

### **3. Globally influential Finland**

#### **3.4 Measures to promote EU careers – an international comparison**

**Maximum amount of available appropriation:** EUR 100,000

**Time span:** 8/2022 – 8/2023

#### **Background to, description of and reasons for information needs:**

The geographical balance of staff employed by EU institutions and agencies plays an important role in shaping policies that take into account the interests of the Union as a whole and ensuring the Union's legitimacy. The relative share of Finns employed by the EU is, however, decreasing rapidly because of retirements. The number of Finnish applicants and their pass rate in the official competition organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) are too low. In the Commission, for example, Finland is underrepresented in lower-grade entry-level positions (AD5–8).

The Government Report on EU Policy (Government 2021) drew attention to the topic of EU recruitments. In its response to the report, Parliament stated that the Government must have the capacity to influence proactively the content of the Commission's upcoming legislative initiatives in particular, and that adequate resources must be allocated to this work (EK 36/2021 vp – VNS 7/2020 vp). Exercising influence within the EU also involves ensuring that the institutions employ personnel from different Member States in a balanced manner. The Committee for EU Affairs has outlined the main areas for development in the promotion of EU careers, and the work will be advanced together with a network of liaison officers in the ministries.

Finland is not the only country facing challenges related to the geographical balance. Many other countries are also struggling with under-representation. Ireland, for example, has recently drawn up a national strategy to increase Irish representation in the European Union's institutions and agencies, outlining new measures to improve the competitiveness of Irish applicants (Government of Ireland 2021). Some countries clearly fare better in the recruitment competitions than others, and this study will examine the factors behind these countries' recipes for success. In addition, a number of other countries relevant and interesting to Finland will be included in the analysis.

The comparison must cover the following countries:

- 1) Countries that fare best in the competition: Belgium, Spain, France and Romania
- 2) Other countries of interest to Finland: Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Denmark

The material used in the study may include interviews with key operators in the different countries, documents, websites, statistics and survey materials, for instance.

**Research questions:**

The main purpose of the study is to find out what kinds of measures the countries included in the comparison use to promote their citizens' careers in the EU and how effective they are.

More specific sub-questions:

- Who is responsible for promoting EU careers (main responsibility, other parties)?
- Is the promotion of EU careers based on a comprehensive strategy, policy or other position or plan?
- What kinds of measures does the country use to promote EU careers for its citizens (e.g. communication, training, coaching, positions for seconded national experts, other job rotation in international positions, EU traineeships, lobbying activities)?
- What amount of financing and human resources are used for promotion activities?
- What is known about the effectiveness of different measures and how is this assessed?
- Can any best practices be identified based on the study?

**Link with decision-making and preparation in the Government:**

The results of the study will be used in the work of the EU liaison officers and when preparing national measures to promote the recruitment of Finns to the EU.

**Reporting:**

The project will produce a final report in Finnish or English in line with the guidelines for the Government's analysis, assessment and research activities, along with a separate Policy Brief in Finnish and English.

**References**

Government of Ireland (2021) [A Career for EU. Ireland's Strategy to increase Irish representation in the European Union's Institutions and Agencies.](#)

Government (2021) [Government Report on EU Policy. Strong and united EU – towards a more sustainable European Union](#) Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:4. ([in English](#))

**Websites:**

Prime Minister's Office [EU recruitment website](#) (in Finnish)

European Personnel Selection Office EPSO [website](#) ([in English](#))