

Munich, 14-01-2025
sc25001cp

Report on the GCC meeting of 13 December 2024

Dear Colleagues,

The General Consultative Committee (GCC) met by videoconference on 13 December 2024. The following items were on the agenda of the meeting and the CSC members of the GCC raised their concerns and tried to get further clarifications:

- Cross-site moves for personal reasons – for consultation [GCC/DOC 25/2024](#)
- Reconstruction of career – for consultation [GCC/DOC 26/2024](#)
- Simplification and digitalisation of processes related to spouse income – for consultation [GCC/DOC 27/2024](#)
- Office wide organisational adjustments 2025 – Stream 1 – for information [GCC/DOC 28/2024](#)
- Amendment to the general guidelines on rewards 2024 – for consultation [GCC/DOC 29/2024](#)

The detailed and reasoned comments and opinions by the CSC members of the GCC are annexed to this paper.

The Central Staff Committee

Opinion of the CSC members of the GCC on [GCC/DOC 25/2024](#) Cross-site moves for personal reasons

The CSC members of the GCC give the following opinion on the Cross site moves for personal reasons in [GCC/DOC 25/2024](#).

The document introduces in the Service Regulations an Article 55b defining that the appointing authority may, at its discretion, grant an employee's request to change their place of employment for personal reasons, provided that it is compatible with the requirements of the service and organisational constraints.

In that case, no new entitlement arises in relation to the benefits under Articles 60, 72, 73, 76, 77, 80 and 81 ServRegs.

On the consultation

1. On 18 September 2024, the administration invited the Central Staff Committee (CSC) to nominate 5 experts to Technical Meetings on cross-site transfers scheduled on 1 and 9 October.
2. On 26 September, the CSC nominated 5 experts.
3. On 27 September, the administration sent in advance of the first technical meeting a copy of the presentation they will use as support information (**ANNEX 1**).
4. On 1 October, the first technical meeting took place.
5. On 7 October, the administration sent a draft comparative table of changes to the ServRegs and Circulars. The document was labelled confidential.
6. On 8 October, the CSC nominees sent comments and questions (**ANNEX 2**).
7. On 9 October, the second technical meeting took place and on the same day the administration published an Intranet [Communiqué](#) announcing the reform to staff. The content of the Communiqué reflected that no suggestion from the staff representation would be taken into account.
8. On 10 October, the CSC nominees sent further comments (**ANNEX 3**).
9. On 5 November 2024, the CSC published a [paper](#) on the reform (**ANNEX 4**).
10. On 28 November, the administration tabled in the GCC the document [GCC/DOC 25/2024](#).
11. On 13 December, the meeting of the General Consultative Committee (GCC) took place.

On the merits

Business reasons for cross-site transfers still exist

12. Officially, the Office considers that with digitisation, cross-site teams and the New Ways of Working there is little to no business need for cross-site transfers anymore.

13. The [Communiqué](#) of 9 October confirms that “[w]ith very few exceptions (e.g. for tasks related to on-site facility maintenance) work can be performed remotely, and staff can perform their duties whether they’re working on-site or anywhere in their host country, or even abroad.”

14. As a result, the EPO made cross-site transfers (almost) impossible since 2020.

15. The document in its summary further explains that

“enhanced digitalisation [allowed] the building of cross-site teams - without requiring that staff change their place of employment [...] Under these circumstances, business reasons for changes of place employment have become largely obsolete.”

16. and further details in section 2.1, paragraph 2:

“vacant posts are now generally published Office-wide, with the final site allocation being determined by balancing the Office’s and the selected candidate’s needs, considering any organisational constraints.”

17. However, the job offers published at the time of the consultation on the topic show the following for DG1 (**ANNEX 5**):

Examiner post in	Location
AI & Quantum Computing (INT/EXT/22002)	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Biotechnology (INT/EXT/22003)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Computer (INT/EXT/22004)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Electrical Engineering & Power Systems	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Electrical Motors and Generators	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Electro-Mobility & EVs (INT/EXT/22018)	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Electronics (INT/EXT/22005)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Image, Audio & Video (INT/EXT/22007)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Industrial Biotechnology (INT/EXT/22015)	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Inorganic Chemistry & Chemical Engineering	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Life Sciences (INT/EXT/22016)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Materials Science (INT/EXT/22008)	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Mechanical & Automotive engineering	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Medical Mechanics & Electronics	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Organic Chemistry (INT/EXT/22010)	Germany (Munich)
Power Electronics / Electrical Drives	The Netherlands (The Hague)
Semiconductors (INT/EXT/22011)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)
Telecom & Wireless (INT/EXT/22012)	Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

18. Examiners posts in specific fields are therefore open for specific places of employment only: Munich or The Hague, but also in Munich only or in The Hague only. None are open for Berlin or for Vienna. Similarly, lawyer posts were recently published as being open in Munich only.
19. In the GCC meeting, we asked if examiners would be granted a transfer to Vienna despite the restrictions in the EPC (see Rule 35 Impl. Reg. EPC). We are still waiting for a clarification.
20. The statement that “vacant posts are generally published Office-wide” is therefore misleading and does not reflect the reality.
21. The Hague remains the site which is the most cited in job offers for examiners. This confirms that recruiting in The Hague is more difficult.
22. The statement that “business reasons for changes of place employment have become largely obsolete” is wrong. There are still business reasons for re-staffing The Hague.

Cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons always existed

23. For decades, EPO employees or their family have sometimes had difficulties in adapting to the country of their place of employment: e.g. distance from relatives, medical reasons, children’s education, etc. When EPO employees found themselves in such a situation, they could request a transfer, for personal or family reasons, to another place of employment. The Office fulfilled its duty of care by considering the request for transfer and considered it also as directly beneficial for the Organisation. Indeed, an employee with personal issues alleviated, thanks to a transfer, would be an employee in a better position to perform at work.
24. Historically, transfers occurred most often from The Hague to Munich. The Hague is often considered less attractive (e.g. for its medical system). Its attractiveness further decreased with the Education Allowance reform which made international schools unaffordable for newly recruited EPO staff members.
25. Transfers for personal or family reasons sometimes took time to obtain, as they should be also compatible with requirements of the “business”, the site capacity and with any

commitments on behalf of the Office towards its host states (e.g. the staff complement in The Hague).

26. When transferred, an EPO employee was entitled to

- one-off benefits: special leave with pay of up to 5 days¹, an installation allowance between 1 or 2 months basic salary², reimbursement of expenses and advances³, lump-sum compensation for the removal of household and personal effects⁴, travel expenses⁵.
- long-term benefits, if applicable after a change of country of employment: home leave⁶ and expatriation allowance⁷. For instance, a German national working in Munich could have become entitled to these benefits when moving to The Hague.

27. The EPO made cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons (almost) impossible since 2020. Around 20-30 staff members⁸ who requested a cross-site transfer for personal or family reasons since then are still waiting in 2024 for a positive reply from the Office.

28. The document gives as reasons in section 1, paragraph 2:

*“During the **pandemic**, changes to the place of employment were not possible in view of the strict travel restrictions. In parallel, with the roll-out of new and improved digital tools, staff familiarised themselves with a completely **new way of working** that allowed them to work equally efficiently remotely.”* (emphasis added)

29. First, the pandemic cannot be the reason. Travel restrictions were lifted fast after 2020 and the pandemic was officially stopped by World Health Organization (WHO) in 2023. End of 2024, staff are still waiting for their transfer.

30. Second, under the [New Ways of Working](#), EPO staff may work a maximum of 60 days abroad but they shall remain in the country of employment for the rest of the working days including 60 days at the place of employment. Furthermore, teleworking may also be withdrawn at any time. The scheme is such that EPO staff and their family shall remain primarily in the country of employment. Personal or family difficulties linked to the country of employment may therefore arise like in the past and such a transfer hence be justified.

31. The staff representation considers that neither the pandemic nor the New Ways of Working should have been used as an excuse to put colleagues in such a situation incompatible with the Office’s duty of care.

¹ Article 59 ServRegs

² Article 73 ServRegs

³ Article 76 ServRegs

⁴ Article 77 and 81 ServRegs

⁵ Article 80 ServRegs

⁶ Article 60 ServRegs

⁷ Article 72 ServRegs

⁸ Estimate provided by the administration during the Technical Meeting of 1 October 2023. The exact figure could be higher.

32. Unofficially the Office allowed exceptional transfers and was asking the selected staff members to sign a document waiving their right to expatriation allowance. Again, the Office put in place the practice before changing the rules and shows that the main driver is cuts on benefits.

Duty of care vs “cost-neutrality”

33. The Office considers that in order to re-open cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons, it should change the Service Regulations and hence seek approval from the Administrative Council. The latter is unfortunately focused on financial implications at the benefit of staff and the Office opted for “cost-neutrality”:

- for the one-off benefits: a complete abolition
- for the long-term benefits (home leave and expatriation allowance): **no new entitlement** after a change of country of employment. For instance, a German national working in Munich can never be entitled to these benefits when moving to The Hague.

34. This proposal is doubtful from a legal point of view.

35. First, Article 64 ServRegs on “Remuneration” states that an employee *“may not waive his entitlement to remuneration [which] shall comprise basic salary and, where appropriate, any allowances”*.

36. Second, a German national hired in Munich and transferred for personal or family reasons in The Hague will not be entitled to the expatriation allowance, while a German national directly hired in The Hague will be entitled. Two employees with the same nationality and on the same place of employment will be treated differently.

Transfers for “you” and transfers for “them”

37. The proposal maintains the possibility for management to initiate cross-site transfers for business needs, in case of reassignments and promotions. In such a case, the full financial package remains applicable.

38. Little to no information is available on how reassignments and promotions take place at the Office. Management makes use of its broad managerial discretion on the matter and staff representation is kept out of any observer post in such procedures.

39. The border between “transfer at the request of the employee” and “transfer at the initiative of the Office” might therefore be thin when it comes to management themselves.

Conclusion

40. The EPO’s communication on the reform is incomplete and misleading. The Office is not putting in place a new transfer policy for personal or family reasons, it is just restoring what had been stopped since 2020 while introducing cuts on benefits.

41. Cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons will still remain subject to requirements of the “business”, the site capacity and with any commitments on behalf of the Office towards its host states.
42. Overall, this new policy of financially penalising transfers for personal or family reasons is difficult to reconcile with the official communication fostering mobility.
43. The Office did not need to change the Service Regulations. The Office could continue the past practice. There was no need for the change unless the main Driver (of SP2028) was not “People”, but rather cuts on benefits.
44. For the above reasons, the CSC members of the GCC can only be **negative** about the document.

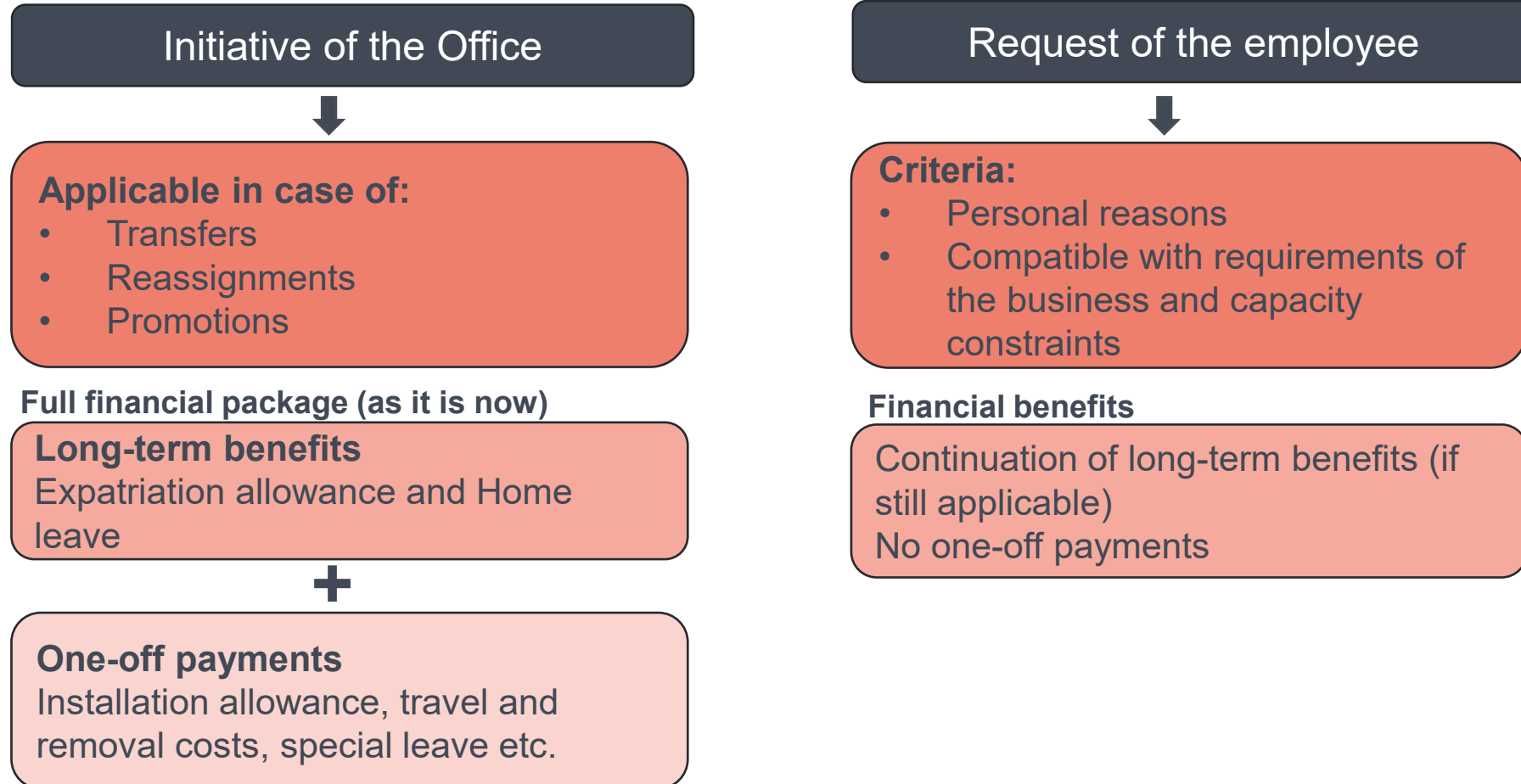
The CSC members of the GCC

ANNEX 1

CHANGE OF PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT – A NEW APPROACH TO CROSS-SITE MOVES TECHNICAL MEETING

HELENA JOHANSSON | ADMINISTRATOR DEPT. TALENT PLANNING AND POLICIES | 01.07.2024

FUTURE APPROACH – DIFFERENTIATION BY NATURE OF REQUEST



Change for personal reasons

1. Pre-conditions that have to be met for cross-site moves for personal reasons:
 - ✓ Compatible with business needs (as endorsed by PD and confirmed by HR)
 - ✓ In line with organisational constraints such as
 - Seat agreements (e.g. staff complement in TH)
 - Sufficient building capacity at target site
2. Impact on long-term benefits in case of moves *for personal reasons* – examples:

Nationality	Moves from:	Moves to:	Current entitlement for expat allowance?	Entitlement for expat allowance after change for personal reasons
Italian	BE	TH	yes	yes
German	MUC	TH	no	no
Austrian	MUC	VIE	yes	no
Swedish	TH	MUC	yes	yes

NEW ARTICLE 55B ADVANTAGES

- Avoids confusion with concept of transfers
- Provide legal basis for staff to request a change for personal reasons
- Offers clarity on the financial implications

Article 55b(1)

The place of employment may be changed by the appointing authority as a result of transfer, promotion or reassignment

Article 55b(2)

The appointing authority may, at its discretion, grant an employee's request to change their place of employment for personal reasons notably if it is compatible with the requirements of the service and organisational constraints. In such case, no new entitlement arises in relation to the benefits under Articles 60, 72, 73, 76, 77, 80 and 81.

Next steps

In view of the envisaged ServRegs amendments, AC involvement is required.

Milestone	Dates
Social dialogue with technical exchange meeting	September/October
GCC meeting	November
AC meeting	10/11 December
Entry into force	1 January 2025

ANNEX 2

Comments and questions following the Technical Meeting of 01-10-2024 on Change of Place of Employment

Transfers for personal reasons always existed and are still justified

Transfers between places of employment triggered by personal reasons took place at the EPO since decades. EPO staff sometimes had difficulties in adapting to the country of their place of employment for instance and personal circumstances were the reason for requesting a transfer e.g. distance from relative, medical reasons, children education, etc. Such transfers have always been considered as compatible with the needs of the service.

It is only since 2020 that the EPO has made such transfers (almost) impossible to obtain resulting in allegedly 20-30 staff members waiting for a positive reply from the Office. The Office argues that with digitisation, cross-site teams and the New Ways of Working there is little to no business need for physical transfers anymore. We note that the New Ways of Working do not allow staff to work from anywhere they want. EPO staff may work a maximum of 60 days abroad but shall remain in the country of employment for the rest of the working days including 60 days at the place of employment. Teleworking may also be withdrawn at any time. The scheme is such that EPO staff and their family shall mainly remain in the country of employment. Personal reasons for requesting a transfer may therefore still arise and the transfer hence be justified.

Abolition of new entitlement to benefits in case of transfers for personal reasons complying with the duty of care is not justified and legally flawed

Article 55b(2) foresees no new entitlement to Articles 60, 72, 73, 73, 76, 77, 80 and 81. This cannot be understood. First, the Office has a **duty of care** towards employees struggling with personal issues, e.g. health issues, family dispersion, educational issues related to local schooling system, etc Second, an employee with personal issues alleviated thanks to a transfer, will be an employee performing better. It is hence beneficial to the Office and does not justify a cut on new entitlements.

We therefore consider that a transfer justified by such personal reasons should be treated under the same entitlement conditions as a transfer at the initiative of the Office, namely without losing any new entitlement to benefits foreseen in the current Service Regulations.

Article 64 ServRegs defines that:

Determination of remuneration

- (1) *Save as otherwise expressly provided in these Service Regulations, an employee who is duly appointed shall be entitled to the remuneration appropriate to his grade and step. **He may not waive his entitlement to remuneration.***
- (2) **Remuneration shall comprise basic salary and, where appropriate, any allowances**

Therefore, Article 55b(2) contradicts Article 64 ServRegs which encompasses entitlements as a whole and does not make any distinction between present or new entitlements.

Virtual transfers have already been granted based on business needs (e.g. change to a technical field where the examiner has more expertise, higher SE demands of the new team, etc), independently of whether the affected staff member had personal reasons. It seems the intention now is to **make savings** at the expense of these colleagues in case such colleagues want to make their virtual transfer become a physical transfer.

The result of such a proposal will be the creation of different categories of staff artificially constructed by administrative considerations over personal circumstances. This will undoubtedly give rise to cases of **unequal treatment**.

Entitlement to expatriation allowance

Article 72 ServRegs in combination with C392 are currently applied by the Office in such a way that an employee of Italian nationality with more than 3 years of prior residence in Germany is hired in The Hague and granted the expatriation allowance. Then, if that employee is transferred to Munich (at the request of the Office or at the request of the employee), the Office puts the colleague back into the situation at the time of entry at the Office and thus considers him as having had a residence of more than 3 years in Germany, and thereby withdraws the expatriation allowance.

The slides provided by the administration are thus misleading on the representation of the current entitlement to expatriation allowance by linking it solely to nationality and pretending that there would be no loss of entitlement.

Now with the proposed text, if an Italian hired by the Office in Munich with a residence of more than 3 years in Germany and hence not granted the expatriation allowance, is then transferred for personal reasons to The Hague, the Italian employee is not granted the expatriation allowance.

To conclude, the Office is now creating with the proposed text a situation where in case of transfer for personal reasons, one can lose entitlement and can never get a new entitlement.

This policy of penalising active transfers at the request of staff is difficult to reconcile with the official Office communication fostering mobility.

Questions:

1. We would welcome a written confirmation that new entitlements to the Education allowance (Article 71 ServRegs) are not impacted in case of transfers for “personal” reasons.
Could you please provide it?
2. To our knowledge, transfers for personal reasons took place in the past for the following reasons:
 - a. Heath: e.g. treatments only available or desirable in another place of employment

- b. Family: e.g. partner, parents residing in or close to another place of employment
 - c. Education: e.g. problems in the ESH
- Could the Office provide other personal reasons it has in mind?

3. We would welcome a written confirmation of the statement made during the meeting on 1 October 2024 that, in case an employee applies to a post linked to a specific place of employment, their change of place of employment would not be considered as a transfer for personal reasons.
Could you please provide it?

The CSC nominees in the Technical Meetings on “Change of place of employment”

8 October 2024

ⁱ This was merely an estimation provided by the administration during the first technical meeting. According to our feedback this number could be higher.

ANNEX 3

**Comments and questions following the
Second Technical Meeting of 09-10-2024
on
Change of Place of Employment**

I. THE PROPOSAL

I.1. Timing of the technical meetings

For this second technical meeting, a draft document including amendments to certain articles of the Service Regulations was presented.

As a result of the discussions that took place during the two technical meetings, we think that the current proposal is still in a premature state, as some further analysis of specific aspects is still required. For example, a detailed cost-benefit analysis is missing and therefore the justification for certain choices cannot be fully understood.

For this reason, we think that a third technical meeting is justified for tackling the remaining issues. We expect that there is still room for maneuvering to improve the proposal, even though, before this second meeting, the main principles of the proposal were already announced and detailed in a publication to all staff on intranet

I.2. The proposed changes

The presented document included amendments to Articles 10, 53, 60, 72, 73, 76, 77, 80 and 81 Service Regulations, in addition to the proposed introduction of a new Article 55b, which was already proposed at the first meeting.

We observe that the amendments introduce gender neutral language, clarifies the distinction between transfers to a post and changes of place of employment. The amendments further seem to clarify contradictions between the proposed Article 55b and the rest of the service regulations.

Still, on substance, the proposal seems to tackle problems which have not been thoroughly analyzed or understood, or at least not fully shared with the staff representation, thus just leaving us speculating about the consequences and intentions of the changes. In view of them, we have still some apparent sources of disagreement.

III.1. Financial justification

The publication for the staff of 9 October mentions the need to move to a cost-neutral solution for the Office. We think, contrary to that assessment, that the proposal is not cost neutral but cost-saving and therefore negative for staff, something that we regret.

Indeed, in the absence of a detailed cost-benefit analysis, it is thinkable that many staff members would lose long-term entitlements under the proposed provisions. For example, current expatriate staff from the host countries who would want to return voluntarily to their home country. On the other hand, with the proposed amendments, it would not be possible for any staff member to earn new long-term entitlements. This leads to a net loss of long-term salary mass.

II. SUBSTANTIAL ELEMENTS

II.1. Hardship cases

A special type of transfer takes place to comply with the Office duty of care, including for example social, health or family issues (e.g. family dispersion) or educational difficulties. These cases should be distinguished from those cases where the change of place of employment is just a matter of personal preferences.

It is first noted that, under the current proposal, there is not even a guarantee that the change of place of employment will be granted. Thus, we believe that hardship cases should receive preferential treatment, i.e., these requests should be granted preferentially to those which do not showcase an underlying hardship reason.

Second, from the cost point of view, and in our opinion, hardship cases should be dealt under the same conditions of the proposed Article 55b(1) ServRegs, namely, including one-off reimbursements and not excluding the possibility to earn those entitlements derived from expatriation.

We understand that the Office may have suggested that, also in the interest of the employee from privacy and data protection perspective, these changes of place of employment could be covered under Article 55b(1) ServRegs. Confirmation of this position could certainly ease the current perceived differences on this topic.

II.2. One-off entitlements

Although not explicitly stated during the two meetings, with the present proposal, the Office seems to aim at containing potential high costs from one-off entitlements derived from frequent voluntary changes of place of employment.

We believe that some alternative solutions could be considered, instead of just plainly proposing the waiving of the right to the one-off entitlements, for example:

- Allowing one-off entitlements, by voluntary transfers, once every ten years;
- Allowing one-off entitlements, at least once, by the first voluntary transfer after appointment or;
- Allowing one-off entitlements, at least once, by a voluntary transfer, if the staff member has not yet claimed them or was not entitled to them by recruitment/appointment;
- Allowing one-off entitlements, at least once, by a voluntary transfer close before retirement, in particular if the staff member foreseeably will not claim them by retirement.

Unfortunately, the format and timing of the two short meetings did not allow for in-depth exchange on possible solutions which could have a positive effect on staff on this matter. We would be ready to hold a dedicated discussion on this topic if there was any readiness from the Administration to advance to a better solution for staff.

II.3. Expatriation Allowance

In view of the new ways of working framework and the hybrid work environment, the proposal justifies renouncing to earn new entitlement for expatriation allowance in the case of voluntary changes of place of employment.

In our view, in the current working environment and framework, there is still a duty to work from the site for sixty days, which already forces the staff to reside at a reachable distance from the place of employment.

Further, the new ways of working environment may change and the number of days of presence at the site may also change in the future, which would also force staff to stay even closer to their site.

Allowances were introduced to cater for specific needs or compensation for specific costs. Not taken away that it might not have been always fair in the past, we consider that the suggested introduction will create more unfairness amongst staff.

For these reasons, we consider that waiving the entitlement to obtain the allowances under Article 72 ServRegs is unjustified and unnecessary in the proposal.

II.4. Discretionary decisions

Even though the proposal is presented as an opening to possibilities for staff, the change of place of employment can only happen at the discretion of the appointing authority, which indeed is against the alleged purposes of the reform.

In our view, therefore, the text of the proposal should make clear that requests for voluntary change of place of employment shall be granted by default by the appointing authority, without any discretionary decision. Otherwise, the decision to reject the request should be motivated by the appointing authority.

In addition, since business needs are required for it, in both Article 55b (1) and (2), it is not clear in which cases weight is going to be given to business or personal reasons. This will create unequal treatment among staff members, being treated differently in similar circumstances, something that may create frustration among staff members, and ultimately lead to unnecessary litigation.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND REMAINING QUESTIONS

In addition to the substantial questions described above, the following questions describe our present understanding of certain topics, for which confirmation from the Administration would be welcome. In that sense we believe that the Office should issue further guidelines on how discretion and is going to be applied. We would welcome specifically that the Office confirms our preliminary understanding that:

- in case of applying to a post to another place of employment or in case of “mixed” reasons, e.g. if it is more convenient to group a particular team at one place of employment, it will be considered that the transfer takes place at the initiative of the Office, under Article 55b(1) ServRegs;
- the decisions to grant or reject a request to change the place of employment are decisions in the sense of Article 106 Service Regulations;
- the Office will be keeping the balance of nationalities and sizes of the different sites, according to the social reports;
- there will be transitional measures, so that pending transfer requests will be treated under the current version of the Service Regulations;

The latter and more details may be discussed in a working group in cooperation with the staff representation to set up the guidelines and clarify the number of open questions. In any case, we hope that some of the comments raised lead to improvements of the text before adoption.

ANNEX 4

Munich, 05.11.2024
sc24063cp

Cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons *Reviving a policy with cuts on benefits*

In the Intranet [Communiqué](#) of 9 October 2024, the Office announced having developed a proposal allowing staff to request a change of place of employment for personal or family reasons. Such a transfer policy actually existed at the EPO since decades and was stopped in 2020. The Office is now reviving it but plans to introduce new cuts on allowances. This paper brings explanations.

Transfers for personal or family reasons: a policy which always existed

For decades, EPO employees or their family have sometimes had difficulties in adapting to the country of their place of employment: e.g. distance from relatives, medical reasons, childrens education, etc. When EPO employees found themselves in such a situation, they could request a transfer, for personal or family reasons, to another place of employment. The Office fulfilled its duty of care by considering the request for transfer and considered it also as directly beneficial for the Organisation. Indeed, an employee with personal issues alleviated, thanks to a transfer, would be an employee in a better position to perform at work.

Transfers for personal or family reasons sometimes took time to obtain, as they should be also compatible with requirements of the “business”, the site capacity and with any commitments on behalf of the Office towards its host states.

When transferred, an EPO employee was entitled to

- one-off benefits: special leave with pay of up to 5 days¹, an installation allowance between 1 or 2 months basic salary², reimbursement of expenses and advances³, lump-sum compensation for the removal of household and personal effects⁴, travel expenses⁵.
- long-term benefits, if applicable after a change of country of employment: home leave⁶ and expatriation allowance⁷. For instance, a German national working in Munich could have become entitled to these benefits when moving to The Hague.

New Ways of Working puts a stop to cross-site transfers

The Office considers that with digitisation, cross-site teams and the New Ways of Working there is little to no business need for cross-site transfers anymore. The [Communiqué](#) confirms that “[w]ith very few exceptions (e.g. for tasks related to on-site facility maintenance) work can be performed remotely, and staff can perform their duties whether they’re working on-site or anywhere in their host country, or even abroad.”

As a result, the EPO made cross-site transfers (almost) impossible since 2020. Around 20-30 staff members⁸ who requested a cross-site transfer for personal or family reasons since then are still

¹ Article 59 ServRegs

² Article 73 ServRegs

³ Article 76 ServRegs

⁴ Article 77 and 81 ServRegs

⁵ Article 80 ServRegs

⁶ Article 60 ServRegs

⁷ Article 72 ServRegs

⁸ The figure is an estimate provided by the administration during the Technical Meeting of 1 October 2023.

waiting in 2024 for a positive reply from the Office.

The staff representation considers that the New Ways of Working should not have been used as a justification to put colleagues in such a situation incompatible with the Office's duty of care.

Under the [New Ways of Working](#), EPO staff may work a maximum of 60 days abroad but they shall remain in the country of employment for the rest of the working days including 60 days at the place of employment. Furthermore, teleworking may also be withdrawn at any time. The scheme is such that EPO staff and their family shall remain primarily in the country of employment. Personal or family difficulties linked to the country of employment may therefore arise like in the past and such a transfer hence be justified.

Reviving the stopped policy with doubtful cuts on benefits

In the [Communiqué](#) of 9 October 2024, the Office announced *"having developed a proposal allowing staff to request a change of place of employment for personal or family reasons"*. Actually, the Office is reviving the stopped policy and sets the priority on financial sustainability rather than on the duty of care: *"considering that the request is made for personal reasons, the move must also be cost-neutral for the Office."*

- for the one-off benefits: a complete abolition
- for the long-term benefits (home leave and expatriation allowance): **no new entitlement** after a change of country of employment. For instance, a German national working in Munich can never be entitled to these benefits when moving to The Hague.

This proposal is doubtful from a legal point of view. Article 64 ServRegs on "Remuneration" states that an employee *"may not waive his entitlement to remuneration [which] shall comprise basic salary and, where appropriate, any allowances"*.

Transfers for "you" and transfers for "them"

The proposal maintains the possibility for management to initiate cross-site transfers for business needs, in case of reassignments and promotions. In such a case, the full financial package remains applicable.

Little to no information is available on how reassignments and promotions take place at the Office. Management makes use of its broad managerial discretion on the matter and staff representation is kept out of any observer post in such procedures.

The border between "transfer at the request of the employee" and "transfer at the initiative of the Office" might therefore be thin when it comes to management themselves.

Conclusion

The EPO's communication on the reform is incomplete and misleading. The Office is not putting in place a new transfer policy, it is just restoring what had been stopped since 2020 while introducing cuts on benefits.

Cross-site transfers for personal or family reasons will still remain subject to requirements of the "business", the site capacity and with any commitments on behalf of the Office towards its host states. There is no plan to allow DG1 staff to be transferred to Vienna or to increase the size of the Brussels office.

Overall, this new policy of financially penalising transfers for personal or family reasons is difficult to reconcile with the official communication fostering mobility.

The Central Staff Committee

The exact figure could be higher.

ANNEX 5



European Patent Examiner in AI & Quantum Computing (INT/EXT/22002)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

Curious about future innovation?

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Supporting innovation, competitiveness, sustainability and economic growth: that's our mission at the European Patent Office (EPO)

As the patent office for Europe, we are proud to deliver high-quality services that promote a safer, smarter and more sustainable world, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the highest ESG standards. As an equal opportunities employer, the EPO is shaped by the diversity of our people's personalities, knowledge and cultures. Interested in joining us?

What's in it for you

- **Exclusive access to innovation:** gain unique insights into the latest inventions before they reach the market
- **Inspiring work environment:** work with multilingual people from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds
- **Job with a purpose:** contribute with your insights to the future of technology
- **Professional growth:** access our comprehensive training portfolio and explore opportunities to realise your full potential
- **Workplace flexibility:** benefit from our working arrangements, generous leave policies and a family-friendly work environment

What you will do as a patent examiner

- Perform **end-to-end examination** – in our three official languages – of patent applications, i.e. the texts and drawings that describe an invention for which an individual or a company seeks legal protection
- **Research, find and use** the most relevant prior art, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the invention's novelty and inventive step
- **Support** the entire **innovation ecosystem** by making well-reasoned decisions on whether a patent is to be granted, applying both your technical knowledge and understanding of legal frameworks
- Ensure the uniform and effective application of the **European Patent Convention** and other legal texts, contributing to the robustness of Europe's intellectual property system

What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning, and Quantum Computing

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
- **curiosity and an eagerness to learn:** you enjoy solving technical puzzles and are always keen to learn; you have a thirst for knowledge and staying abreast of the latest developments in your field and beyond and are eager to acquire new skills and pick up technologies in different fields
- **clear communication skills:** you are able to explain things clearly and feel comfortable interacting with colleagues and applicants to process patent applications efficiently

... Sound like you?

By the way, no previous IP (intellectual property) knowledge is needed: we take care of that side of things via our dedicated legal training.

Minimum requirements

- **Master's degree** (or equivalent/higher) covering one or more technical fields mentioned above
- **Excellent knowledge** (at least C1) **of one of our official languages (English, French and German) and the ability to understand the other two;** alternatively, excellent knowledge (at least C1) of English (in such cases, the willingness to learn the missing languages and to reach level B2 within a set time frame would be required)
- Work experience in industry would be an advantage
- **Citizenship of one of the member states of the European Patent Organisation**

What we offer at the EPO

- A competitive salary
 - Family-friendly benefits
 - Generous flexibility options allowing you to work from anywhere in the country of employment (min. onsite attendance applies) and up to 60 days from any EPC contracting state
 - Relocation benefits and various allowances (e.g. household, dependants, childcare, education, expatriation, installation, rent allowance)
 - Contributory medical insurance and pension schemes
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 - Free gym access
 - Social activities and clubs
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European Patent Examiner in Biotechnology (INT/EXT/22003)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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What you will do as a patent examiner

- Perform **end-to-end examination** – in our three official languages – of patent applications, i.e. the texts and drawings that describe an invention for which an individual or a company seeks legal protection
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- **Support** the entire **innovation ecosystem** by making well-reasoned decisions on whether a patent is to be granted, applying both your technical knowledge and understanding of legal frameworks
- Ensure the uniform and effective application of the **European Patent Convention** and other legal texts, contributing to the robustness of Europe's intellectual property system

What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- DNA analysis with focus on amplification and sequencing techniques, epigenetics, genomics (including medical applications)
- Proteins and peptide analysis, with focus on peptide/protein chemistry and physical/chemical analysis of biological materials (e.g. colorimetric, spectrometric, spectrophotometric or fluorometric techniques; immunoassays; electrochemistry)
- From genomic to proteomics and protein engineering
- Non-coding RNA biotechnology (RNA interference, splicing modulation, CRISPR) including medical applications
- Viral vectors and gene therapy
- Plant genetic engineering and biological materials (plant and animal cells)

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
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Minimum requirements

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European Patent Examiner in Computer (INT/EXT/22004)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Error detection and correction
- HCI, GUI, Computer Devices
- ICT security or cryptography
- Memory management, storage interfaces

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
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Minimum requirements

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European Patent Examiner in Electrical Engineering & Power Systems (INT/E

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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What we are looking for

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- Electrical Power distribution; Electrical Power infrastructure; Structure, manufacturing, handling, and processing of cables; Mechanical aspects of cable installation; Installation, production, and design of switchgear cabinets
- Electric and electronic passive elements, i.e. Capacitors and Resistors with knowledge in basic electrical circuits and basic organic and inorganic chemistry; electro-chemistry and materials e.g. metal oxides, ceramics, carbons, nano-carbons, graphene, fullerenes
- Electrical engineer (physicist with similar expertise), preferably with background in electric power distribution (e.g. from renewable energy sources, such as photovoltaic systems, wind turbines, hydropower plants etc. to grid/power networks) via AC and/or DC lines (including HVDC), power conversion, energy storage, wireless power transfer and battery charging technologies (e.g. EVs/HEVs charging).
- Electrical Engineer with Electronics: Fault protection in electric transmission and distribution grids, as well as in electric networks for households, vehicles, and other installations.

Apply if you have

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European Patent Examiner in Electrical Motors and Generators (INT/EXT/220)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

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- **Electrical Motors and Generators; i.e. AC or DC rotating, oscillating or linearly moving machines (including stepping motors and torque motors) with particular focus on the structural aspects of these machines (ideally, minimum experience of 3 years and/or PhD)**

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
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European Patent Examiner in Electro-Mobility & EVs (INT/EXT/22018)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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As the patent office for Europe, we are proud to deliver high-quality services that promote a safer, smarter and more sustainable world, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the highest ESG standards. As an equal opportunities employer, the EPO is shaped by the diversity of our people's personalities, knowledge and cultures. Interested in joining us?

What's in it for you

- **Exclusive access to innovation:** gain unique insights into the latest inventions before they reach the market
- **Inspiring work environment:** work with multilingual people from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds
- **Job with a purpose:** contribute with your insights to the future of technology
- **Professional growth:** access our comprehensive training portfolio and explore opportunities to realise your full potential
- **Workplace flexibility:** benefit from our working arrangements, generous leave policies and a family-friendly work environment

What you will do as a patent examiner

- Perform **end-to-end examination** – in our three official languages – of patent applications, i.e. the texts and drawings that describe an invention for which an individual or a company seeks legal protection
- **Research, find and use** the most relevant prior art, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the invention's novelty and inventive step
- **Support** the entire **innovation ecosystem** by making well-reasoned decisions on whether a patent is to be granted, applying both your technical knowledge and understanding of legal frameworks
- Ensure the uniform and effective application of the **European Patent Convention** and other legal texts, contributing to the robustness of Europe's intellectual property system

What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Electrically driven vehicles (EVs) incl. battery electric vehicles, fuel cell electric vehicles and externally-powered electric vehicles
- EV drivetrain power electronics, incl. both structural and control-related aspects
- System aspects related to safety of EVs
- System aspects related to electrically driven auxiliary equipments
- (Bidirectional) battery charging (incl. V2X, V2H and V2G applications)

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
- **curiosity and an eagerness to learn:** you enjoy solving technical puzzles and are always keen to learn; you have a thirst for knowledge and staying abreast of the latest developments in your field and beyond and are eager to acquire new skills and pick up technologies in different fields
- **clear communication skills:** you are able to explain things clearly and feel comfortable interacting with colleagues and applicants to process patent applications efficiently

... Sound like you?

By the way, no previous IP (intellectual property) knowledge is needed: we take care of that side of things via our dedicated legal training.

Minimum requirements

- **Master's degree** (or equivalent/higher) covering one or more technical fields mentioned above
- **Excellent knowledge** (at least C1) **of one of our official languages (English, French and German) and the ability to understand the other two;** alternatively, excellent knowledge (at

least C1) of English (in such cases, the willingness to learn the missing languages and to reach level B2 within a set time frame would be required)

- Work experience in industry would be an advantage
- **Citizenship of one of the member states of the European Patent Organisation**

What we offer at the EPO

- A competitive salary
- Family-friendly benefits
- Generous flexibility options allowing you to work from anywhere in the country of employment (min. onsite attendance applies) and up to 60 days from any EPC contracting state
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- Social activities and clubs

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We welcome all applications for vacant positions. We consider each on its professional merits – regardless of your nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, parental responsibilities, age, religion or belief.

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jobinfo@epo.org

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European Patent Examiner in Electronics (INT/EXT/22005)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Amplifiers (e.g. differential amplifiers, LNAs, RF power amplifiers such as Doherty power amplifiers, audio power amplifiers such as class D amplifiers, class A to S amplifiers, switched capacitor amplifiers, push-pull amplifiers, charge amplifiers, TIAs)
- Antennas for RF communications, including e.g. mobile phone antennas, antenna arrays, multiband and polarization diversity solutions and mechanical support details. In addition, passive microwave devices like filters, waveguides, phase shifters, and circulators.
- Record carriers and readers (electronic aspects of data carriers, in particular RFID/NFC tags, chip cards, optical bar codes, and the related readers)

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
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Minimum requirements

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European Patent Examiner in Image, Audio & Video (INT/EXT/22007)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

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- Coding and decoding for error detection and correction
- Display Processing and Control Circuits (Digital electronic systems, video processing and microelectronics; Design of video processors; Analog electronics background)
- Image processing, computer vision, pattern recognition
- Loudspeakers, microphones, headphones, multi-channel audio systems, hearing aids

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
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European Patent Examiner in Industrial Biotechnology (INT/EXT/22015)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

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What we are looking for

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- Industrial Biotechnology with specific focus on fermentation and cell culture processes and devices

Apply if you have

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European Patent Examiner in Inorganic Chemistry & Chemical Engineering (I

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

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- Chemist or chemical engineer with knowledge in inorganic and materials chemistry (such as Carbon based materials, silicon based materials, Fillers, pigments, zeolite materials, Treatment of specific inorganic materials, Phosphorus Compounds, sulphur compounds, nitrogen and sulphur production); knowledge in polymer chemistry would be an asset.
- Chemical engineer with sound knowledge in petroleum refining - ideally some knowledge in catalysis; preferably experience in processes like steam cracking, fluid catalytic cracking and hydroprocessing.
- Chemist with good knowledge in Sorbent and ion exchange materials, both in inorganic and organic chemistry; understanding of polymer chemistry would be an asset.
- Chemist with knowledge in cement, concrete, ceramics and inorganic chemistry in general; good knowledge in organic chemistry and/or polymers would be considered an asset.

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European Patent Examiner in Life Sciences (INT/EXT/22016)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

Curious about future innovation?

Imagine finding yourself every single day exploring breakthrough developments before almost anyone else. As a patent examiner, you have the chance to support the inventors who will shape our world and the lives of millions of people for years to come.

Supporting innovation, competitiveness, sustainability and economic growth: that's our mission at the European Patent Office (EPO)

As the patent office for Europe, we are proud to deliver high-quality services that promote a safer, smarter and more sustainable world, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the highest ESG standards. As an equal opportunities employer, the EPO is shaped by the diversity of our people's personalities, knowledge and cultures. Interested in joining us?

What's in it for you

- **Exclusive access to innovation:** gain unique insights into the latest inventions before they reach the market
- **Inspiring work environment:** work with multilingual people from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds
- **Job with a purpose:** contribute with your insights to the future of technology
- **Professional growth:** access our comprehensive training portfolio and explore opportunities to realise your full potential
- **Workplace flexibility:** benefit from our working arrangements, generous leave policies and a family-friendly work environment

What you will do as a patent examiner

- Perform **end-to-end examination** – in our three official languages – of patent applications, i.e. the texts and drawings that describe an invention for which an individual or a company seeks legal protection
- **Research, find and use** the most relevant prior art, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the invention's novelty and inventive step
- **Support** the entire **innovation ecosystem** by making well-reasoned decisions on whether a patent is to be granted, applying both your technical knowledge and understanding of legal frameworks
- Ensure the uniform and effective application of the **European Patent Convention** and other legal texts, contributing to the robustness of Europe's intellectual property system

What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- **Biomaterials:** dealing with the chemical aspects and material properties of implants and wound dressings.
- **Pharmaceutical formulations:** formulation specialists (pharmacists; organic chemists) of known chemical compounds (organic small molecules, which may be represented by Markush formulae or functional features defined by their mechanism of action, inorganic compounds, polymers or nucleic acids). The formulations are aiming at delivering an active ingredient to a subject in need thereof.
- **Pharmacology / Biopharma:** the area is mainly dealing with patent applications directed to the first and further medical use of biological material, such as peptides, bacteria, cells and/or plants; combinations of active ingredients, dosage regimen and personalised medicine are also part of the technical field.
- **Pharmacology / Medicinal Chemistry:** the area is mainly dealing with patent applications directed to the first and further medical uses of known chemical compounds (organic small molecules, which may be represented by Markush formulae or functional features defined by their mechanism of action, inorganic compounds, polymers or nucleic acids). Combinations of active ingredients, dosage regimen and personalised medicine are also part of the technical field.

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
- **curiosity and an eagerness to learn:** you enjoy solving technical puzzles and are always keen to learn; you have a thirst for knowledge and staying abreast of the latest developments in your field and beyond and are eager to acquire new skills and pick up technologies in different fields
- **clear communication skills:** you are able to explain things clearly and feel comfortable interacting with colleagues and applicants to process patent applications efficiently

... Sound like you?

By the way, no previous IP (intellectual property) knowledge is needed: we take care of that side of things via our dedicated legal training.

Minimum requirements

- **Master's degree** (or equivalent/higher) covering one or more technical fields mentioned above
- **Excellent knowledge** (at least C1) **of one of our official languages (English, French and German) and the ability to understand the other two**; alternatively, excellent knowledge (at least C1) of English (in such cases, the willingness to learn the missing languages and to reach level B2 within a set time frame would be required)
- Work experience in industry would be an advantage
- **Citizenship of one of the member states of the European Patent Organisation**

What we offer at the EPO

- A competitive salary
- Family-friendly benefits
- Generous flexibility options allowing you to work from anywhere in the country of employment (min. onsite attendance applies) and up to 60 days from any EPC contracting state
- Relocation benefits and various allowances (e.g. household, dependants, childcare, education, expatriation, installation, rent allowance)
- Contributory medical insurance and pension schemes
- 30+ days of leave per year and flexible working hours
- Free gym access
- Social activities and clubs

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European Patent Examiner in Materials Science (INT/EXT/22008)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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- Electrochemistry, Lithium-Ion Battery & Fuel Cell Materials, Production Technology (Processes & Equipment) for Batteries, Fuel Cells and Electrolysers, System Integration of Batteries and Battery Management
- Production & Recycling of Ferrous & Non-Ferrous Metals, Hydrogen and Ammonia Production
- Steel Metallurgy & Heat Treatment of Alloys
- Textile engineering: fiber production techniques, chemical and physical treatment of textiles
- Thin Film Coatings (PVD, Sputtering, CVD, ALD); Single Crystal Growth, Surface Science, Semiconductor Industries
- Polycondensates and Polyacrylates

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European Patent Examiner in Mechanical & Automotive engineering (INT/EX1

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

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What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Electronic cigarettes, traditional cigarettes and machines for their manufacture (background as mechanical and/or electronic engineers)
- Infrastructure & Mechanics
 - Building elements (such as finishing and closure elements)
 - Conveyors for goods and general purposes, excluding walkways and escalators
 - Locks and ovens
- Mobility & Space Technologies
 - Dashboards and air conditioning for vehicles
 - Automotive engineering – vehicle structures, mechanisms, controlling and manufacturing methods

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
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Minimum requirements

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European Patent Examiner in Medical Mechanics & Electronics (INT/EXT/220)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: German (Berlin) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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- Cardiovascular implants
- Medical diagnosis
- Medical engineering
- Medical robotics
- Medical mechatronics and mechanics (including catheters, guidewires, microneedles, surgical devices, medical fluid mechanics, implants for the vertebral column and corresponding manufacturing technologies)

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
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Minimum requirements

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European Patent Examiner in Organic Chemistry (INT/EXT/22010)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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- Organic chemistry for the field of cosmetics: the candidate should be able to read chemical formulas well. General knowledge in biology (eg botany, biochemistry) or material science (eg polymers) would also be desirable. No experience in the field of cosmetics is necessary. Patent applications in the field often involve eg the combination of active ingredients in compositions, the non-therapeutic uses of said compositions/compounds, and processes for preparing compositions or achieving non-therapeutic effects.

Apply if you have

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European Patent Examiner in Power Electronics / Electrical Drives (INT/EXT/%)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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- **Professional growth:** access our comprehensive training portfolio and explore opportunities to realise your full potential
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What you will do as a patent examiner

- Perform **end-to-end examination** – in our three official languages – of patent applications, i.e. the texts and drawings that describe an invention for which an individual or a company seeks legal protection
- **Research, find and use** the most relevant prior art, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the invention's novelty and inventive step
- **Support** the entire **innovation ecosystem** by making well-reasoned decisions on whether a patent is to be granted, applying both your technical knowledge and understanding of legal frameworks
- Ensure the uniform and effective application of the **European Patent Convention** and other legal texts, contributing to the robustness of Europe's intellectual property system

What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- **Electrical Engineer with a focus on Power Electronics / Electrical Drives: Solid state switched mode power electronic converters: DC/DC, AC/DC, DC/AC, AC/AC; circuit topologies; modulation; control.**

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
- **analytical-thinking and decision-making skills:** you excel at breaking down complex problems and making informed decisions with confidence and clarity based on thorough research and analysis
- **curiosity and an eagerness to learn:** you enjoy solving technical puzzles and are always keen to learn; you have a thirst for knowledge and staying abreast of the latest developments in your field and beyond and are eager to acquire new skills and pick up technologies in different fields
- **clear communication skills:** you are able to explain things clearly and feel comfortable interacting with colleagues and applicants to process patent applications efficiently

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Minimum requirements

- **Master's degree** (or equivalent/higher) covering one or more technical fields mentioned above
- **Excellent knowledge** (at least C1) **of one of our official languages (English, French and German) and the ability to understand the other two;** alternatively, excellent knowledge (at least C1) of English (in such cases, the willingness to learn the missing languages and to reach level B2 within a set time frame would be required)
- Work experience in industry would be an advantage
- **Citizenship of one of the member states of the European Patent Organisation**

What we offer at the EPO

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European Patent Examiner in Semiconductors (INT/EXT/22011)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich/Berlin) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

Application deadline: 13.11.2024

Technical Interviews estimated for: October 2024 – January 2025

Final interviews planned for: November 2024 – February 2025

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What we are looking for

We are currently seeking scientists, engineers and IT, technical, mechanical and material experts who share our passion for innovation and wish to work at the cutting edge of technology, analysing the latest inventions, particularly in the technical areas of:

- Semiconductor manufacturing (deposition and patterning technologies, doping, lithography, etc.) and at least basic understanding of semiconductor devices physics (pn-junctions, MOSFETs, bipolar devices, ...). Ideally, master's degree or PhD in electrical engineering, physics or materials science, ideally with a focus on microelectronics and/or solid state physics and a willingness to deepen their knowledge in this field.
- Semiconductors: Organic LEDs, OLED displays and Packaging
- Semiconductor technology of inorganic photovoltaic cells and modules
- Semiconductor technology: Interposers for integrated circuit packaging; Manufacture of the back end of the line (BEOL) of integrated circuits; Etching of insulating or conducting layer; Masking; Ion implantation, Diffusion, Gettering, Ohmic, Schottky and MIS contacts
- Semiconductor devices and manufacturing technology (Physicist or Electrical Engineer background)
- Semiconductors: General Electronics / Analogue and digital circuit design, semiconductor memories including structures, operation, and testing
- Semiconductors: LEDs, Plasma Beams & Wafer Bonding
- Semiconductor processes and devices: Process integration and manufacturing of CMOS & memory technologies

Apply if you have

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European Patent Examiner in Telecom & Wireless (INT/EXT/22012)

Job group: 4

Duration of contract: Five years, renewable (full-time)

Career path: Technical

Location: Germany (Munich) or The Netherlands (The Hague)

Working mode: [Hybrid](#)

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- Data networks (Network Management & Monitoring; Routing, Switching & Flow control; Access, Bus, Home & Virtual networks)
- Mobile Radio Communication- MIMO - 5G - 6G - beamforming - physical layer
- Power saving in wireless communication systems
- Retransmission protocols and arrangements to detect, prevent and deal with errors in data transmissions
- Wireless communication (Wireless resource allocation)
- Wireless networks (4G, 5G and wireless LAN)

Apply if you have

- **a relevant technical background:** you have the expertise required for the areas specified from your studies, projects and concrete work experience
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Opinion of the CSC members of the GCC on GCC/DOC 26/2024:

Reconstruction of career

The CSC members of the GCC would like to preface the following opinion with a few introductory and basic remarks. The consultation of the GCC was preceded by three technical meetings at which the proposed amendments were explained by the responsible colleagues from the administration. These explanations related not only to the content but also to the intended purpose of the amendments. This allowed the participating Staff Representatives to ask clarifying questions where necessary, make detailed suggestions and provide constructive comments. Such a process is only useful if the input is taken into account. This explicitly does not mean that all suggestions have to be accepted. But at least the Staff Representatives expect an explanation as to why certain suggestions are rejected. With this in mind, the CSC members of the GCC would like to explicitly confirm that the preparatory technical meetings were conducted professionally and were indeed useful in the above sense.

The CSC members of the CSC give the following opinion on GCC/DOC 26/2024, the proposed revised Circular No. 308, which foresees a reconstruction of career for employees appointed by promotion for a limited duration to posts classified in job groups 3 or 2.

The CSC members of the CSC appreciate that in the proposed Article 1 a clear distinction is made between appointments by promotion to (a) posts classified in job groups 3 or 2 and (b) to posts classified in job groups 5 or 4. The clarification that case (b) may not be limited in time is supported.

The CSC members of the CSC note a terminological inaccuracy in the terminology introduced in Article 2: the "limited duration" of a promotion. According to Article 49(1) ServRegs, a promotion is defined as the access to a higher grade. This access to a higher grade is, *per se*, a one-off event with no time duration. Article 4(1) ServRegs speaks of an appointment to fill a vacant post by promotion. Article 11(1) ServRegs reads: to assign to each employee the grade corresponding to the specific post to which they have been appointed. It is probably impossible to have the inaccuracies completely resolved.

The clarifications in Article 5 are explicitly welcomed. It is now clear that permanent employees will remain permanent employees after the appointment by promotion for a limited duration to posts classified in job groups 3 or 2 comes to an end. This will be the case regardless of whether the limited duration comes to its end or is terminated by the employee's request.

The CSC members of the CSC consider the regulation in Article 6 to be unfavourable. The point of reference here should be the regulation in Article 41(3) ServRegs for members of the Boards of Appeal, which states that employees upon expiry of their term of office are assigned to a post corresponding to their grade so that no reconstruction of career would be necessary. However, it is also noted that this regulation emphasises the independence of the members of the Boards of Appeal. The CSC members of the CSC would have found it appropriate if the arrangement

shown in the table had been replaced by a provision that foresees $2/3$ advancements per year of the limited duration. If the resulting number of advancements is then rounded down, this would even correspond to the proposed table. However, it would resolve the inherent contradiction that, under the proposed regulation, three years would be valued at two advancements, but six years at only three instead of four years, which would be proportionate.

Finally, the CSC members of the GCC welcome the regulations in Article 7 for pension rights. They confirm that the normal calculation modalities for pension rights apply – as they do for employees who retire at a grade and step lower than that which they had previously held in the Office.

There are not transitional provisions in the proposed amended Circular No. 308, so that the CSC members of the GCC assume that the principle of *tempus regit actum* applies.

The CSC members of the GCC conclude by noting with approval that some of their proposals have been incorporated into the proposed Circular No. 308.

The CSC members of the GCC

Opinion of the CSC members of the GCC on [GCC/DOC27/2024](#) “Simplification and digitalisation of processes related to spouse income”

The CSC members of the GCC give the following opinion on the Simplification and digitalisation of processes related to spouse income, which is an update to Circulars 266 and 425 and the introduction of a new Circular 432 in [GCC/DOC 27/2024](#).

The document adapts the former Circular 266 related to long-term care insurance, adapts the former circular 425 relating to contributions to the healthcare insurance scheme payable for gainfully employed spouses, and introduces new Circular 432, which defines the process of declaring the spouse income information.

New Circular 432 “defines how the income of an employee’s spouse is determined when the spouse is gainfully employed outside the Office. This definition is used to determine the entitlement to the household allowance and the level of contributions to healthcare and long-term care insurance for spouses.” Adjusted Circular 266 removes the FAQs and examples given at the end of the document. Adjusted Circular 425 removes the definition of the spouse income, which is now embedded in new Circular 432.

On the consultation

1. On 25th of October 2024, the administration invited the Central Staff Committee (CSC) to nominate 5-6 experts to Technical Meetings on adjustments to Circulars 266 and 425.
2. On 31st of October, the CSC nominated 6 experts.
3. On 8th of November, the administration sent to the CSC nominees a presentation providing the motivation behind the intended changes yet no details on the foreseen changes within the documents. Circular 432 was not yet mentioned.
4. On 11th of November, a first technical meeting took place.
5. On 20th of November, the administration sent to the CSC nominees comparative tables regarding the changes in Circulars 266 and 425 and the new Circular 432.
6. On 25th of November, the second technical meeting took place.
7. On 28th of November, the administration tabled in the GCC the document [GCC/DOC 27/2024](#).
8. On 13th of December, the meeting of the General Consultative Committee (GCC) took place.

On the merits

We really appreciate the intention to digitalise and simplify the processes.

But new Circular 432 does not clearly specify that the annual income to be declared is only the spouse's gainful employment and does not simplify the work of HR, if every single year a statement and evidence must be submitted, as the wording of Article 1 (1) states.

We are worried about the possibility of a broad interpretation of the required evidence of the annual income and with that, about the possible intrusion into privacy. And we don't see a simplification of the HR work, if every employee and pensioner submit every single year a declaration and evidence.

We suggested that in the new Circular 432 the required income should be clearly specified in Article 1 (1) as the "annual income from gainful employment". Nevertheless, it was underlined by management during the GCC meeting that only the annual income from gainful employment is meant. If so, it is not comprehensible, why the Circular 432 was not amended accordingly, especially as it was discussed as concern from our side in the technical meetings.

For a real simplification, we also suggested that evidence should be requested only if really needed for the determination of the contributions or benefits, like in the calculation for household allowance in some cases (if no dependants, and net income around G4/4 and higher) and in the calculation of long-term care contributions (also needed only if gross income around or higher than G4/4).

In case of the contributions to the health care insurance scheme, a statement in which category the spouse's gross income from gainful employment is lying relating to G1/4 would be enough (under 50%, between 50%-100%, or over 100%), because no calculation is performed, as the contribution amounts are fixed every year for the categories. Evidence is not at all required if the spouse's gross income from gainful employment is over G1/4, because the contribution is the fixed maximum.

Furthermore, if no changes occur in the spouse's income from one year to another, then neither a declaration, nor evidence to submit make sense.

Thus, if no hidden agenda is behind the wording of Circular 432 Article 1 (1), an amended wording according to our suggestions would not have been work intensive and would have had the same meaning as allegedly intended.

Conclusion

For the above reasons, the CSC members of the GCC can only be **negative** about the document.

The CSC members of the GCC

Comments of the CSC members of the GCC on [GCC/DOC 28/2024](#) Office wide organisational adjustments 2025 – Stream 1

The CSC members of the GCC provide the following comments on the Office wide organisational adjustments 2025 – Stream 1 ([GCC/DOC 28/2024](#)).

The document introduces a vast reorganisation of several DGs of the Office.

Introduction

1. The content of the document is limited to vague and general analyses related to abstract organigrams, but the document remains entirely silent on the impact of the organisational adjustments on the people performing the tasks.
2. As for past reorganisations, the impact will nonetheless exist and create unrest among staff.
3. Therefore, the document [GCC/DOC 28/2024](#) **should have been provided for consultation**, not merely for information.
4. This latest reorganisation is already announced as a Stream 1, while its scope is broader than many of the recent reorganisations. Yet, no thorough evaluation of the last reorganisation(s) has been carried out, or at least nothing has been communicated.
5. The preparation towards this “Stream 1” of reorganisation has been particularly opaque. Virtually no one was informed of the purpose, content, scope and expected benefit of the reorganisation.
6. In the GCC meeting of 13 December 2024, the administration explained that those that needed to decide were informed. In other words, only a handful of top managers were informed of a reorganisation impacting thousands of employees.
7. Aims of this reorganisation such as “enhance staff connectivity, engagement and sense of belonging” are at odds with the absence of connection with staff in planning this reorganisation.
8. The information about the reorganisation plans hit the colleagues by surprise, minimum information provided the late afternoon of the day before the [announcement](#) was published on the intranet. Line managers had to contact that same evening all colleagues that had not attended the meetings. Clearly, not all changes have been discussed with the colleagues concerned.
9. Teams are once more not being moved in their entirety, and not receiving the information about those who were earmarked to stay behind. No reasoning was provided, staff perceived all this as arbitrary decisions behind their backs.
10. According to the administration, the reorganisation is based on careful review of what work is performed by the people affected by the reform. Since this review has not involved any

staff member, it seems that only the tasks of managers have played a role in the new organisational structure that will result from this reorganisation.

11. Some of the current line managers are left in the dark about who should be transferred and who should remain and for which portfolio of tasks. The receiving directorates are also not yet aware even of the skillsets of their future colleagues.
12. For the Young Professionals (YPs) who started in their first year only in September 2024 the reorganisation has an additional negative impact. As of April 2025, some might lose their tutors, if they are not allowed to move along with them and their tasks.
 - Will they be given the option to stay with their current tutors and tasks or will they have to embark on completely new duties for the last few months of their first year?
 - Or will they be provided the option to switch already at the beginning of the year to another tutor?
13. It is unclear how the reorganisation will impact their possibilities to be considered when applying for continuing as a YP in a second year. **The office is urged to clarify the options and possibilities for our YPs.**

DG0

14. “PD User engagement and SMEs” is moved further away from the Patent Grant Procedure (PGP) units but is brought closer to PD Comms.
15. On the substantive level, the benefits of this move are described only in vague terms. Yet, user engagement, and especially engagement of SMEs depends on their ability to draft patent applications. The new focus by this reorganisation on facilitating access to patent filing for key users appears to reduce the view on user engagement to their ability to perform formal filing steps and the new solution being that the EPO advertises its services.
16. On an organizational level, claims are made by the administration of shortened feedback loops without describing which loops are shortened and why feedback loops with PGP units are not negatively affected.

DG1

17. Directorate General 1 (DG1) is being taken over by Business Information Technology (BIT).
 - The Chief Operating Officer of DG1 is also the Chief Technology Officer of BIT (see [Communiqué](#) of 25 October 2024).
 - “Key Account Management Customer Services” moves from DG1 to the CTO area of BIT.
 - “Customer Intelligence and Enquiries” moves from DG1 to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) area of BIT.

18. Staff is concerned by this takeover and [recent statements](#) coming from BIT on Artificial Intelligence (AI) showing a lack of knowledge of the work done in DG1. AI automated classification of AI was done by BIT at the back of gérants and classifiers, and the latter have stomach pain when seeing that the AI only classifies solely on the basis of the claims with only 40% compliance rate.
19. The number of Principal Directors (PD)s reporting to Vice-President 1 (VP1) is reduced from four to two. Directorates are reduced from 22 to 18, thereby creating huge directorates of 500 people, as big as PD clusters in the past.
20. The number of operational Formalities Officers (FO) teams will be brought into line with the number of operational directorates. In this Stream 1, the number of FO Team Managers will hence be further reduced. Stream 2 foresees a reduction of the number of team managers among examiners.
21. The Office is breaking its promise. When the Office created Team Managers in DG1, it advertised it as a way to assess those who could be the Directors of the future. Now, career possibilities are vanishing in DG1: and the Office continues the policy of downgrading the careers in DG1. While there is an increased concentration of PDs and Directors in DG0 and DG4, the fate of DG1 is to remain a worker class unit.
22. This reorganisation is taking place in context of worst goal setting ever:
- An [increase of +7% in productivity](#) is imposed on DG1 in order to catch-up now with what could not be produced during the pandemic,
 - No complexity of fields is taken into account anymore (this will impact patent quality),
 - Attacks on parental leave continue as it is not deducted from capacity planning,
 - Staff is stressed by now unachievable targets,
 - DG1 management does not hesitate to cascade the information that incompetence procedures have been launched against examiners. By the end of this year, 3 examiners will be downgraded for low productivity.
23. The fate of DG1 can be summarized as follows: takeover and downgrade.

DG4

24. BIT grows even more, by receiving now people coming from DG1 and DG5, while at the same time the HR departments are lacking employees in all areas. There seems to be no balance, and it gives the impression that only BIT is of importance for management, while the other departments are out of focus.
25. Colleagues with a lot of know-how in HR are retiring and are not being replaced. Many employees in the HR departments, especially from job group 6, are completely overwhelmed with work and are not receiving any support.

26. We are also observing an even greater concentration of power among a few managers colleagues. Even if they are highly qualified, the responsibility seems disproportionately high, and in terms of the workload it is worrying. There is a lot of potential and knowledge within the EPO staff that already exists. If the existing potential and knowledge could be better used, it would benefit not only the individuals involved but also the entire Organisation.

DG5

27. The reorganisation of PD54 – a shift of many of their current tasks to BIT, involves the risk that the goals of the EPO's patent information policy (ie the commonly agreed goal to improve access to patent information in Europe for both the general public and industry – in particular SMEs) can no longer be met by setting an increasingly strong focus on mainly making patent data available, possibly with AI-based tools, but without complementary activities to enable the stakeholders to access, understand and benefit from this bulk data. This deficit particularly affects the non-expert target groups, such as SMEs and startups, which are of particular importance for innovation in Europe.

28. This reorganisation Stream 1 will further negatively impact the close network of teams and activities related to patent knowledge, by putting them in widely separated units in different DGs. Experience has shown that this creates additional administrative barriers to cooperate and to develop innovative solutions.

29. In addition, the document describes that in a case, activities of a team will be integrated in another team. One of the teams will be moved with the majority of tasks, yet another team's IT-related tasks will be moved and for another team, it will be moved with the current tasks *en bloc* to the other directorate. The reorganisation reads and is perceived as being rushed through and not well thought through. It is leaving our colleagues in uncertainty and worried about their future, about experience and knowledge loss to the detriment of a proper business continuity in their areas of competence.

Conclusion

30. Driver 1 of SP2028 is "People". In this whole Stream 1 of the reorganisation nothing can be found about people. The communication on this reorganisation is a vacuum.

31. Staff is definitely not treated and involved as an asset of the EPO.

The CSC members of the GCC.

Opinion of the CSC members of the GCC on [GCC/DOC 29/2024](#) Amendment to the general guidelines on rewards

The CSC members of the GCC give the following opinion on the amendment to the general guidelines on rewards under Articles 48, 48a and 49(2) Service Regulations and Circular 364 in [GCC/DOC 29/2024](#).

The document proposes to postpone the payout of the second round of bonus (individual and strategic) to January 2025. The calibration phase would be extended, and the Harmonisation Committee meeting would be scheduled for January 2025.

On the consultation

1. The administration did not plan any Technical Meeting on the topic.
2. On 28 November 2024, the administration tabled in the GCC the document [GCC/DOC 25/2024](#) and on the same day published the updated timeline to all staff in an Intranet [Communiqué](#).
3. Staff and their representation was put in front of a *fait accompli*.
4. On 13 December 2024, the meeting of the General Consultative Committee (GCC) took place.

On the merits

Three rounds of reward exercises in 2024 proved to be not feasible

5. The document, paragraph 3 states that:

“it became apparent that, with the reporting cycle not yet officially ended and the performance of tasks continuing at a high pace in all Office areas ahead of the Christmas break, a considerable amount of work was still underway and would have been left out of the managerial assessment underlying this reward exercise”
(emphasis added)

6. and in paragraph 4:

“it has been concluded that adjusting the current timeline to allow for the bonus payout in January, rather than December, would better reflect the spirit of the guidelines: to reward objectively and fairly all of staff’s efforts and contributions.”

7. On the floor, we hear that three rounds of rewards (one pensionable in April 2024, two rounds of bonuses in July and December 2024) required a considerable amount of resources from the Office.

8. In addition, we hear that a production gap was found in some areas of DG1 and that it became convenient not to reward staff before the end of the year 2024 in the hope that postponing the bonus would create more engagement.

Backpedalling and hiccups in the course of the first implementation year

9. The policy of one or more bonus rounds during the course of the performance year was introduced for the first time in 2024 via an amendment in Circular 364 ([GCC/DOC 35/2023](#)). The administration argued that increased “timeliness” of bonuses would create more engagement.
10. The staff representation had warned the administration of the caveats in the technical meetings and in its GCC [opinion on GCC/DOC 35/2023](#) (par. 29 to 37).
11. The Guidelines on Rewards 2024 ([GCC/DOC 1/2024](#)) submitted early 2024 set the number of rounds of bonuses to two and the timeline in July and December 2024. These two rounds of bonuses were meant to timely reward the performance of 2024. At the same time, the **minimum individual bonus amount was increased from EUR 2.000 to EUR 3.000.**
12. Again, the staff representation had warned the administration of the caveats in its GCC [opinion on GCC/DOC 1/2024](#) (par. 29 to 37).
13. Now, in the course of the first application proposes to go back to the former practice by rewarding the performance of 2024, not in December 2024, but in the following year in January 2025. This backpedalling did not go unnoticed by staff upon reading the [Communiqué](#).
14. For the first round of bonuses, there were already hiccups. By spreading the same yearly envelope over two rounds of bonuses, Team Managers found themselves in the first round with an envelope divided by two while at the same time the minimum bonus was increased from 2.000 to 3.000.
15. Team Managers could often reward only 1 team member, and that team member was often the one getting usually the double steps.
16. Some Directorates even decided not to apply the first round of bonuses and to keep the first envelope for the second round on top of the second envelope in order to reward more staff.

Conclusion

17. If a policy of two rounds of bonuses, ends up with such issues at both stages, there is therefore evidence that it is not adapted to operational needs. We hope that the administration reflects on this.
18. The staff representation stresses again that bonuses do not create engagement, but career advancement does.
19. For the above reasons, the CSC members of the GCC are **negative** on the document.

The CSC members of the GCC