



Presented by EU TRAINING

EPSO CAST Demystified

LIVE Q&A SESSION



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Webinar Intro:

- Live Q&A any time via the chat box
- Technical issues email: support@support.eutraining.eu
- Interactive Training
- Recording within 24 hours
- Slides, Q&A and transcript in follow-up document

Duration: approximately 90 minutes

Agenda



- What is a Contract Agent?
- Posts and conditions for Contract Agents
- What is the CAST exam?
- Difference between CAST and other EPSO competitions
- The CAST selection process
- 11 frequently asked CAST questions answered
- Tips to improve your chances of success
- Resources
- Questions & Answers
- Special Offer!

WHAT IS A CONTRACT AGENT?





CONTRACT AGENT POSTS HAVE BEEN CREATED TO ACHIEVE 'FLEXIBILITY' IN THE EU WORKFORCE.

It is an excellent opportunity to land a job at an EU institution/agency without having to pass a full EPSO competition.

BUT...

- Usually for a limited period only
(Contracts ranging from 6 months up to 3 years, which may be extended)
- Usually with limited responsibilities
- Less opportunities for career advancement
- Fewer mobility options
- Lower remuneration



POSTS & CONDITIONS FOR CONTRACT AGENTS



3B CONTRACT AGENTS

Contract for a definite duration, in the larger EU Institutions.
Permitted to apply to internal competitions.

3A CONTRACT AGENTS

May get indefinite contracts, usually employed in the Executive Agencies.
Cannot participate in internal competitions.

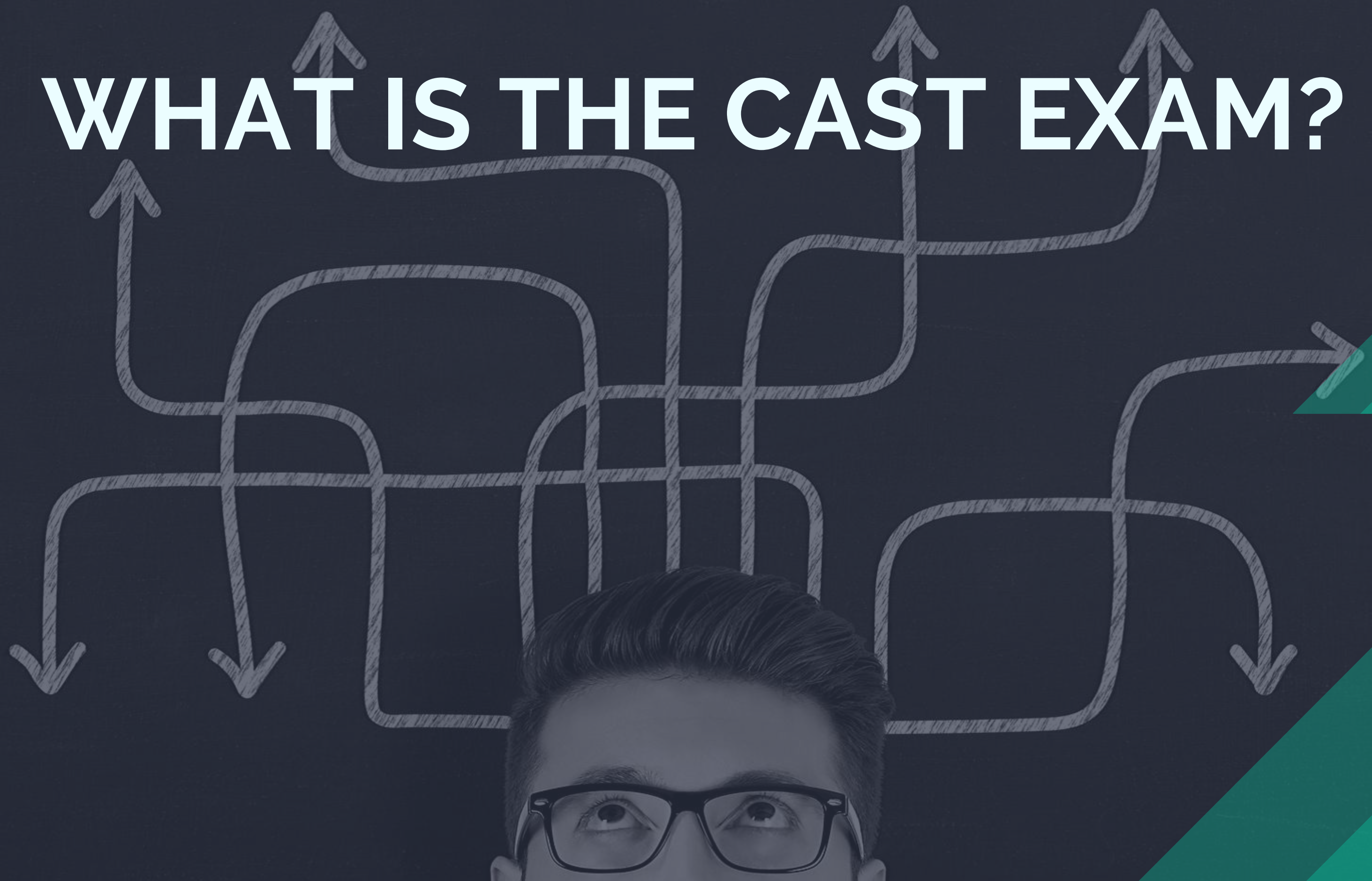
DELEGATIONS

Contract Agents at delegations may get indefinite contracts, with access to internal competitions.

AGENCIES

Regulatory Agencies found in most of the Member States. They employ temporary and contract agent.

WHAT IS THE CAST EXAM?



CAST STANDS FOR:

Contract Agents Selection Tool

The open-ended Contract Agent selection process was introduced in 2017, with a pilot starting in 2016.

CAST competitions are organised by EPSO in order to improve transparency.

The selection exam includes verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning tests + a field related competency test.

These exams are completed at test centers and take the form of multiple-choice questions.

Current CAST profiles & function groups:

- Finance (FG II, III, IV)
- Project / Programme Management (FG III, IV)
- Secretaries / Clerks (FG II)
- HR / Administration (FG II, III, IV)
- Communication (FG III, IV)
- Political Affairs / EU Policies (FG III, IV)
- Law (FG III, IV)
- Information and Communication Technology (FG III, IV)
- Manual and administrative support workers (FG I)
- Child care staff (FG II)
- Educational Psychologists (FG IV)
- Translators (FG IV)
- Proofreaders (FG III)

**NEW CAST PROFILES
REGULARLY ANNOUNCED BY EPSO.**





DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAST & OTHER EPSO COMPETITIONS

EPSO COMPETITIONS:

- Competition announced regularly.
- Submit your application by the deadline.
- Everyone gets to sit the computer based tests (who is eligible).
- Have to get one of the highest exam scores to be invited to the next stages of the competition.
- Tests designed to eliminate candidates.
- Need to be on a 'Reserve List' to get invited to job interviews.

CAST COMPETITION:

- Apply anytime - no deadline!
- Need to register yourself in the CAST database to participate.
- HR searches for and selects applicants from the database to sit the computer based tests.
- Reaching the pass mark for each test is good enough.
- Passed the tests - can be invited to job interviews.
- Technically not a competition. Not directly competing against others.



THE CAST SELECTION PROCESS

6 STEPS TO CAST SUCCESS

STEP 1:

Fill in the application form to be added to the CAST database.

STEP 2:

Upload your CV

STEP 3:

The recruiting services selects you to sit the CAST exam. This may happen because you applied for a published job OR you were invited via the "CAST search" process.

STEP 4:

Computer-based testing takes place every month.

STEP 5:

If you pass the CAST exam (reasoning tests + field test), the recruiting service, which invited you to sit the exam is obligated to interview you.

STEP 6:

If you successfully pass the selection process, you may get offered a Contract Agent role.

11 FREQUENTLY ASKED CAST QUESTIONS ANSWERED

#1

IF I FAIL A CAST TEST, CAN I REPEAT IT?

Yes, but you will need to wait for 6 months to be tested again.

- **Reasoning Tests:** for same or higher function group(s).
- **Competency Tests:** for same or higher function group(s) of that particular CAST profile.

Also, a re-do after this time elapses doesn't happen automatically. You need to be selected again by an institution/agency before getting another chance.



#2

MAY I APPLY TO SEVERAL PROFILES AND FUNCTION GROUPS?

Yes, but make sure to tailor your application specifically to each one.



#3

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT A RECRUITING SERVICE MAY WANT TO INTERVIEW ME FIRST BEFORE INVITING ME TO TAKE THE COMPUTER-BASED TESTS?

Yes, sometimes recruiting services do a pre-interview before sending people to sit the CAST exam.

#4

IF I'M WORKING IN THE INSTITUTIONS WITH A DIFFERENT TYPE OF TEMPORARY CONTRACT (AS A TEMPORARY AGENT, NATIONAL EXPERT) AND I'M CLOSE TO THE END OF MY CONTRACT, IS IT A GOOD IDEA TO ASK MY HIERARCHY TO INVITE ME TO SIT A CAST EXAM?

This is something that's definitely worth doing if you are interested also in a contract agent contract. If you have already sat the CAST exam previously, this may improve your chances of finding a new post.



#5

IS THE FIELD RELATED COMPETENCY TEST EU SPECIFIC OR NOT?

It is not necessary to have prior experience in the EU Institutions in order to pass these tests, but this exam does require some preparation.



#6

IS THE VERBAL, NUMERICAL AND ABSTRACT TESTS AS DIFFICULT AS THE AD COMPETITIONS?

As you only need to reach a threshold (pass mark), the tests are somewhat easier but still require proper preparation.

The background of the slide features a dark, semi-transparent overlay on a photograph. The photograph shows a person's hands writing in a spiral notebook with a pen. To the left, there is a white cup of coffee on a saucer with a spoon. The overall aesthetic is professional and focused on work or study.

#7

IS IT ENOUGH FOR ME TO SIMPLY APPLY FOR A CONTRACT AGENT POST?

No, you may be required to send your CV and cover letter to the place of recruitment, as well as, submit a CAST application. These are two separate processes.

#8

IS IT POSSIBLE TO 'UPGRADE' FROM A CONTRACT POSITION ATTAINED THROUGH THE CAST PROCESS TO A PERMANENT ROLE? (EXAMPLE: AN ADMINISTRATOR AT THE EU COMMISSION)

There is no possibility to upgrade, however depending on the type of contract, you may be allowed to participate in internal competitions, which are somewhat easier than the external competitions and with fewer steps.

#9

HOW OFTEN WILL I NEED TO SIT THE CAST EXAM?

If you successfully pass each test:

Reasoning Test results: valid for 10 years - for same or lower function group(s)

Competency Test results: valid for 5 years - for that specific profile in the same or lower function group(s)

#10

IF I PASS THE CAST TESTS, BUT WANT TO IMPROVE ON MY SCORES CAN I TAKE THE TESTS AGAIN? IS THERE AN ADVANTAGE IN HAVING A VERY HIGH EXAM SCORE?

Not really, the CAST exam is about passing. The scores are not communicated to the recruiting services afterwards.



#11

IF I AM INVITED TO A CAST INTERVIEW WILL IT BE LIKE AN EPSO COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW OR DIFFERENT?

This will be a proper job interview, which may include similar elements as the competency based interview, but it is different.

Expect to be asked very specific and technical questions about the profile type you are being interviewed for.

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS





**Apply to as many fields as possible
as long as you have relevant
experience in that particular profile.**

(Submitting multiple applications does not necessarily
increase your chances of being pre-selected.)

**Upload your CV as well.
The application form will
not be enough.**





Make sure you use 'keywords' that are relevant to your profile.

To indicate your on-going interest and to remain visible and searchable in the database, update your application at least every 6 months.






Lobby for yourself.
There is a greater chance that the institution/agency's recruiting service will find you if they know about you.

When you are invited to sit the computer-based tests, take your preparation seriously.

- To pass the reasoning tests (verbal, numerical, abstract) consistent and regular practice over a number of weeks is key.
- Do lots of simulation tests to enhance your skills in the areas being tested.





RESEARCH

To prepare for the field competency test:

- Join the "EPSO CAST Exams" facebook group to read feedback from other's experiences.
- Practice competency test simulations available on EU Training for each CAST profile (a good resource to prompt further topics to research and read up on).
- Refresh your general knowledge and do some research on the profile you are being interviewed for.

CAST selection interview tips:

- As the competition is usually very high, make sure to prepare well for your interview.
- Be ready to present yourself and explain your motivation. Most likely you will be asked some technical questions related to the job and also competency based questions are possible.
- Booking a personal coaching session with an EU career professional may enhance your chances of success.



PREPARATION RESOURCES...





Join the largest CAST community.

"EPSO CAST EXAMS" FACEBOOK PAGE

Engage with other candidates and
learn from their experiences.

WOULD YOU LIKE SOME EXPERT GUIDANCE ON HOW TO ENHANCE YOUR EPSO CAST APPLICATION AND CV?

Our EU career expert is on hand to review these
and offer personally tailored advice.

Application Assistance

Send a request any time.



Webinars...

FREE - BEGINNER'S GUIDE WEBINARS:

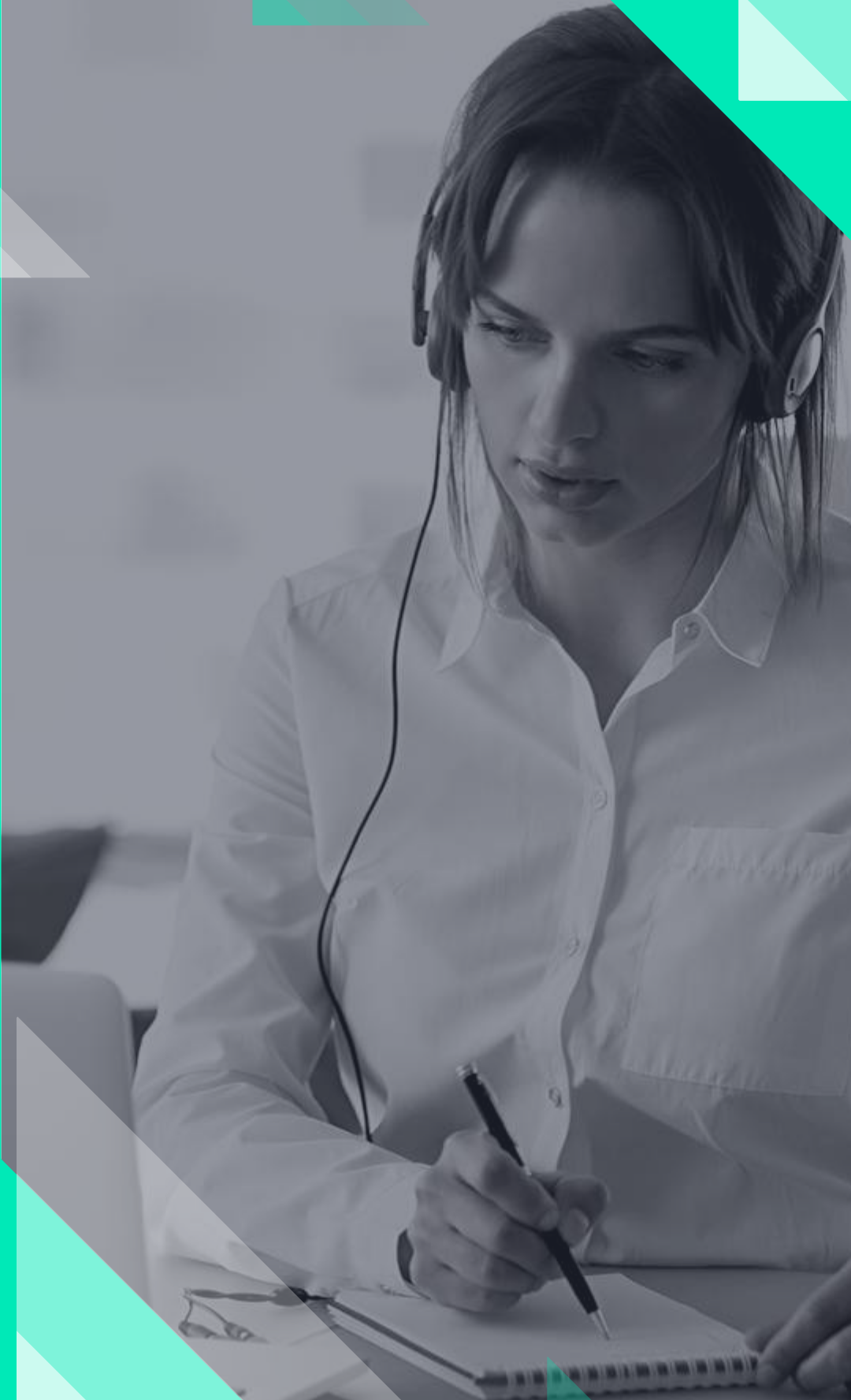
- Beginner's Guide To The EPSO Verbal Reasoning Test
- Beginner's Guide To The EPSO Numerical Reasoning Test
- Beginner's Guide To The EPSO Abstract Reasoning Test

PRO TIPS WEBINARS:

- Pro Tips For The EPSO Verbal Reasoning Test
- Pro Tips For The EPSO Numerical Reasoning Test
- Pro Tips For The EPSO Abstract Reasoning Test

OTHER:

- FREE - EPSO CAST Information Webcast
- FREE - e-learning courses on EU institutions and policies
- Maths Refresher For Numerical Reasoning



Simulated Practice Tests for Each EPSO CAST Profile

These simulated practice tests
will serve as an excellent tool to improve your skills
and enhance your performance in the
verbal, numerical, abstract reasoning tests
and
the field related competency test

A man in a dark suit and tie stands in front of a whiteboard, smiling and pointing with a pen at a line graph. The graph shows a fluctuating line that generally trends upwards. In the foreground, the backs of three people's heads are visible, showing they are seated and facing the whiteboard. The background is a simple office setting with a window. The overall image has a semi-transparent dark overlay.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

JOIN OUR NEXT CBT TRAINING SESSION
MASTER THE EPSO COMPUTER-BASED TESTS

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Personal Coaching

FOR THE CAST COMPUTER BASED TESTS

- One-on-one coaching sessions with an EPSO expert
- Sessions are tailored according to your needs, but can include:
 - Highlighting improvement opportunities
 - Exam strategies development and best practices
 - Exam methodology clarification with practice tests
- Coaching sessions available via Skype, or in person at our training venue in Brussels



THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

20% OFF

EPSO CAST PRACTICE PACKAGES
AND WEBINAR RECORDINGS

Use code: **CAST2019**
Valid for 48 Hours!
(until 8pm Saturday, 12 October)

WWW.EUTRAINING.EU