



ONLINE EU TRAINING

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# 87 Questions

## You Always Wanted To Ask

### About the **EPSO Exams**



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# General Questions

## Question 1

**What is the age of the average applicant for the EPSO exams?**

It is hard to tell, though various sources mention that it is around 30-34 years of age. Some candidates are more senior while others have just graduated – there is no rule.

## Question 2

**Which one should an applicant read first if facing a verbal or numerical reasoning question: the question or the answers?**

In both test types, reading the question (and the answer options) first will allow you to focus on the relevant parts of the input data (in verbal reasoning: the text; in numerical reasoning: the table).

Also, in numerical reasoning, glancing at the answer options will allow you to determine what level of accuracy you need to make your calculations (how far apart are the answers if they are numbers?) If you need further advice, check our [Tips & Tricks](#) section or sign up for one of the [methodology webinars](#) we run!

## Question 3

**If you train on paper for the Verbal and Numerical Reasoning tests, will you be slower than taking the test on a computer?**

All pre-selection exams from 2010 are done on a computer, so this should be borne in mind. To answer the question, nevertheless paper makes it a bit easier to read texts and there you can also underline certain words, which is not possible on screen (though you will be given notepaper and pen at the exam centre).

# General Questions

## Question 4

**Are multiple answers possible for a question?**

No, under the current EPSO system only one answer is possible for a question, though for Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs), you will need to give the “most effective” and “least effective” answer for every question/situation you are presented.

## Question 5

**Does EPSO deduct a point for incorrect answers in the pre-selection tests?**

Unlike the French and some other exam systems, EPSO does not deduct any points for wrong answers, so guessing is even more worth it if you are unsure of which answer to choose.

## Question 6

**Which way is better to prepare for the EPSO pre-selection: doing every form of reasoning daily or focusing one day on verbal, than a week on numerical etc?**

A mixture of tests for each study/ practice session you plan is recommended by the experts. This will help alleviate boredom and loss of motivation as well, in addition to more closely modeling what you will face at the exam. Some methodology tips can be found [here](#).

# General Questions

## Question 7

**Can you recommend any links for training material?**

Obviously a good place to prepare is the Online EU Training website ;) at Online EU Training we offer Verbal Reasoning (currently) in 11, Numerical and Abstract Reasoning in two languages! Click [here](#).

If you are looking for something offline, the Ultimate EU Test Book is the #1 Bestseller on the subject, containing practice tests as well as abundant methodology. Click [here](#).

## Question 8

**Are the EPSO tests adaptive in terms of difficulty as in the case of GMAT?**

At the time of writing, the tests are not adaptive. EPSO test forms are fixed before the exam event, and the test questions put to candidates do not 'react' to the proportion of correct or incorrect answers you give.

## Question 9

**Can we pass through a question and go back afterwards?**

Yes, but limiting this to a minimum is recommended – navigation takes up a lot of valuable test taking time.

# General Questions

## Question 10

**If I finalize one of the 3 categories faster than the allocated time, can I “use” the saved time on one of the other categories?**

Unfortunately no, all tests are timed separately.

## Question 11

**Won't there be any questions related with general EU knowledge in the pre-selection test?**

No, the pre-selection now is purely cognitive – no knowledge-based tests will be asked. A few, very limited number of exams nevertheless may ask for EU knowledge but this affect less than 5% of all EPSO competitions.

## Question 12

**How does the level of difficulty of the EPSO's sample questions measure up to the real-life EPSO questions?**

The sample tests on EPSO's website are [here](#). Based on the experience of the users of Online EU Training, they are a good measure of the difficulty of the real test, although some users say that the abstract reasoning tests were more difficult than the samples.

# General Questions

## Question 13

**Does the difficulty of the questions that are used in your methodology webinars differ from the ones on the Online EU Training website?**

The questions on the Online EU Training website cover a wide range of difficulty levels so you can practice on diverse material. In the webinar, tests are selected based on two factors:

- easy ones to better demonstrate a point,
- complex ones so you get a better idea of what you can expect.

## Question 14

**Do you mark your answer each time or at the end of each part?**

You mark your answer for each question, and then you submit the test at the end. Don't worry; there will be a tutorial in the test centre before you start the test.

## Question 15

**Do more women or men pass the pre-selection?**

The tests are designed by professionals and psychologists in such a way that they must be gender-neutral. Regarding the statistics of men vs women, it depends on the given competition, the required profile or diplomas etc., for example usually many more men would apply for and pass IT-related competitions but slightly more women tend to apply and pass communication or public administration exams.

# General Questions

## Question 16

**How many answer options do the different question types have?**

Verbal and numerical reasoning has 4 answer options, while Abstract reasoning has 5, though this may change over time if EPSO changes its policy. A good place to ask for this kind of information is Online EU Training's facebook page [here](#).

## Question 17

**Does Online EU Training offer practice material?**

Yes – please check our website [here](#).

## Question 18

**What identification do I need to bring to the test?**

This should be detailed in the letter / invitation / message you receive from EPSO, usually your passport or national ID.



# General Questions

## Question 19

**What is the best way to prepare for the EPSO exams?**

The most important thing is to practice regularly – preferably every day. At first, don't focus on timing, but generally become familiarized with the tests – take your time, read the texts (Verbal Reasoning), analyze the tables (Numerical Reasoning) or the figures (Abstract Reasoning), and so on. Once you feel confident that you are conscious about what to pay attention to when looking at a test item, you build up your speed by timing your tests and gradually decreasing the time you give yourself to answer a set number of questions. You can find tons of methodology advice on Online EU Training.

## Question 20

**Is it a good idea to focus on few questions, and then guess the last questions as time is running out, and we don't have time to think about them?**

No, don't get bogged down with difficult questions – do not allow yourself to spend more time on one question than what is allocated – if you still run out of time, however, do make guesses – no penalty for wrong answers.

## Question 21

**Where can someone find some tests to practice for the EPSO exams?**

There are thousands of practice tests available on Online EU Training – feel free to check them out on our website, in the [EPSO Tests](#) menu.

# General Questions

## Question 22

**What is the average number of times people take an EPSO test to pass it?**

This is very hard to answer, but let's look at it this way. If we assume that on average, 20 people apply for one spot on the reserve list, it is simply impossible for everyone to get it right the first time. If you should be one of the ones who does not make it the first time (which we hope will not happen), this really depends on the number of times you are willing to try. As a very subjective opinion, with the proper amount of preparation and motivation, you should be able to succeed already for the first time. Although the number of candidates is always very high, not everyone will put so much effort in it – practicing, attending trainings, and so on. Moreover, make sure to apply for a more 'specialist' profile, ie where a specific qualification or diploma or experience is required (e.g. audit or external relations or other), provided of course you meet the eligibility criteria. The reason for this is the more specialist the profile, the less people apply, so you greatly increase your chances.

## Question 23

**Regarding the three parts of the exam, are there any breaks in between?**

Yes, there is a small 5 minute break between the different tests but you can choose to keep going immediately.

# General Questions

## Question 24

**Is it better to spare time to answer right to questions or try to answer ALL questions even if we don't know the answers?**

Quality is of course very important and you should aim to provide the most accurate answer, however, also make sure you don't leave any question unanswered since there is no penalty for wrong answers so you may be lucky enough to get the answer right and get more points.

## Question 25

**Do you have to pass each test to get to the next one?**

Technically, you will sit ALL tests in the pre-selection. But if you fail any of them (i.e. you don't reach the minimum pass mark, which is usually 50% of the score in a given test or in the case of Situational Judgment Tests, 60% of the total score), you are out of the competition. That is the importance of the pass mark. On the other hand, for AST3 and usually for Specialist competitions EPSO determines a pass mark for the numerical and abstract reasoning tests together, so theoretically you can still pass if you get one point on the numerical reasoning and a very high score for the abstract reasoning.

# General Questions

## Question 26

**How can you prove your work experience if you have worked for clients as a freelancer? What sort of proof will you be required to show then?**

You must have paid some taxes or social security after your income (or you may be registered as a freelancer or self-employed), so any certificate that proves this and/or client letter would be convincing documents.

## Question 27

**Is over-qualification a problem? I have been told that could be a reason for not hiring?**

This can be an issue at the actual recruitment (not in the EPSO selection procedure), but for the EPSO exams this cannot prevent you from getting on the reserve list. Even at the recruitment you can convince the EU institutions that you are fine with their offer despite having a higher qualification than the specific job profile may require.

## Question 28

**In the Assessment Center, do they ask questions about the EU?**

Not directly, but the case study and the oral presentation will be related to your exam profile so it is much recommended to know the “basics”. The main focus of the Assessment Centre is the evaluation of your ‘competencies’ such as communication, working with others, resilience, learning and development, leadership and others via exercises such as a structured interview, oral presentation, group exercise and other tasks. For more information about the Assessment Centre, check this [link](#).

## Question 29

**Are the numerical and abstract reasoning questions for linguists easier than for example economists or public administrators, or is it simply adapted by the percentage you need to answer correctly in order to pass?**

There are two factors which decrease the weight of these two tests for linguist candidates:

- the pass mark is usually 40%,
- the numerical and abstract tests are almost always marked together – you can pass by achieving a higher score in one test and a lower one in the other.

## Question 30

**Are there Situational Judgment Tests for translators?**

No (though this might change in the future). According to the information we have, the reason EPSO decided against administering a Situational Judgment Test for this year's linguist competitions is the fact that candidates already have a lot of tests to sit (three verbal reasoning tests, for example).

## Question 31

### Scoring, pass mark and invitation to the EPSO Assessment Centre for Translators and Interpreters:

#### Translators

The conditions for being admitted to the Assessment Centre are the following (according to 2011 and 2012 exams, this might change in the future):

- you must achieve the pass mark in the admission tests:
  - Verbal - Reasoning (main language): 50% (10 out of 20)
  - Numerical + Abstract Reasoning (aggregate): 40% (8 out of 20)
  - Verbal Reasoning (second language): 50% (5 out of 10)
  - Verbal Reasoning (third language): 50% (5 out of 10)
- you must meet all other general requirements:
  - you must also be among the X best candidates
- usually, 2.5-3 times as many candidates are invited as there are places available for the number of places available for each profile
- example: at a recent Danish translator competition the places available were (option 1 +2): 41 and EPSO was planning to invite approximately 120 people to the Assessment Centre

#### Interpreters

The conditions for being admitted to the Assessment Centre are the following (but check your specific notice of competition as this may vary from one exam to another):

- you must achieve the pass mark in the admission test
- Verbal Reasoning (main language): 50% (10 out of 20)
- Numerical + Abstract Reasoning (aggregate): 40% (8 out of 20)
- Verbal Reasoning (second language): 50% (5 out of 10)
- Verbal Reasoning (third language): 50% (5 out of 10)
- you must meet all other general requirements
  - for AD5 positions, you must pass the intermediate interpreting test
  - you do not have to be among the best X candidates – all candidates who fulfil the above will be invited to the Assessment Centre



## Question 32

**I will take the exam in English and French  
while my native language is Romanian.  
Do you think I will have a problem with that?**

No, as long as the language that you choose as your first is near-native level. It is not linked to your citizenship (that would be discriminatory) so it is up to you which one you choose as your first and second language.



# Administrators (AD)

## Question 33

**How many applications has EPSO received for the competition?**

51 639 applications were validated in 2010 for 323 places on the reserve list and in 2012 there were 45357 applicants for 296 places on the reserve list. The number of people passing to the Assessment Centre is around 1000 in both cases.

## Question 34

**Are we in competition with the entire pool or only with the candidates in the different profiles?**

In the pre-selection phase, you are in competition with the entire pool of the given exam (all profiles have the same reference numbers, and the pre-selection is considered a single pool). The reason for this is that the pre-selection test is a cognitive test, not related to your professional skills.

## Question 35

**What is the next phase in the EPSO selection procedure for administrators after the pre-selection?**

The next phase is the Assessment Centre. Please see a short summary of the entire process [here](#).



# Administrators (AD)

## Question 36

**Do specialists have greater chances to succeed in the EPSO administrators competition?**

If the questions refers to the various profiles, then the answer is 'yes'. Based on statistical evidence, the more 'specific' a profile is (meaning that not any diploma would qualify you to apply but only relevant degrees are accepted for eligibility), the less people there are for each spot on the reserve list. To read about this in more detail and see some concrete numbers, visit the following [link](#).

## Question 37

**Is Human Resources included in European Public Administration (EPA) profile?**

2010 it was but it is not included in each annual cycle.

## Question 38

**Can you clarify again the amount of time available for the EPSO AD pre-selection tests?**

You have 35 minutes for 20 Verbal Reasoning tests, and then 20 minutes for 10 Numerical Reasoning tests. After this, you can have an optional 10-minute break, followed by 10 Abstract Reasoning tests in 10 minutes, and, finally, 30 minutes for 24 Situational Judgment tests.

# Assistants (AST) & CAST exam

## Question 39

**What do you think is the best trick for the Accuracy test questions?**

Read the answers first, and then the questions, then check the text before the icons. If done in a different order, you may get confused of what represents what.

## Question 40

**How are the EPSO CAST Pre-selection tests scheduled?**

Please read the official information from EPSO:

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES The admission tests to this open competition will be structured as follows:

- Candidate arrives at the test centre: 30 minutes before the test appointment,
- Identity check, candidate signs in,
- On-screen tutorial: 5 minutes,
- Admission test a): 35 minutes,
- Admission test b): 20 minutes,
- Break (optional): 10 minutes maximum,
- Admission test c): 10 minutes,
- Admission test d): 30 minutes,
- Satisfaction survey (optional),
- End of admission tests, candidate signs out.

# Assistants (AST) & CAST exam

Admission test a): A test comprising a series of multiple-choice questions to assess your general aptitudes and competencies in terms of verbal reasoning. Time allowed: 35 minutes during which you will have to answer 20 questions.

Admission test b): A test comprising a series of multiple-choice questions to assess your general aptitudes and competencies in terms of numerical reasoning. Time allowed: 20 minutes during which you will have to answer 10 questions.

Admission test c): A test comprising a series of multiple-choice questions to assess your general aptitudes and competencies in terms of abstract reasoning. Time allowed: 10 minutes during which you will have to answer 10 questions.

Admission test d): A test comprising a series of multiple-choice questions to assess your judgement as regards various situations. Time allowed: 30 minutes during which you will have to answer 20 questions.

## Question 41

**Do the different Function Groups of the EPSO CAST selection differ in difficulty?**

Yes, CAST exams are usually categorised into FGII and FGIII, and the exam for FGII positions are slightly easier.

# Assistants (AST) & CAST exam

## Question 42

**Are the questions of the EPSO CAST exams easier than the questions of the Administrators' pre-selection?**

Yes, CAST verbal & numerical tests are easier than the Administrators' (AD) pre-selection test. This is because most CAST positions are equivalent to the Assistant (AST) positions, and AST exams have easier tests than AD exams.

## Question 43

**All those passing the EPSO CAST selection tests with 50% right answers are considered eligible for CAST?**

Here is the official word from EPSO:

For EPSO/CAST/01/2010, the rules were the following: "Candidates who pass the verbal and numerical reasoning tests will be invited to sit tests on EU knowledge and specific competencies within the profile selected."

And for EPSO/CAST/02/2010: "You will be notified of the results of the tests from the end of July 2010 via your EPSO account. Three weeks after the candidates have been notified of the results, the information provided in the online application forms of those candidates who have passed the tests will be accessible in the database to recruiting departments."

This means that for EPSO/CAST/01/2010, a second round of testing took place. For EPSO/CAST/01/2010, all those who passed and were otherwise eligible were automatically placed on the reserve list.

# Assistants (AST) & CAST exam

## Question 44

**Do I get the 50% if I answer all verbal reasoning questions correctly and all the numerical reasoning questions *incorrectly*?**

Based on the above information, yes.

## Question 45

**How many points does answering the 20 verbal reasoning questions correctly get you?**

The verbal reasoning test can get you 20 points, the abstract reasoning test 10 points, and the numerical reasoning test also 10 points. In other words, the number of points you can get is equal to the number of questions in the test.

The pass mark is 50% for verbal reasoning, and 50% for abstract and numerical reasoning together. This means that you can score 30% on abstract reasoning and 70% on numerical reasoning, and you will reach the pass mark. Please also note that the pass mark does not mean you can advance to the next phase, for that, you also need to be in the group of X best candidates.

## Question 46

**Is it easy to get to the AD level once you are an AST3 in the European Commission?**

Passing from AST3 to AD is possible in 3 ways: by passing an open competition like anyone else, or via a special internal procedure called "certification" or also via internal competition that is usually announced every 5 years for EU officials and temporary agents.

# Verbal Reasoning

## Question 47

**If you chose a wrong answer would you be deducted point from the total score?**

No, there is no penalty for wrong answers, so always guess if you do not know the correct answer.

## Question 48

**If a verbal reasoning question is rather difficult is it better to move to the next one?**

Yes, there is no extra point for solving the harder questions. If you cannot figure out how to approach the test item in the first 30 seconds, just move on to the next one. If you save time on the easier ones, you can always come back to think more about the harder ones.

## Question 49

**On the contrary, if the first answer is the right one, I would not analyse the remaining options, would this be advisable?**

If you are confident in your assessment, by all means, mark the supposedly correct answer. Once you have the necessary routine, this is not excessive risk-taking.

On the other hand, if you are not sure which answer option might be the correct one, you can use the process of elimination – discarding all those answer options that feel the least correct (ie. insufficient information or patently wrong statements), hoping to be left with only one.

# Verbal Reasoning

## Question 50

**In verbal reasoning, do you think that 35 mins are enough?**

This is a subjective question, but I would say that if you apply certain methods (reading the question and answers first instead of the passage, which will allow you to focus only on the relevant parts of the text) then the roughly 100 seconds you have for a questions should be sufficient.

## Question 51

**Are the answer choices of the verbal reasoning questions in the EPSO pre-selection shown at the same time as the question or after the paragraph?**

Everything related to one test item will be shown at the same time.

# Numerical Reasoning

## Question 52

**Does EPSO provide the applicants a physical calculator or should we take our own?**

We at Online EU Training recommend you avoid using the calculator as much as you can by applying estimation and proportions whenever possible. When that is not possible, the calculator comes into play. A physical calculator has the benefit of being easier to handle and you indeed get one, though these are very basic types. You also have access to an on-screen calculator that may require a bit of familiarisation to use efficiently, though it is very similar to the ones we offer on our online test practice interface.

## Question 53

**Does EPSO use numerical reasoning questions where the table is actually irrelevant and you have all the information you need in the question itself?**

No, this type of numerical reasoning questions is not common in the EPSO pre-selections, as it would be quite a trick question, which EPSO is not known to do. If there is a table, you can be sure you will need at least one piece of information from that table.



# Numerical Reasoning

## Question 54

**Are the examples on EPSO's website and your website taken from previous exams?**

Verbal and Numerical Reasoning tests have a long history in EPSO exams, and even the topics of the texts or the statistics may change a bit, the methodology remains the same. Abstract Reasoning tests are "new" (since 2010), but EPSO put a lot of effort into testing and optimizing the tests before they were publicly launched, with representative samples and focus groups. The examples you see online on EPSO's site are usually from previous exams, the ones on our website are closely modelled on EPSO's ones but they were independently authored by psychometric experts.

## Question 55

**As a British Citizen, it will not be possible to take the test in English but in another EU language? Is that correct?**

It doesn't depend on your citizenship, rather on your declared first language. Please see the answer above in this document for the general principle on languages.

# Numerical Reasoning

## Question 56

**Does the level of difficulty of the numerical reasoning questions depend on the specialization chosen? For i.e. those who chose Economics or Audit, will they have a harder test while lawyers have an easier one?**

In short: no. The pre-selection phase is not designed to measure professional skills, but rather a general aptitude to comprehend complex texts (Verbal Reasoning), work with numbers and identify trends and relationships (Numerical Reasoning) and perform well in new and unfamiliar tasks (Abstract Reasoning, measuring your generic problem-solving capacity).

EPSO has many chances to measure your professional skills at later stages in the Assessment Centre. One example is the Case Study exercise. In the Case Study exercise, economists sometimes need to work with numbers, data and economic indicators at a much higher level than in numerical reasoning, while lawyers are presented legal texts and exercises laden with complex legal terms.

However, we must note that while there is no differentiation between profiles, the level of difficulty of the pre-selections tests does vary for different levels: AST (Assistant) exams include simpler test items than Administrator exams.

## Question 57

**Are geometry exercises to be expected in EPSO pre-selection tests?**

No. All EPSO numerical reasoning tests are based on tables and diagrams, with the occasional text-based exercise, but geometry is not among the tested skills (nor is it used in the abstract reasoning tests).

# Numerical Reasoning

## Question 58

**Dealing with zeros and decimals almost requires us to write down all parts of our operations. Do we have time for that?!**

The first thing you should try is to find a way to avoid performing complex calculations. If you are forced to do it, you will make good use of the pen/paper (you are given an 'erasable slate', ie a writing board). If you can quickly solve a number of tests without much calculation, you will have time to jot down notes for some of the other test.

## Question 59

**Can I choose the order of the questions; e.g. answer first the abstract questions, then the numerical or skip one question and go back to it later?**

You can choose the order of solving the test items *within* one test, but you cannot choose the order of the tests.

## Question 60

**Proportions, variation, averages seem to be the bulk of numerical reasoning questions asked in the EPSO pre-selections. Where can one find a good explanation of the relevant equations? Is there a cheat-sheet or something that freshens up our minds on the rules about percentages?**

A general overview of these basic mathematical operations, a high-school level mathematics text book will be your best bet. Also, [this webinar](#) is a great math refresher resource, for example.

# Numerical Reasoning

## • Question 61

**Can using shortcuts to solve numerical reasoning questions increase the risk of getting to wrong results by misleading the applicant?**

A good shortcut will not be misleading. Shortcuts, aren't meant to be businesses where you give up some degree of certainty in exchange for speed, a good shortcut is just as mathematically sound as if you performed the actual calculations.

## • Question 62

**Do all questions have a shortcut? If we are making a lot of calculations, are we going the wrong (or the long) way?**

No. Sometimes you simply need to accept the fact that there is nothing else to be done than perform the cumbersome calculations. Again, a shortcut can be all kinds of different things. It can be a brilliant observation allowing you to answer the questions without calculating, but it can also simply mean that the difference between the answer options allows you to simplify the numbers you are working with, because even rounded-up or rounded-down numbers will provide the required level of accuracy.

## • Question 63

**Can you tell us the kind of calculations normally appears in the EPSO numerical reasoning tests?**

The calculations themselves are never too complex: addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, percentages and ratios (fractions). The trick is to figure out *what* calculations to perform, and the best way to do that is through practice.

# Numerical Reasoning

## Question 64

**In what proportion of the numerical reasoning tests does EPSO display visuals and graphs in the pre-selection?**

You will not have more than 25-30% of the tests with diagrams – tables still constitute the bulk of EPSO's database.

## Question 65

**Does anybody know where I can find all the Math formulas for numerical reasoning test?**

We have a methodology webinar called 'Math refresher', you can find it [here](#).

## Question 66

**Some books have said that for the numerical part of the exam, the AD exams have extra types of questions and more detailed concepts than the AST? Is this true?**

No, all questions are formulated along the same patters, though the level of difficulty does differ between AST and AD.

# Abstract Reasoning

## Question 67

**What are the most common features of EPSO pre-selection abstract reasoning questions? What should an applicant first look for (e.g. number of sides, angles)?**

The most common building blocks are as follows:

- Rotation,
- Reflection,
- Angles and Directions,
- Shapes,
- Patterns (colors, fills),
- Transformations (one shape turning into another),
- Concepts (visually demonstrated concepts),
- Visual mathematics (shapes representing numbers).

## Question 68

**Does EPSO use abstract reasoning questions that have a “no answer is correct” answer option?**

No.

# Abstract Reasoning

## Question 69

**What sort of material can be used for practicing abstract reasoning tests, other than the test packages at Online EU Training and the Ultimate EU Test Book?**

Any non-verbal and non-numerical puzzle, quiz, test or game is conducive to better performance in such tests. However, if the exam is close, it is worth focusing your precious time on tailor-made preparation materials.

## Question 70

**Can a grid base abstract reasoning test contain only horizontal rule or only a vertical rule, or are there always one vertical and one horizontal rule in EPSO's grid based abstract reasoning tests?**

In a perfect grid, the entire grid will be a cohesive whole, and there *will* be some kind of relationship between all items in one row and one column. As we saw, sometimes the figures do not represent any specific rule, and the only thing to realize is that there are no two identical components within one row and one column.

## Question 71

**Does EPSO use abstract reasoning tests that contain both numbers and shapes?**

No, abstract reasoning tests, as a rule, do not contain numbers and letters/text.

# Abstract Reasoning

## Question 72

**Is the base in EPSO's grid based abstract reasoning questions always at the same position - on the top left?**

No, any figure can be the basis for 'deriving' the other figures. Also, a rule with which you can derive figures in a row, for example, will work both ways, starting from the left or the right as well. Also, sometimes the middle figure is derived from the two neighbouring figures – the possibilities are, unfortunately, endless.

## Question 73

**What is EPSO's official wording of the question for odd-one-out questions?**

EPSO currently doesn't use such questions, only "which one is next in the series" type of questions.

## Question 74

**What are the criteria to check if the rule we come up with is the one thought by the test designer?**

Obviously, the best proof for that is when one of the answer options corresponds to what we believe is the correct answer. This is why it is worth coming up with the rule and visualizing the correct figure first, and then check the answer options – the presence of the figure we came up with will be proof that we are on the right track. However, there is a caveat: the test designer might take into consideration that you might misread something and include a figure which will correspond to the incorrect rule you came up with (a so-called distractor figure), so double-checking whether your rule takes into account every aspect of the test is very important.



# Abstract Reasoning

## • • Question 75

**What are polygons and what do we have to know about geometrical shapes?**

A good summary can be found [here](#).

## • • Question 76

**Does the difficulty of the questions in EPSO pre-selection abstract reasoning tests grow with every question?**

This is a general characteristic of all psychometric tests. The first few items will be easier to help you warm up, and then the difficulty will increase. At EPSO, the questions you are given do not depend on the answers you gave to earlier questions, the test form is fixed and not “computer adaptive”.

## • • Question 77

**Does EPSO use only black and white abstract reasoning tests or are there also other colours used?**

There will be no colours in the abstract reasoning tests, but you might see different shades of grey, for example.

# Situational Judgement Tests

## Question 78

**How does EPSO score the Situational Judgement Tests?**

It follows a special scoring which is in fact irrelevant as what matters is the competency report that EPSO creates based on your answers. This is then used for the Structured Interview in the Assessment Centre, so the actual scoring has little relevance. Nevertheless, each of the four answer options carries two scores: one score if selected as most effective, and one score if selected as least effective.

## Question 79

**Does EPSO consider “Managing expectations” an EU competency/subcompetency? Is saying No in a situation taken as very negative, uncooperative etc?**

No, managing expectations is more of a subset of various competencies, i.e. communication, team management and others. Saying no to a request can always be reasonable as long as circumstances warrant it.

## Question 80

**Does the score of the Situational Judgement Test affect how much the applicant will be “grilled” at the Structured Interview?(e.g. those who score high will be less “grilled”, while low scoring applicants will be „grilled to the max”)**

No, in fact no candidate is going to be “grilled” at the structured interview - your SJT results are completely independent from the Assessment Center as they are part of the pre-selection tests and assessors do not consider your SJTs in the structured interview.

# Situational Judgement Tests

## Question 81

**What should be prioritised in the Situational Judgement Tests: competencies or values?**

Most likely you will not be given such a clear choice between the two, especially because the two are interlinked (e.g. in a situation where your team working skills are tested, you need to bear in mind the EU institutions' values of loyal cooperation between various units while clear and transparent cooperation is also required: this is a typical mix of the two approaches).

## Question 82

**Does EPSO send the Situational Judgement Test reports to all the applicants like the results of the other pre-selection tests?**

No report is sent to you, only the scores you obtained in the SJT.

## Question 83

**Is there a "right" and a "wrong" answer in the Situational Judgement Tests?**

The goal of the test is to create a solid scoring framework based on your answers. Obviously if you reach low scores in one or more competencies, that affects the scoring since SJTs usually have a pass mark of 24 points out of 40 (since there are 20 questions and each has the 'most effective' and 'least effective' option that yields 2 points per question).

# Situational Judgement Tests

## Question 84

**For EU institutions or EPSO, is there anything on 'promoting European interest' or similar values or more 'do as you are told'?**

There is no such value listed. As the SJTs focus on personal competencies, what matters more is the institutional culture of EU institutions (that is why we emphasized some core characteristics of public/governmental bodies, such as hierarchy, loyalty between various branches, procedures, strict ethical rules etc.). Just a quick note on authority: EU institutions are certainly not the army, so it's much more a dialogue and cooperation between officials and their supervisor than a "top-down" chain of command.

## Question 85

**Why do you need leadership as a competency if EPSO is recruiting for entry level (AD5) positions?**

Even though this competition is not for head of unit or other management posts, leadership is needed for cooperation between various units of the same level in hierarchy. For instance, if you are a project leader (or in EU language, you are responsible for an interservice consultation between various Directorates General of the Commission), you still need to coordinate, manage and/or supervise the activities, inputs and communication between various units across the organisation, which does require leadership.

# Situational Judgement Tests



## Question 86

**What is the objective of a Situational Judgement Test? Is it to “reveal” the applicant’s true personality or to verify if the applicant’s personal competencies matches to EU competence?**

It is more the latter, i.e. if your personal competencies match those that have been identified (or “mapped”) by EPSO for any given job profile. It might happen that your exam results are excellent, and your competencies are also fine but they do not really match the ones EPSO is looking for: if you have a strong individual drive, limited respect for hierarchy etc., this may mean that you would not fit (and feel good working for) the institutions. There is nothing wrong with this as this does not qualify you as a good or bad person; simply it means that your personality type may not match what EPSO is looking for.



## Question 87

**Are the Situational Judgement tests at Online EU Training concrete examples from EPSO or are they made by Online EU Training, based on information received from EPSO?**

The tests at Online EU Training are based on publicly available information provided by EPSO and a detailed professional analysis done by an occupational psychologist who is an expert on public sector recruitment and EU affairs.



# LOOKING FOR MORE RESOURCES FOR YOUR PREPARATION?

## EU TRAINING OFFERS:

OUR RECOMENDED PRACTICE TEST PACKAGES	QUESTIONS	PRICE
<b>EPSO AD or AST</b> <b>ABSTRACT - NUMERICAL - VERBAL</b>	STARTING AT 350 QUESTIONS	<a href="#">FROM 40 EUR</a> 
<b>EPSO AD or AST</b> <b>SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT</b>	STARTING AT 180 QUESTIONS	<a href="#">FROM 35 EUR</a>
<b>EPSO AST</b> <b>PROFESSIONAL SKILLS</b>	STARTING AT 1 COMPLETE TEST	<a href="#">FROM 35 EUR</a>
OUR RECOMENDED WEBINARS	SCHEDULE	PRICE
<b>EPSO AD</b> <b>ABSTRACT - VERBAL REASONING METHODOLOGY WEBINAR</b>	ONCE EACH MONTH	<a href="#">75 EUR</a>
<b>EPSO AD</b> <b>NUMERICAL REASONING AND SJT METHODOLOGY WEBINAR</b>	ONCE EACH MONTH	<a href="#">75 EUR</a>
<b>EPSO AST</b> <b>ABSTRACT - NUMERICAL - VERBAL REASONING METHODOLOGY WEBINAR</b>	ONCE EACH MONTH	<a href="#">75 EUR</a>
<b>EPSO AST</b> <b>PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND SJT METHODOLOGY WEBINAR</b>	ONCE EACH MONTH	<a href="#">75 EUR</a>