



# Guidelines on the recruitment of EMCDDA staff

## 1. Scope

This document provides guidance for the selection committee and the relevant EMCDDA services (Human Resources Management Sector – HRMS) on the implementation of the procedures carried out by the EMCDDA to recruit staff, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union (SR), of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS), and of the rules adopted by the EMCDDA for the implementation of these provisions, pursuant to Article 110 SR.

These guidelines are consistent with the rules and policies in force at the EMCDDA for equal opportunities and for the prevention and management of possible conflicts of interest.

## 2. Vacancy notice

The vacancy notice shall set out eligibility and selection requirements, indicating type and duration of contract and recruitment grade.

The preparation of the vacancy notice encompasses the following steps.

1. The HRMS prepares the first draft and checks its compliance with the applicable rules, namely in terms of conditions for the submission of applications and eligibility criteria.
2. The HRMS sends the first draft to the concerned head of unit for input, namely on responsibilities and essential and advantageous criteria. This input should be provided within 10 working days.
3. The HRMS then sends the revised draft to the members of the selection committee, giving them 5 working days to comment and contribute, in particular with regard to the essential and advantageous requirements.
4. The HRMS will ensure that the input received is duly considered and properly included in the draft vacancy notice in accordance with the applicable rules. On this basis, the HRMS formats the document for publication and ensures its editing and proofreading within 5 working days.
5. The finalised document must be approved by the EMCDDA appointing authority/authority authorised to conclude employment contracts (AA/AACC), who signs it.
6. As required by the relevant rules, the HRMS will publish the vacancy notice internally within the EMCDDA and/or externally via the EMCDDA website, the EPSO website, the dedicated extranet of the EU Agencies network, the EMCDDA focal points of the Reitox network, the members of the EMCDDA Management Board and Scientific Committee and, where appropriate, via advertisements in the local and/or specialised press or web pages.

The vacancy notice shall remain open for at least one month.

Requirements included in the vacancy notice should be easy to assess during the recruitment process. Requirements which are vague or difficult to assess should be avoided. While drafting the vacancy notice, the persons involved shall bear in mind the way in which each requirement can be evaluated in practice.

The vacancy notice shall state under the heading 'Selection procedure' that only applicants obtaining at least 60 % of the total number of points available to score the compliance of their application with the relevant selection requirements may be invited for the interview. Furthermore, the vacancy notice should state the maximum number of applicants that the selection committee may invite for the interview and test. By default, the maximum number of invitees for interview shall be ten (10). This number may be



changed by decision of the EMCDDA AA/AACC, depending on the number of applications received and the type of post to be filled, and in order to constitute a significant reserve list, when applicable.

Finally, the vacancy notice shall indicate that the applicants invited for the interview and test should obtain at least 70 % of the total points available for the evaluation of the interview and test in order to be considered suitable for recruitment. The selection committee may propose that the EMCDDA AA/AACC approves the creation of a reserve list for recruitment including these candidates.

The vacancy notice will include and disclose the names of the members of the selection committee. Each member of the selection committee will be made aware of this before their appointment. If a prospective member objects to the disclosure of their name via the vacancy notice, they will not be able to sit in the relevant selection committee.

### **3. Selection committee**

#### **a) Composition of the selection committee**

The members of the selection committee are formally appointed by the Director of the EMCDDA, as EMCDDA AA/AACC. The selection committee shall consist of at least three members and include one member from the relevant unit/service and one member to be designated by the Staff Committee. From among the members appointed, the EMCDDA AA/AACC nominates a chairperson. The member from the relevant unit/service cannot be nominated chairperson. The selection committee shall be appointed by taking into account, as much as possible, the need and opportunity to ensure gender balance and broad geographical representation. External members may also be invited, should specific expertise be needed to properly carry out the selection process.

#### **b) Main tasks of the selection committee**

The main task of the selection committee is to assess the applicants in order to determine their suitability for the position advertised, in accordance with the vacancy notice published.

In this context, each applicant has to be evaluated in accordance with the requirements outlined in the vacancy notice and then scored, on this basis, by applying the established scoring method, as reflected in the evaluation forms to be provided by the HRMS for the work of the selection committee. In particular, the selection committee and its members have to assess and score whether and how each applicant meet the requirements mentioned in the vacancy notice. The evaluation carried out shall be dated and signed by the members of the selection committee.

If during the evaluation, or at any stage of the procedure, the selection committee or one of its members discovers that a candidate does not meet one or more of the conditions for admission to the selection procedure or that some information provided with the application form does not correspond to the data resulting from the relevant supporting documents, they must inform the HRMS, this being a cause for exclusion of the relevant applicant from the procedure.

As a result of the assessment of the applicants, and depending on the outcome of this assessment, the selection committee may recommend to the EMCDDA AA/AACC the recruitment of the best-ranked candidate and/or the adoption of a reserve list which includes the suitable applicants.

With regard to the above, the main tasks of the selection committee can be summarised as follows:

- to contribute the drafting of the vacancy notice, in particular with regard to the essential and advantageous requirements;
- to prepare the questions for the interviews and written test;
- to assess each eligible candidate in accordance with the published criteria;
- to establish the list of the best-ranked candidates to be invited for an interview and written test;





- to report to the EMCDDA AA/AACC the outcome of its assessment, which may include a proposal to recruit the highest ranked applicant and/or to adopt a reserve list including the suitable applicants.

The HRMS is responsible for providing ongoing technical assistance and for overseeing the process, in particular by ensuring that the applicable rules are complied with throughout the procedure. The HRMS is also responsible for the preparatory work that may be required to enable the selection committee to perform its tasks (for example, publishing the vacancy notice, arranging meetings, preparing draft minutes of all of the committee's meetings), without prejudice to the responsibility of the selection committee for the performance of its duties and deliberations relating to the different phases of the selection process.

### **c) Principles that should guide the work of the selection committee**

The following principles should guide the selection committee in the performance of its tasks:

- transparency of procedures, in line with the relevant provisions of the SR and CEOS;
- assessment of the eligibility and suitability of applicants in strict compliance with the requirements stated in the vacancy notice;
- equal treatment of all applicants, this including, in particular:
  - no unequal treatment and no discrimination on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, disability, age or sexual orientation;
  - proper consideration of relevant differences between educational systems as well as of applicable mutual recognition of diplomas;
  - proper understanding of the intrinsic value of professional experience.

The vacancy notice is the reference that the selection committee must use and rely on to ensure consistency and impartiality in all aspects of the selection process.

### **d) Confidentiality**

The work and deliberations of the selection committee are strictly confidential and may not be disclosed to anyone. Applicants are made aware of this. It is forbidden for applicants, or any party acting on their behalf, to make direct or indirect contact with the selection committee. All enquiries or requests for information or documentation in relation to the selection procedure should be addressed to the HRMS. The members of the selection committee are requested to take note of this essential detail. It is the responsibility of each member of the selection committee to act in total respect of the principle of confidentiality. In line with Article 20 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, all recipients of data regarding a selection procedure are reminded of the obligation not to use the data received for any purpose other than the one for which they were transmitted.

Applicants shall be granted access to all their personal data processed within a selection procedure. In particular, data subjects should be given access to their evaluation results from all stages of the selection procedure (pre-selection, interview and written tests), unless the exception as further specified in Article 6 of Annex III to the Staff Regulations can be applied. This exception may imply that access should not be granted to the comparative data concerning other applicants (comparative results), nor to the individual opinions of the members of the selection committee. In order to exercise their rights, applicants shall address the representative of the HRMS indicated in the vacancy notice as the contact person for the selection process in question.

### **e) Conflict of interest**

To ensure transparency and objectivity, the selection committee must inform the HRMS in writing if there could be a conflict of interest, or if there could be deemed to be a conflict of interest, with respect to the assessment of any of the candidates submitted to the selection committee for evaluation. For this





purpose, each member of the selection committee shall fill in the declaration of absence of conflict of interest using the form to be provided by the HRMS for this purpose.

In order for a conflict of interest to exist, either the member of the selection committee or any member of their immediate family shall have interests (pecuniary or otherwise) which could reasonably be construed as having any influence on the proper and objective performance of the member's duties in relation to the evaluation of applications submitted in response to a recruitment procedure carried out by the EMCDDA. A conflict of interest exists when a member of the selection committee knows an applicant at a personal or professional level that could interfere with a fair evaluation and judgement of this applicant.

Each member of the selection committee who is aware of a possible conflict of interest in relation to an applicant shall immediately inform the HRMS in writing by stating the kind of relationship they have with this applicant. Once this information has been received, the HRMS will communicate the potential conflict of interest to the EMCDDA AA/AACC, who may take any action deemed appropriate to preserve the transparency and objectivity of the selection procedure.

#### **4. The selection procedure**

##### **a) Selection on files (pre-selection)**

The selection on files, or pre-selection, is the phase during which the selection committee shall assess, on the basis of each application file received, whether candidates meet the requirements set for admission, eligibility and selection. The HRMS will assist the selection committee by carrying out the preparatory work for this task. In particular, the HRMS will prepare a table in which each requirement mentioned in the vacancy notice is listed. The HRMS will also check if candidates meet the conditions for submission of applications and the eligibility requirements. This preparatory work will be presented to the selection committee, who are ultimately responsible for assessing and validating the information received.

Evaluation forms for the selection on files will be provided to the selection committee by the HRMS. Each member of the selection committee has to complete and sign all forms. On this basis, the HRMS will prepare a summary of the results of the evaluation carried out by the selection committee, to be signed by its members. Minutes recording the work of the selection committee for the selection on files will be drafted, dated and signed by the members of the selection committee.

At the end of the selection on files, the applicants who have been awarded at least 60% of the total points available to score their compliance with the established selection requirements may be invited for the next phase of the selection procedure (interview and test).

The selection committee must carry out its evaluation in relation every requirement that must be assessed for the purpose of the selection on files, in accordance with the published vacancy notice.

##### **b) Conditions for submission of applications**

Each applicant must fulfil the conditions set for the submission of the application, as indicated in the vacancy notice. Any application which does not comply with one of these conditions must be excluded from the next step of the procedure (considered not admissible). No derogation is allowed.

The conditions for submission of applications are the following.

- The application must be made through the EMCDDA e-recruitment system, accessible at this link: <https://e-recruitment.emcdda.europa.eu>. In order to be able to apply online via this system, each potential applicant must first create their own EMCDDA profile by providing a valid e-mail address and password.
- The application must be submitted via the EMCDDA e-recruitment system by the closing date mentioned in the vacancy notice.



### **c) Eligibility requirements**

In accordance with the relevant provisions, the requirements for eligibility include:

- compliance with the minimum level of education;
- being a national of one of the European Union's Member States or of a country that has signed an agreement with the European Union on its participation in the work of the EMCDDA that allows these nationals to be recruited under contract of employment by the EMCDDA;
- having fulfilled any obligations imposed by the applicable laws concerning military service;
- producing the appropriate character references as to the suitability for the performance of the required duties;
- being physically fit to perform their duties;
- demonstrating a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union and a satisfactory knowledge of another of these languages to the extent necessary for the performance of the required duties;

Any application which does not comply with one of these requirements must be excluded from the next step of the procedure (be considered ineligible).

### **d) Requirements to be considered essential for selection**

These requirements are mentioned as essential in the vacancy notice and cannot be added, modified or removed during the selection procedure. Each requirement must be assessed by each member of the selection committee. Requirements cannot be merged. Compliance with each one of these requirements is essential, and particular attention should be given to the scoring of this compliance. Points from 0 to 10 are awarded, as a general rule, to score how each applicant meets each one of these requirements. In exceptional cases, the EMCDDA AA/AACC may decide to award a different number of points to score specific requirements that are considered of particular importance for the post advertised. In this case, this shall be made clear in the relevant vacancy notice.

### **e) Requirements to be considered advantageous for selection**

These requirements are mentioned as advantageous in the vacancy notice and cannot be added, modified or removed during the selection procedure. Meeting these requirements should be considered as an asset. The lack of compliance does not entail exclusion from the next step of the process. Considering the non-essential nature of these requirements, points from 0 to 5 are awarded to score how each applicant meets each one of them.

### **f) Interviews and tests**

The selection committee will have to decide on the set of common questions to be asked during the oral interviews and on the content of the written test, before the selection on files phase. The HRMS will disclose this information to the selection committee only after confirmation by the chairperson of the selection committee that the questions for the oral interviews and written test have been set by the selection committee and are held by the chairperson. The chairperson of the selection committee will only transmit the questions for the interview and test to the HRMS on the last working day before the date of the beginning of the interviews and test, to allow for the necessary preparatory operations and to avoid the undue disclosure of the questions.

The scope of the questions and the written test will be consistent with the information provided in the published vacancy notice, in particular with regard to the duties of the post to be filled and the established selection requirements.

Whenever possible, interviews shall take place over one day, or a series of consecutive days. Should applicants not be able to participate in the interview on a given day, the date for interviews should not be changed and the applicant should be informed accordingly by the HRMS. In the interests of equal treatment of candidates, and by analogy with the same principle applicable to EU competitions, no derogation from this principle should be granted.



The applicants will be asked general questions about the EMCDDA and the European Union, as well as specific questions relating to the post, their educational background, professional and working experience, capacities and abilities, and any other matter that could be relevant for the selection, in line with the set requirements. The candidate should be given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. Any questions on working conditions, relocation, salaries or any other HR issue should be redirected to the HRMS for the necessary reply.

The chairperson of the selection committee ensures that a common structure and organisational arrangements are defined and applied for all interviews relating to a given recruitment procedure. The chairperson ensures that the timeframe allocated for interviews is the same for each applicant and is complied with. The chairperson also ensures that the members of the selection committee agree on the common list of questions to be asked for the interview of each applicant. It is the duty of the chairperson to steer the work of the selection committee to ensure that all necessary formal organisational arrangements are respected and the applicants may perform to the best of their ability in this context.

A written test shall be required for each selection procedure and shall be carried out and corrected in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of the author during the correction process. The selection committee will assess and score the result of the test, and a maximum of 30 marking points will be available for this purpose.

The outcome of the evaluation of the interviews and written tests will be documented in an evaluation form to be provided by the HRMS, which is to be completed and signed by the members of the selection committee.

The work and the final deliberations of the selection committee shall be recorded in minutes to be dated and signed by the members of the selection committee and transmitted to the EMCDDA AA/AACC.

#### **g) Case study**

For certain positions, and if decided by the EMCDDA AA/AACC, the candidate may be requested to provide a case study to the selection committee, either at the EMCDDA premises or remotely (online). In such cases, this shall be made clear in the vacancy notice.

The case study will encompass questions that address possible related priorities and solutions aimed at supporting the EMCDDA's operations, in accordance with the purpose and duties of the job. Based on the presentation of each candidate and their reply to questions that the selection committee may ask in relation to their presentation, the selection committee will assess the performance of each candidate in relation to the relevant criteria. The selection committee will assess and score the result of the case study, for which a maximum of 50 marking points will be available.

#### **h) Assessment on competences**

Candidates (up to 10) the selection committee considers suitable for the advertised position following the assessment will be eligible for a further assessment of competences as follows.

- For middle management positions, these candidates shall be invited to an external assessment centre to sit a series of tests aimed at assessing their competences, skills and abilities in relation to the duties of the position in question, and in accordance with the requirements established for the relevant recruitment process.
- For other positions, the suitable candidates may be invited to complete an online questionnaire designed to assess their competences in relation to the duties of the position in question and in accordance with the requirements established for the relevant recruitment process.

In both situations, candidates are entitled to receive, upon request, feedback on their results.



The external entity that may be contracted for this process will deal with personal data involved in accordance with the applicable legislation on data protection and exclusively for the purpose of the assessment to be carried out.

## 5. Selection committee deliberations

The selection committee must always be aware that its deliberations on the result of the selection procedure, either positive or negative, constitute administrative acts/decisions. Such acts/decisions may be challenged via a request for revision and/or a complaint to the Court of Justice of the European Union or the European Ombudsman.

The HRMS will schedule the meetings and the venue on behalf of the chairperson of the selection committee and will inform the members of the selection committee accordingly.

The HRMS, together with the chairperson of the selection committee, ensures that the necessary deliberations are taken and provides the members of the selection committee with all relevant information with regards to the selection procedure.

Each meeting of the selection committee shall be properly recorded in minutes to be signed by all members of the selection committee.

The deliberation of the selection committee concerning the final result of the selection process shall be included in the last minutes and transmitted to the EMCDDA AA/AACC.

Pursuant to the outcome of the selection procedure, this deliberation will include the names of the applicants who have been considered by the selection committee as suitable to occupy the position advertised.

## 6. Reserve list

On the basis of the results of the selection procedure and the deliberations of the selection committee on the candidates considered suitable to occupy the position advertised, the EMCDDA AA/AACC may establish a reserve list for recruitment. The duration of the validity of any reserve list is specified in the relevant vacancy notice and may be extended by decision of the EMCDDA AA/AACC.

The decision to recruit from an existing reserve list is at the sole discretion of the EMCDDA AA/AACC. Once established, a recruitment reserve list may be used to fill similar positions.

## 7. Filing

The HRMS is responsible for filing all documents relating to the selection process.

Done and approved in Lisbon on .....<sup>18</sup> September 2023.

Alexis Goosdeel  
Director

