



TRANSCRIPT:

2016 EPSO Investigators Exams (EPSO/AD/323/16 and EPSO/AD/324/16) Information Webcast

András: Hi and welcome! This is András Baneth speaking from Brussels and it's my pleasure to start the webinar on the EPSO Investigators Competition together with Jan De Sutter who's speaking with me on a different location but will be doing a double act where we'll be sharing with you lots of good and useful information about how to make the most out of this competition.

So here are our pictures. You can see who's speaking. We'll be sharing with you the presentation but not our live feed. We'd like to make the presentation as relevant and helpful to you as possible. I just like to make sure that technology is on our side. I'd like to get a quick confirmation and hi from Jan, if you could check in please?

Jan: Yes, hi András good evening. Everything is fine on this side.

András: Great, thanks very much. So I'll be leading the webinar and we'll have Jan's input from time to time because as you might know if you have already attended any of our classroom courses or if you have taken a coaching session or coaching lesson with him, you would know him as a former president of an EPSO Selection Board. Jan has vast experience in the EPSO system and even beyond that he's my co-author of the Ultimate EU Test Book - Assessment Centre Edition and he has his own book called the Ultimate EU Career Development Book which looks at the strategic aspects of EU career development. So we'll be relying on Jan's expertise at different sections of today's webinar especially when it comes to the Talent Screener and parts of the Assessment Centre.

As always you can type in live questions in the bottom left corner of your page and my colleague Lenke who is kind enough to assist us from Budapest will be conveying these to me and I'll be reading these out to you so we can address these questions live.

Whatever question we may not be able to answer will be followed up in writing after the webcast. But just to make sure what you'll be getting and that you don't miss anything, you will receive within a day the full recording of today's webcast and the Prezi and transcript as well. The transcript might take a little longer but we're definitely going to be sharing that with you along with the recording.

So a few words about our community, which you might know. We have over 80,000 registered users over the years and over 43,000 fans on Facebook. Hope you are a part of that fantastic group of supporters and candidates because we share a lot of useful information the first time on Facebook, even before we put it on our website, and other candidates can engage in conversations with each other as well.



We have lots of test packages to help your preparation with over 25,000 questions in our database with over 17 million questions that have been used over the years, test combinations and simulations and lots of webinars or hundred hours available on our website. A huge number of these completely free of charge and we have trained over 5,000 participants in almost 10 years since we exist.

Today's Agenda

Let's look at today's agenda for the Investigator exams to see the kind of topics we'll be covering. We'll say a few words about what an investigator actually does, why that's a relevant job for you who is listening at this webcast or webinar. Which are the specific positions available? It is important to understand, to set the expectations and make sure that you can choose the right profile, so we'll look at the most important formal aspect of the job, or of the competition. The selection process, which is eligibility and making sure that you have a clear idea whether or not you are eligible. Hope you are. And then we'll look at why this is a great opportunity? Why is it worth spending a lot of preparation time on passing the competition and making sure that you are among the top candidates who is going to be placed on the Reserve List?

Regarding the actual competition and the process, we'll look at the pre-selection test and not just the test but we'll also have a brief discussion about the so-called Talent Screener which is an integral part of any specialist competition like this one.

And then we'll look at the Assessment Centre which is phase two or step two in the selection process. What kind of tests you are required to sit and how you can optimize your performance.

And then we'll say a few words about preparation and we'll be happy to share with you a special exclusive offer which is only available for 48 hours after this webinar has finished so that's something worth looking out for.

So briefly this is the agenda and let's actually get started and see what it means to get a job as a result of this competition as an investigator or a team leader.

Place of Work

And before anything else, you might be interested in the place of work. And especially if you have not had much exposure to jobs in the European Union you might wonder where that beautiful little blue airplane might take you and essentially its two cities - Brussels or Luxembourg, because Strasbourg even though it's officially the seat of the European Parliament, it doesn't employ any significant number of EU staff. So it's essentially Brussels, rather exceptional cases or for this particular competition, it might be Luxembourg.



In Brussels it's essentially OLAF – the Anti-Fraud Office of the European Union and there could be other services of the European Commission that would employ Investigators of some kind. So the place of work is essentially – these places obviously the actual work so in carrying out the duties and the task as a result of this job you probably will be required to travel quite extensively at least within Europe, but even beyond because a lot of these jobs deal with EU funds, the operational and the actual control of this EU funds and you may or may not know EU funds are being spent in the millions not billions even beyond the borders of the European Union. That means there are huge funds being deployed in Turkey, in North Africa, even in the Caribbean area, in large parts of Africa, Asia so wherever development need or any sort of EU tax payer funded money is deployed. Those are potential places where as part of your job you might be required to exercise, to execute a control process.

And then going further where is the selection and recruitment to happen? One important distinction is that EPSO as the European Personnel Selection Office. It's not the European Recruitment Office. So what EPSO does is select candidates and place them on the Reserve List.

Once you are on the Reserve List, that's when EU institutions (the ones that you see on the screen) can actually recruit and these are the seven institutions: European Commission, European Parliament, Council of Ministers, European Court of Justice, European Court of Auditors, Committee of the Regions and Economic and Social Committee.

Formally speaking or institutionally speaking, OLAF would be under the European Commission heading in here even though OLAF – the European Anti-fraud Office – is an independent organisation and it's only just from the government's perspective, it belongs under the Commission but it carries out its work independently.

So this is where the recruitment can actually happen to and if you go further, or before we go further one important point that the actual recruitment is decided at the moment of the recruitment. So you would not know in advance and you cannot indicate your preference in advance which institution or which city or country do you prefer to be placed.

Once you are on the Reserve List and whether recruitment is happening that's when these factors can be considered.

So going further let's look at two competitions have been announced by EPSO and essentially there are three profiles to choose from and there's one competition AD 7 with two different sub-profiles and then you have another competition for AD 9 – for key leaders.

So depending on how much seniority and how much experience you have in the field of anti-fraud investigations and things that we will discuss very shortly what constitutes requirement, you can choose the AD 7 or the AD 9 track.

And within the AD 7 you have a choice to make between profile 1 and profile 2. Very important – application before 28th of June. Do not leave the application to the last moment. A lot of candidates do that mistake that they wait until the last day and then a server can collapse, it might be impossible to reach a website or you missed the deadline last moment. There's nothing more frustrating than doing such a rookie mistake, such an elementary mistake. So I urge you



to apply once you've made up your minds, spend the sufficient number of hours or minutes that are required to filling your EPSO profile, the Talent Screener and submit your application in due course.

And one very important piece of information is that you may only apply to one profile per competition.

Language

Let's look at a little bit the language use which often leads to confusion sometimes frustration. There's a first language and there's a second language. The first language is always an EU official language so one of the 24 official languages of the EU which is not linked to your citizenship. So if you happen to be a Swede, you grew up in Portugal and your passport is Swedish but you think and dream and curse in Portuguese then you're free to choose Portuguese. But if your parents spoke to at home Swedish and you're fluent in Swedish, you are at liberty to choose Swedish. So any of these 24 languages can be chosen. There is no restriction. The only criteria is that you speak that language pretty fluently. The official expression is proficient user. In practice that means you need to be fluent.

And then the second language, you need to be an independent user which is somewhat lesser expectation and that can be English, French or German.

Let me correct myself. It MUST BE English or French or German. Which means that your choice is limited to these three languages and it must be different from your first language. So if you happen to be a Brit whose first language is most likely British, I mean English. British-English just as English anything else, then your second language must be either French or German because you cannot choose English as a second language as well.

And for many speakers of French or German or even English, it causes quite a bit of problem to juggle with the languages and make sure they choose the one that they are most comfortable with.

If I were to advise anyone who has the liberty and the luxury to speak a lot of languages, I'd say choose your first language in which you passively understand the most because the pre-selection tests: the Abstract, Verbal, Numerical Reasoning tests are conducted in your first language and choose a language, a second language in which you can speak fairly confidently because the Assessment Centre will be in your second language.

So first language any of the 24 and then second language: English, French, German as long as it is different from the first one.

And I see that there are some questions coming in which is great so please do type your questions and Lenke will be conveying these to us. And some of these are referring to the Talent Screener something we'll come back to in a moment.



Citizenship

So going further citizenship it's fairly clear, I relate to everyone that you need to have an EU citizenship from one of the 28 countries.

Available Positions

And then let's look at more specifically at the available positions. So for all positions and for all competitions, you need to have an EU citizenship (so that's a general requirement) and more specifically the number of places for each of these competitions that we are discussing right now.

So AD 7 Investigators and there is a profile one with 25 places on the Reserve List and for profile two, there are 15 places, whereas for key leaders which is more for a managerial position, you have 10 places on the Reserve List. So in terms of evaluating your chances, also in light of your own experience this is something to consider. Where you have the most chances? Which job could eventually lead to the highest level of satisfaction?

Why is it a great opportunity?

And then why is it a great opportunity? I probably don't need to preach to the converted because you surely know that an EU job offers a lot of good benefits, there are attractive salaries and from AD 7 position, the net salary is somewhere between 5,000 or 6,000 euros, depending on where you were recruited from, because you might be eligible for an expatriate allowance and you might be eligible for child allowance or household allowance. There are benefits if you're married and you have health insurance and for children, there are European schools and other benefits.

Pre-Selection Phase

So having said that, let's look at the pre-selection phase and what the pass marks and the scores are. So there are essentially three exams for the pre-selection phase which is Verbal Reasoning, Numerical and Abstract Reasoning. The pass mark is an objective criteria. So it's a score that you must pass otherwise you're eliminated from the competition. You are out.

Verbal Reasoning pass mark is 50%. The good news is for Numerical and Abstract Reasoning the score is combined so if you do a lousy job at Numerical Reasoning and an outstanding job for Abstract Reasoning, you can still pass at least the objective pass mark.



Eligibility

How do you actually get one of these jobs? Let's look at the eligibility. What the formal criteria are? For AD 7 profile 1 you need to have a completed university studies with diploma. Here is one very, very important point. The diploma is not limited to relevant studies - meaning as long as it's an officially recognized diploma, it can be accepted. What's more important though of what is more limited is that the number of years of work experience has to be relevant. So it cannot be any kind of work experience or professional experience, it has to be relevant to the job.

The same thing for profile 2 where you need to have a completed degree and the six or seven years of relevant professional experience.

The difference is that if you have a 4-year diploma then six years of professional experience. If you have a 3-year degree then you need seven years of experience. The idea is that these two: the diploma and the experience add up to 10 years.

And then for team leaders you have a diploma, requirement and you need to have at least 10 or 11 years of work experience. The same idea of three years of degree and then 11 years or 4 years of studies and 10 years and here the sum is 14 years and then you are eligible.

Pre-Selection

Now what is pre-selection? The pre-selection it depends on the number of applicants because if the number of applicants is a lot and a lot is defined in the Notice of Competition that if it exceeds a certain threshold, that the Selection Board decides/determines they will have a pre-selection. So there the result of the Abstract, Verbal and Numerical Reasoning is going to be a ranking. So that's different from simply passing those tests, it's actually a ranking in the order of the scores which has an impact whether or not you get invited to the next part.

But if there are not so many applicants in the first place then it's not really a pre-selection. In that case the Abstract, Verbal and Numerical Reasoning tests will be part of the Assessment Centre and in that case all you need to do is pass the objective pass mark. So the 50% for Verbal Reasoning and 50% for the combined Abstract and Numerical Reasoning.

So in the first case, it's really a pre-selection, it's a ranking, it's a competition. If there are not so many candidates then it's actually part of the Assessment Centre.

And then a few words about so the Verbal Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning are all conducted in your first language that's why it's so important which one you choose.



Verbal Reasoning

Verbal Reasoning is a test where you have text passage (section of text) that you need to read and understand. Now there's a question which refers to the text passage, four statements and only one of them is correct. Very straightforward but one important thing to bear in mind, this is a logic test. This is a reasoning test. This is not a reading comprehension test so it's not about your vocabulary and your expertise in a language. This is strictly about logic. And you have 20 questions and 35 minutes, so on average you have 1 minute and 45 seconds per question, which is definitely not a lot and you probably never had 35 minutes of your life fast so fast, as it does when you're sitting a verbal reasoning exam.

What you need to pay attention to just a couple of highlights and obviously if you want to go deeper into the subject we have a lots of webinars, classroom courses, personalised coaching, free tips and tricks, eBooks, everything you can imagine on our website to learn more about the methodology.

What you see here, bear in mind that outside information needs to be forgotten. You need to base your answers strictly on what you read in the text passage but nothing that you may know when reading newspapers or following politics. If it's not in the text, it doesn't exist.

Careful with generalisations so if the text says something about heavy rain falling all day versus, it was bad weather. So if the text talks about the heavy rainfall then one of the options talks about bad weather, does it really correspond? It is really a generalisation or is it something that takes the attention away from the original statement?

Possibility versus fact. Words like may, might, could be and obviously the equivalent of these expressions and words in your own language or one of the 24 EU official languages. Something that can really mislead the candidates because something that might just be a hypothetical situation in the text passage but is described as reality in one of the answer options and that doesn't correspond to the correct answer.

And then similar wording, again synonyms or words which look similar but actually have a different meaning.

Numerical Reasoning

Let's look at the Numerical Reasoning in the nutshell. So Numerical Reasoning is always about charts and tables. In this case you have slightly more time so you have two minutes per question and you have 10 questions that you need to answer in 20 minutes. Here you have chart but the trick is that despite a chart having a lot of fields and cells, you only need a limited amount of information to look at.

In this case we are not going to go into the details of this question but let's say we look at the 2006 production in Germany that's one cell if you compare that to the 2005 collection in the EU total it's another cell. Everything else can be forgotten. So the most important thing in Numerical Reasoning is identifying the relevant pieces of information so



you can eliminate as much as possible. So you can zoom in literally or virtually and look at the most relevant pieces of information but forget everything else.

In terms of how you approach a Numerical Reasoning Test you look at interpreting the data. What is it that they want from me? Which piece of information are they looking for? You reason, you say how do I get that? How do I actually find the answer for that particular question? And the last two parts are the ones that usually take the most time because if you calculate everything immediately then it takes awful of time. Whereas if you can estimate a certain sum you don't need to take the calculator. You don't need to use the onscreen calculator. You can just do a wild guess and find the right answer. Especially if the four answer options are pretty far apart from each other. So if one answer option says 48, the next one says 218, the third one says 2,000 and the last one says 10,000. So in this case they are very far apart so you probably don't need a specific figure to arrive at. What you need is estimation which saves you time.

Abstract Reasoning

Abstract Reasoning is a very special kind of test and funny or not we put here an icon you see a Tetris which is very similar to what Abstract Reasoning is because you operate with shapes and figures. So in this very simple example you see the kinds of shapes and internal shading or circles or other elements that move around then you need to find the correct answer.

The tough thing about Abstract Reasoning is that 10 questions are asked and you need to answer them in 10 minutes. So it's 1 minute per question, that's pretty tough. But there is always an internal logic to it and what you need to look at is dissect, take apart an Abstract Reasoning exam and look at the dot how it moves, look at the square how it moves. And perhaps determine how they move in relation to each other or independently and there is usually some shaded element, usually there is some movement within a grid of within a picture and sometimes the two elements are related to each other.

So in this case the dot is moving downwards and then backwards and then the square has its own logic how it moves as well.

Talent Screener

Now let's spend a little time with the Talent Screener because a Talent Screener is a unique thing to all specialist competitions and it's an important part of pre-screening candidates whether they have the professional qualifications.

So at this point I'll pause for a second and I'll ask Jan to say a few words about Talent Screener having been on the other side of the story a few years ago when he was actually evaluating answers for some competitions where candidates put in information into the Talent Screener.



Jan: Yes, thank you András. So the Talent Screener like András already said it is indeed a pre-selection tool but it is even more than that because depending on the score you got in your Talent Screener, you will be invited to the Assessment Centre or not because the number of people who are actually invited to the assessment centre is usually limited to three times the number of positions to be put on the Reserve List. Only the people with the highest score on the Talent Screener will be invited to the Assessment Centre - provided of course that they meet the eligibility criteria.

The easiest way to explain what a Talent Screener is, it's an alternative format of your CV. An alternative format, why? Because a CV is usually a very difficult document to interpret and to score. There are no standardised formats (while you have the Europass format, but that is not really a standard) so there is no standardised format for CVs and usually people put a lot of information on their CV that is not actually relevant to the competition.

So the Talent Screener it is actually a questionnaire and with 9, 10, 11 questions and every question is split in two parts. The first part the answer is either yes or no and the second part is if yes you will explain what your experience or your educational background actually is about.

The very first screening is done by the computer. The computer is simply looking at all the yeses that you have ticked and the appropriate boxes and he multiplies those yeses with the weight of the question at hand. Total score obtained in that way is used as the first - they call it a pre-sift mechanism - to take out those people or those Talent Screener forms that are really eligible, let's say that are on top of the list. Then the second step is manual - the jury they are reading what you have written in B part of your Talent Screener answer. And they are giving you a score depending on a set of criteria they have been establishing beforehand and those criteria are obviously applied in the same way to all the participants.

One important thing to remember is that it is in your interest to have as many yeses as possible in your Talent Screener. Of course I'm not advising you to lie, but as you probably know there are ways of saying yes that may be (how would I say...) more relevant. Let me express maybe differently even if you are not complying 100% according to your own feeling to a yes, I would still advise you to answer yes and maybe try to explain that your experience or the education that you have followed does in some way relate to the experience that you are actually looking for.

András: May I compliment or add something to this. I think of this as a very important point. In the Talent Screener, it's not about modesty just like a CV is not about modesty. So just like Jan said I think this is a crucial point that if you think that certain aspects of your professional career or your background could be relevant in light of a given question then answer yes and expand and explain as best as you can. Because if you say no it immediately lowers your overall score and you don't even give the assessor or don't even give members of the Selection Board to manually evaluate or personally evaluate your answers because the automatic system will exclude you. So the Talent Screener is very familiar, very similar to a CV in the sense that you need to be very conscious and careful how you formulate your answers. It's not just copy pasting a bunch of data into the Talent Screener, but pay attention how you convince those members of the Selection Board that you actually merit a certain number of scores.



So pay a lot of attention to the actual wording and style of the Talent Screener because it can have a major impact with your scores.

Two things:

One is that I wrote a couple of years ago or I think perhaps two years ago a long article about [how to optimise your Talent Screener](#). It's freely available on the website; we will also share it with you in the follow up after this webinar. Make sure that you read that.

Then number two Jan sometimes also is available as a private coaching or other arrangement to help you optimise or write your Talent Screener to make sure that you get the most out of it.

Now before we move on to the next point and I'm sure there will be questions, two or three minutes just to answer some questions that have come in.

Question Block 1

Question: As a Greek speaking Greek and English, I must choose Greek as 1st and English as second language. right?

Answer: Here is one from Philipp who says he speak Greek and English, which language to choose then yes language one needs to be Green and language two English because language two is only from three options and Greek is not among them.

Question: If we answer all 10 abstract and no numerical reasoning question can we pass?

Answer: Here's another one on the Abstract Reasoning, if we answer all 10 abstract questions and numerical reasoning, can we pass? And if the Abstract, Verbal, Numerical Reasoning tests so the psychometric tests are part of the Assessment Centre then regarding the objective pass mark, yes you can still pass because there it's only a pass or not pass question and the Abstract and Numerical are combined and if you have more than 50%, then you're good.

If these tests are a part of the Pre-Selection, again objectively you can pass but realistically you cannot because it's pretty likely that there will be many other candidates who have a better performance than that. So you meet the formal criterion but you're not necessarily among top x number of candidates

Question: Does experience as a financial auditor or internal auditor qualifies?

Answer: Here's another question about eligibility. Does experience in the financial auditor, internal auditor qualify? I'd say it depends on how that's relevant to the questions in the Talent Screener because that's exactly what the Talent Screener is for to establish that relevance. So if you as an internal auditor dealt with relevant topics and you can properly express and convey that then it can qualify.



Question: I have a question on the Talent Screener, maybe you can address during your presentation. It seems to me that the call is tailored specifically for people with backgrounds within a national body (e.g. an Anti-fraud institution). Is any legal experience in investigations on fraud and corruption in general worth being mentioned in the talent screener? Are lawyers expert of criminal law admitted to apply? Is people with experience in these topics with NGOs recommended to apply?

Answer: Here's another question about Talent Screener and maybe Jan you'd be interested in providing your perspective. Let me read it briefly, it's a fairly long question. One of our participants asking that it seems that the Talent Screener tailor specifically for people with backgrounds within national body like an anti-fraud institution but what about legal experience in investigations on fraud and corruption in general. Is it worth being mentioned in the Talent Screener? Our lawyers, experts of Criminal Law or expert in Criminal Law admitted to apply. What is your view on that, Jan?

We may have lost Jan for a second. Let's see if he can come back. Alright, while Jan is fixing the technology let me give my perspective.

So again the approach is you need to be able to convey a good argument that when filling out the Talent Screener you provide all the information that this experience is a relevant experience. So that this experience is related to the job and it's related to the expertise that EPSO is looking for.

You might get the impression that it's more for people in national administrations but then again if you should make a strong case for your own expertise then it all depends on how that's being evaluated.

Good. So I suggest we move on. There are some questions I see but we'll come back to these just in light of time management, we'll get to the next question.

Scoring

So how is the scoring done? We mentioned it briefly so the Verbal Reasoning is from 0-20 the pass mark is 10. And then Numerical and the Abstract is combined so the pass mark is 10 as we discussed before. And then one final point on that is that the tests are eliminatory and do not count towards the tests at the Assessment Centre. So even if these pre-test are part of the assessment centre it doesn't influence your overall score in the Assessment Centre.

Selection Based on Qualifications

Good. Let's go to the next one. Selection based on qualification is pretty much the Talent Screener – is pretty much what we mean by the Talent Screener and if everything goes good meaning you did a stellar job, a great job for the Abstract, Verbal, Numerical Reasoning and your Talent Screener score are as high as humanly possible, you get to the Assessment Centre.



Assessment Centre

There you have five tests. You have 8 general competencies and five tests.

How are those being tested?

You have a Case Study, a Group Exercise, two types of Interviews and an English Comprehension Test. Now the English comprehension test is a little bit of an exception here because the score you get there does not count to the overall score.

So the English language test is only pass or not pass. So 5 points out of 10 and once you do that, that's fine. It's important because some candidates might be sitting the competition, the Assessment Centre in French or German, but even they need to pass the English comprehension test.

Apart from this the classic Assessment Centre tests are the Case Study, Group Exercise and the two Interviews and the 8 competencies are being tested through these exams. The way the Interviews are done is different however. Because the General Competency Based Interview has nothing to do with your future job as an Investigator. It is only about the competencies, such as working with others, resilience, communication, leadership and other competencies which are listed on EPSO's website and we also have extensive materials on how to prepare for these, what is expected of you.

The Specific Competency Based Interview, the one you see on the right side is a bit unique because that is linked to the Talent Screener. That is linked to your answers in the Talent Screener and your professional ability and capabilities to perform the job. So those are questions linked to your professional expertise and your professional background, whereas the other Case Study, Group Exercise and the General Competency Based interview are all related to your general competencies of how well you can organise and prioritise issues or deliver quality and results.

So Assessment Centre is a fantastic and fascinating topic, I'm happy to answer any questions you have and we can talk hours and hours. We actually have two webinars two times 2 hours of webinars discussing in detail these tests and how to best prepare for them.

But for now let's look at the scoring. So each of the 8 competencies is worth 10 points, so altogether you can get 80 points on that and you need to have at least 3 points for competency or at least 40 points in total as a minimum to be considered for eligibility.

And then you have the Field Specific Competency so the domain specific competency interview and that is worth a lot as you can see. Its 120 points in total and you need to have at least 60 so that interview weighs a lot because they are recruiting specialist, specialist investigators so they need to know that you know your stuff.

And then you have the English Language Comprehension test as I mentioned before that's only a pass mark 5 points out of 10.



[Reserve List](#)

So that is the scoring and if everything goes as it should then you end up in the Reserve List which is a list on which the number of successful candidates is pre-established. What you see in the Notice of Competition, that's what we mentioned a little earlier in today's webinar of 25, 20 and 10. It has a validity. For specialist competitions like this one, it usually is valid for more than one year because it's open until a similar competition has its new Reserve List. So that's the time during which you are recruitable. When they are looking at the list and they can hire you from that list. That's the actual recruitment which happens at some of the institutions we have mentioned before.

[Job Interview](#)

So then comes the job interview, which is the actual last part in the journey towards an EU job because they invite you from a Reserve List to showcase your talent.

And the big question is how to get these jobs? And a couple of pointers, few ideas and as I said before we have a vast, vast, vast collection of best practices, tips and tricks, eBooks, videos and targeted preparation tools for you to improve your performance.

You need to practice a lot. This is very similar to a sports performance where you might be able to easily run hundred meters in 10 or 12 seconds but to run the same distance in less than 10 seconds, that's when you need an awful lot of practice. So depending on your preparedness or current ability to perform well in a psychometric test, that determines how much practice you might need. But our general advice is to practice for 8-12 weeks very regular basis whether it's 30 minutes every day or two times two hours every week. It's entirely up to you. Just be consistent and persistent.

And learn methodology. This has its own system just like any sport, just like any other activity in the world, there is a deeper set of rules and knowledge that is worth looking into.

So persistence is key and understanding the methodology as well. So do lots of simulation, do a lot of practice and that should generally improve your performance.

This is a screenshot of our Verbal Reasoning test which is 100% modelled on EPSO's own tests. Even the interface you see here is fairly basic but the very reason that it looks just like the real thing. Same thing with Numerical Reasoning, sometimes you even have two tables that you need to analyse and look into in context and then you have the Abstract Reasoning with five images and you need to look for the next one in the row with various answer options.

So with this in mind I urge you and I encourage you to try many of our free packages and free demo as well, which is in our new website, which was recently redesigned. I'm very happy to share with the fact that we have Verbal Reasoning tests in 16 languages. No one even comes close to this in Europe because 16 languages we have developed over years and had it proofread and checked by hundreds of our users and our customers to make sure that it provides the best



possible tool for your preparation so whether you speak Czech or Spanish or Polish or Bulgarian, you can practice with us.

Numerical Reasoning we have in English, French and German and all the other tests we have in English and French.

The webinars I've mentioned we have lots of free events and free webinars. The recording is always posted on our website so you can look for the FREE Beginner Webinars for Abstract, Numerical and Verbal Reasoning but if you'd like to advance and go further we have a lot of Pro Tips webinars and even on Math Refresher for Numerical Reasoning if your Math knowledge is a little rusty then you have a great way to refresh it. And then lot of free eBooks, tips and tricks and demos that I mentioned before and then a whole range of services to help your preparation including statistics and comparative tools to benchmark yourself against other candidates.

And then the books I mentioned before my The Ultimate EU Test Book which has an Administrator edition brand new one from 2016 and the other one that I had the privileged to co-author with Jan, which is the Assessment Centre edition of the EU Testbook.

And before I turn to the special discount offer, let's look at a couple of questions and I'm told that Jan is back in the system.

Jan give some sign of life if you are technologically connected. Alright, maybe technology is not on our side on that end. But in any case let's look at the questions and I'll pick a few which should be relevant to everyone on this webinar.

So let's see.

Question Block 2

Question: How do we get in touch with Jan, as a coacher?

Answer: How do we get in touch with Jan? Well, through the website you can easily get in touch and he'll be happy to answer questions on the Talent Screener and any other. And this is also relevant to everyone else. We are very happy to help you in any way possible completely free of charge. Just send us a message whether it's sent to me personally or to Jan or our team can help you out, we're always happy to answer within 24 hours.

Question: I am eligible if I work as a civil servant for Finance Minister in fiscal inspections which consist in activities of inspections of taxpayers regarding the way they declare, constitute and pay the taxes to consolidated budget, also my work consist in combating tax avoidance and preparing criminal cases for tax evasion cases?

Answer: So here's another question I'm eligible for work as a civil servant for Finance Administer in Physical Inspections? ...my work is combating tax avoidance and preparing criminal cases for tax evasion cases. As far as I understand this looks very much eligible to me. But for your very specific situation, I'm happy to look into it a little deeper if you send a CV or other information, we can follow up bilaterally.



Question: Is there a time scheduling for this competition. computer based tests, Assessment Centre, ...

Answer: Is there a time scheduling for this competition like computer-based test, assessment centre? So what is the time line? Well as you're aware the deadline to apply is 28th of June, which makes us think that the evaluation of the Talent Screener and then the Pre-Selection tests (if there are pre-selection tests or these might be part of the Assessment Centre) that decision is most likely not going to be taken before the middle or end of September.

I would speculate that given the summer recess and the summer breaks and also at EPSO and with the members of the Selection Board, this most likely will not happen before middle or end of September. So the tests are likely going to take place sometime in October again my disclaimer (that this is speculation at this stage) but based on our past experience this is how it seems likely and the Assessment Centre is probably going to happen towards the end of the year. But EPSO might be able to give you more information if you call them or write them probably in September you will be able to get an update from them.

Question: In the case study will be several people of different nationalities. In the common discussions who chooses the lead language?

Answer: In the Case Study, there will be several of people of different nationalities? In the common discussion, who chooses the lead language? Let's separate two things. One is the Case Study where you are required to analyse and process a bulky set of background files (diverse set of documents) and turn that into some sort of written format usually a report or some sort of executive summary. The Case Study language is always Language 2 so English, French or German and the Case Study's goal is to apply any knowledge that you have so a Case Study is not a knowledge-based test. They are not going to ask you specific definitions or formula or pieces of information. They need you to use your knowledge, not to recite your knowledge. That's an important distinction. But what you probably meant is the Group Exercise. The Group Exercise is part of the Assessment Centre where you have usually six candidates sitting around the table. You are given a background file and you need to discuss it among yourselves. The language again is Language 2 so English, French or German. So the language is determined and the idea in the Group Exercise is that nobody has a specific role to play. So it's not a role play exercise and it's not a concrete driven exercise.

So everybody is equal in a group exercise which makes it difficult - or how do you overcome the challenge of actually shining or showcasing what you know without being too dominant in the group. We also run a lot of classroom courses with Jan's leadership where we simulate Group Exercises and that's fantastic way of actually getting into the mode and understanding the group dynamics of what constitutes good or bad behaviour.

Let's go to the next question. Can you estimate when the pre-selection will take place? I think I've just covered this.

Question: For Verbal Reasoning, shall we first read questions and then the text or vice versa?

Answer: For Verbal Reasoning, what is good approach do we read first the question and then the text or vice versa? Well, I cannot give a generic advice because for some people one version works better than the other but the best thing



is to practice with our tests and see what works best for you. Measure your time, see the results and see which one works best. One important thing nevertheless is when you read the text passage; you can read it fairly superficially. But when you read the four answer options, read it very thoroughly. So don't do the other way around. When you read the answer options make sure that you really concentrate because every word counts and it may change the meaning of the sentence and make it incorrect.

Again we have a lot of free webinars and other eBooks where you can go deeper because there's a lot of depths and lots of science when it comes to understanding Verbal Reasoning and the other tests. What is the best method, how you can save time and read it quickly?

Question: Numerical reasoning in Romanian?

Answer: Numerical Reasoning in Romanian? I wish unfortunately we don't have it but for Numerical Reasoning I would say the language is a secondary consideration. So for Verbal Reasoning language is very important that's why we have so many linguistic versions but for Numerical Reasoning as long as you understand the key basic concept of Mathematics or the expressions in Mathematics, you can definitely practice effectively with English or French or German tests.

Let's see. I'm still looking at the tests and I know that time is approaching so here is the discount code. You're very welcome to use it and share with others while I cover other questions.

Question: Is there any recording of this webinar made available for participants afterwards?

Answer: So is there any recording of this webinar made available? Absolutely! So we'll be sharing the recording, the Prezi and other materials including a link to my article about Talent Screener tips very shortly with everyone.

Question: Are the 6 years of relevant experience calculated in exact days, or there will be flexibility?

Another question. Are the 6 years of relevant experience calculated in exact days or there will be flexibility? That's an interesting question. It's usually calculated quite rigidly so if you started to work somewhere in September and you ended your work let's say the following June it's hard to call it an entire year, though you might give it a try. And this is something we might need to look into but I believe they are fairly formal when it comes to the calculation of such time but then again I'm happy to look into specific details of your case and see whether it really is an issue.

Now, one or two other questions...

Question: András you've just said Case Study is a written exercise. The report is in writing only? No oral presentation of our report / findings / proposals?

Answer: Case study is a written exercise. The report is in writing only. No oral presentation of a report, findings or proposal. Yes, that's a good clarification. So when it comes to the Case Study, it's purely written. It's a standalone exercise in the Assessment Centre. You submit your case study and that's it. On a pragmatic or logistic note, usually the



Case Study actually happens a little earlier. It's not required from you on the day of the Assessment Centre. This is not a general rule. So in some competitions you might have a dedicated day for the Case study and then the actual Assessment Centre a little later. In some cases you might have the Case Study as part of the Assessment Centre day or day and a half that you need to do it on the spot.

When it comes to the oral presentation and I believe there is no Oral Presentation in this particular competition but generally speaking in the Assessment Centre if there is one, again it's a standalone exercise. So in this particular competition you have a Case Study, you have the two interviews and you have the English Language test and the Group Exercise. So there is no Oral Presentation, you only have the interviews and then again one of the interviews, it's about your showcasing your competencies such as resilience and you need to give an example from your life where you overcame a sudden unexpected situation or you need to give an example how you learned something that you could use later in your professional career.

So one part looks strictly at your competencies. The other part looks at the Talent Screener and looks at your professional competencies. But then again neither of these two is considered a presentation.

So very briefly to finish off in respect of everyone's time to make sure we keep within the 60-minute time frame, to confirm you'll get the recording, you get the Prezi and the transcript. The transcript within five days and if you have any questions whatsoever, we're more than happy to answer those. Send it to www.eutrainning.eu through the Contact Form whether it's addressed directly to me or to Jan or any of our team members, we'll be happy to follow up and do use the services and I wish you a lot of luck and a good preparation for this fascinating opportunity to work for the European Union.

Thanks very much. This was András Baneth and Jan De Sutter from Belgium.