

Pre-selection process of the Executive Director – appointment of a Management Board observer

63rd meeting of the Management Board 23 September 2021

Proposal

The Management Board (MB) is invited to appoint an observer to the pre-selection process for the new Executive Director.

The proposal has been put forward by the Preparatory Group for the selection and appointment of the future Executive Director.

Background

The Preparatory Group for the selection and appointment of the Executive Director met remotely on 23 July 2021 to review the draft vacancy notice for the future ECHA Executive Director. The group proposed amendments to the notice and recommended its approval to the MB. The final draft version of the vacancy notice was submitted to the Management Board for approval via a written procedure (MB/WP/02/2021) on 30 July 2021. The written procedure concluded on 6 August 2021, with the vacancy notice approved by the Board (see a separate report on the written procedure outcome under the agenda point C.2).

The Commission intends to publish the vacancy in the Official Journal of the European Union without undue delay. ECHA will promote the job advertisement also in the specialised press, among Member States and its public channels.

The Commission will then organise the pre-selection process, which will lead, after consultation and interviews by the Consultative Committee on Appointments (CCA), to a list of the most qualified candidates. This list, containing the candidates' name in alphabetical order, will be submitted by the Commission to the Management Board for the subsequent phase of the selection of the future Executive Director.

The pre-selection will be carried out in accordance with the respective Commission guidelines which foresee that the Management Board may designate an observer to the pre-selection committee.

In order to maintain the integrity of the selection and appointment procedure, the observer will be required to strictly respect the confidentiality of the pre-selection process. He/she must exercise the greatest discretion in every aspect of the proceedings, also after the termination of the pre-selection process.

Rationale and proposal

The Management Board is invited to consider designating an observer to the pre-selection committee.

The person appointed as observer would participate in the pre-selection interviews but should not ask questions to candidates, nor take an active role in the deliberations of the pre-selection panel. The observer will be invited to provide information to the MB on the conduct of the pre-selection process.

The workload for the observer will depend on the number of candidates. Generally, it can be expected that ca. three working days and 2-3 missions to Brussels (reimbursed by ECHA) will be required.

With a view to avoiding potential conflicts of interest, it is recommended that the observer appointed by the MB would not be a candidate for the position of the Executive Director, nor would he/she participate in the MB vote for appointing the future Executive Director.

The MB may appoint the person of its choice as observer, who may be a MB member or another person enjoying the trust of the Board.

With due consideration for avoiding potential conflicts of interest and the separation of the role of the observer and voting MB members, the Preparatory Group makes a recommendation to the MB prior to the plenary meeting.

Alternative options

The Management Board could decide to appoint another person for the role. In this case, his/her availability will need to be ascertained.

Finally, the Management Board could also decide to abstain from designating an observer to the Commission pre-selection Committee. This could, however, result in an eventually less informed Management Board decision on the appointment of the next Executive Director, and it is not recommended.

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