produce a short-term effect and longer-term effect, e.g. by organising internal competitions, allowing the most successful non-permanent staff to be recruited as Officials. In this sense, the Commission ensured a greater predictability for this internal track by publishing a calendar for internal competitions until 2024.
- The Commission is currently reviewing its decision on the use of Temporary Staff (to be adopted before the end of 2023), aiming for external publication of these posts to increase visibility (centralisation of publications on one webpage, together with the possibility to publish on other platforms).
- The Commission will work on increasing the visibility of publications of non-permanent positions and will collaborate with Member State administrations on how best to reach the desired recipients in the Member State concerned. The Commission will make efforts to promote the publication of EU non-permanent job offers on a single webpage as a point of entry when looking for any type of position in the EU institutions.
- In parallel, DG HR is preparing **General Implementing Provisions (GIPs)**, which will allow the adoption of appropriate measures to tackle geographical imbalances (including competitions by nationality) if required. The HR Strategy indicates that nationality based open competitions will be used, where appropriate and in line with EU law, following an analysis of the impact of Action Plans for underrepresented Member States. Whilst nationality-based open competitions are mentioned as possible appropriate measures under certain circumstances<sup>14</sup>, it needs to be ensured that they comply with Article 27 of the Staff Regulations;

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<sup>14</sup> Those appropriate measures must be justified and shall never result in recruitment criteria other than those based on merit. Before such appropriate measures are adopted, the appointing authority of the institution concerned shall adopt general provisions for giving effect to this paragraph in accordance with Article 110.

- The **Blue Book traineeships** are also a key entry point in the Commission. DG HR and DG EAC agreed to apply as of 2023 the Member States' **guiding rates** and replace the current geographical quotas to improve the geographical balance of the Virtual Blue Book candidate-trainees. All trainees will receive introductory training for EU Careers in general and positions such as Temporary and Contract Agents, AD5 and Junior Professionals Programme (JPP) in particular. For the October 2022 campaign, a top up was used to already improve the geographical balance of under-represented Member States and brought already positive results;

The Commission will intensify the use of external publication for its Senior Management positions in order to attract a broader, gender-balanced and geographically diverse pool of candidates. These vacancy notices will be published on the public Europa website, referenced on the Official Journal as well as on the EPSO website and communicated to the Member States' Permanent Representations to the EU. Such enhanced visibility is aimed at encouraging qualified candidates to apply. The Commission Representation will continue to contribute to the greater visibility of these external publications.

## 2.2.2. Actions aiming at correcting the underlying causes of imbalances in the longer term.

Actions aiming at correcting the causes of imbalances in the long-term have a large spectrum. They include, amongst others, communication, outreach and targeted training.

- **External competitions:** The main measures in the EPSO Action Plan include:
  - a newly approved Competition Model focusing on reducing the duration of external competitions to 6 months, from publication of the notices of competition to publication of the reserve lists;
  - terminating the use of the Assessment Centres (oral tests) and using only written tests in the selection procedures;
  - creating a single-window review mechanism;
  - pre-publishing information materials for the EU knowledge test (used only for generalist AD and AST competitions);
  - possibly introducing a digital skills test for some competitions, in line with the needs of EPSO's institutional clients;
  - universal use of remotely proctored tests;
  - reasoning tests organised on a pass/fail basis (not ranked);
  - multilingual competitions with some testing in one specific language, in line with the needs of EPSO's institutional clients.

Moreover, EPSO will continue to publish information on competitions in due time and will strive to enhance communication with successful candidates on its reserve lists. EPSO will also continue to provide targeted information on working and living conditions in Brussels and Luxembourg, including by providing relevant statistics and video staff testimonials.

EPSO will continue to produce webinars for Member States EU Careers experts, public video tutorials, public online landing pages and infographics (in all 24 languages), as well

as social media posts and ads for each competition. EPSO's new website (June 2022) will remain the main information hub for external competitions.

- **Outreach:** The Commission will actively mobilise available resources in the Commission's Representations in Capitals to participate in outreach, public events and spread targeted communications materials emphasising the opportunities EU careers offer (value-based jobs, variety of policy fields, possibility to be hosted in other Member States or in third countries outside EU, etc).
- **Management:** The Commission will continue to work on identification of talent for managerial functions and support those Officials who aspire to Middle Management and Senior Management, also targeting Officials coming from underrepresented Member States. This includes tailored development programmes for aspiring Middle Managers and Senior Managers, and other support measures. For aspiring Senior Managers, this is in the form of individual coaching sessions, and for aspiring Middle Managers it is in the form of different learning experiences that include coaching, mentoring and career guidance.

## 2.3. Joint measures

Actions to be jointly undertaken by the Maltese Government, the Commission and its Representation in Malta. These initiatives include among others targeted training, outreach and promotion.

- Revision of sample tests: Malta would appreciate the support of the relevant Commission Services, primarily DGT, in collaboration with EPSO to revise the EPSO sample tests in Maltese, which could be adding a barrier for Maltese applicants in succeeding in EPSO competitions. This has a bearing on attractiveness and attracting talent. The Commission may also monitor this translation issue and EPSO will ensure that material, including sample tests, is shared to help candidates prepare.
- Collaboration: Malta will work towards enhancing cooperation with the Commission Representation in Malta in the promotion of EU Career opportunities. A meeting is to be set-up to discuss avenues of collaboration. It is suggested that a representative from DG HR and EPSO is present for this meeting, to ensure streamlined cooperation between all parties;
- Outreach and promotion: Malta plans to organise a social media campaign for EU Careers by filming short testimonial videos from Maltese nationals who worked or are still working in the EU (including trainees). In these short clips, the individual would share their experience and career path. It is proposed that this initiative is undertaken in collaboration with the Commission Representation in Malta. This would complement the work of the Representation in its outreach activities and efforts in spreading communication materials on the EU level to different audiences. Such an initiative would also include the participation of Maltese Commission employees and Blue Book trainees;
- In collaboration with the Student Ambassador for the University of Malta, the Maltese Government will also be participating in the Careers Fair which will be organised at the University of Malta in 2023;
- Maltese EU Careers Staff Ambassadors are being encouraged to participate in an EPSO initiative and record a video in Maltese detailing their life and work in the EU to be included on YouTube. Once published, this video will be promoted locally;

- Information Material & Communication on updated Procedures: The Commission aims to keep Member States informed and involved regarding updates to procedures related to recruitment or selection (for instance the Blue Book Traineeship). An open line of communication should be kept between the Commission and Member States. Furthermore, information material (infographics, publications etc) will be regularly updated to reflect these changes and made readily available to the Capital for dissemination. This will ensure that the information on career opportunities available by the Commission and the Capital are consistent;
- The Commission would welcome any initiative taken by Permanent Representations to hold discussions with Officials of their respective nationality, particularly Heads of Units with the aspiration and potential to become Senior Managers, aimed at encouraging them to apply for Senior Management positions;
- Finally, it is also important to do our utmost to reach potential candidates who have not traditionally seen a career for themselves in the EU institutions. This could include qualified candidates from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, from outside the main universities and centres of population, candidates with disabilities or with an ethnic minority background. These groups are currently underrepresented among Commission staff and reaching out to them could be a way of both increasing the talent pool and increasing diversity among Commission staff.

## 3. Data and performance Indicators

### 3.1. Data sharing on geographical balance

The Commission is conscious that Member States need to be regularly informed on the evolution of the situation regarding geographical balance. The 2018 report on geographical balance was a one-off exercise (as foreseen by the Staff Regulations). The Commission committed however to present **data on Staff Geographical Balance to the Council Working Party on Staff Regulations (WPSR) once a year** with a reference date of 31<sup>st</sup> December of the preceding year (higher frequency would not be appropriate for several reasons: statistical significance, influence of external constraints, technical factors; granularity is to be examined also in light of personal data protection; additional ad hoc requests could be examined on a case-to-case basis).

In addition, the Commission will continue to provide **comprehensive statistics at regular intervals** through different channels: via the Europa website (HR statistics and Statistical Bulletin); three times a year directly to Permanent Representations (full staff listings); via regular updates to the WPSR on geographical balance.

### 3.2. Action Plan performance indicators

The measures implemented by Malta, and the Commission will be assessed in the first quarter of 2024 according to the following indicators (non-exhaustive list). The baseline used will be 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021:

**Output indicators** (they relate to implemented operations/measures by measuring what is directly produced/supplied):

- Indicators related to promotional and communication activities to be developed based on the design/setup of the measure and internal capacities to collect the data:
  - Number of persons reached through EU Careers promotion and outreach activities which includes events, information campaigns via digital and online tools, careers fairs and jobs postings, amongst others;
  - Number of people supported in the next EPSO Generalist Competition;
  - Number of EU Careers Staff Ambassadors;
  - Number of EU Careers Student Ambassadors.

**Result indicators** *(they capture the expected effects on participants or entities brought about by an operation/measure):*

- Number of applicants to the Blue Book Traineeship programme and number of trainees who start the traineeship;
- Number of Blue Book Trainees who become Commission staff;
- Number of successful candidates on the Junior Professionals Programme (JPP);
- Share of Temporary Agents and FGIV Contract Agents;
- Number of non-permanent staff and number of external candidates who become Contract Agents FGIV, AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents or AD5-AD8 Officials;
- Share of administrators across various grades, focusing on AD5-AD8 Officials;
- Participation and success rate at EPSO competitions;
- Number of Maltese in JPD Programme and those becoming AD5-AD8 Officials (including AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents or FGIV Contract Agents);
- Number of SNEs;
- Number of SNEs becoming Contract Agents FGIV, AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents or AD5-AD8 Officials;
- Number of NEPTS; and,
- Number of NEPTS becoming Contract Agents FGIV, AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents or AD5-AD8 Officials.

## 4. Next steps



As per the HR Strategy, the Commission, has committed to improve geographical balance by meeting all Member States and drafting joint Action Plans for those that are underrepresented in entry grade categories of staff. These Action Plans are not to be considered as “a one-off reporting” but rather as a continuous, dynamic process between the Commission and the concerned Member State.

The implementation of the ‘soft measures’ in the joint Action Plans will be carried out during 2023. Based on the collected data on output and results indicators, the Commission will, jointly with the Member State, assess the impact of these measures in the first quarter of 2024.<sup>15</sup>

Based on the jointly reached conclusions from the assessment, it will be discussed whether to include further measures in addition to those already listed in this joint Action Plan. In addition, an annual follow-up of the statistics in the Working Party on Staff Regulations is foreseen as well as regular monitoring of geographical balance and continuation of a dialogue with the Member States.

The Commission encourages Member States to share their best practices. Synergies can be achieved by launching joint actions in Brussels and in Member States, including the joint job fairs, and organising communication as well as outreach events to promote EU Careers wherein the Commission and other EU institutions could participate.

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<sup>15</sup> The assessment will be based on measures starting from the 1st of January 2022.



## 5. Annex: Glossary on Staff Grades and Categories

**Administrator:** This percentage includes staff between AD5-AD16. It includes managers and Temporary Agents, and excludes linguists.

**AD5-AD8 Officials:** This percentage includes AD5-AD8 Officials. It excludes linguists and Temporary Agents.

**All Commission staff:** This percentages includes all ADs, ASTs and AST-SCs in the Commission. It includes linguists and Temporary Agents.

**Average EPSO Pass Rate:** This percentage shows the EPSO Competition pass rate in comparison to the average EU-27 pass rate (2,0%) for competitions initiated between 2015 and 2021.

**Blue Book Trainees (BBT):** Twice a year, the Commission offers 5-month paid traineeships. The traineeships begin in March or October. This percentage includes both sessions per year.

**Contract Agents (CA):** Contract staff are employed for a limited period, with an initial contract of 6-12 months which can be renewed for up to 6 years. This percentage only includes Contract Agents FG IV.

**Junior Professional Programme (JPP):** This percentage includes selected Junior Professionals (up to 50 in total per year). The JPP is targeted at Blue Book Trainees, CAST Contract Agents and Temporary Agents with less than 3 years of work experience. It gives them the opportunity to participate in internal competitions to become EU Officials at the end of the programme.

**Middle Management:** This percentage includes Heads of Unit, Heads of Departments and Heads of Task Forces.

**National Experts on Professional Training (NEPT):** Staff from the public administrations of EU or EFTA Member States who are working in the Commission for professional training purposes for a duration between 3 and 5 months.

**Participation at EPSO Competition:** The participation rate shows the country's share of participation in EPSO AD competitions initiated between 2015 and 2021, compared to the share of its population among the EU-27.

**Seconded National Experts (SNE):** This percentage includes national or international civil servants who are working temporarily for the Commission but remain in the service of their national employer.

**Senior Management:** This percentage includes Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, Hors Classe Advisors, Directors and Principal Advisors.

**Temporary Agents (TA):** Temporary Agents can perform specific tasks as an Administrator on a temporary basis. The maximum duration of the initial contract is four years. The contract can be renewed once for a maximum duration of two years.

