

## NOTICE OF INTERNAL COMPETITION

COM/AST-SC2/2022 (SC2)

**Deadline for applications: 22 December 2022 at 12.00 (midday), Brussels time**

The European Commission ('the Commission') is organising an internal competition ('the competition') based on tests under Article 29(1)(d) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union ('the Staff Regulations') and article 82(7) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants to constitute a reserve from which it may recruit new members of the civil service as 'secretaries' in function group AST-SC grade 2 (SC2).

This notice of internal competition and its annexes ('the notice of competition') form the legally binding framework for this selection procedure. In this competition, any reference to a particular gender shall be deemed to refer to any other gender.

**Number of successful candidates sought: 30**

During the selection procedure, you will be invited to sit several tests in accordance with section IV of this notice of competition. The Commission will ensure that the conditions in which candidates sit these tests comply with the recommendations issued by the relevant Public Health Authorities (the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and other international, European and/or national authorities).

### **I. WHAT TASKS CAN I EXPECT TO PERFORM?**

Secretarial, administrative support and clerical tasks, office management and other equivalent tasks requiring a certain degree of autonomy.

Please see **ANNEX I** for further information on the typical tasks performed by secretaries in the Commission.

### **II. AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

**To be eligible you must meet ALL the following general and specific conditions on the deadline for applications.**

#### ***1) General conditions***

Since this is an internal competition, you are presumed to meet all the general recruitment conditions referred to in Article 28 paragraphs b) to f) of the Staff Regulations regarding

officials, in Article 12(2) paragraphs b) to e) of the CEOS regarding temporary agents or in Article 82(3) paragraphs b) to e) of the CEOS regarding contract agents, as applicable.

To be eligible for this internal competition, you must be **a national of a Member State of the European Union (EU)**.

## **2) *Specific conditions***

### **2.1) *Statutory link and administrative status***

You must:

- a) have served for **at least 36 full months, which do not have to be consecutive**, as an official or temporary agent or contract agent at the Commission and
- b) have spent **at least the last 12 full consecutive months** prior to the deadline for applications as an official or temporary agent or contract agent of the Commission and
- c) have spent **at least the last 6 full consecutive months** prior to the deadline for applications as an AST-SC official, an AST-SC temporary agent, a contract agent in FG II of the Commission, **or as any combination of these categories**.

**The following administrative statuses**, within the meaning of Articles 35 et seq. of the Staff Regulations, **are taken into account for the calculation of the required period specified in the paragraph above:**

‘active employment’,  
‘leave for military service’,  
‘parental leave or family leave’  
‘leave on personal grounds’  
‘on secondment in the interests of the service’  
‘on secondment on your own request’.

Periods of employment spent in agencies or other institutions will not be taken into account. Periods of employment spent in the Commission as an interim agent, a member of the auxiliary or local staff, or as a seconded national expert will not be taken into account either.

### **2.2) *Function group and grade***

**On the deadline for submitting applications**, you must be an AST-SC official or an AST-SC temporary agent or a contract agent in FGII in the Commission.

N.B. Any grade awarded to a person during secondment in the interests of the service will not be taken into account for the purposes of eligibility for this competition.

### **2.3) *Qualifications and work experience***

**You must demonstrate:**

1. Post-secondary education attested by a diploma,

**OR**

2. Secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to higher education, followed by work experience relevant to the nature of the duties of at least 3 years,

**OR**

3. a vocational training or work experience relevant to the nature of the duties of an equivalent level.

**Please note that ONLY diplomas that have been awarded in EU Member States<sup>1</sup> or that are the subject of equivalence certificates issued by the authorities of one of these Member States shall be taken into consideration.**

### ***3) Specific conditions – languages***

In accordance with Article 28(f) of the Staff Regulations, you must have knowledge of at least two official EU languages: **a thorough knowledge of one language (minimum C1 level) and a satisfactory knowledge of another language (minimum B2 level).**

Please note that the minimum levels required above must apply to each linguistic ability (speaking, writing, reading and listening). These abilities reflect those of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

(<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>).

In this notice of competition, you must choose one language among English, French or German, to be used for all of the following:

- the application form;
- the computer-based Multiple-Choice Question pre-selection test on knowledge of EU policies and institutions described in section III ‘How will I be selected?’, point 2);
- the written assignment and the oral test, described in section III ‘How will I be selected?’, points 3) and 5);
- communication with the Secretariat of this competition.

**Your language for this competition must be English, French or German, and must always be different from your main language or first language as encoded in Sysper.**

Please see **ANNEX II** for more information on the languages for this competition.

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<sup>1</sup> Including in the UK for Diplomas awarded before the date of entry into force of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, ie, before 31 January 2020.

### III. HOW WILL I BE SELECTED?

#### 1) *Application process*

***You must complete your application form in the language you have chosen as the language for this competition (see section II, point 3) ‘Specific conditions-Languages’.***

When completing your application form:

- fill in all the parts of the application form;
- select your choice of language for this competition (**English, French or German**).

By validating your application, you declare on your honour that you meet all the conditions set out in section II (“Am I eligible to apply?”) above.

**Once you have validated your application you will no longer be able to make any changes. It is your responsibility to ensure that you complete and validate your application within the deadline.**

#### 2) *Computer-based Multiple Choice Question pre-selection Test on knowledge of EU policies and institutions*

If you validate your application within the deadline, you will be invited to sit a computer-based multiple-choice question (‘MCQ’) pre-selection **test on the knowledge of EU policies and institutions**.

Test	Language	Questions	Duration	Pass mark
MCQ on EU policies and institutions	<b>English, French or German</b>	40 questions	75 min	25/40

**This pre-selection test on the knowledge of EU policies and institutions is eliminatory, which means that, in order to proceed to the next phase of the competition you must obtain at least the pass mark indicated in the table above. The mark awarded will not be added to the marks obtained in the subsequent tests nor to the calculation of the overall score.**

All practical information relating to the conduct of this test will be set out in the invitation letter. This test may be taken remotely (online) from your computer or in person.

#### 3) *Written test*

If your application was validated within the deadline, you will be invited to sit the written test that will take place on the same day as the ***Computer-based Multiple-Choice Question pre-selection test on knowledge of EU policies and institutions***.

The written test will consist of:

Test	Language	Maximum Duration	Pass mark
A written assignment ( <u>e.g.</u> , minutes, letter or note).	English, French or German	120 min	30/50

This written test will assess the competencies required to perform secretarial and administrative support duties in the Commission. See ANNEX I for details.

All practical information relating to the conduct of the written test will be set out in the invitation letter. This test may be taken remotely (online) from your computer or in person.

Your written test will be marked **ONLY if you are eligible and if you obtain at least the pass mark in the *Computer-based Multiple-Choice Question pre-selection test on knowledge of EU policies and institutions.***

#### **4) Eligibility checks**

The compliance with the general and specific conditions set out in section II ‘Am I eligible to apply?’, will be checked **ONLY** if you obtain at least the pass mark in the Computer-based Multiple-Choice Question pre-selection test on knowledge of EU policies and institutions.

These checks will be based on the information available in Sysper or, if you choose not to consent access to your Sysper file, on your supporting documents to be submitted before the deadline for applications.

Please see point 1.2 of ANNEX III for details on eligibility checks.

#### **5) Oral test**

**Candidates who reach at least the pass mark in the written test and one of the highest marks, up to a maximum of 3 times the number of successful candidates sought in this competition, will be invited to the oral test.**

Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, all those candidates will be invited to the oral test.

The oral test consists of an interview to test your motivation as well as the competencies required to perform secretarial and administrative support duties in the Commission (as mentioned in ANNEX I).

The oral test will be held in your chosen language for this competition: **English, French or German.**

**The oral test is marked out of 50. The pass mark is 30/50.**

The oral test may be held remotely (online). The practical information relating to the conduct of the oral test will be set out in the invitation letter.

#### **6) Reserve list**

The Selection Board will draw up a reserve list of up to the number of successful candidates sought from those eligible **candidates who have obtained all the required pass marks, as well as the highest overall marks representing the sum of the marks received in the written test and in the oral test.** Names will be listed alphabetically. Where a number of candidates tie for the last available place, they will all be placed on the reserve list.

The reserve list will be made available to the Commission for recruitment procedures.

Inclusion on a reserve list does not confer any right to or guarantee of recruitment.

The reserve list will be valid for **two years counting from the date of its publication in the Administrative Notices.** The Appointing Authority may decide to extend the validity of the reserve list.

#### **IV. WHEN AND WHERE CAN I APPLY?**

**The deadline for submitting your application is 22 December 2022 at 12.00 (midday), Brussels time.**

Apply online following the instructions on My IntraComm at the following address: [AST/SC2 internal competition 2022 \(europa.eu\)](https://ast/sc2.europa.eu)

Please see **ANNEX III** for further information on how to apply.

## ANNEX I

### TYPICAL SECRETARIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT DUTIES

Reporting to an administrator or to an assistant, secretaries will be expected to perform secretarial assistance, support and technical tasks that may vary from one department to another. In general, secretaries provide support to one or several people, departments or units within the Commission, often using IT tools such as word-processing, electronic mailboxes, spreadsheets and databases. A thorough knowledge of these IT tools is therefore required.

The duties performed as a secretary may include:

- preparing files,
- supporting the organisation and coordination of the department's activities (meetings, official travel, diary), answering calls, taking messages,
- managing documents and requests for action (receipt, processing, follow-up, and filing of documents, reports and correspondence),
- preparing, processing, finalising, and checking documents and tables (editing, formatting),
- finding, compiling and disseminating information (updating databases, files)
- providing secretarial support in managing and following up projects, processes and procedures relating to the management of resources,
- drafting notes or minutes,
- providing secretarial and logistics support in organising meetings, events or conferences,
- providing secretarial and administrative support for the delivery of accounting, financial and HR procedures, and IT systems,
- providing assistance, support and logistics for internal and/or external communication and information,
- providing support and logistics for management of equipment and buildings,
- assisting with the preparation of programmes and work programmes,
- providing secretarial assistance, support and logistics for preparation of projects, cases and contracts and monitoring their continuity, contributing to reports and their implementation,
- providing secretarial assistance, support and logistics for the implementation of programmes/projects/cases/contracts,
- providing secretarial and administrative support for calls for proposals/invitations to tender, and calls for expressions of interest, with a view to concluding contracts or agreements relating to grants or monitoring procurement procedures, including the evaluation of tenders,
- providing secretarial assistance, support and logistics for delivery of learning and development activities.

## ANNEX II

### LANGUAGES

The Commission sets out below its reasons for choosing a limited number of official EU languages for the selection based on tests, for the application form and for all communication with the Secretariat of the internal competition. These considerations also explain the procedure used for publishing this notice of internal competition and take account, where necessary, of the implications of the judgments handed down by the Court of Justice of the European Union.

In relation to this, it should be noted that, in its judgment handed down on 3 March 2021, the General Court confirmed that in the context of a notice of competition reserved to officials and staff employed in an institution, the requirement of knowledge of certain languages may be justified in the light of the internal nature of that competition, as candidates are in a position to understand the reasons for the languages required for the tests, and that the Court is able to review the choice of those languages.<sup>2</sup>

The languages for the selection based on tests (English, French or German) for the purposes of this internal competition were chosen because the need to recruit staff of the highest ability, productivity, and integrity has to be balanced with the interests of the service, which require that successful candidates be immediately operational and capable of communicating effectively within the institution in the course of their everyday work in languages which have for decades been those most commonly used by officials and other servants of the Union for internal communication.

Requiring candidates to choose one of these languages for certain stages of the competition is a proportionate means of checking that they possess qualities of the very high standard required in the Commission working environment. Candidates are, by definition, contract agents or temporary agents who are familiar with the Commission and who have an in-depth knowledge of at least one of these three languages.

At the same time, the selected method ensures that no candidate will suffer linguistic discrimination, as all candidates, including those whose main language or first language is one of the three in question, will have to write and speak in another of these three languages during the written and oral tests: there will therefore be no competitive advantage for those whose main or first language is one of these three languages. Indeed, candidates will not be allowed to sit the tests in their main language or first language.

The main language or first language is defined as any of the 24 EU official languages for which candidates produced ‘evidence of a thorough knowledge’ in accordance with Article 28(f) of the Staff Regulations and which is encoded in Sysper as “main language” on the basis of the “mother tongue” declared by the candidate in the application form completed when taking up employment as temporary agent or as first language declared for the competition for officials or for the CAST for contract agents.

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<sup>2</sup> *Barata v Parliament*, T-723/18, ECLI:EU:T:2021:113, paragraph 114, with further references.

Since this notice of competition is not to be published in the Official Journal but within the institution (Article 1(2) and 1(3) of Annex III to the Staff Regulations), it is neither obligatory nor necessary to publish it in all official EU languages in view of the well-established language usage referred to above and of the languages being used for this competition.

## ANNEX III

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The provisions of these general rules apply unless the notice of competition states otherwise.

#### 1. HOW TO APPLY?

Before applying for the internal competition, please check :

- (i) whether you meet **ALL** the general and specific conditions under section II ‘Am I eligible to apply?’ and
- (ii) whether the information about your career in Sysper is correct.

You must apply following the instruction given on My IntraComm at the following address:  
[AST/SC2 internal competition 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

**The deadline for submitting your application is 22 December 2022 at 12.00 (midday), Brussels time.**

**If you have questions concerning your application, please contact the secretariat of the internal competition only via the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu)**

##### 1.1 Online application

The link to the application form is on [My IntraComm](#). By clicking on the link, you will be automatically directed to the application form.

##### 1.2 Eligibility checks

The Selection Board will verify the compliance with the general and specific conditions in one of the following ways:

- a) You agree to give the Selection Board and the Secretariat of the internal competition access to the relevant information in Sysper by selecting the appropriate mention in the application form. In that case:
  - i. either the information available is sufficient to show that you meet all the eligibility conditions laid down, and you will not have to send any supporting documents at the stage of eligibility checks; or
  - ii. the information available is deemed by the Selection Board to be insufficient or not show that you meet all the eligibility conditions laid down in Section II. In this case, you must submit the additional documents to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) by the deadline set by the Selection Board, failing which you will not be admitted to participate in the competition.

- b) You do not agree to give the Selection Board and the Secretariat of the internal competition access to the relevant information in Sysper by selecting the appropriate mention in the application form.

In this case, you must submit the necessary documents to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu), **at the latest on the deadline for applications**, failing which you will not be admitted to participate in the competition. If those documents are deemed by the Selection Board to be insufficient or to not show that you meet all the eligibility conditions laid down in Section II, you must submit any additional documents requested to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) by the deadline set by the Selection Board, failing which you will not be admitted to participate in the competition.

### 1.3 Languages

In your application, you must indicate your main language as encoded in Sysper on the basis of information on the languages of your competition or CAST provided when recruited as an official or as a contract agent or on the form completed upon recruitment as temporary agent.

Candidates are expected to check Sysper languages data before applying for this competition.

The language you choose for this competition must be either English, French or German, and must always be different from your main language in Sysper.

**Before applying, please check if your data in Sysper as regards your languages is accurate and:**

- **if you are an official or a contract agent, if these languages are in line with the languages declared for the competition to become an official or for the CAST selection,**
- **if you are a temporary agent, if these languages are in line with the languages declared in the form completed upon recruitment as your mother tongue and other languages.**

### 1.4 Validation of the application

Once you have filled out your application, you must validate it. After validation, you will receive an application number. **You must state your application number in any correspondence relating to this competition.**

**It is your responsibility to complete your application in time. You are strongly advised not to wait until the last days before applying, since heavy Internet traffic or a problem with the Internet connection may prevent you from submitting your application on time. Once the deadline expires, you will no longer be able to apply.**

### 1.5 Equal opportunities and special arrangements

Should you encounter any accessibility issues when completing your online application, or should you require more information, please contact the Secretariat of the internal competition: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).

If you have a disability or a medical condition that may hinder your ability to sit the tests, please indicate this in your application form and send to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) any information on the type of special adjustments you need. If a disability or condition develops after you have validated your application, you must inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.

Please note that you will have to send a certificate from your national authority or a medical certificate to [HR-ACCESSIBILITY-COMPETITIONS-SELECTIONS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-ACCESSIBILITY-COMPETITIONS-SELECTIONS@ec.europa.eu) in order for your request to be taken into consideration. Your supporting documents will be examined, so that reasonable accommodation can be made where required.

## **2. BY WHOM WILL I BE ASSESSED?**

### **2.1 Selection Board**

A Selection Board is appointed to select the best candidates in the light of the requirements set out in the competition notice.

For certain tests, the Selection Board may be assisted by one or more examiners serving in an advisory capacity.

The Selection Board decides on the difficulty of the competition tests and approves their content, assesses the candidates' compliance with the general and specific eligibility conditions, compares candidates' merits, and selects the best candidates to perform the duties of a civil servant in the light of the provisions of this the notice of competition.

The proceedings of the Selection Board are secret.

The work of the Selection Board is facilitated by the Secretariat of the internal competition.

### **2.2 Conflicts of interests**

The names of the Board members will be published on My IntraComm at the following address: [Selection Board](#).

Candidates, Selection Board members, and the Secretariat of the internal competition are required to declare any conflict of interest that might arise, for example, in cases of a family or a hierarchical link.

A situation that may constitute a conflict of interests must be declared to the secretariat via [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) as soon the person concerned becomes aware of it. Each such case will be evaluated individually and appropriate measures will be taken.

To ensure the Selection Board's independence, except in expressly authorised cases, it is strictly forbidden for candidates or anyone outside the Board to attempt to contact any of its members on any matter related to the competition or the Board's proceedings.

Candidates who wish to state their case to the Selection Board must do so in writing, sending this correspondence to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).

**A breach of any of the rules mentioned above on conflicts of interests could result in a disciplinary action against a Selection Board member or the secretariat staff member and/or in a disqualification of a candidate from the competition.**

All correspondence concerning this competition must be conducted via the functional mailbox of its Secretariat: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu)

### 3. DISQUALIFICATION

You may be disqualified at any stage of the competition if the Appointing Authority finds that you have:

- made false declarations or declarations unsupported by the appropriate documents;
- failed to book or sit one or more of your tests;
- failed to comply with the terms and conditions for testing, specified in the instructions and information made available to candidates;
- cheated or attempted to cheat during the tests, recorded online tests or attempted to manipulate the fair conduct of tests, or compromised the integrity of the competition process in any other way;
- submitted an application in a language other than that/those specified in the notice of competition;
- contacted or attempted to contact a member of the Selection Board of the competition in an unauthorised manner;
- failed to inform the Secretariat via the functional mailbox of a potential conflict of interest with a Selection Board member or with a staff member of the Secretariat;
- signed or written a distinctive mark on anonymously marked written tests.

**Candidates for recruitment by the EU institutions must show the highest possible integrity. In addition to disqualification, fraud or attempted fraud may render you liable to disciplinary proceedings and compromise your eligibility for future selection procedures.**

### 4. COMMUNICATION

#### 4.1 Communication with the Secretariat of the internal competition

For practical and organisational reasons, you must communicate with the administration in English, French or German. **In all communication, you must state your name as given on your application form, the competition number, and the number received when your application was registered.**

Candidates must check the competition dedicated page on My IntraComm regularly to keep track of their progress during the competition. If a candidate cannot do this due to a technical problem or due to the fact that they are no longer working within the Commission, they must notify the Secretariat immediately to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).

The Secretariat of this internal competition reserves the right not to supply information that is already clearly stated in this Notice of Competition, its annexes or on the My IntraComm page dedicated to this competition, including under ‘frequently asked questions’.

The Commission applies the principles of the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour <https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-union/principles-and-values/ethics-and-integrity/code->

[conduct-eu-staff\\_en](#) (as published in the Official Journal). Accordingly, the Secretariat of this internal competition reserves the right to cease any improper (i.e. repetitive, abusive and/or irrelevant) correspondence.

## **4.2 Access to information**

As a candidate, you have a specific right of access to certain information concerning yourself directly and individually, granted in the light of the obligation to state reasons, in order to allow for an appeal against rejection decisions.

This obligation to state reasons must be balanced with the confidentiality of the Selection Board proceedings, which ensures the Boards' independence and the objectivity of the selection. Due to confidentiality, attitudes adopted by members of Selection Boards regarding the individual or comparative assessments of candidates cannot be disclosed. These access rights are specific to candidates in an internal competition and legislation on public access to documents may not confer on them rights broader than those specified in this section.

Requests will be dealt with taking account of the confidential nature of the Selection Board proceedings under the Staff Regulations (Annex III, Article 6).

Accordingly, if you so request, you can be given additional information relating to your participation in the competition. You should send any request for information in writing to the Secretariat of the internal competition via the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) **no later than one month after you are notified of your results**. You will receive a reply within one month of receipt of the request.

### **4.2.1. Disclosure of information**

You will receive the following information after each stage of the selection process:

- eligibility: whether you were admitted; if not, the eligibility conditions that were not met;
- MCQ tests: your results and a grid with your answers and the correct answers by reference number/letter. Access to the text of the questions and answers is explicitly excluded;
- written tests: your results if you are not amongst the candidates invited to the next phase;
- oral tests: your results

As a rule, the Selection Board does not communicate to candidates any source texts or test assignments, as these may be intended for re-use in future competitions. For certain tests, however, it may exceptionally publish the source texts or source information on the tests on My IntraComm.

### **4.2.2. Information on request**

You may request an uncorrected copy of your answers in the written test where the content is not intended for reuse in future competitions. Your corrected answer papers and the details of the marking of tests, in particular, are covered by the secrecy of Selection Board proceedings and will not be disclosed.

The Selection Board will endeavour to make as much information available to candidates as possible, in accordance with the obligation to state reasons, the confidential nature of Selection Board proceedings and the rules on the protection of personal data. All requests for information will be evaluated in light of these obligations.

Any requests for information should be submitted via email to [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) within 5 working days of the date of publication of your results.

### **4.3 Protection of personal data**

Your personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data [repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001].

**For more information, please refer to [AST/SC2 internal competition 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)**

## **5. QUERIES, COMPLAINTS AND OTHER ISSUES**

**If at any stage in this selection procedure you consider that a particular decision was detrimental to your interests, you can take one of the following actions, as appropriate.**

**You are encouraged to submit your queries, requests and complaints to the Secretariat in English, French or German, which would enable the secretariat to assist you and reply faster.**

### **5.1 Technical and organisational issues**

If, at any stage of the selection procedure, you encounter a serious technical or organisational problem, in order to allow us to investigate the issue and take corrective measures, please inform the Secretariat of the internal competition, within 3 calendar days and **exclusively via the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).**

For issues with your application, you must contact the Secretariat of the internal competition immediately and in any case before the deadline for applications via the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).

Queries sent less than 5 working days before the deadline for applications might not be answered before that deadline.

If the problem occurs during a specific test at a test centre or during remote testing, please:

- alert the invigilators or the contact service mentioned in your invitation immediately so that a solution can be investigated during the test itself. In any case, ask them to record your complaint in writing; and

- contact the Secretariat of the internal competition no later than 3 calendar days after your tests via the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu) with a brief description of the problem.

For problems occurring outside test centres (e.g. issues with access to testing platform, or any technical issues during remote testing), please follow the instructions given in the invitation to that test.

## 5.2 Complaints about MCQ test questions

If you have reasons to believe that an error in one or more of the questions/items in the multiple-choice-question (MCQ) test affected your ability to answer, you may ask for the question(s) concerned to be reviewed.

The Selection Board may decide to “neutralise” the question(s) containing the error, *i.e.* cancel the question(s) concerned and redistribute the points initially allocated to that/those question(s) among the remaining questions of the test. Only those candidates who received the question(s) at stake will be affected by the recalculation. The marking of the tests remains as indicated in the relevant sections of the notice of competition.

To introduce a complaint about MCQ test question(s), you should:

- (a) contact the Secretariat via the functional mailbox: [[HR-COM-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-SC2@ec.europa.eu)] within 3 calendar days counting from the day following that on which you took the test in question,
- (b) describe the question(s) concerned as accurately as possible, and
- (c) explain the nature of the alleged error(s).

Complaints submitted after the deadline or complaints which do not clearly describe the contested question(s) and/or alleged error(s) will not be taken into account. In particular, complaints merely pointing out alleged issues of translation, without specifying the problem, will not be taken into account.

## 5.3 Requests for review

**Within 5 working days of the date on which you are informed of the decision of the Selection Board**, you may send a letter requesting a review, indicating clearly the decision you wish to have reviewed and stating the grounds for your request by email to the functional mailbox: [HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-COM-2022-SC2@ec.europa.eu).

You will receive an acknowledgment that your request has been received.

The Secretariat of the internal competition will send the request for review to the Selection Board, who will examine it and inform you of its decision as soon as possible. Requests received

after the deadline will not be taken into account.

In all correspondence, you must quote your name as given on your application form and the competition number.

You can request a review of any decision taken by the Selection Board which establishes your results, determines whether or not you can proceed to the next phase of the competition, or affects your legal status as a candidate in another way.

No request for review is possible in relation to MCQ test results (see section 5.2 above).

Requests for review may be based on alleged material irregularities in the competition process, and/or non-compliance - by the Selection Board or by the Secretariat - with the Staff Regulations, the notice of competition and/or with the case law. In other words, you must be able to demonstrate that specific manifest errors of assessment were made or that procedural breaches have occurred.

The simple fact that you may disagree with the evaluation by the Selection Board of your performance in a test or of your qualifications and/or experience is not sufficient to claim that the Selection Board made an error of assessment. The Selection Board enjoys a wide margin of discretion in making value judgements about candidates' performance, qualifications, and experience.

## **5.4 Appeal procedures**

### **5.4.1 Administrative complaints under Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations**

**As a candidate, you may lodge a complaint under Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union.** You should send only one copy of the complaint:

- by email, preferably as a PDF file, to the functional mailbox HR MAIL F.6 ( [HR-MAIL-F6@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-MAIL-F6@ec.europa.eu) ); (for candidates working in the Commission at the time of the complaint, only Secem encrypted emails are accepted)

The **three-month time limit for lodging a complaint** laid down in Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union begins on the day of notification of the act adversely affecting the complainant.

Administrative complaints received after the deadline set in Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations will be considered inadmissible.

The purpose of the administrative complaints procedure is to verify if the legal framework and procedural rules of the competition have been respected. You should note that the Appointing Authority cannot overturn a value judgment made by a Selection Board and has no legal powers to change the substance of a Selection Board's decision.

The General Court has consistently held that the wide discretion enjoyed by selection boards is not subject to review by the Court unless the rules which govern their proceedings have clearly been infringed.

## **5.4.2 Judicial appeals**

As a candidate, you may submit a judicial appeal under Article 270 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 91 of the Staff Regulations to General Court of the European Union. Please consult the website of the General Court (<http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/>) for more information.

## **5.4.3 Complaint to the European Ombudsman**

You may lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman as all EU citizens are entitled to do under Article 228(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in accordance with the conditions laid down in Decision 94/262/ECSC, EC, Euratom of the European Parliament of 9 March 1994 on the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties (OJ L 113 of 4 May 1994, p.15). To do so, you need to create an account or you can submit a complaint by post (1 avenue du President Robert Schuman - BP 403 - F-67001 Strasbourg Cedex). Please consult the website of the European Ombudsman (<https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/make-a-complaint>) for more information.

Please note that complaints lodged with the Ombudsman have no suspensive effect on the time limit for bringing appeals in court or launching administrative proceedings. Please note also that, under Article 2(4) of the Decision on the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties, any complaint lodged with the Ombudsman must be preceded by the appropriate administrative approaches to the institutions and bodies concerned (including the complaints procedure set out in Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union).

## **6. SECURITY CLEARANCE**

Pursuant to Article 10(2) of the Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information<sup>3</sup>, all individuals whose duties may require them to have access to the EU classified information shall be security authorised to the relevant level (EU SECRET) before being granted access to such EU classified information.

Given that the European Commission regularly handles sensitive and classified information requiring a high degree of confidentiality, it is within the interests of the service that staff members whose duties may require them to have access to sensitive and classified information have the appropriate security clearance to the relevant level (EU SECRET).

Therefore, the laureates of this competition may be asked, as a pre-requisite for recruitment for certain posts, to submit themselves to the security clearance procedure provided for in the above-mentioned Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444.

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<sup>3</sup> Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015, OJ L 72, 17.03.2015, p. 53.

Laureates of this competition who apply to such posts are therefore understood to be prepared to undergo security clearance procedure under the Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444. In all cases, these aspects will be clearly indicated in the vacancy notice for the post concerned.

The security clearance procedure is carried out by a National Security Authority of the Member State of the candidate's nationality. The security clearance procedure may vary considerably between Member States. Applicants are advised to inform themselves about the procedure before applying to this competition.