

Letter from the European Ombudsman to the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) on the use of remote testing only for the 'pre-selection' tests in a selection procedure to recruit EU civil servants (Assistants AST3 - EPSO/AST/154/22)

Correspondence - 17/05/2023

Case OI/1/2023/VS - **Opened on** 15/03/2023 - **Decision on** 22/01/2024 - **Institution concerned** European Personnel Selection Office (No further inquiries justified) |

Director

European Personnel Selection Office

Dear Ms X,

On 31 March 2023, EPSO announced its decision [1] to cancel the selection procedure EPSO/AST/154/22, which is the subject of the above-mentioned own-initiative inquiry I launched earlier this year.

Following this announcement, I have received a significant number of complaints from candidates who had been informed they had passed the pre-selection tests, arguing that the decision to cancel the selection procedure is unfair and that the information provided by EPSO was limited.

It is understandable that the candidates who had passed the pre-selection tests are deeply disappointed with the selection procedure being cancelled and that they would have wished for another solution to address the difficulties surrounding the selection procedure, such as a retesting of candidates who had faced problems or that the candidates who had passed the pre-selection tests could keep their points for a new selection procedure.

Given that the main purpose of my own-initiative inquiry is to identify lessons that could be learned for future selection procedures, I would like to include this aspect within the scope. While I will make clear to complainants who turned to me about the cancellation that I cannot annul EPSO's decision, as some would have wished for, I would like to be in a position to



reassure them about the reasoning behind this decision and to secure for them as much information as possible in this regard.

I would therefore find it useful in the context of this own-initiative inquiry to receive EPSO's reply to the concerns raised in the above-mentioned complaints about the cancellation.

To this end, I would appreciate it if EPSO could provide further details on the decision, notably on the reasons for resorting to this exceptional measure, as well as on its assessment of any other solutions that some candidates would have wished for, such as the retesting of candidates who had faced problems or that the candidates who had passed the pre-selection tests could keep their points for a new selection procedure.

I look forward to receiving your written reply to these additional aspects by 14 July 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Emily O'Reilly

European Ombudsman

Strasbourg, 15/05/2023

[1] <https://epso.europa.eu/en/cancellation-competition-epso-ast-154-22-assistants-ast3> [Link]