

**Frequently Asked Questions on the competitions for the  
Secretaries cycle 2014  
EPSO/AST-SC/01/14**

**SECRETARIES (grades SC1 and SC2)**

**for the following languages:  
CROATIAN, ENGLISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN**

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## Conditions for application

### What are the duties of a secretary in the EU Institutions?

The duties are listed in the notice of competition. You can also have a look at our web site where you can find access to useful information on different profiles:

[http://europa.eu/epso/discover/job\\_profiles/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epso/discover/job_profiles/index_en.htm)

Please note that the SC2 grade secretaries will mainly be recruited by the Court of Auditors in Luxembourg.

### Can I apply for both grades or for several languages?

No, you can only apply for one grade and one language. You must choose before you start your application and you cannot change your choice after the validation of your competition.

However, if you applied for grade **SC 2** and the Selection board finds that you do not meet the eligibility criteria for this grade, you might under certain conditions be reassigned, with your consent, to the SC1 grade and invited for the assessment tests. Please carefully read detailed information in the notice of competition.

Please also note that the SC2 grade secretaries will mainly be recruited by the Court of Auditors in Luxembourg.

### Which diploma do I need to participate?

There are 2 possibilities:

- You have a post-secondary education attested by a diploma in the secretarial field (no minimum duration). The diploma must always be relevant to the duties. We do not have a list of all these diplomas and we cannot therefore give you advice on individual cases. It is for the selection board to decide, within the framework set by the notice of competition, if your diploma can be considered as the relevant diploma.

- You have a level of secondary education attested by a diploma giving access to post-secondary education, followed by at least three years' professional experience in the secretarial field with tasks that are directly and mostly related to the secretarial duties described in the notice of competition. NB: The three years do not count towards the number of years of professional experience required for candidates of the SC2 grade.

An overview of diplomas is available at [http://europa.eu/epso/doc/diplomes-fortheweb\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/epso/doc/diplomes-fortheweb_en.pdf)

If you have a diploma gained outside the EU, you can participate in the competition, but you should check that your diploma is recognised by one of the EU member states' authorities (<http://www.enic-naric.net/>) as this is required to be recruited.

### **Could my professional experience possibly be taken into account in the context of a competition?**

Only candidates for the grade SC2 need professional experience in the field (4 years). Candidates for the SC1 grade do not need professional experience. For professional experience counting towards the diploma, see relevant information above.

Please keep in mind that professional experience is relevant only if acquired after the diploma giving access to the competition was obtained.

It is for the selection board to decide, within the framework set by the notice of competition, if professional activities carried out can be considered as the professional experience required (including any experience acquired during a traineeship).

Professional activities can be considered by the selection board as professional experience if the following two conditions are met:

- 1 - they are genuine and effective, excluding any small scale research activities carried out during studies that would be purely marginal and ancillary
- 2 - they are paid, even if the level of remuneration is low, below the guaranteed minimum wage, and regardless of the source of earnings (employer, government, foundation or other) or the sui generis nature of the employment relationship (employee or not) under national law.

To come to this decision, the selection board interprets the concept of professional experience required only in the terms of the competition in question, as set out in the description of duties (see notice of competition) and not in terms of national legislation, as this would inevitably lead to differences in treatment between candidates of different nationalities.

### **Can I still participate if I don't meet all the conditions?**

You must meet all the conditions and we strongly advise you not to apply if you do not meet them. The Selection board will only admit candidates who meet all eligibility requirements.

### **How many EU languages do I need to speak?**

You need at least 2 languages: your first (or main) language must be one of the 4 competition languages (English, French, German or Croatian); and a second language that must be English, French or German (this second language must be different from your first language). You must have thorough knowledge of your first language (level C1) and a satisfactory knowledge of your second language (level B2).

Part of the admission tests and the assessment tests will be in your second language.

To give you an idea of the required knowledge, you can check the following web site: [http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Downloads/CEF/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid.csp?loc=en\\_EN](http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Downloads/CEF/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid.csp?loc=en_EN)

### **I'm not a citizen of one of the 28 EU Member States. Can I apply?**

No, you must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union to apply.

### **How many places are there on the reserve list?**

We are looking for the following number of successful candidates per language. These numbers are based on the needs the EU Institutions expressed prior to publication of the competition. The reserve lists constitute a pool of potential recruits which is valid, in general, initially for about one year. The validity of reserve lists may be prolonged by EPSO according to the needs of the Institutions. Being on a reserve list does not guarantee your recruitment by the Institutions. Most of the posts for SC1 grade secretaries are in Brussels and in Luxembourg. The SC2 grade secretaries will mainly be recruited by the Court of Auditors in Luxembourg.

<b>Language</b>	<b>SC1</b>	<b>SC2</b>
Croatian	40	13
English	70	32
French	56	33
German	21	10

### **What is the salary range for these posts?**

<b>Grade</b>	<b><i>Basic monthly salary (in €) 40 hours working week</i></b>
AST/SC2	2 654
AST/SC1	2 345

## **My online application**

### **How to apply?**

Before starting your application, you should very carefully read the following documents: the notice of competitions, the General Rules applicable to open competitions and the online manual (links available at <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eu-careers.info/assistants/secretaries-mf/>).

The application process might take some time. Don't start late as we do not accept any applications that are not validated before the deadline. The responsibility for completing your online application before the deadline is entirely yours. We would

advise you not to wait until the last minute before applying, since exceptional web traffic or technical failure may mean that you have to start the whole online application process over again, which you will not be able to do once the deadline has passed.

Please also note that you cannot duplicate a former application.

Start your application at <http://secretaries.eu-careers.eu> by clicking on the relevant "Apply now" button. You must log out from your account before starting the application; you cannot launch the application from your EPSO account.

### **Can I modify the content of my application once it has been validated?**

No, you can no longer edit your application, as EPSO immediately processes data once it's validated.

### **Where can I apply?**

After reading the documents published there, you can start the online application at <http://secretaries.eu-careers.eu>

Your application must be validated by 21/03/2014 midday (Brussels time) at the latest. The application process may take some time and we strongly advise you not to wait until the last moment before applying.

### **I have some difficulties with filling in the application form.**

Please check the online manual "[How to apply?](#)" or our [video](#). You will find there many tips to help you register your application.

### **In which language should I fill in the application form?**

The application form must be completed in English, French or German.

### **When do I need to send you my diplomas and other documents relating to my professional experience?**

You will be invited at a later stage via your EPSO account to submit your supporting documents. Please also check the related information in the [Guide to open competitions](#).

## **Competition tests and planning**

### **Where can I find further information on the tests?**

For some of the tests we have samples available at [http://europa.eu/epso/apply/sample\\_test/index\\_en.htm#chapter3](http://europa.eu/epso/apply/sample_test/index_en.htm#chapter3)

EPSO does not itself publish any books/leaflets/brochures which contain questions for preparation, tips for passing the exam, etc. apart from the information which is available on this web-site. Some Member States organise courses for training EU nationals for the European Institutions' open competitions. To find out more, please check the following information:

[http://europa.eu/epso/apply/info\\_sessions/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epso/apply/info_sessions/index_en.htm)

**When will I receive the invitation to book for my computer-based tests?**

The booking for admission tests is planned to take place in March and April 2014. Invitations to book will be published in the candidates' EPSO accounts

**When do the computer-based tests take place?**

The tests are planned to take place in April and May 2014.

**Is the travel to the computer based exam centre reimbursed?**

No, there is no reimbursement when travelling for computer based tests admission tests.

**When do the assessment tests take place?**

The planning of the Assessment centre will be published as soon as possible at [http://europa.eu/epso/doc/epso\\_planning\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/epso/doc/epso_planning_en.pdf). These tests will not start before September 2014.

**Is travel to Brussels for the assessment tests reimbursed?**

You may get a contribution to your travel and subsistence costs according to the rules at: [http://europa.eu/epso/apply/on\\_going\\_compet/reimburse/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epso/apply/on_going_compet/reimburse/index_en.htm)

**When will I find out if I have got to the reserve list?**

Reserve lists are planned to be available at the beginning of 2015.

The following indicative planning will be updated regularly to keep you updated: [http://europa.eu/epso/doc/epso\\_planning\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/epso/doc/epso_planning_en.pdf)

**Further questions?**

Please regularly check the competition specific information published and consider subscribing for e-mail alerts at [www.eu-careers.info](http://www.eu-careers.info).