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Meet tomorrow's administrators today

AST to AD certification

Last week Newshound talked to the colleagues taking part in the intensive certification training course. Just to remind you, certification is the procedure in the new staff regulations that gives AST colleagues the chance to become ADs.



Certification — how does it work (in practice)?

Over a period of 5 weeks (of working time) from 29 May to 4 July, 157 ASTs from all EU institutions (117 in Brussels, 40 in Luxembourg, in all 20 from the EP) are following a 300-hour training programme, followed by oral and written exams. The training is organised by the European administrative school.

Meet the candidates

Over lunch, the Newshound team met a few certification candidates in Brussels to give you a 'horse's mouth' account of how this ambitious pilot programme is going. What did they tell us? Well, as usual, there are pros and cons.

The 'good news'

- Participants have a general feeling of being valuable for their institutions. They know the training programme is a big investment in them and an acknowledgment of previous high-calibre performance.
- Many explain they already perform administrator tasks, leading teams, taking important decisions, etc. Once ADs, many would like to stay in their current jobs.
- Certification is a much fairer and efficient way of becoming an

administrator than the concours system.

- The trainees stressed that the standard of training is very high, equipping them with precious information and new skills. The training also structures a lot of what they have already learned on the ground (some suggested their bosses would do well to enrol for the programme!). The external trainers are extremely familiar with the EU institutions.
- And... twice a week the European administrative school lays on a very nice lunch. Participants also value the top-quality facilities of the external venue chosen.

The 'bad news'

- The participants felt the programme is too intense and too 'concentrated' for a five-week period. Many also admitted that they continue to work — some go into their office at 6 a.m., others return after a long day's training!
- Participants feel that the obligation to follow the training course in French or English but never in their mother language is an extra effort when the programme is already so intense.
- The final exams are a cause of stress for many — they cannot take success for granted and have to work really hard to make sure they pass. But the good news is there is no success quota, unlike regular EPSO competitions. Candidates who fail can take the tests again next year without redoing the whole training programme.

There is more to come

This is just the beginning — in October our colleagues follow another two-week session on their chosen specific module (e.g. finance, human resources or political bodies). If they pass, they will not automatically become ADs — they will have to apply for AD jobs. We will keep you informed and catch up with our colleagues the EP as they prepare for the next step to certification.

The 2007 certification application season begins in the autumn. All ASTs are eligible. The EP chooses its candidates on merit, experience and qualifications.

The 2006 certification application season begins after the summer. All AST officials with six years' experience and who were at least B*5s before 31 December 2005 and whose last staff report states they are apt to perform AD functions are eligible. The EP chooses its candidates on merit, experience and qualifications.

More info:

[Newshound archives](#)

[List of successful EP candidates](#)

How to apply: [European administrative school website](#)