



# EU TRAINING

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## EPSO Applications Reopened Refresher Webcast | TRANSCRIPT

**Recorded on:** 29 May, 2024

**Recording Length:** appx. 60 minutes

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome, everyone. We truly appreciate your participation. We have a lot to cover about these two competitions. I will answer as many as possible during the event, and we'll ensure all questions are addressed afterward.

### ABOUT EU TRAINING

I won't go into my background, but many of you know my work with EU training and the Ultimate EU Testbook. I used to be a Commission official and now focus on exciting projects like this presentation on the Economist and Crisis and Migration exams and the changes since their launch.

A quick overview of our company for newcomers: we offer various services to help candidates prepare for EPSO competitions and internal competitions of EU institutions. We provide coaching, webinars, information, and online tests to support your success. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn for updates and discussions.

### SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW (4:13)

EPSO has decided to reopen applications after a period of suspension. For those new to EPSO exams and the Economist and Crisis and Migration exams, here's some context: the exams were suspended last year due to technical issues. Today, we'll discuss the changes and the steps involved in the relaunch.

The selection process starts with creating a profile on the EPSO website, uploading supporting documents, and taking computer-based tests, which include reasoning skills, a field-related multiple-choice quiz, and a written assignment. This is followed by an eligibility check and a reserve list, which is necessary for recruitment by EU institutions.

## KEY CHANGES TO THE PROCESS (7:00)

Key changes to the process: the suspension in October 2023 was due to technical problems with the remotely proctored tests. EPSO has now introduced a new testing method with improved software. All candidates, even those who completed tests in October, must retake them to ensure fairness.

A significant change is the introduction of the 24 language regime, allowing candidates to choose any two of the 24 official languages for their tests.

The official languages of the EU can be used depending on which part of the exam is being discussed. The previous system requiring English, French, or German (and sometimes Italian or Spanish) as the main languages has been changed due to legal challenges and court cases. The European Court of Justice found limiting language choice to these few could be discriminatory. Thus, the 24 language regime has been introduced, impacting the written test.

The written test is the new terminology for what used to be the case study. It will be based on publicly available materials for practicality and budget reasons. These materials have already been translated by the translation office into the 24 official languages and will be used for the written test. This means no specially developed materials will be created for the test; instead, they will use existing documents from EU institutions and publications available online.

Candidates will receive background material to analyse before the competition. This ensures they can prepare in advance. The written test will no longer include invented materials such as mock emails or press releases.

Regarding the timeline, the exams are expected around September or October, almost certainly not before the summer break. This timing is based on deadlines and the organisation of the system.

EPSO has updated the multiple-choice questions offered by EU training to align more closely with the actual competition.

## COMPETITIONS OVERVIEW (15:14)

The number of positions available remains unchanged from the original figures for 2023:

### EPSO/AD/402/23

- Macroeconomics and Microeconomics: 300 places on the reserve list
- Financial Economics: 348 places
- Industrial Economics: 322 places

These numbers indicate a large competition with reasonable chances for participants.

### EPSO/AD/403/23

For crisis management, migration, and internal security, there are 168 and 118 places respectively.

## **ELIGIBILITY (16:52)**

Eligibility is straightforward if you meet formal criteria, but professional background, degree, and work experience are crucial. Applicants need EU citizenship, fulfillment of military service if required, and must meet character requirements, especially for sensitive positions.

### **Language Requirements**

Language requirements have changed to the 24 language system. You must choose two different languages from the 24 official EU languages. Language one will be used for computer-based tests (abstract, verbal, numerical reasoning) and language two for the field-related multiple-choice quiz and the written test.

When choosing languages, consider your proficiency. Language one should be one you can process information in quickly, while language two should be one in which you can express yourself well, especially in writing.

For future employment, the choice of languages may not significantly impact your chances, provided your background and CV clearly show your language proficiency.

At least one of the main official languages, especially English, is commonly used in EU institutions. Demonstrating this linguistic skill on your CV should be sufficient. This 24-language regime is new and being fully implemented for the first time.

Language one and language two must be different. In terms of qualifications and work experience, refer to the notice of competition for details. Your work experience is counted from the date of your degree. If you have unique scenarios, check with the selection board for clarification.

### **Where Will You Work?**

Most positions will likely be in Brussels or Luxembourg, where EU institutions are primarily located, though there are also EU representations in European capitals and beyond. Job profiles and levels (e.g., AD5 or AD7) are detailed in the notice of competition.

## **EPSO COMPETITION PHASES (25:20)**

Regarding competition phases, the core tests include abstract, verbal, and numerical reasoning, a field-related multiple-choice quiz, and a written test. The application process involves creating a profile, validating it, and uploading supporting documents. The deadline for application or revalidation is 9th July, with supporting documents due by 4th September.

There is no longer a requirement for the main language to be English, French, or German due to legal challenges. The written test, now based on publicly available materials, will use existing documents translated into the 24 official languages.

The exams are expected around September or October, almost certainly not before the summer break. EPSO has updated the multiple-choice questions to align more closely with the actual competition.

The written test, which I briefly discussed, is something we'll look at in more detail now. For those new to this, all tests will be conducted online and remotely proctored. You won't need to visit a test centre; instead, you must ensure your computer meets certain conditions, and you're alone in the room without unauthorised materials.

All tests will occur on the same day. This includes the written test and the field-related computer-based test. We are developing a workshop to help with mental preparation, focusing on managing stress and optimising performance on the test day.

The computer-based tests (CBT) include abstract, verbal, and numerical reasoning. The verbal reasoning test involves 20 questions in 35 minutes, focusing on logical deductions and understanding the logic of a text. There's no penalty for incorrect answers, so it's advisable to always select an answer.

Numerical reasoning comprises 10 questions in 20 minutes, requiring data interpretation and reasoning. While a calculator is provided on-screen, avoiding its use can save time.

Abstract reasoning consists of 10 questions in 10 minutes, involving shapes and patterns that follow a certain logic. Preparation is crucial as this can be challenging, especially for those not inclined towards mathematical reasoning.

### **Economists | CBT Scoring**

For the Economist competition, numerical reasoning is separated with a pass mark of 6 out of 10. Verbal and abstract reasoning are combined with a pass mark of 15 out of 30. This means you can compensate for lower scores in abstract reasoning with higher scores in verbal reasoning.

### **Crisis/Migration | CBT Scoring**

For the Crisis Management and Migration competition, verbal reasoning is separated with a pass mark of 10 out of 20, while numerical and abstract reasoning are combined with a pass mark of 10. You must complete all parts of the exam, and scores are calculated after all tests are completed.

### **Field-Related MCQ**

The field-related multiple-choice quiz follows, consisting of 30 questions in 40 minutes, focusing on knowledge-based questions specific to your competition domain (e.g., microeconomics, industrial economics, migration, crisis management). The pass mark is 15 out of 30, but this test is ranked, meaning you need to be among the top scorers to proceed.

The highest-scoring candidates will proceed, so while the pass mark is 15 out of 30, ranking is crucial. This applies to all domains: economics, crisis, and migration. This part of the test is taken in language two, making it essential to know EU program names, abbreviations, and institutions in that language.

### **Written Test**

The written test does not assess field knowledge but focuses on written communication skills. You will have 45 minutes to complete it based on publicly available documents provided beforehand. It's vital to be familiar with these documents to use the 45 minutes effectively.

Ensure your written communication is clear and structured. We will offer writing workshops to help develop these skills in any language. The written test is scored alongside the eligibility check, and your performance in the field-related test determines if your written test is evaluated.

## Eligibility checks

Eligibility checks require supporting documents for all declarations. Ensure you can provide evidence for work experience or qualifications. Only candidates who meet all criteria, pass all components, and rank high enough will be placed on the reserve list, which is alphabetically ordered.

## Reserve List

Once on the reserve list, your status changes from candidate to laureate, making you eligible for full employment. Recruitment may involve interviews depending on the Directorate-General or institution. We offer webinars on securing a job post-reserve list placement.

## HOW TO GET THE JOB (48:44)

For preparation, consistency is key. Whether it's an hour a day or a set number of hours per week, regular practice in numerical reasoning, subject matter expertise, and other components is crucial. Understanding methodologies for written assignments and abstract, verbal, and numerical reasoning will improve performance. Persistence and a disciplined study plan, even during vacations, are essential.

We offer numerous online resources, including practice questions in 24 languages for computer-based tests. We constantly improve the quality of these resources to support your preparation.

We are constantly revising and introducing new services to aid your preparation. Video explanations for numerical and abstract reasoning are available, providing step-by-step guidance.

We've revised and updated the Economist exam test questions and revamped the crisis and migration tests based on candidate feedback. For the written test, we offer simulations with evaluations by our experts to help you improve your writing. A Clear Writing Workshop will be held on the 2nd of July, focusing on writing methodology.

Free resources include webinars with methodology tips and case study insights, a salary calculator, and "ask me anything" sessions. Here's the discount code for our services: REOPENED24 (all caps).

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## QUESTIONS

*Q: Can annotations be made in the numerical test?*

**A:** Regarding the numerical test, annotations cannot be made on the chart, but you can use a notepad for calculations.

**Q:** *Can we choose different language combinations for language one and language two?*

**A:** Language combinations for this competition can differ from those used in the CAST exam.

**Q:** *Does EU Training still provide rooms with computers to rent for the exams and if so in which cities?*

**A:** We provide rooms with computers for exams in Brussels at our office at Square Ambiorix.

**Q:** *How do we know on which documents are field related multiple-choice questions based?*

**A:** For field-related multiple-choice questions, study the notice of competition, EU institution websites, and relevant European parliamentary committees. AI tools can help summarise lengthy documents into manageable formats.

**Q:** *Will you provide a list of documents?*

**A:** We do not provide a specific list of documents, but institutions might provide background briefings for future competitions.

**Q:** *Any change in the substance typology of questions compared to previous competitions?*

**A:** EPSO recently released new sample questions for abstract, verbal, and numerical reasoning, which show no significant changes in difficulty or style. Our existing database reflects the current level of difficulty and style of the competitions.

**Q:** *Does EU Training intend to prepare training on the new component namely the written test? Could you please mention something more on that?*

**A:** We have a written skills webinar on the 2nd of July and plan to offer reruns if necessary.

Last year's case study webinar is applicable for the written test.

**Q:** *Am I eligible if my professional experience is in small business?*

**A:** Regarding eligibility with professional experience in small business, it should be relevant if, for instance, you are applying for the Economist competition focusing on microeconomics, provided you can prove the experience and have the necessary degree.

**Q:** *Written test: will there be an autocorrect function?*

**A:** For the written test, it's unclear if there will be an autocorrect function. There was no spell check last time, and we need to see if the new interface includes it. Prepare as if there won't be a spell check, and avoid using difficult-to-spell words.

Normally, spelling and grammar are not the primary focus of the evaluation for the written test, but clear communication is still important.

**Q:** *Retake of your question: if half of them were not used yet can we use those in new languages?*

**A:** For questions on retaking tests or using questions in new languages, it is technically possible, but check with customer support for confirmation.

**Q:** *Some of the questions on EU Training require the use of functions like Powers since this is not allowed how relevant are these questions?*

**A:** If certain questions on EU Training require functions not allowed, like powers, report them for review.

**Q:** *Written tests, so what do they actually assess? Only how we organize the information?*

**A:** The written test assesses more than just organisation of information. It evaluates competencies, including logical arguments, connection to the text, answering the question asked, and supporting claims with evidence.

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Thank you for attending. If you have additional questions or need further assistance, [please reach out](#). We're here to support your preparation comprehensively. Good luck with your exams!