



P. Nikiforos Diamandouros
European Ombudsman

Mr Nicholas David Bearfield
Director
European Personnel Selection Office
Avenue de Cortenbergh, 25
1049 Brussels
BELGIQUE

Strasbourg, 07-05-2012

Follow-up to own-initiative inquiry OI/9/2010/RT concerning the European Personnel Selection Office

Dear Mr Bearfield,

On 18 May 2011, I informed you of my decision closing my own-initiative inquiry concerning EPSO's new policy in open competitions regarding the booking of admission tests, its communication with candidates, and the conditions in the various test centres (reference number OI/9/2010/RT).

In my decision closing the above own-initiative inquiry, I made two further remarks concerning i) the practice of sending candidates e-mail notifications in the framework of open competitions, and ii) the situation where candidates, although properly informed of the booking period, are not able to access the internet during that short period and thus cannot book their CBTs (for instance, because of an adequately justified illness).

EPSO replied to my further remarks on 3 October 2011. It stated that it improved its communication with candidates. In this respect, candidates are informed by e-mail of the necessity to book their admission tests. In order to avoid that e-mail notifications be intercepted by spam filters, EPSO decided to send these e-mails by category. EPSO further stated that in duly justified cases, if a candidate is not able to access the internet during the period foreseen to book his/her admission tests and thus cannot book his/her CBTs, EPSO will consider the individual circumstances of the case, in order to allow the modification of the booking period for the candidate concerned.

Nevertheless, similar issues to those mentioned in my two further remarks form the subject matter of a complaint which has recently been submitted to the Ombudsman¹.

¹ Complaint 749/2012/RT.



I decided to open an inquiry into the above-mentioned complaint and asked the complainant to clarify why it considers that EPSO's position on his case was not satisfactory, in light of my conclusions in the own-initiative inquiry. Therefore, I do not invite EPSO to submit an opinion on the complainant's allegation and claim at this stage of my procedure.

However, I would be very grateful if EPSO could inform me of the follow-up it has given to the commitments it made in its reply to the above-mentioned further remarks, namely: i) whether it reinstated the practice of sending candidates e-mail notifications in the framework of open competitions and, ii) whether it allows the modification of the booking period for candidates who are not able to access the internet during the period foreseen to book their admission tests and thus cannot book their CBTs in that period.

I would be grateful if EPSO could send its reply by 31 May 2012.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'P. Nikiforos Diamandouros'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

P. Nikiforos Diamandouros