

21 February, 2025

Mr. Piotr Serafin,  
Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud  
& Public Administration,  
Rue de la Loi 200, Brussels,  
Belgium

Dear Commissioner Serafin,

At the beginning of the Commission's new mandate, we would like to congratulate you once more on your demanding position of Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration. In particular, we would like to express our hopes and expectations of improving the geographical balance of staff within the European Commission, as stated in your Mission Letter.

Since the creation of the European Communities, the Staff Regulations have enshrined the principle that the staff of the EU's institutions must be recruited on the basis of the broadest possible geographic basis, without discrimination based on nationality. A geographically balanced European public administration, which includes the various national perspectives, is essential to the institutions' long-term credibility and legitimacy and thus the European project.

Nationals of our Member States have been significantly underrepresented in the Commission for years. This issue is of a structural nature and therefore requires structural solutions. We welcome the efforts by the Commission to address this issue during the last mandate, namely through the HR Strategy and the Joint Action Plans. However, the results have been insufficient so far and progress has been too little and too slow. In this past decade, both the extent of underrepresentation of some Member States and the number of underrepresented Member States have increased, and with projected retirements the situation is expected to deteriorate further.

We are convinced that introducing further concrete measures to restore geographical balance is key, as the current set of 'soft measures' have proven to be insufficient. Therefore, the adoption of the Commission's General Implementing Provisions is urgent. Additionally, we are convinced that nationality based competitions are the most effective tool to address the problem in the short to medium term. We welcome the European Parliament's decision to launch such competitions and call on the Commission to consider this measure as well.

Smooth and shortened processes remain core to the recruitment of officials. The Commission and Member States have a joint interest in EPSO completing the renewal of its competition process. We believe that transparency and communication are key to a good candidate experience and will improve recruitment and talent management as well as boost the attractiveness of EU careers. We invite you to consider kick-starting a reform of the Commission's selection and recruitment of temporary staff in order to simplify and streamline the selection procedures and enhance transparency.

We underline our full support and cooperation in your pursuit of finding effective solutions to the pressing issue of achieving a geographically balanced workforce.

Yours sincerely,

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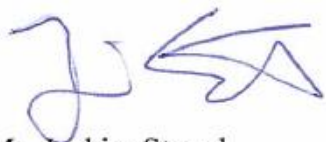
Mr. Werner Kogler,  
Minister for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sports,  
Austria

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Dvořák', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr. Martin Dvořák,  
Minister for European Affairs,  
Czechia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Wammen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

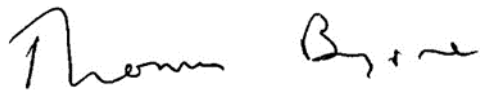
Mr. Nicolai Wammen,  
Minister for Finance,  
Denmark

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Strand', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr. Joakim Strand,  
Minister for European Affairs,  
Finland

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Annalena Baerbock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ms. Annalena Baerbock,  
Bundesministerin des Auswärtigen,  
Germany



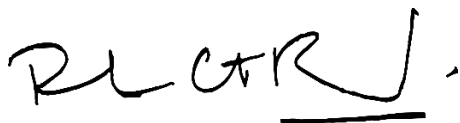
Mr. Thomas Byrne,  
Minister of State for European Affairs and Defence,  
Ireland




Mr. Xavier Bettel,  
Vice Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade,  
Luxembourg



Mr. Caspar Veldkamp,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
The Netherlands



Mr. Paulo Rangel,  
Minister of State and of Foreign Affairs,  
Portugal



Ms. Jessica Rosencrantz,  
Minister for EU Affairs,  
Sweden