



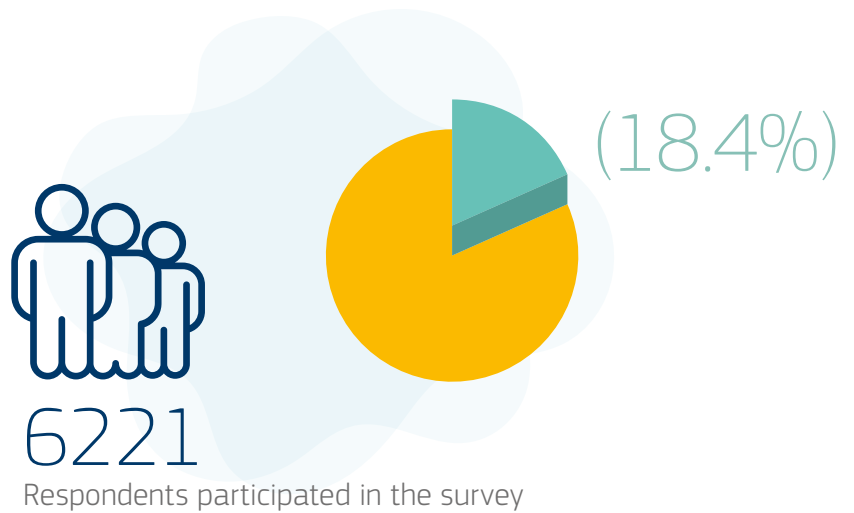
EPSO'S DIVERSITY PILOT SURVEY MAIN FINDINGS



I. Introduction

The survey was sent to **33 810 former candidates** who took part in **28** EPSO since closed competitions between **2018** and **2020**¹.

The participation was entirely on an anonymous and voluntary basis. The answers were collected solely for statistical purposes, in order to gain a better idea on the diversity of EPSO's applicant pool and to allow EPSO to identify its diversity target groups.

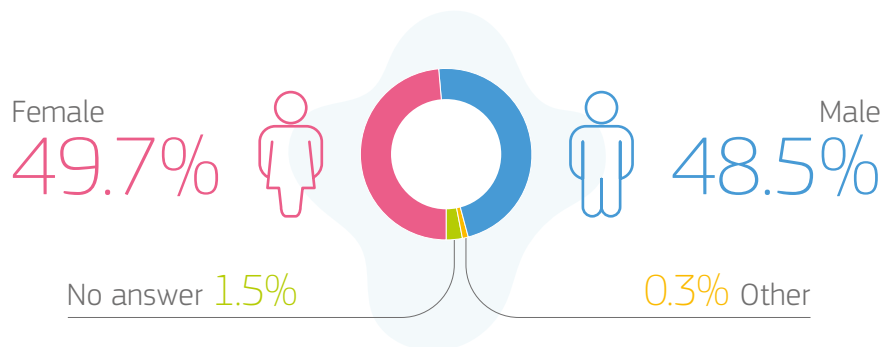


¹ 2 AD Generalist competitions, 18 AD Specialist competitions, and 8 AST/AST-SC Specialists competitions. AD competitions are for Administrators, and AST/AST-SC are for Assistants/Secretaries-Clerks.

II. Key characteristics of EPSO's applicant pool²

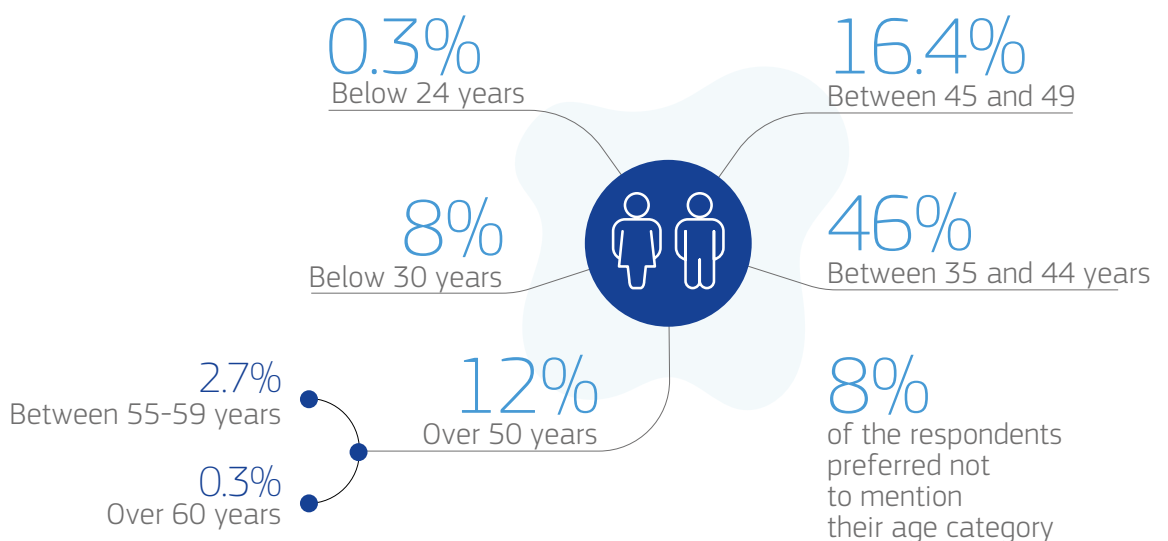
1. Gender

Gender balance was well established in our pool of respondents: **Female (49.7%), Male (48.5%)**. **0.3%** of participants selected the option "other", and less than **2%** of participants decided not to disclose their gender or did not provide any answer to the question.



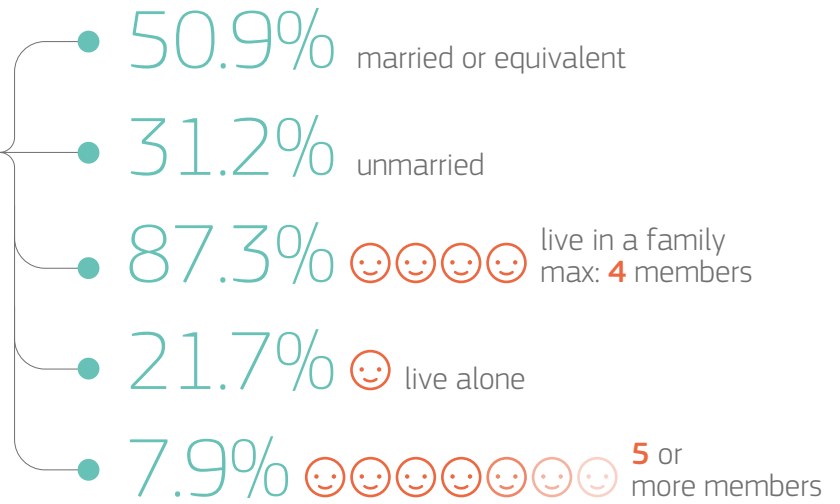
2. Age

The majority of the respondents are:



² The total percentages for each category may differ from 100% due to missing values or 'I don't know/prefer not to say' answer option which were not taken into account

3. Family status & composition



4. Citizenship & Country of birth

Most of the respondents are European citizens (**97.3%**) and born in a country that is part of the European Union (**91.9%**).

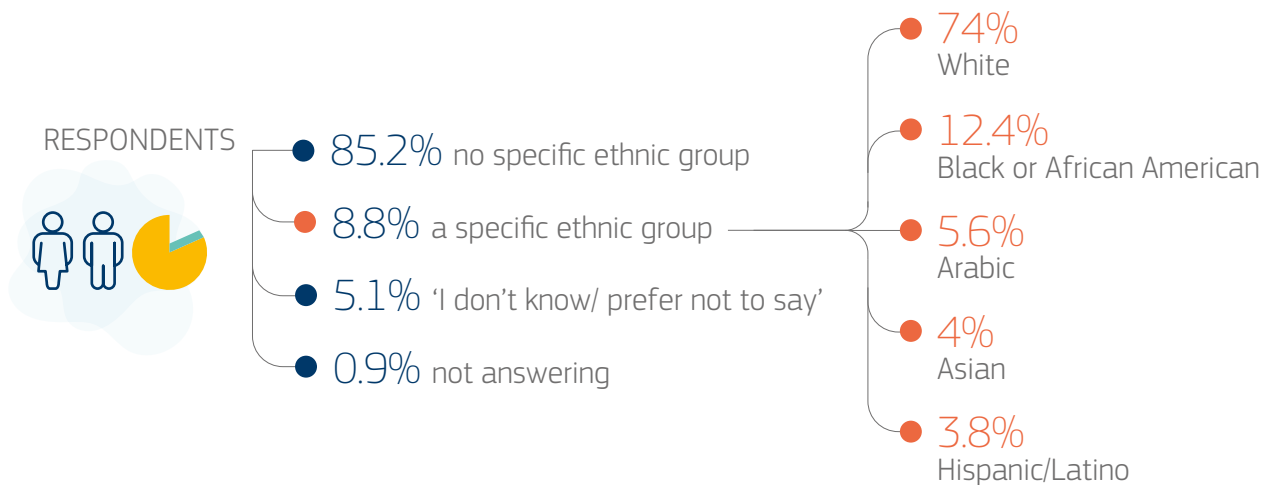


The most-widely represented EU citizenships in our sample are (in order of importance): Italian, Spanish, Greek, Romanian, Belgian and French. **0.4%** of our pool has a non-EU citizenship. In this case, the two citizenships worth mentioning are Albanian and Algerian. The six most represented countries of birth overlap almost entirely with the most represented citizenships.

The qualitative analysis has identified the following main non-EU countries of birth (or regions), in order of importance: Central and South America, Central and South Africa, Western Balkans, North Africa, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, USA, Canada, Russian Federation and Switzerland.

5. Ethnic background

85.2% of respondents do not consider themselves as coming from a specific ethnic group, whilst **8.8%** do. Potentially, this percentage could be much higher, as **5.1%** answered '*I don't know/prefer not to say*', and **0.9%** chose not to answer this question. The qualitative analysis of those who have specified their ethnic background suggests the following most common categories of ethnic groups in our sample³: White (**74%**), Black or African American (**12.4%**) Arabic (**5.6%**), Asian (**4%**) and Hispanic/Latino (**3.8%**). The countries of birth (or regions) identified in the previous point are worth analysing in more detail when identifying our ethnic target groups.

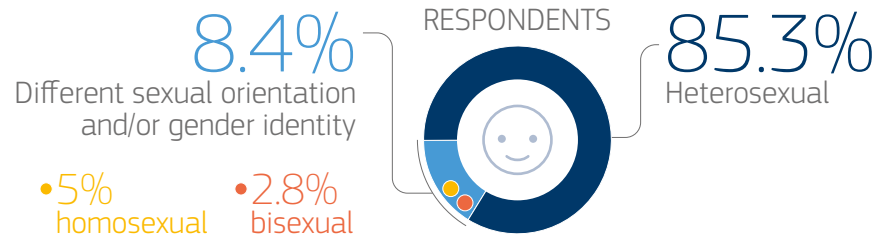


6. Religion or belief

The majority of respondents (**57.4%**) do not consider themselves religious, while **34.3%** of the participants do. The qualitative analysis of replies from respondents who have specified their religion or belief suggests the following categories: Catholic (**61%**), Orthodox (**29%**), Muslim (**3.3%**), Protestant (**2%**), Jewish (**1.2%**), Lutheran (**1%**), Buddhist (**0.9%**), Atheist (**0.7%**) and Evangelist (**0.6%**). What is interesting and important to note is that when we ask participants whether they consider themselves to be perceived as belonging to a particular religion, belief or faith group, out of **12.3%** of those who have answered 'yes' to this question, more than half consider to be perceived as Catholic, **22.3%** as Orthodox, **12.4%** as Muslim, and **3%** as Hindu according to the qualitative analysis of their answers. There is a relatively high rate of those who have preferred not to answer and/or have chosen the '*I don't know/prefer not to say*' answer option (**12.5%**).

³ The categories were created based on the following classification: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-15-089.html>

7. Sexual orientation/ Gender identity



This percentage is potentially higher, as **5.7%** of participants chose the *'I don't know/prefer not to say'* answer option and **0.5%** did not answer. The very low number of respondents choosing 'other' as an answer option and additional specifications from the qualitative analysis suggest that the categories listed in this question represent relatively well the spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities, although some new proposals would be worth analysing.

8. Information in relation to the socio-economic status⁴

92.3% of respondents declared to have a university degree or equivalent, out of which **15.4%** hold a PhD. **2.2%** of the sample have secondary education as their highest level of education.

They are mostly full-time workers (**84.6%**). **5.7%** did not have a job when filling in the survey.

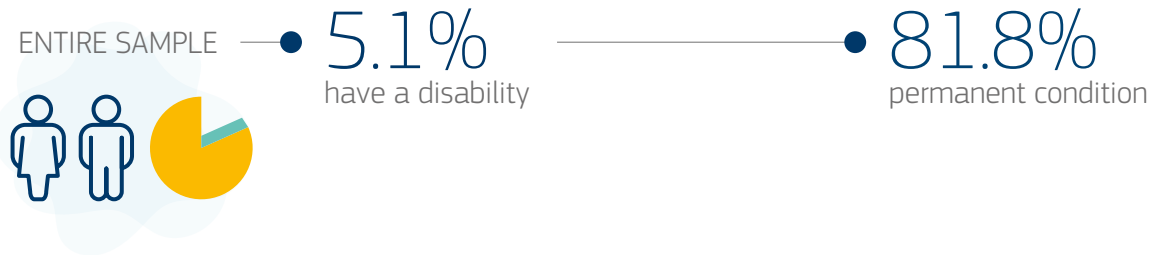
Respondents speak three languages on average (almost **10%** speak five languages). The five most spoken languages are English, French, Spanish, Italian and German in order of importance. The majority of respondents (**63%**) come from a monolingual family, while almost a quarter of the respondents are from a bilingual family.

As regards parents or guardians, they are also very highly educated; **49.6%** hold a university degree, and **12.4%** hold a PhD. It is interesting to note that almost **10%** of the parents/guardians have primary school as the highest level of education. At the time respondents were studying, **87%** of their parents/guardians were working full-time.

The majority of respondents (**74.5%**) perceive themselves as not coming from an underprivileged socio-economical background, contrary to **19.5%** of the respondents who perceive themselves to have an underprivileged socio-economical background.

9. Disability & Medical condition

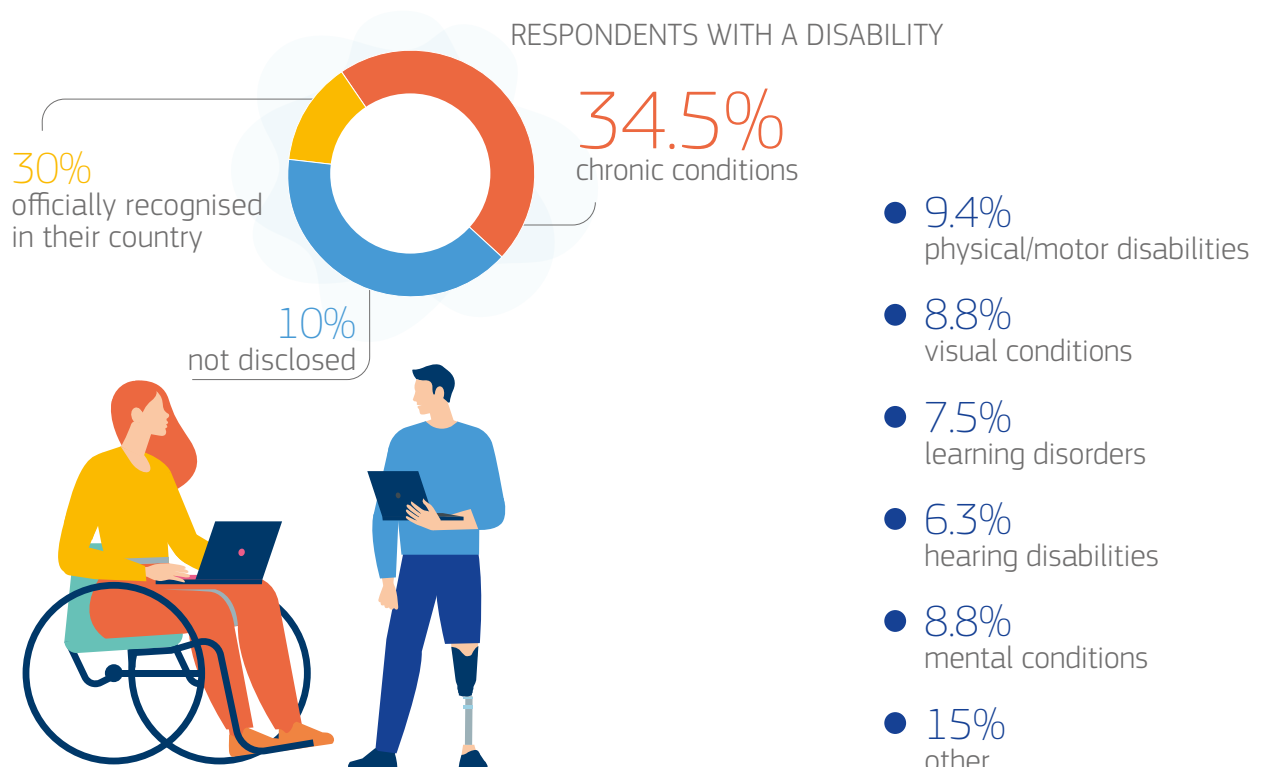
5.1% of the entire sample declared to have a disability or a medical condition, out of which **81.8%** reported to have a permanent condition.



30% declare their condition is recognised officially as a disability in their country. This can be explained by chronic conditions being the most prevalent condition by far in our sample (**34.5%**).

The other important categories are physical/motor disabilities (**9.4%**), visual and mental conditions (each **8.8%**), learning disorders (**7.5%**), hearing disabilities (**6.3%**).

Almost **15%** of the sample chose the category ‘other’. The qualitative analysis allowed us to identify some more specific conditions out of which some could have been covered by the existing categories (e.g. autism spectrum, cancer, head trauma/brain injuries, dyslexia, heart conditions, epilepsy, digestive conditions...). It is important to note that almost **10%** of the sample chose not to disclose their condition.



III. Competitions

Most of the respondents (**60.4%**) are candidates who have not succeeded in an EPSO competition. They have participated in **4** or more competitions (**51.1%**) in the course of their life (**36%** have participated in **5** competitions). They have participated mostly in AD Generalist competitions (**61%**), AD Specialist competitions (**50%**), and CAST (**39.2%**) selections. The majority of them were excluded during or after the Computer Based Test phase (**45.6%**) of the competitions they took part in. The qualitative analysis shows that out of those who have specified a different stage of elimination, the talent screener was the most prevalent stage mentioned. Out of **38.6%** of candidates who report being successful in an EPSO competition, almost **85%** were invited for a recruitment interview and **77%** were either recruited or in the process of being recruited.

IV. Perception of enjoying equal opportunities

Most of the respondents tend to perceive equal opportunities on the general labour market, including in the EU Institutions and in EPSO's competitions.

They report to enjoy more equal opportunities in EPSO competitions compared to the labour market and EU Institutions.

Labour market
61.1%

Equal opportunities
RESPONDENTS



55.7%
European Institutions

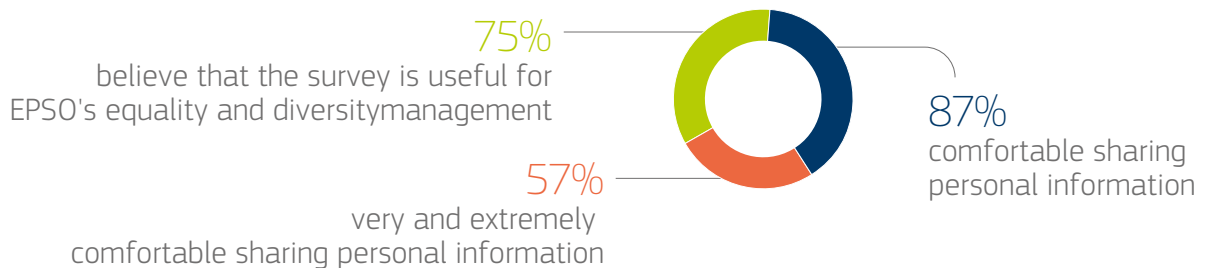


The qualitative analysis suggests an interesting ranking of perceived grounds for discrimination worth further analysing. Age, nationality, gender, professional experience and race/ethnicity seem to be the **5** top grounds for possible discrimination reported in the context of EPSO's competitions. The situation is quite similar (with some slight changes in the ranking) for the EU Institutions and the labour market. It is worth mentioning that in the labour market, gender is reported as being the biggest ground for discrimination.



V. Feedback about the survey

75% of the participants believe that the information requested in this pilot survey is useful for EPSO in terms of equality and diversity management. It is very positive to see that **87%** of respondents felt comfortable sharing their personal information (from moderately to extremely), out of which **57%** reported to feel very or extremely comfortable. This should make the implementation of a future equality and diversity monitoring tool easier.



VI. Impact of candidates' characteristics on some key variables⁴

1. Number of competitions

Disability, sexual orientation/gender identity, ethnic background and religion or belief do not seem to have an impact on the number of applications. On the other hand, we observe that the percentage of female candidates applying to more than five competitions is significantly higher than the percentage of male candidates. This effect is also present when we combine gender or disability with the socio-economic status and disability and gender. Age of respondents seems to also have an impact on the number of applications.

Age of respondents

35-49 years



18-34 years



However, the combination of ethnic and perceived religion does not affect the number of applications.

2. Reported success rate in EPSO competitions⁶

It appears that gender, disability, ethnic background and under privileged socio-economic status do not play a significant role in determining the reported successful (or unsuccessful) outcome in an EPSO competition even if we observe a slightly higher reported success by female candidates.

Sexual orientation and age are the only isolated characteristics that seem to have an impact. When it comes to sexual orientation, respondents who identified as homosexual report higher success rates compared to other sub-groups and the total sample. In terms of age, the most successful age group seems to be '35-49'. The biggest decrease in success is observed in the '18-34' group.

⁴ For each candidate's characteristic separately and in combination, we have analysed their impact on the following variables: the number of competitions, reported success rate in EPSO competitions, invitation to a recruitment interview, recruitment rate and perception of equal opportunities enjoyed in the labor market, EPSO competitions and EU Institutions

3. Invitation to a recruitment interview & reported recruitment rate⁷

The combination of ethnic background with gender, religion, perceived religion or socio-economic status has no impact. On the other hand, women with a disability or an underprivileged socio-economic status tend to report more success in EPSO's competitions than the total sample.

Gender, disability and sexual orientation/gender identity seem to positively impact the chance of being invited to a recruitment interview in our sample (except for the sub-group 'bisexuals').

Female successful candidates and successful candidates with a disability enjoy also a higher rate of recruitment, which is not the case for those with a different sexual orientation/gender identity (except for 'bisexuals'). On the other hand, we can observe that successful candidates in the **50 to 60+** age group, with a specific ethnic background, religion or belief, or an underprivileged socio-economic status tend to report a lower rate of invitations to a recruitment interview.

When it comes to reported recruitment, successful candidates with a specific ethnic background, and those with a disability are significantly more often recruited. Those with a lower socio-economic status and **50 to 60+** age group are significantly less often recruited.

The combination of some variables tend to intensify these observations (e.g. women with a disability are both more often invited to a recruitment interview and recruited. Successful candidates with a disability and a lower socio-economic status report to be less often invited to a recruitment interview but are significantly more often recruited. Successful candidates from a specific ethnic background, being perceived as having a specific religion by other people and with a lower socio-economic status are less often invited to a recruitment interview but report to be more often recruited when compared to the total sample).

4. Perception of equal opportunities

In general, successful candidates believe to have enjoyed equal opportunities more than the unsuccessful candidates and this in all three situations (labour market, EPSO competitions, EU Institutions) which might indicate the presence of bias. The highest level of equal opportunities perceived was in EPSO competitions compared to the labour market in general and to the EU Institutions. When we consider candidates' characteristics, it seems that gender does not affect how candidates feel in terms of equal opportunities.

On the other hand, age, disability, socio-economic status, ethnic background, religion or belief, sexual orientation/gender identity and their combinations tend to affect the perception of having enjoyed equal opportunities more negatively.

For example, the **50** to **60+** age group tend to perceive equal opportunities much less compared to the total sample, whilst those in the **18-24** age group have a positive perception of equal opportunities in EPSO's competitions. Candidates with a disability tend to experience low levels of equal opportunities in EPSO's competitions but have a more positive perception when it comes to the EU Institutions. Candidates with a specific ethnic background and religion or belief tend to perceive less equal opportunities in all three situations assessed.

VII. Main conclusions, limitations and next steps

EPSO's equality & diversity pilot survey contributed to a better understanding of the type of candidate EPSO selection procedures seem to be attracting. The typical EPSO candidate could be described as:

- **a good balance between female and male;**
- **mostly in the 35-44 age group;**
- **EU citizen born in the EU without specific ethnic background and most probably coming from Italy, Spain, Greece, Romania, Belgium or France;**
- **married or equivalent;**
- **highly educated and multilingual;**
- **fervent candidate to EPSO AD competitions;**
- **rather 'straight';**
- **not very religious;**
- **from a privileged socio-economic background;**
- **and without a disability or a permanent medical condition.**

Our observations represent some limitations though, as they are founded on an anonymous survey where most of the questions were based on participants' willingness, perceptions and self-declarations. Hence, before drawing any conclusion, we would need a more systematic monitoring and accurate personal data. Indeed, it would be necessary to get precise data by, for example, implementing a full equality & diversity monitoring tool. This would allow us to further enhance our equal opportunities policy and management by having accurate data on diversity for each candidate (this would remain on voluntary basis), their performance in EPSO's competitions and recruitment interviews, as well as on actual recruitment rates and time spent on the reserve lists before being recruited.

A detailed analysis of the participants' feedback and comments would also be necessary to improve the survey, together with the reformulation of some questions and answer options to allow the collection of more relevant details.

Another important limitation concerns the sample, as the survey was focusing on **20** AD competitions and only **8** AST/AST-SC competitions (most of the competitions were for specialists), which can affect the type of observations we made. Therefore, we can consider them rather as possible indications and not tendencies.

What the survey suggests is that targeted measures for some groups could already be envisaged in order to attract more diversity to EPSO's applicant pool (such as below 30 or over 50 years old candidates, candidates with a specific ethnic background, and/or with a lower socio-economic status and/or with a disability or a medical condition, and/or a different sexual orientation/gender identity).

A very positive point to stress is that **87%** of respondents felt comfortable sharing their personal data in the context of this survey, out of which **57%** very and extremely comfortable.



This should facilitate an implementation of an equality and diversity monitoring tool and the collection of more accurate data on candidates (both regarding their perceived diversity characteristics and their performance in EPSO selections).



The practical next steps to undertake:

- analyse the diversity data in the Member States collected via EPSO's equality and diversity coordinators network to allow EPSO to identify its diversity target groups;
- adopt a targeted communication and outreach strategy to attract more talent from diversity target groups;
- get closer to target groups and demystify the EU careers for them. Identify why they are under-represented. Identify their blocking factors and propose solutions in collaboration with organisations representing them;
- engage more with diversity (expert) organisations via EPSO's database of partner organisations established by the ongoing call for cooperation to all EU diversity organisations;
- analyse the lessons learnt from this pilot survey for the future development of an equality and diversity monitoring tool (as foreseen under the EU anti-racism action plan).



For more information regarding this survey,
please send an email to
EPSO-EQUALITY-DIVERSITY@ec.europa.eu

Learn more about EPSO's ongoing activities on
Equality and Diversity on its dedicated [page to
Equal Opportunities](#)

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