



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

18 May 2004

ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR 05/2004

RULES FOR RECRUITMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Circular is to outline the general principles and the procedures to be followed with regard to recruitment. Its aims are to ensure that recruitment is based upon the principles of professional qualification, transparency, equal access and non-discrimination, as laid down in Article 20.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Central Bank.

2. Short-term contract employees

Where this Administrative Circular refers to a “member of staff” or “members of staff”, this shall include short-term contract employees, to whom Annex I “Conditions of Short-Term Employment” to the Conditions of Employment for Staff of the European Central Bank applies.

3. Recruitment

- 3.1 Recruitment is defined as filling a vacant position, which can occur at any point in time during the year.
- 3.2 In order to create the opportunity for advancement and mobility within the European Central Bank (ECB) for all members of staff, all vacant positions shall initially be advertised only internally, except in the following instances:
 - if the vacant position is a management position (Head of Division and above), the vacancy shall, as a rule, be advertised simultaneously both internally and externally,
 - if a similar vacancy has been advertised (internally or externally) within the past six months and a qualified candidate identified as part of that previous procedure is proposed for recruitment, it will not be necessary to re-advertise the vacancy,
 - if, on the advice of the business area concerned, the Directorate Human Resources agrees that it is unlikely that there will be suitable internal candidates, the vacancy shall be advertised simultaneously both internally and externally,
 - if, in view of an urgent need to fill a particular vacancy, the Directorate Human Resources agrees with the business area concerned that the vacancy shall be advertised simultaneously both internally and externally,

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- if the position can be filled by means of a horizontal transfer within the business area without the need for a change in the salary band, the vacancy shall not be advertised.

4. Vacancy notices

- 4.1 Vacancy notices shall set out the main responsibilities of the position and a general description of the educational and other qualifications and experience required. Where the initial place of work will not be Frankfurt am Main, this shall be specified in the vacancy notice. Furthermore, the term of the contract, the working hours and the requirement for shift work, on-call and/or structural weekend work duties shall be included, as appropriate.
- 4.2 Vacancy notices shall set out the deadline for the submission of applications. Applications shall be made in writing in English and may also be submitted in another official Community language. Applications may be transmitted in electronic form, or by fax or surface mail. The vacancy notice shall specify that the ECB has no obligation and makes no commitment to return applications and attached documents, if any, to applicants. As a general rule, the time limit shall be not less than three weeks from the date of issue of the vacancy notice. For vacancy notices that are only published internally, the time limit may be two weeks. The need to derogate from this rule shall be justified in writing by the business area manager to the Directorate Human Resources, which shall decide whether or not this is appropriate.
- 4.3 Internal vacancy notices shall be circulated and communicated by e-mail to all staff.
- 4.4 Vacancy notices shall be advertised externally via the ECB's website and by sending them to the national central banks of the European System of Central Banks.
- 4.5 In consultation with management of the business area, the Directorate Human Resources may also decide to advertise externally published vacancy notices simultaneously in selected media and/or to engage search firms or similar recruitment agencies or to present vacancies at appropriate recruitment fora.

5. General principles of the selection process

- 5.1 The selection process shall be directed towards securing individuals with high standards of ability, efficiency and integrity.
- 5.2 Without prejudice to the principle stated above, the selection process shall also be directed to securing the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the European Union. No nationality quota shall apply and no vacancy shall be reserved for a specific nationality. However, on account of specific business-related needs, positions may be advertised which require professional qualifications and experience related to a particular Member State.
- 5.3 The selection process shall be conducted without regard to ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or physical disability. A balanced representation of men and women among the ECB staff is considered to be desirable.

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- 5.4 In the event that candidates have equal qualifications for a position, gender and/or nationality may be used as additional criteria for the selection decision with a view to achieving a balanced representation of gender and/or nationalities.
- 5.5 The ECB shall make reasonable arrangements within the working environment to accommodate the employment of disabled staff, as appropriate.
- 5.6 In general, the ECB is neutral with regard to the recruitment of close relatives, spouses, recognised partners or close acquaintances of members of staff or of members of the Executive Board and other decision-making bodies of the ECB. However, the latter shall not seek to influence the selection process involving such candidates. Should the Directorate Human Resources have any doubts with regard to the recruitment of a close relative, spouse, recognised partner or close acquaintance of a member of staff, it shall submit the case to the Executive Board for a decision.
- 5.7 Close relatives, spouses, recognised partners or close acquaintances of members of staff or of members of the Executive Board and other decision-making bodies of the ECB shall not be recruited as subordinates of the ECB member of staff or of the Executive Board to whom they are related or known.
- 5.8 The Directorate Human Resources shall be responsible for the procedure for filling vacant positions and shall ensure that the rules laid down by this Administrative Circular are followed. The Directorate Human Resources shall submit annually to the Executive Board a report on recruitment. The report shall *inter alia* inform the Executive Board on the use of discretionary powers by the Director General Administration and the Directorate Human Resources.

6. Correspondence with applicants

- 6.1 All applications shall be registered by the Directorate Human Resources. Applications sent directly to business areas shall be forwarded to the Directorate Human Resources in order to be registered.
- 6.2 The Directorate Human Resources shall provide written confirmation of receipt of an application as soon as possible and at least within two weeks of receipt of the application.
- 6.3 The Directorate Human Resources shall inform applicants in writing as soon as possible of the outcome of their application, but no more than four months after receipt of the application. In the event that the selection procedure has not been finalised within a four-month period, the applicants shall be informed within that time that the selection procedure is still under way. Furthermore, candidates shall be informed at four-monthly intervals about the status of their applications.

7. Selection procedure

- 7.1 Except for selection of the Directors General, Deputy Directors General, Directors or candidates for positions at the same bands in the salary structure, a Selection Committee shall be formed for each selection procedure. A Selection Committee shall be composed of one or more representatives of the business area where the vacancy occurs, a representative of another business area, subject to the authority of the Director General Administration to make an exception in accordance with

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paragraph 7.2 and a representative of the Directorate Human Resource. The Directorate Human Resource shall take the initiative for the establishment of a Selection Committee as soon as the business area has submitted a vacancy notice for publication. The Selection Committee shall agree on the selection of applicants to be invited for further participation in the selection procedure and on the conduct of the selection procedure subject to the following paragraphs of this Article. The Selection Committee shall agree on the assessment of the applicants who shall be invited for the selection procedure and on the recommendation for final selection. If no agreement can be reached on a particular issue in the Selection Committee, the issue shall be submitted to the next hierarchical level of the representatives in the Selection Committee. Ultimately, the Vice-President shall decide after having sought the views of the Executive Board member(s) responsible for the business areas represented in the Selection Committee.

- 7.2 The selection procedure shall in any case include interviews. One of the interviews shall be conducted by representatives from at least two business areas, one being the business area in which the vacancy has arisen. A representative at management level in the business area in which the vacancy has arisen shall participate in this. In addition, there shall be an interview with a representative of the Directorate Human Resources. The Director General Administration shall identify which other business area is to be involved in the selection procedure. In exceptional cases to be identified by the Director General Administration, the interview may be held by only two or more representatives of the business area in which the vacancy has arisen, one of whom shall be a manager, and a representative from the Directorate Human Resources.¹
- 7.3 The Directorate Human Resources shall arrange interviews in close co-operation with the Selection Committee concerned.
- 7.4 In the event that a member of staff involved in the selection procedure has a close personal relationship with a candidate selected for interview, he/she shall inform the other interviewers of this in advance of the interview and may decide to withdraw from the selection process. He/she shall withdraw from the selection process if his/her objectivity could be seriously challenged. The Directorate Human Resources may decide, if requested to do so by other interviewers involved in the selection process, to ask an interviewer to withdraw from the selection process where his/her objectivity is considered to be impaired.
- 7.5 For each advertised position, at least two candidates shall be invited for interview, unless an insufficient number of suitable applications has been received. The Directorate Human Resources may reject requests from business areas to arrange numerous interviews if it is of the view that the number requested is disproportionate to the number of positions to be filled.
- 7.6 Selection shall be based upon the qualification and experience-related requirements as set out in the vacancy notice.

¹ In case of disagreement between the Director General Administration and the business area in which the vacancy has arisen, the Vice-President shall decide.

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- 7.7 In agreement with the Directorate Human Resources, tests and other selection tools, as appropriate, may form part of the selection procedure. The Directorate Human Resources shall inform candidates invited for the selection procedure in advance of the test(s) and/or other selection tools to be used.
- 7.8 After completion of the interviews, the Selection Committee shall seek the endorsement of the manager of the business area in which the vacancy has arisen, except where the vacancy is for a Head of Division, where the endorsement of the Executive Board shall be required. The Selection Committee shall subsequently inform the Directorate Human Resources in writing of the result of the selection process and the reasons for selecting successful candidates and for rejecting unsuccessful candidates. The memorandum shall also indicate the number of applicants and the number of those invited for interview. It shall also contain a reasoned assessment of all the candidates interviewed ranked in order of suitability.
- 7.9 The business area where the vacancy occurs may indicate that it wishes to keep a candidate on hold for a similar vacancy in future. Applications may be kept on hold for a maximum period of six months.
- 7.10 If no suitable candidate has been identified, additional candidates may be invited for interview. There is no obligation to fill the position if a candidate with the required profile cannot be found.
- 7.11 In accordance with internal guidelines, the travel expenses and hotel accommodation of candidates invited to interview, where necessary, shall be reimbursed.
- 7.12 The Directorate Human Resources shall keep the relevant documentation with regard to the selection of candidates for a period of one year from the date of completion of the selection procedure. The applications and the exchange of correspondence with applicants shall form part of the documentation. However, the vacancy notice and the assessment of candidates who participated in the selection procedure and the recommendation for selection shall be kept for a period of five years. Without prejudice to the second indent of Article 3.2, such documentation shall not be used or referred to in the selection process for other vacancies.
- 7.13 Employment contracts or letters for internal transfers shall be signed in accordance with the rules for signing powers governing the appointment of staff as laid down in A/C 1/1998 on Signing Powers and Powers to Incur Expenditure.
- 7.14 Employment contracts shall commence with effect from the first or the 15th of a month. This shall also apply to internal recruitment with the proviso that a successful candidate shall be transferred at the latest three months after the current manager has been informed of the selection for the position concerned.

8. Conditions of external recruitment

8.1 A candidate may be recruited as a member of staff only on condition that:

- he/she is a national of one of the Member States, and enjoys his/her full rights as a citizen. The Executive Board may in exceptional circumstances recruit a national from countries other than those mentioned in the first sentence;
- he/she produces, upon request, the appropriate evidence and references as to his/her suitability to perform the duties required, including the originals of relevant degrees and other certificates;
- he/she is physically fit to perform his/her duties. This shall be certified by the ECB's Medical Adviser prior to the start of employment. For that purpose, the successful candidate shall undergo a medical examination on the basis of a medical questionnaire provided by the ECB. For specific functions, this may imply a fitness test. The cost of the medical examination shall be borne by the ECB;
- he/she has a thorough knowledge of English and a satisfactory knowledge of a second official Community language.

8.2 The starting salary shall be commensurate with the profile of the position and the relevant qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. It shall be proposed by the Directorate Human Resources and endorsed by the business area.

8.3 Candidates shall be offered an employment contract matching the terms indicated in the vacancy notice, unless it has been agreed with the candidate that a shorter term will be offered.

9. Exceptions

The Executive Board may decide on different rules and/or procedures if the application of the provisions of this Administrative Circular would not be conducive to the achievement of the aims of this Administrative Circular.

Done at Frankfurt am Main on 18 May 2004.²

For and on behalf of the Executive Board

[signed]

Jean Claude Trichet

President

² This Administrative Circular replaces Administrative Circular 01/2003 "Rules for recruitment" of 14 January 2003.