



Joint Assessment Report
on
Action Plan on
Geographical Balance

AUSTRIA

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 Austria which was endorsed on 21 August 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, Austria, and jointly, aim to strengthen geographical balance in the Commission workforce¹. Austria continues to develop and implement various outreach measures to promote EU careers at national level and support their candidates. Austria 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 Austria (2023).

In terms of underrepresentation as of 31 December 2023, Austria falls below the 80% threshold of its guiding rate in Contract Agents in FG III and FG IV, AD5-AD8 Officials, and AD5-AD8 Officials and Temporary Agents (combined). The analysis of the result indicators for the period 2021 – 2023 shows increased shares in relation to Blue Book Trainees, AD5-AD8 Officials, AD5-AD8 Temporary Agents, and AD5-AD8 Officials and Temporary Agents (combined). Despite the measures implemented to date, the numbers in some staff categories remain a point for further detailed monitoring and analysis. Alongside the issue of underrepresentation, Austria 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 externally². Member States will be duly informed once adopted.

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

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

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 Austria 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:	Austria	Guiding Rate:	2,6%	80% of Guiding Rate:	2,0%	Population Share:	2,0%
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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	259		261		233		
Blue Book Trainees	23	68%	29	75%	41	108%	↑
JPP Applications	17		22		36		
JPP Selections	1		1		2		
FGIII	13	37%	12	34%	7	20%	↓
FGIV	46	57%	47	55%	44	48%	
SNE	20	88%	23	92%	27	104%	
AD5-AD8 Officials	57	63%	63	72%	63	75%	↑
AD5-AD8 TAs	17	75%	22	74%	30	90%	↑
AD5-AD8 Officials + TAs	74	65%	85	73%	93	79%	↑
AD9-AD14 (non-management) Officials	153	98%	158	99%	152	93%	
AD9-AD14 (non-management) TAs	3	96%	4	120%	6	171%	↑
AD9-AD14 (non-management) Officials + TAs	156	98%	162	100%	158	95%	
AD5-AD14 (non-management) Officials	210	85%	221	90%	215	87%	
AD5-AD14 (non-management) TAs	20	77%	26	79%	36	97%	↑
AD5-AD14 (non-management) Officials and TAs	230	84%	247	89%	251	88%	
AD Officials retirements	10		8		15		

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		2	6	6	5
BB*		2	3	1	0
FGIII			3	0	0
FGIV		0		2	1
SNE		0	0	0	1
AD5-8 TA		0	0		4

Transitions 2023					
Role as of 31/12/2022	Role as of 31/12/2023	FGIII	FGIV	AD5-AD8 TA	AD5-AD8 Off
External Recruitment		1	5	7	1
BB*		0	1	1	0
FGIII			4	1	0
FGIV		0		5	3
SNE		0	0	0	1
AD5-8 TA		0	1		2

*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	145	148	240
Share of Applicants	1,4%	1,4%	1,5%
Number of completed competitions	15	13	0
Laureates	4	5	
Pass Rate	2,8%	3,4%	
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 Austria (AT with COMM for joint measures)

Timeframe: 1st Jan 2021 - 31st Dec 2023

Indicator	Counts	Scope	Additional information / Comments
1. Online and offline information events (webinars and career fairs)	18 events	3800 estimated number of participants	
2. Information campaigns (providing detailed information about competitions, events and EU job options, and promoting EU careers)	21 Advertisements on Career Platforms 300 E-Mails providing detail information (administrative bodies, universities, relevant stakeholders) 24 Events		
2.1 Newsletter	48 editions	153,600 number of views 11,600 subscribers (average throughout the year)	
2.2 Website	NA	2021: 29,158 views 2022: 43,187 views 2023: 44,976 views	
2.3 Social media	NA	LinkedIn: 14,184 views LinkedIn: 6,247 followers FB: 325,094 views FB: 35,000 estimated number of followers	LinkedIn: activities since October 2022
3. Individual training and coaching sessions for EPSO candidates	Approx. 200 sessions	Approx. 1,500 participants (throughout the year)	2021-2023
4. Grants for the College of Europe students	NA	3 students receiving grants per year	Provided by Federal Chancellery since academic year 2022/23
5. Support for Blue Book Traineeship candidates	NA	130 candidate Blue Book Trainees supported	Events and individual support.

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

Joint Measures (initiated by AT/EC/EPSO)	Count	Scope	Additional information / Comments
1. EPSO career student ambassadors 2022/2023	2 people		
2. EPSO career student ambassadors 2023/2024	6 people		10 in total reported by member state for 2023/2024 academic period
3. EPSO career staff ambassadors 2023	8 people		6 in total reported by member State
4. Participation in career fairs by EPSO and other EU institutions in Austria	11 career fairs	825 participants	Specific Events organized by the Austrian EU JOB Information.
5. Concours info & preparation at EU House	70 people		
6. Career Centre Uni Vienna	80 people		
7. School groups in the frame of "EU Erfahren"	75 people		
8. Law Students in EU House	20 people		
9. Academic Forum for Foreign Policy	150 people		
10. Career Calling Fora & Talks	410 people		

Footnote: The data presented above is provided by AT, 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. Bluebook guiding rates	completed	The application of guiding rates to the Blue Book traineeship database is creating a more geographically balanced Bluebook 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 - pilot phase	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 for TA and CA FGIV posts	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. Encouraging 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.

