

# THE 2004 ENLARGEMENT AND COMMISSION RECRUITMENTS

## HOW THE COMMISSION MANAGED THE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF FROM 10 NEW MEMBER STATES

### SITUATION AT THE END OF THE EU-10 TRANSITION PERIOD

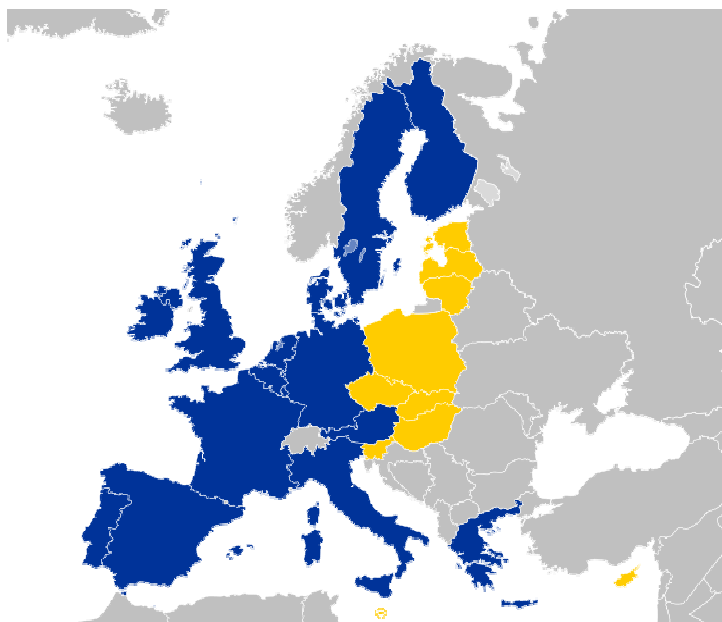
#### FINAL REPORT

The biggest enlargement in the history of the European Union took place between 2004 and 2007. On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the EU-10, joined the European Union. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania, the EU-2, followed the same way.

Enlargement meant also the need to recruit nationals from these countries by the European Union institutions. Therefore, the Council adopted upon proposal of the Commission a derogation regulation which allowed for the preferential recruitment of candidates from the ten new Member States during a transitional period<sup>1</sup>.

The selection and integration of large numbers of new staff from other countries is a challenge for every private or public organisation, consequently for every EU institution and in particular for the Commission as the biggest of the EU institutions.

The transitional period for the 10 Member States which joined the EU in 2004 expired on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. Therefore, it is time for the Commission to take stock of how it managed this process<sup>2</sup>. The transitional period for Bulgaria and Romania expires on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 and recruitments are on-going. This issue will be dealt with in a separate report in 2012.

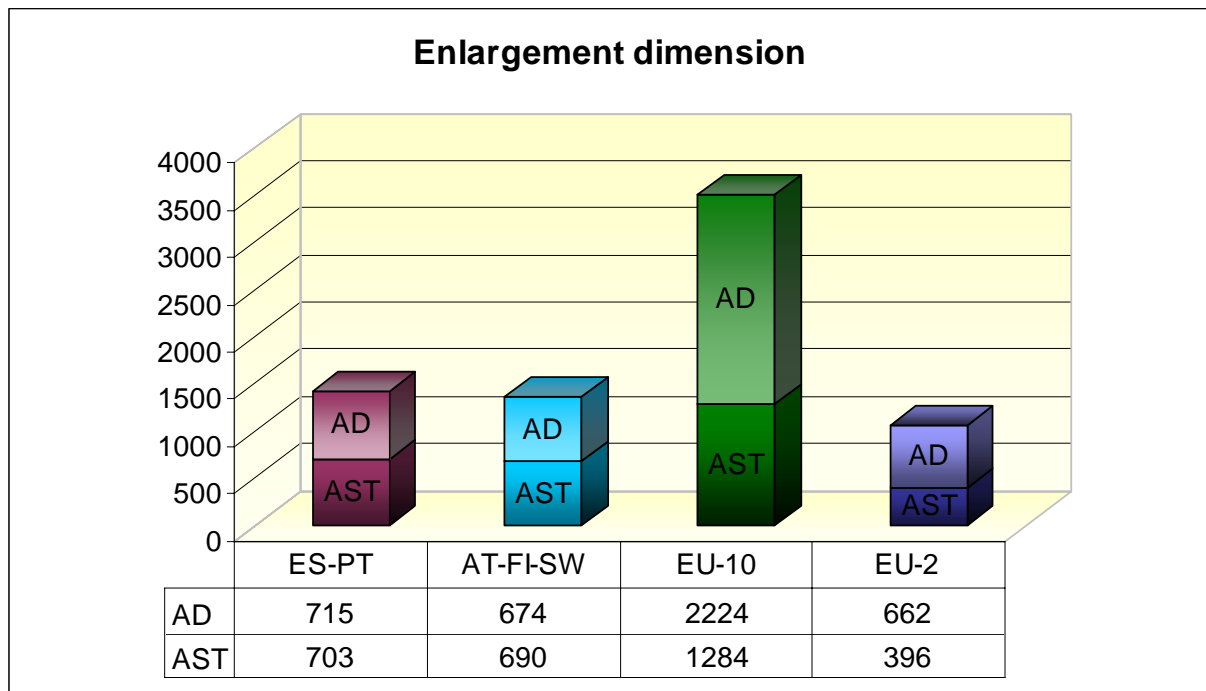


<sup>1</sup> Council Regulation N° 401/2004 of 23 February 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Unless stated otherwise, all figures and tables refer to the situation on 31 December 2010.

## 1. FACTS

The Commission set voluntarily for itself very ambitious recruitment targets for EU-10 nationals during the transition period (7 years from 2004 to 2010). The Commission committed itself to around 3,500 recruitments, representing nearly 16% of the pre-enlargement posts. If added up to the partially overlapping EU-2 enlargement (5 years from 2007 to 2011), the commitment reaches a total of more than 4,500 additional staff, i.e. around 20% of the number of pre-enlargement posts in the establishment plan. The targets for the recruitment of managers were based on a proportionate increase of the number of management functions. On top of that, the Commission committed itself to reach the overall EU-10 target by the end of 2008, 2 years ahead of the end of the transition period.



ES-PT: Spain and Portugal; AT-FI-SW: Austria, Finland, Sweden. AD: includes A grade and linguists. AST: includes ex B, C and D grades.

With a total recruitment target of 4,566 staff, the 2004-2007 enlargement taken as a whole is over 3 times as big as the enlargement to Spain and Portugal in 1986 (1,418) and the enlargement to Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995 (1,364). In relative terms, the weight of the EU-10 recruitment targets (3,508 officials or temporary agents) represented around 16% of the officials and temporary agents in activity at the beginning of the transition period. For the 1986 Spain-Portugal enlargement, the recruitment target represented 11% of the corresponding pre-enlargement staff in activity, and for the 1995 Austria-Finland-Sweden one it represented 8%.

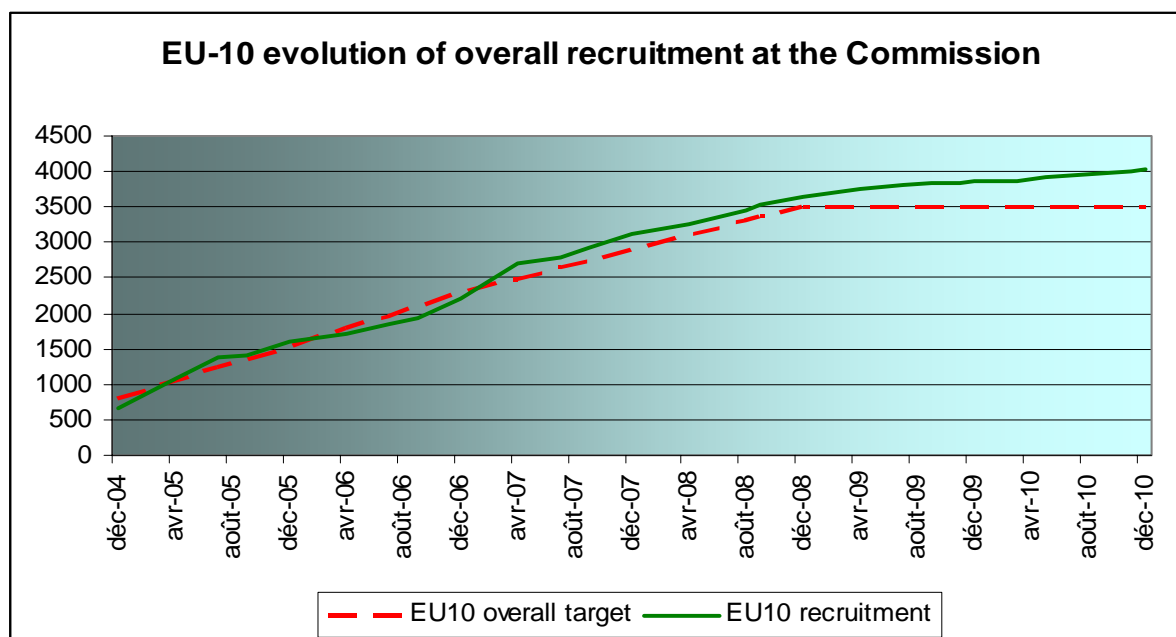
## 2. STATE OF PLAY OF EU-10 RECRUITMENTS

### 2.1. Main figures

EU-10 Target		EU-10 Achievements	
Establishment plan posts:	3.508	Recruitments:	4.004
Period: 2004-2010		Period: 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2004 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2010 <sup>4</sup>	Target achievement: October 2008

Targets: administrative establishment plan<sup>3</sup> plus research indirect actions.  
Achievements on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010<sup>4</sup>.

The Commission committed to achieving the global minimum target for EU-10 recruitments by the end of 2008, i.e. 2 years ahead of the end of the transition period. The EU-10 overall target was achieved in October 2008, for both the AD and the AST function groups. At the end of the transition period, the ambitious target of 3,508 set for the EU-10 recruitments was surpassed, with a total of 4,004 recruitments. This was possible because the targets were minimum targets and the services were free to recruit nationals from the 10 Member States whenever they saw a candidate fit for a post.



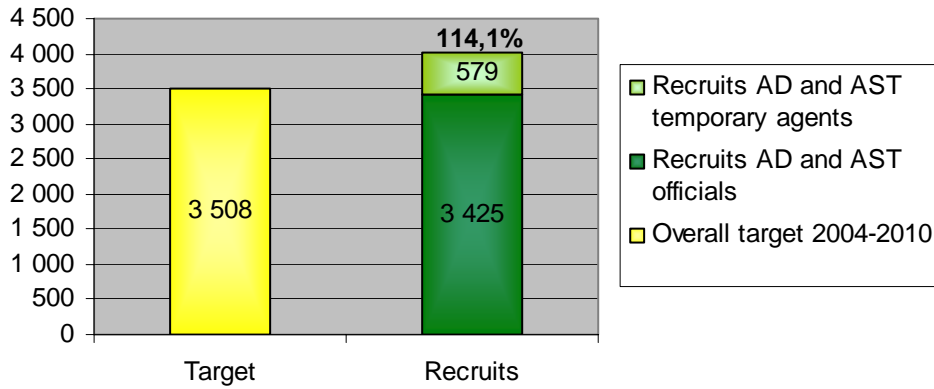
In the context of a strict monitoring of EU-10 recruitments, the Commission set progressive targets per DG (cf. section 4). Since 2007 the actual recruitments have been steadily above the overall Commission target!

The situation of recruitments on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 for EU-10 is: 4,004 nationals (officials and temporary staff), representing 114.1% of the overall indicative 2004-2010 recruitment target of 3,508. There are 2,539 AD and 1,465 AST recruits. This represents around 16% of the Commission officials and temporary agents in activity on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

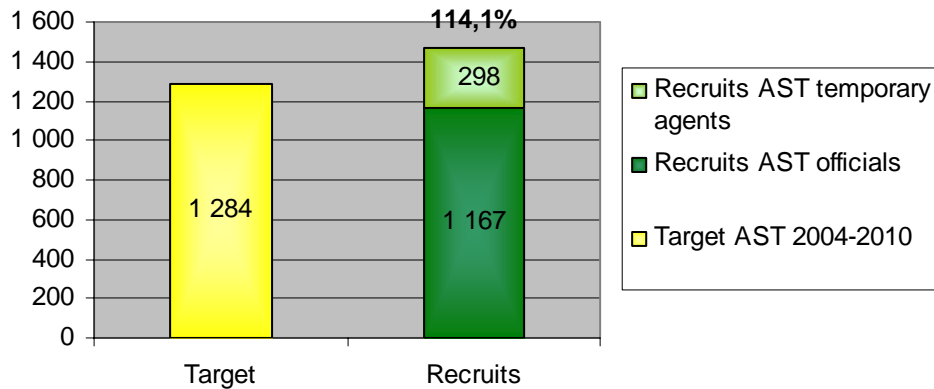
<sup>3</sup> Includes: Operating, EPSO, OIB, OIL, OLAF, OPOCE and PMO establishment plans.

<sup>4</sup> Includes recruitments of officials and temporary agents done and ongoing (for which an offer letter was sent) and turnover of officials.

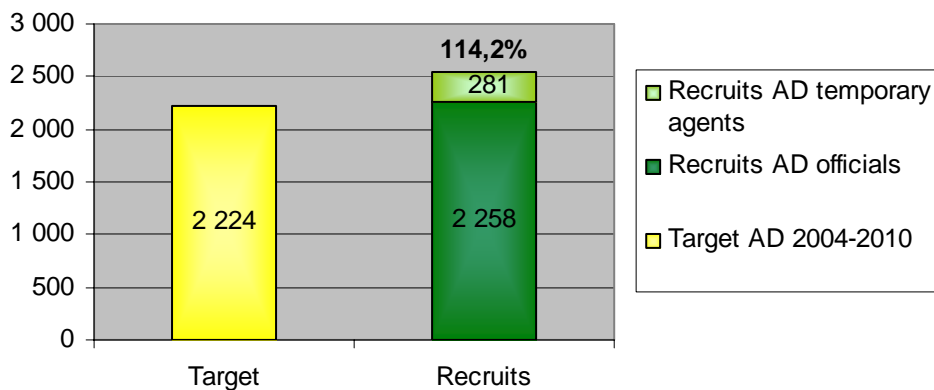
### Overall EU-10 recruitments against target



### EU-10 AST recruitments against target



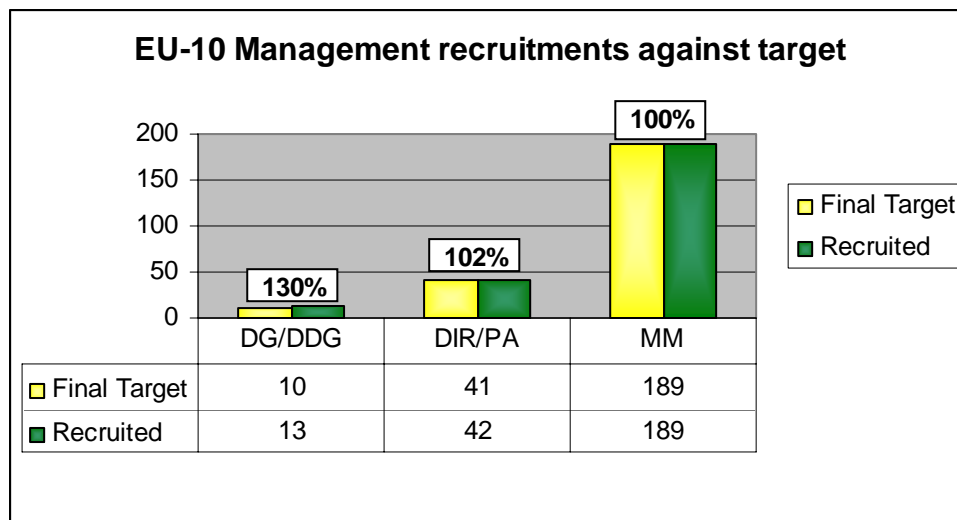
### EU-10 AD recruitments against target



On top of the recruited officials and temporary agents, on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 there were 595 contract agents and 144 Seconded National Experts of EU-10 nationality working for the Commission.

## 2.2. Management figures

At management level, at the end of the transition period for EU-10 recruitment, the overall recruitment results are very satisfactory.



At (Deputy) Director-General level (DG/DDG), the target of one recruitment per Member State is reached for all Member States and for three of them, two recruitments were made at this level. Therefore these recruitments represent 130% of the target.

At Director/Principal Adviser level (DIR/PA), 102% of the overall EU-10 target has been reached with a total of 42 Directors or Principal Advisers recruited during the transition period. In addition, another 2 Principal Advisers are expected to take function in the beginning of 2011.

At Middle Management level (MM), the Commission has reached 100% of its EU-10 overall indicative recruitment target on 31 December 2010 with a total of 189 laureates recruited on Middle Management functions in the past 5 years. Two of those Heads of Unit are to change function in the first weeks of 2011 to pursue their career as Principal Advisers (equivalent to director).

Moreover, 6 laureates from EU-10 Middle Management reserve lists were recruited on Adviser or Heads of sector posts. This follows a Commission decision to promote the recruitment of EU10 nationals at grades AD9 and AD12 beyond the EU-10 Middle Management targets as allocated to Directorates General<sup>5</sup>. Although there is not necessarily a formal commitment to appoint them on a Head of Unit post, the current grade of these persons, who have a proven potential to become managers, makes them eligible to Middle Management positions, whether published or through transfers in the interest of the service.

Finally, an external competition for Heads of Unit in the field of translation (both at AD9 and AD12 levels) was launched in September 2010 for a number of EU-10 languages. This competition will potentially allow during 2011 for the recruitment of Heads of Unit or Heads of Department for Maltese, Latvian, Lithuanian, Slovak and Slovenian languages in the Commission services. This should help reinforce the presence of Middle Managers of a number of EU-10 nationalities in the Commission.

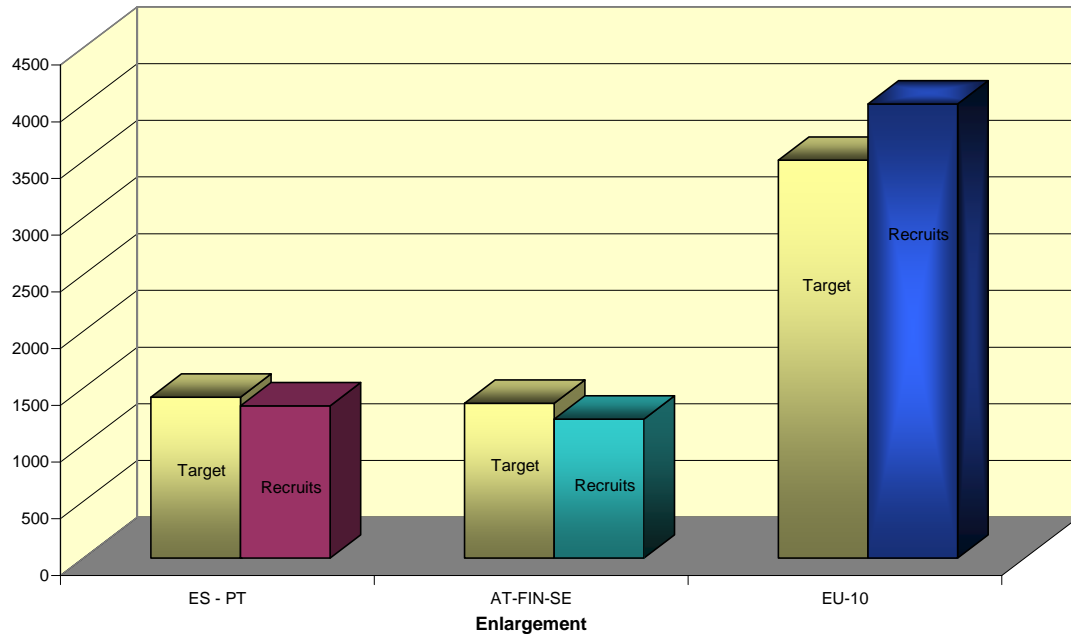
<sup>5</sup> See Commission Decision SEC(2009)1482.

### 3. ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. Main figures

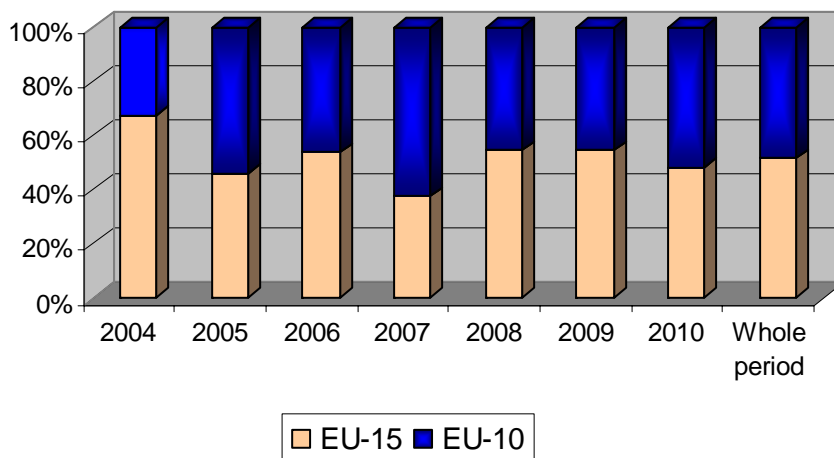
The last enlargements at a glance

**Recruits versus targets**



At the end of the respective transition period, only 95% of the overall target had been reached for the 1986 enlargement (Spain and Portugal) and 90% for the 1995 one (Austria, Finland and Sweden). With a target realisation of 114.1% at the end of the transition period, and despite its dimension, the historic 2004 EU-10 enlargement was accompanied by an historic achievement.

**Recruitment structure 2004-2010**



Officials and temporary agents, first appointment between April 2004 and December 2010.

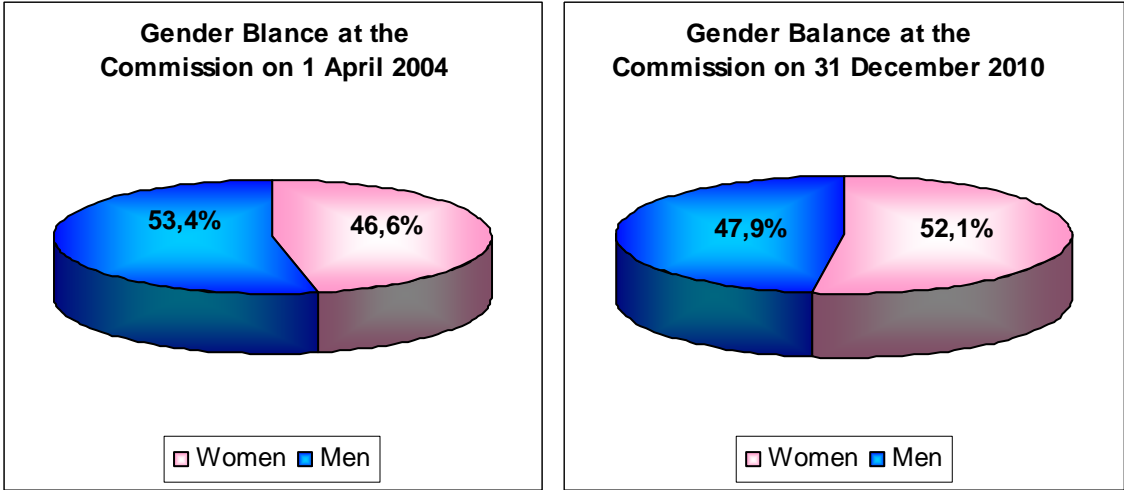
The recruitment effort to integrate staff from the new Member States since the beginning of the transition period is evident and led to certain restrictions to the recruitment of nationals from the 15 old Member States. Nevertheless, as shown in the chart above, the recruitment policy did not jeopardise the recruitment of EU-15 nationals, which kept a reasonable pace over the period, so that in the long-term no major geographical imbalances will appear.

	ES-PT	AT-FI-SW	EU-10
Recruits per day	2,2	1,4	3,3

The absolute recruitment effort is visible in the number of recruitments per day. In average, more than 3 new EU-10 colleagues were recruited every day! This is sensibly higher than the average number of recruitments for the Spain-Portugal and for the Austria-Finland-Sweden enlargements<sup>6</sup>.

**3.2. Gender balance evolution**

a) At the Commission (all officials and temporary agents)



The impact of the EU-10 enlargement clearly gave a significant positive contribution to Commission's gender balance. The share of 46.6% women at the start of the 2004 enlargement grew to 52.1% at the end of the EU-10 transition period, with a growth by 5.5%.

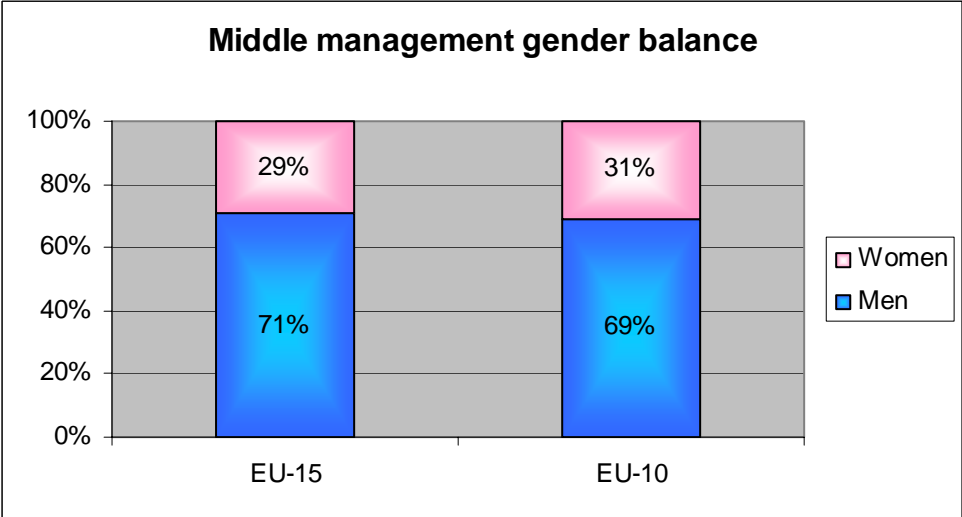
Women were the majority of the EU-10 recruitments in both AD and AST function groups, accounting for over 67%.

<sup>6</sup> Recruitments of officials and temporary agents per working day over the respective transition period. Basis: 245 working days per year. First recruitment, all establishment plans.



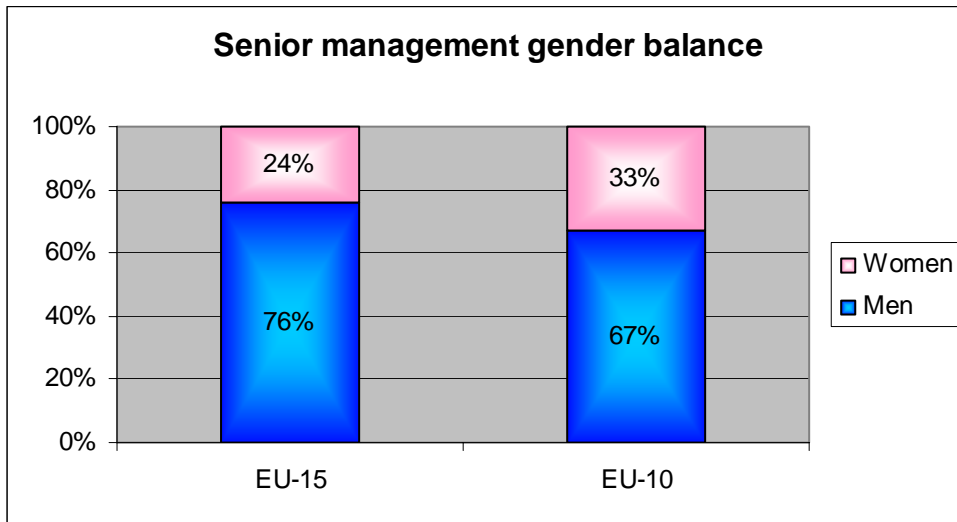
b) At management level

EU-10 recruitment also contributed positively to improving gender balance in the management population. Indeed, women have systematically been better represented amongst first management appointments of EU-10 Member States when compared to EU-15<sup>7</sup>.



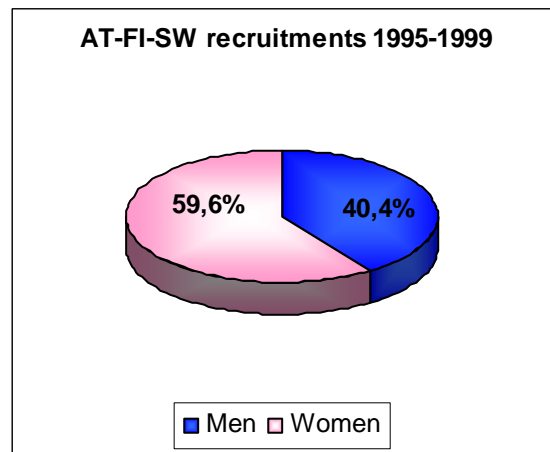
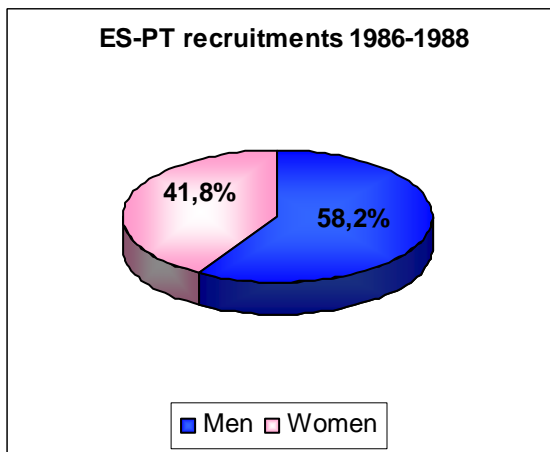
<sup>7</sup> Total EU-10 appointments compared to first appointments EU-15 over the period 2005-2010.





c) Comparison with previous enlargements

Gender balance of recruits in the last 3 completed enlargements (Spain-Portugal, Austria-Finland-Sweden, EU-10)



Officials and temporary agents, all establishment plans, first recruitment.

Women account for 67.2% of the EU-10 recruits in the transition period. This is an impressive increase in comparison to the 59.6% of the 1995 enlargement and even more compared to the 41.8% of the 1986 one during the respective transition periods!



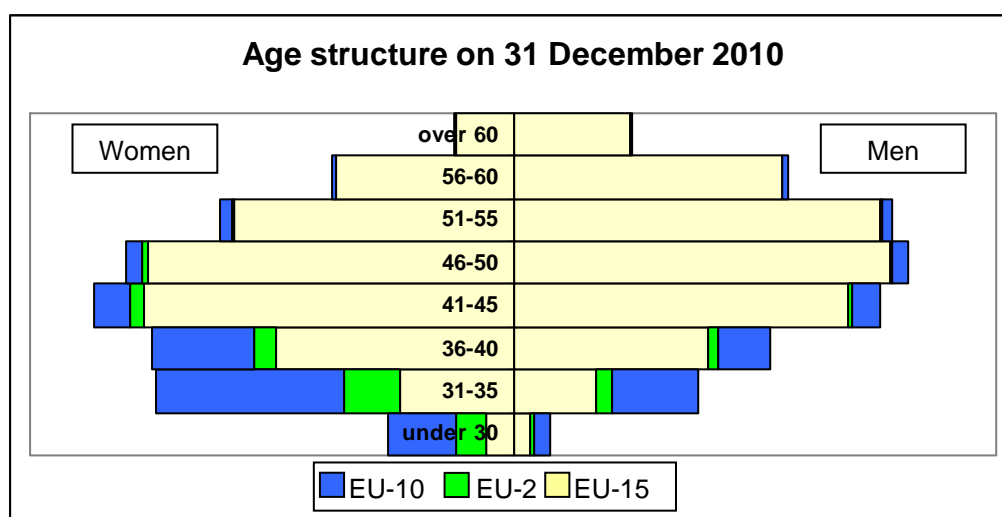
### 3.3. Age structure evolution

#### a) Main figures

	ES-PT	AT-FI-SW	EU-10
Age	34	36,3	33,3

The average age of EU-10 enlargement recruits during the respective transition period had also a positive impact on the Commission's age structure. The effect on the overall Commission staff is relevant if we think that the 45.5 years average age at the Commission as of April 2004 went down by one year to the current 44.5<sup>8</sup>!

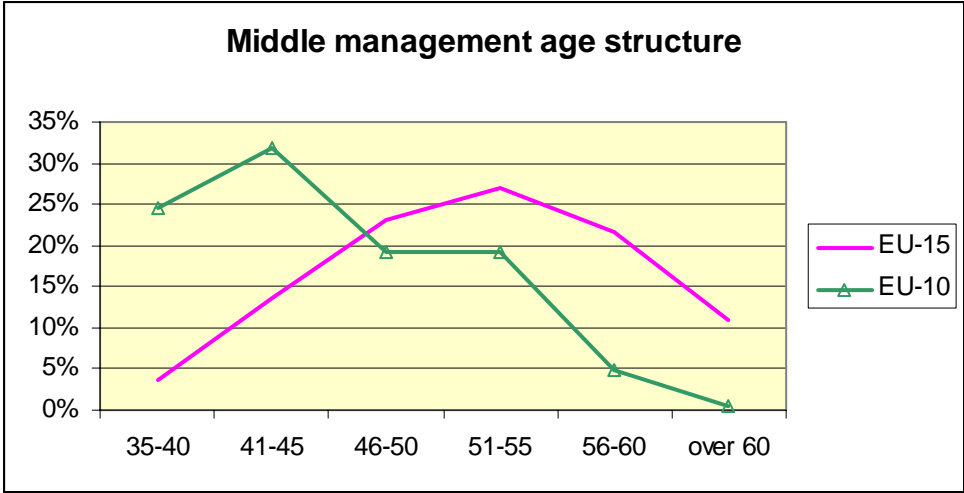
The chart below shows the structure of Commission's officials and temporary agents by gender and age group, summarising the contribution of EU-10 staff on the Commission's gender balance and age structure.



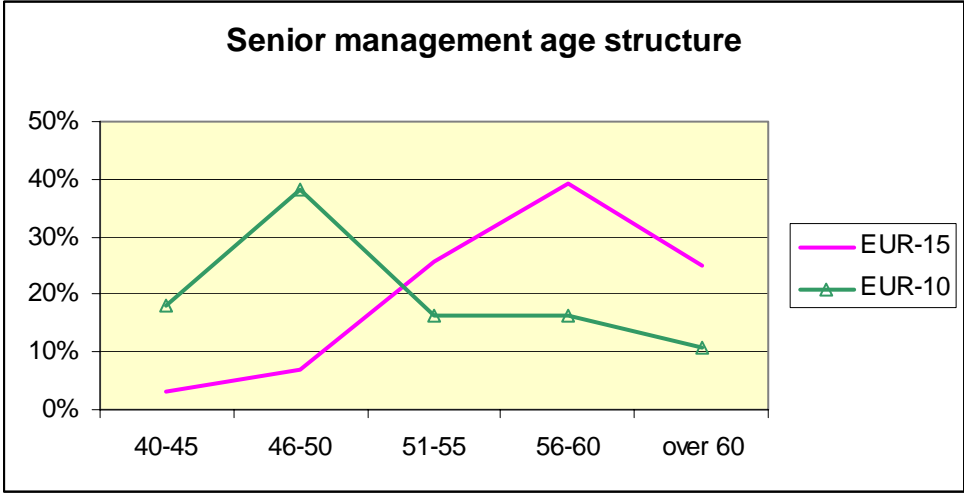
<sup>8</sup> Officials and temporary agents, all establishment plans.

b) At management level

Recruitments from the new Member States have also had a significant impact on the age structure of the management population. The age distribution at middle and senior management levels for the new Member States managers clearly highlights the recruitment of a significant number of young managers and a shift towards lower age classes.

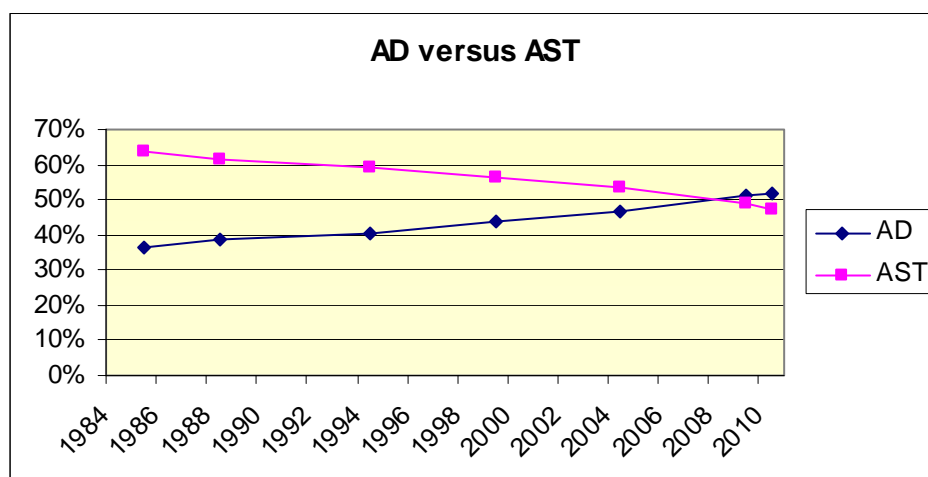


The average age of EU-10 middle managers is 45, against 52 for the EU-15.



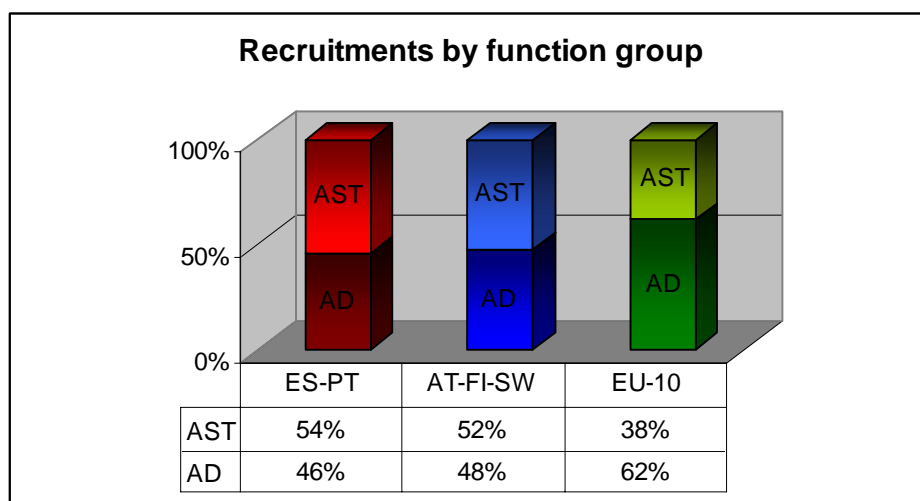
The average age of EU-10 senior managers is 51, against 57 for the EU-15.

### 3.4. Grade structure evolution



The ratio AD / AST, that had always shown more AST, has been reversed in 2008. Despite a clear trend since 1985, the latest enlargement was decisive to break the ratio even. Behind this trend, there is also the aim of the Commission to rebalance its staff structure by increasing the share of officials with academic qualifications. The enlargement played a decisive role in the achievement of this goal.

Indeed, the ratio AD to AST among recruits of the EU-10 enlargement was 62% to 38%, the most favourable to AD in the last 3 completed enlargements.



### 3.5. Senior Management Selection

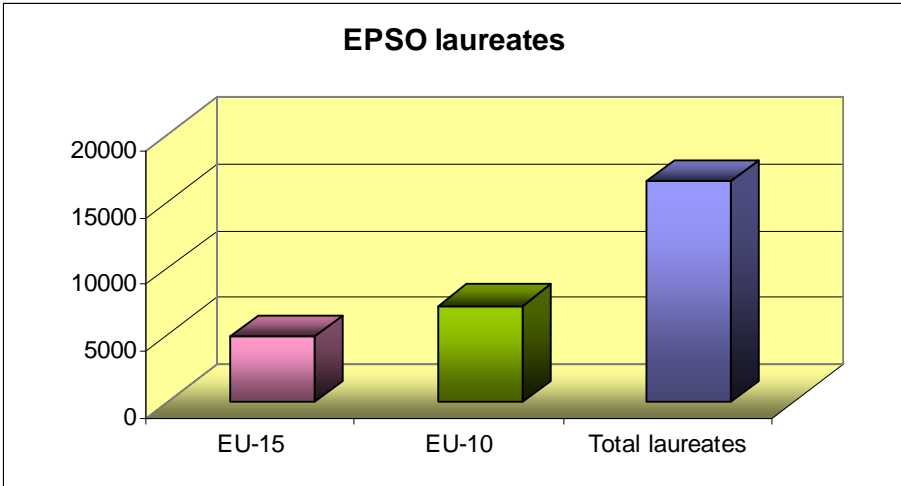
Between 2004 and 2010, the Commission has published 97 senior management positions: 21 at the level of (Deputy) Director-General and 76 at Director (or equivalent) level. These publications attracted almost 6,000 candidates from EU-10 Member States who have been individually assessed by Commission services. DG HR, pre-selection committees in the DG concerned and the Consultative Committee on Appointments<sup>9</sup> all collaborated closely to ensure that these selection procedures were carried out swiftly and correctly, enabling the Commission to achieve its targets in time.

<sup>9</sup> Within the selection process for senior managers in the Commission, the CCA acts as interviewing and evaluation board assessing the general management skills of candidates and their ability to occupy successfully the position of a senior official. It recommends to the Members of the Commission responsible for proposing an

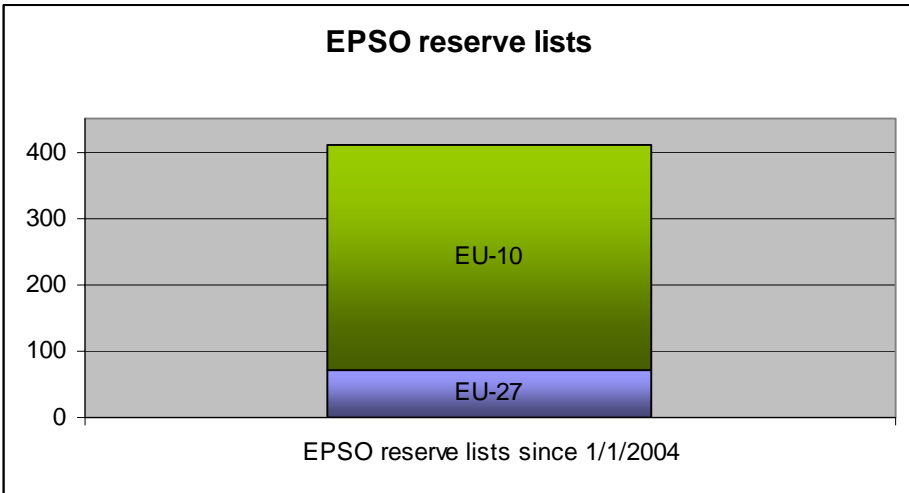
The CCA dealt with a total of 91 selection procedures, interviewing 286 candidates from EU-10 Member States. In line with its mandate, the CCA made sure that candidates who were short-listed for interviews with Commissioners fulfilled the requirements to successfully carry out a senior management position; this is demonstrated by the number of selection procedures where the CCA short-listed no candidates for further interviews (in 22 selection procedures) or just one candidate (14 selection procedures), which represents more than a third of all EU-10 selection procedures.

**3.6. The Role of EPSO**

EPSO was a key player in the success of the enlargement.



Since its creation in 2002, EPSO provided 16,486 laureates to the Institutions<sup>10</sup>; among these there were 7,211 EU-10 citizens, who represented around 44% of the laureates. Providing such a large number of laureates implies the organisation of tests for a much larger number. In total there were more than 500,000 applications for European competitions in the period 2004-2010.

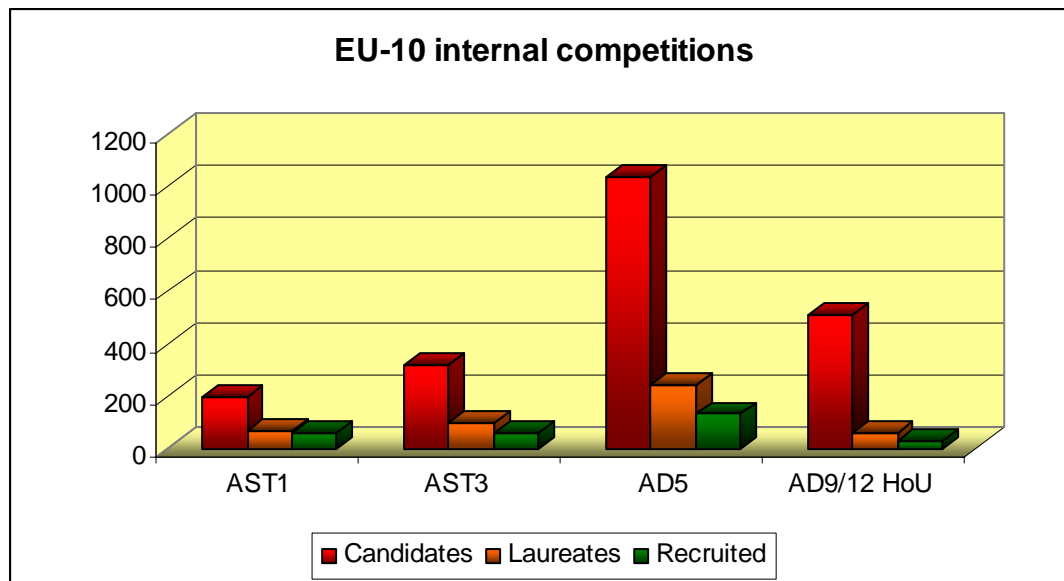


appointment a short-list of the most suitable candidates for the position they applied for and who will have the potential for a long-term career in the Commission. The CCA is chaired by the Secretary-General for (Deputy) Director-General functions or by the Director-General of DG HR for Director functions. Other members are the Head of Cabinet of the President (for (Deputy) Director-General functions), the Head of Cabinet of the Member of the Commission responsible for personnel issues, a Deputy Secretary-General (for Director functions) the Permanent Rapporteur, a Rapporteur appointed to follow-up the selection procedure and the recruiting Director-General. During the interviews, the CCA is assisted by an external human resources expert; in addition, candidates invited for an interview with the CCA will have to go to a full-day assessment centre.

<sup>10</sup> This figure represents the number of laureates from EU-27 Member States.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004, 648 reserve lists have been made available to the institutions, including 339 for EU-10 laureates.

EU-10 internal competitions were organised throughout the transition period or are still ongoing.



AST1 secretary, AST3 administrative assistant and executive secretary, administrator AD5 and AD9 / AD12 heads of unit internal competitions were organised, for a total of 550 requested laureates, corresponding to over two thirds of the EU-10 temporary agents in place at the end of 2008<sup>11</sup>. Out of over 2.000 candidates there were overall 471 laureates out of these competitions and at the end of the transition period 276 of them (around 59%) had been recruited.

#### 4. TOOLS

The efforts of all the Commission services along with a set of accompanying measures put in place by the Commission were the key to these achievements.

##### 4.1. Target setting

To ensure geographical balance across its individual services, the Commission set annual targets per DG and by function group (AD and AST). These targets were based not only on the number of new posts received for enlargement-related activities but also on turnover, so as to make sure that all DGs, even those DGs that did not receive an important number of new posts for the purpose of the enlargement, would recruit a certain number of EU-10 nationals. Specific recruitment targets by DG were set also for management posts. To provide DGs with an overall view of the total effort to be made and to allow for proactive planning, since 2007 these targets were set for several years at once, instead of on a yearly basis. In 2008, additional recruitment targets were allocated to a number of DGs in order to ensure not only the achievement of the overall indicative target but also an acceptable progress rate for each individual EU-10 Member State.

**A low impact on incumbents (EU-15).** In the previous enlargements a "drawing rights" system combined with a one-shot targets distribution had been applied. DGs were attributed recruitment targets and received a new enlargement post in the moment when they had proposed a candidate for recruitment. Nationals of older Member States could be hired only when the target was reached by the DG. By contrast, the methodology applied for the EU-10 enlargement combined a progressive target setting with the attribution of all enlargement posts at the beginning of the year, thus empowering DGs and giving them a higher flexibility. As an effect, a reduced impact was registered on EU-15 recruitments, which continued all along the transition period and remained in line with the turnover.

<sup>11</sup> In accordance with the Staff Regulations, the internal competitions are also open to officials.

## 4.2. Monitoring

A systematic monitoring system was put in place by DG HR in 2007 for the EU-10. Continuous monitoring and reviewing of all stages of the Commission strategy's implementation allowed measuring performance against the indicative targets and reacting swiftly to any problem. This system foresaw that targets set per function group for each DG were raised linearly every two months to reach the DG's yearly targets after the first ten months of each year (i.e. at the beginning of November). The recruitment results were analysed and systematically circulated among the Human Resources Network. As long as the relevant intermediate target was not reached, a DG would not be allowed to recruit EU-15 nationals in the concerned function group (AD or AST). A DG which reached its intermediate target was allowed to recruit EU-15 nationals in the respective function group for the next two months.

## 4.3. Management absorption plan

Since 2007, the DGs had to submit an absorption plan explaining how they intended to attain their EU-10 middle management and senior management recruitment targets. This plan had to be updated every year as long as the DG concerned had not yet reached its targets. When DGs did not submit a plausible absorption plan or did not take appropriate action to implement it, this could lead to the blockage of publications of management posts for the DG concerned and intra- and inter-DG transfers of management staff. These measures were enforced in an increasingly strict manner along the transition period.

## 4.4. Specific recruitment measures for managers

- Each DG request for a reorganisation, and in particular the creation of additional management posts, was assessed by DG HR in accordance with the applicable rules but also scrutinised carefully against the concerned DG's progress towards its recruitment targets. Where appropriate, the required number of newly created management posts was earmarked for nationals from the new Member States.
- Already in 2007, with a view to facilitate the recruitment and induction of middle management laureates, the Commission decided to allow their recruitment on an adviser post, awaiting the subsequent appointment to a middle management post. In 2009, the conditions for such recruitments were modified, amongst others by extending the list of functions allowed for first recruitments to deputy head of unit and head of sector.
- Specific measures for the senior management level aimed at reaching appropriate geographical balance and guaranteeing efficient handling of the selection procedure. These measures included: targeted publication of posts open only for those nationalities for which the recruitment target had not yet been reached; the establishment by DG HR of a time-table for the different phases of the selection procedure, in order to ensure coordinated progress in selection procedures; the appointment by DG HR of the external member required for pre-selection panels; the participation of the Rapporteur in pre-selection interviews.

## 4.5. Professional selection methods

### a) EPSO

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) is the inter-institutional body created in 2002 to provide a professional staff selection service on behalf of the European Union Institutions. In September 2008, a new EPSO Development Programme was introduced. Since 2010 there are annual competition cycles and new procedures which aim to reduce the duration of competitions to a maximum of 9 months and increase their yield.

A lot of competitions reserved to nationals of the new member states were organised.

- *External competitions.* Open competitions aiming at the recruitment of citizens from the new member states have been organised.

- *Internal competitions.* Given that temporary agents have already gained valuable experience in the Commission, it is in the interest of the services to offer them the possibility to become officials by way of internal competitions. These competitions made it possible to obtain timely the number of needed laureates with the appropriate profiles, allowing at the same time for the stabilisation of EU-10 staff. The Commission's EU-10 staff has shown a high interest in participating in these internal competitions: approximately 2.000 applications were registered, all competitions included, and 471 candidates succeeded.
- *Management competitions.* For the selection and recruitment of middle management staff, given the dimension of the 2004 enlargement, the Institutions decided to organise open competitions. For the first time, the selection procedure for middle managers included an assessment centre for the evaluation of the management competencies of the candidates.

EPSO organised competitions in 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2010, producing some 470 laureates.

- *Selection procedures.* For management posts that needed to be filled rapidly after accession (i.e. heads of representation in the new Member States) or that required a very specific profile, 17 separate selection procedures for the engagement of temporary agents were organised.

#### b) Senior management selection

To ensure the selection process for senior management functions is carried out according to best practices and to the highest possible standards, the Commission not only called upon the presence of an external expert in human resources during the CCA interviews, but also required candidates invited for the CCA to pass a full-day assessment centre. These assessment centres tested extensively their senior management abilities and its results were available to the CCA during the interviews.

Over the years, the Commission has organised 93 assessment centres for 221 individual candidates.

The combination of the presence of the external human resources expert during the CCA interview and the use of assessment centres allowed the Commission to gain a correct overview of candidates' senior management abilities and to take its appointment decisions accordingly.

#### **4.6. Induction**

The 1995 enlargement exercise had shown that integration of new managers in the Commission environment is of utmost importance; for this reason, DG HR developed a specific programme (VIP: Vision, Integration, Performance) to support newly recruited senior managers to accelerate their integration in the Commission and to become quickly operational. Very well appreciated by participants, DG HR has decided to extend the VIP programme to all newly recruited managers from 2011 onwards.

#### **4.7 Mentoring**

In addition, every newly appointed senior manager was given the opportunity to join the Commission's senior management mentoring scheme. The objective of this scheme is to provide, during a period of 6-12 months following the date of taking up duties, support to newly appointed senior managers, including those entering the Commission, in relation to the working methods, policies and culture of the institution. A group of around 30 experienced senior managers act as mentors.

### **5. Conclusion**

4,000 recruitments, representing today around 16% of the Commission active officials and temporary agents, from EU-10, 595 contract agents and 144 SNE in place at the end of the transition period: all this worked well without major disruptions or conflicts.

Besides the on-going transitional period for Romania and Bulgaria, the Commission is a truly European institution today.

Compared to earlier enlargements and given its size, the EU-10 enlargement is a great success for the Commission. The lessons learnt will help future enlargements and integration of new staff in general, to the advantage of recruits from all 27 Member States.