The new booking and computer-based-testing procedure

One of the aims of the new selection procedure is to significantly speed up the whole process from registration to recruitment, and the way to speed up the first phase of a competition/selection procedure is through the introduction of parallel registration, booking and computer based testing.

So, how does it work?
Traditionally, all candidates who registered for a competition/selection procedure had to wait until the end of the registration period to be able to book and take the computer based tests. As of 2010, the registration, booking and testing periods overlap (unless otherwise indicated in the instructions to the candidate or other relevant documents), thereby shortening the overall CBT phase from a current average of 14 to 9 weeks. Within 48 hours of validating their application, candidates receive a letter in their EPSO account informing them of the period during which they have to book their testing appointment. Candidates can then choose their testing date, on the basis of the seats available.

The full registration period for an open competition/selection procedure is divided into several sub-periods. The numbers of seats/dates required to accommodate all tests are then calculated on the basis of the overall number of validated applications for each of the above mentioned sub-periods. As a result and in order to guarantee equal treatment of candidates, not all test dates/centres/seats can be opened as from the first day of booking, even though several dates will be made available throughout the whole testing period. Seats are available on a "first come, first served basis" within each sub-period. If a candidate can see only a limited number of dates/centres/seats available, this means that other testing slots have already been booked by other candidates. Additional test dates/centres/seats will then be made available only gradually, depending on capacity needs.

Candidates are also reminded of the fact that admission tests are no longer knowledge based - but rather competency-based tests. Therefore, extensive preparation time is not necessary.
Candidates may reschedule an appointment previously booked if they are no longer able to take the test on the specific date originally chosen. However, such rescheduling is only possible where seats are still available. Any rescheduling must be done at the latest 48 hrs before the original test appointment and the new testing appointment must be scheduled for at least 48 hrs after the time of rescheduling.

Candidates are informed that it is entirely their responsibility to keep track of the progress of the competition/selection procedure. They should check the information relevant to their application by consulting their EPSO account at least twice a week. All candidates, regardless of when they register, will be offered the same number of calendar days in which to book a test. Candidates who miss their booking period will no longer be able to book a test appointment, even if the registration period for the overall competition/selection period is still open.

There is one other important consequence of the parallel system: it will no longer be possible for candidates to continue to make changes to their application right up to the closing date for registration. Once validated, an application becomes final and is sent for further processing.