

Directorate-General Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood

Publication of a vacancy for the function of

Principal Adviser Reconciliation & Normalisation Western Balkans (Grade AD14)

(Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations)

COM/2025/10476

We are

As foreseen in the [Political Guidelines 2024 – 2029](#) of the European Commission, further completing our Union is a geostrategic, economic and moral imperative. We are working closely with candidate and potential candidate countries on their merits-based path to join the EU, by supporting the required structural reforms, their respect for the rule of law and fundamental values and strengthening their resilience and preparedness. We are also ensuring continued support to Ukraine, and in particular we will support Ukraine's reconstruction and accession, and work towards improving cooperation with Türkiye on political, economic and trade matters as well as supporting the countries of the Southern Caucasus.

In the enlargement area, DG Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST) assists those countries with a perspective to join the EU in meeting the criteria defined by the Treaty of the European Union and the European Council. DG ENEST closely monitors the progress of enlargement countries and supports accession negotiations as required by the Council. The DG manages the bilateral relations of the Union with candidate and potential candidate countries on their path to the EU, with a strong focus on reforms related to the rule of law, economic governance and public administration reform.

DG ENEST manages the bulk of the Union's financial and technical assistance to the countries that are candidates or potential candidates for EU membership, as well as countries or people in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood, including Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus. In particular, it manages the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI-GE), the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans, and the Ukraine Facility, as well as three investment frameworks: the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD+), the Western Balkans Investment Framework, and the Ukraine Investment Framework, providing budgetary guarantees, financial instruments and blending.

By implementing assistance actions in Europe's Eastern neighbourhood, DG ENEST supports reform and democratic consolidation, and strengthens the prosperity, stability and security around Europe. DG ENEST helps to promote EU values, policies and interests in this region, and to contribute to developing the special relationship of the EU with its neighbouring countries.

DG ENEST is based in Brussels and has approximately 1200 staff members in Brussels and in the EU Delegations in the partner countries.

We propose

The function of Principal Adviser to advise and support the Director-General in the policy areas of the reconciliation and normalisation of relations between the partners of the Western Balkans in support of the EU's enlargement strategy and in line with the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans.

Under the direct supervision of the Director-General, the successful candidate will:

- Provide strategic advice in relevant policy areas directly linked to the reconciliation and normalisation of relations between partners in the Western Balkans;
- Advise on how to create further incentives for regional cooperation related to the mandate;
- Seek to strengthen and facilitate cooperation between internal actors in partner countries;
- Ensure coherent coordination across the Commission and with external stakeholders, including the EEAS;
- Provide strategic advice on bilateral issues;
- Represent the Commission at a senior level at external events related to the reconciliation and normalization mandate in the Western Balkans

We look for (selection criteria)

Candidates should have:

Personal qualities

- Very good analytical skills and the ability to solve organisational and operational problems,
- Experience in representing an organisation at high level both internally and externally, combined with excellent communication and negotiating skills to effectively engage and maintain high-level contacts within the Commission, with other EU and international institutions, Member States, and other relevant stakeholders,
- Integrity, adaptability, and resilience under pressure as well as commitment to public service values and organisational objectives.

Specialist skills and experience

- Very good knowledge of and experience in EU Enlargement policies in general,
- Proven experience as a senior adviser at political level on international affairs, with a specific focus on the Western Balkans,
- Very good understanding and deep knowledge of the history, politics and culture of the Western Balkans Partners,
- Very good knowledge and understanding of the EU's policies and priorities,
- Strong background in International Law.

Advisory skills

- Demonstrated capacity to work in a senior advisory role with regard to Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood policies,

- Very good political judgement and understanding of a complex political environment, ability to develop a global view on DG ENEST's policy,
- Ability to provide policy, political, and communication advice on complex issues, with a strong focus on the key issues and priorities related to the Western Balkans, in line with the EU's enlargement policy.

Candidates must (eligibility requirements)

Candidates will only be considered for the selection phase on the basis of the following formal requirements to be fulfilled **by the deadline for applications**:

- Nationality: candidates must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union.
- University degree or diploma: candidates must have:
 - either a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies attested by a diploma when the normal period of university education is 4 years or more;
 - or a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies attested by a diploma and appropriate professional experience of at least 1 year when the normal period of university education is at least 3 years (this one year's professional experience cannot be included in the postgraduate professional experience required below).

Only diplomas that have been awarded in EU Member States or that are the subject of equivalence certificates issued by the authorities of one of these Member States may be taken into consideration.

- Professional experience: candidates must have at least 15 years postgraduate professional experience ¹ at a level to which the qualifications referred to above give admission.
- Advisory experience: at least 5 years of the post-graduate professional experience must have been gained in a high-level advisory function ².
- Languages: candidates must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union³ and a satisfactory knowledge of another of these official languages. Selection panels will verify during the interview(s) whether candidates comply with the requirement of a satisfactory knowledge of another official EU language. This may include (part of) the interview being conducted in this other language.

¹ Professional experience is only taken into consideration if it represents an actual work relationship defined as real, genuine work, on a paid basis and as employee (any type of contract) or provider of a service. Professional activities pursued part-time shall be calculated pro rata, on the basis of the certified percentage of full-time hours worked. Maternity leave / parental leave / leave for adoption is taken into consideration if it is in the framework of a work contract. PhDs are assimilated to professional experience, even when unpaid, but for a duration of three years maximum, provided that the PhD has been successfully completed. A given period may be counted only once.

² In their curriculum vitae, candidates should clearly indicate for all years during which advisory experience has been acquired: (1) title and role of positions held; (2) the exact subject area as well as at which level in the organisation the position was based (numbers of hierarchical layers above and below); (3) the reporting lines for each position held.

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:01958R0001-20130701&qid=1408533709461&from=ENhttps://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01958R0001-20130701>

- Age limit: candidates must not have reached regular retirement age, which for officials of the European Union is defined as being the end of the month in which the person reaches the age of 66 years (see Article 52 lit (a) of the Staff Regulations ⁴).

Selection and appointment

The selection and appointment will be conducted according to the European Commission's selection and recruitment procedures (see: Document on Senior Officials Policy ⁵).

As part of this selection procedure, the European Commission sets up a pre-selection panel. This panel analyses all applications, proceeds with a first eligibility verification and identifies candidates having the best profile in view of the selection criteria mentioned above, and who may be invited for an interview with the pre-selection panel. Candidates may be requested to provide documents supporting the information provided in their application at any moment of the procedure. Failure to provide those documents within the deadline set in the request may lead to the exclusion from the selection.

Following these interviews, the pre-selection panel draws up its conclusions and proposes a list of candidates for further interviews with the European Commission's Consultative Committee on Appointments (CCA). The CCA, taking into consideration the conclusions of the pre-selection panel, will decide on the candidates to be invited for an interview.

Candidates who are called for an interview with the CCA participate in a full-day management assessment centre run by external recruitment consultants. Taking account of the results of the interview and the report of the assessment centre, the CCA establishes a shortlist of candidates it considers suitable for the function.

Candidates on the CCA shortlist will be interviewed by the relevant Member(s) of the Commission.

Following these interviews, the European Commission takes the appointment decision.

The selected candidate must have fulfilled any obligations imposed by law concerning military service, produce appropriate character references as to their suitability for the performance of their duties and be physically fit to perform their duties.

The selected candidate should hold, or be in the position to obtain, a valid security clearance certificate from their national security authority. A personal security clearance is an administrative decision following completion of a security screening conducted by the individual's competent national security authority in accordance with applicable national security laws and regulations and certifying that an individual may be allowed to access classified information up to a specified level. (Note that the necessary procedure for obtaining a security clearance can be initiated on request of the employer only, and not by the individual candidate).

Until the personal security clearance has been granted by the Member State concerned and the clearance procedure completed with the legally required briefing from the European Commission's Security Directorate, the candidate will not be able to access EU Classified Information (EUCI) at the level of CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL or above, nor attend any meetings at which such EUCI is discussed.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01962R0031-20140701>

⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/documents-senior-management-selection-procedures_en (only exists in English)

Equal opportunities

In accordance with Article 1d of the Staff Regulations, the European Commission pursues a strategic objective of achieving gender equality at all management levels and applies an equal opportunities policy encouraging applications that could contribute towards more diversity, gender equality and overall geographical balance.

Conditions of employment

The salaries and conditions of employment are laid down in the Staff Regulations.

The selected candidate will be recruited as an official at grade AD14. The selected candidate will be classified depending on the length of their previous professional experience in step 1 or step 2 within that grade.

The selected candidate should note the requirement under the Staff Regulations for all new staff to complete successfully a nine-month probationary period.

The place of employment is Brussels, Belgium.

The post is available from 01 January 2026.

Independence and declaration of interests

Candidates will be required to make a declaration of commitment to act independently in the public interest and to declare any interests which might be considered prejudicial to their independence.

Important information for candidates

Candidates are reminded that the work of the selection panels is confidential. It is forbidden for candidates to make direct or indirect contact with their individual members or for anybody to do so on their behalf. Any query has to be addressed to the secretariat of the respective panel.

Protection of personal data

The Commission will ensure that candidates' personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁶. This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

Application procedure

Before submitting your application, you should carefully check whether you meet all eligibility requirements ('Candidates must'), particularly concerning the types of diploma, high-level

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

professional experience as well as linguistic capacity required. Failure to meet any of the eligibility requirements means an automatic exclusion from the selection procedure.

If you want to apply, you must register via the Internet on the following website and follow the instructions concerning the various stages of the procedure:

<https://ec.europa.eu/dgs/human-resources/seniormanagementvacancies/>

You must have a valid e-mail address. This will be used to confirm your registration as well as to remain in contact with you during the different stages of the procedure. Therefore, please keep the European Commission informed about any change in your e-mail address.

To complete your application, you need to upload a CV in PDF format, preferably using the Europass CV format⁷, and to fill out, online, a letter of motivation (maximum 8 000 characters). Your CV and your letter of motivation may be submitted in any of the official languages of the European Union.

It is in your interest to ensure that your application is accurate, thorough and truthful.

Once you have finished your online registration, you will receive an electronic mail confirming that your application has been registered. **If you do not receive a confirmation mail, your application has not been registered!**

Please note that it is not possible to monitor the progress of your application on-line. You will be contacted directly by the European Commission regarding the status of your application.

Applications sent by e-mail will not be accepted. If you require more information and/or encounter technical problems, please send an e-mail to: HR-MANAGEMENT-ONLINE@ec.europa.eu

It is your responsibility to complete your online registration in time. We strongly advise you not to wait until the last few days before applying, since heavy internet traffic or a fault with your internet connection could lead to the online registration being terminated before you complete it, thereby obliging you to repeat the whole process. Once the deadline for the submission of registrations has passed, you will no longer be able to introduce any data. Late registrations will not be accepted.

Closing date

The closing date for registration is **29/01/2026, 12.00 noon Brussels time**, following which registration is no longer possible.

⁷ You can find information on how to create your Europass CV online at: <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>