

**Call for Expressions of Interest for the  
MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**

**Ref. n°: CEI-SCIE-2022**

With this call the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(FRA\)](https://fra.europa.eu) is opening 11 positions in its Scientific Committee. The term of office of the new members will start on 04.06.2023 and end on 03.06.2028.

FRA is the European Union's specialised expert Agency tasked with providing the EU institutions and the EU Member States (when acting within the scope of EU law) with evidence-based advice in the area of fundamental rights.

While being part of the overall EU administration, the Agency is a distinct entity located in Vienna. Its current Scientific Committee is an esteemed group of internationally renowned human rights experts. Its members, most of them university professors, come from different disciplines and have held high level positions, including being the Vice-President of the European Court for Human Rights, Chairpersons of National Human Rights Institutions, UN Special Rapporteurs, Members of international monitoring committees and other similar roles.

The Scientific Committee is a hub of outstanding human rights experts that oversees the work of the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency.

The position of member of the FRA Scientific Committee is highly prestigious and requires commitment and a considerable investment of time. The Scientific Committee is mandated to guarantee the scientific quality of FRA's work across the full spectrum of fundamental rights. The members meet at least 4 times a year at the premises of FRA in Vienna or remotely.

## **1. THE AGENCY**

FRA is an Agency of the European Union based in Vienna, Austria.<sup>1</sup>

The objective of FRA is to provide the relevant institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and authorities of the Union and its Member States, when implementing European Union law, with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights in order to support them when they take measures or formulate courses of action within their respective spheres of competence to fully respect fundamental rights.<sup>2</sup>

FRA focuses on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU and its 27 Member States. Candidate countries and countries which have concluded a stabilisation and association agreement with the EU can be invited to participate.<sup>3</sup>

FRA comprises the following bodies:

[Management Board](#)

[Executive Board](#)

[Scientific Committee](#)

[Director](#)

[Agency staff](#)

## **2. THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

This call for expressions of interest invites experts possessing the necessary experience in one or more scientific disciplines in the field of fundamental rights to express their interest in becoming members of the Scientific Committee of the Agency.

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1 of [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007](#), amended by the [Council Regulation \(EU\) 2022/555 of 5 April 2022](#) (hereinafter referred to as the “Regulation”) establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (hereinafter

<sup>1</sup> Its founding regulation adopted by the Council of the European Union was published in OJ L 53, 22.2.2007, pp. 0001-0014

<sup>2</sup> Art. 2 of Council Regulation (EC) n. 168/2007 of 15 February 2007 establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

<sup>3</sup> See Art. 28 of Council Regulation 168/2007.

referred to as the “Agency”), the Management Board of the Agency shall appoint a [Scientific Committee](#) which shall be comprised of eleven independent persons, highly qualified in the field of fundamental rights, with adequate competences in scientific quality and research methodologies.

### **Role of the Scientific Committee:**

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 5 of the Regulation, the Scientific Committee shall be the guarantor of the scientific quality of the Agency’s work and shall advise the Director and the Agency on the scientific research methodology applied in the Agency’s work.

For that purpose, the Director shall involve the Scientific Committee in the preparation of documents drawn up in the context of the tasks the Agency is entrusted with, namely in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 1(a-f) and (h) of the Regulation:

- The collection, recording, analysis and dissemination of relevant, objective, reliable and comparable information and data, including results from research and monitoring, communicated to it by Member States, Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, research centres, national bodies, non-governmental organisations, third countries and international organisations, in particular by the competent bodies of the Council of Europe;
- The development of methods and standards to improve the comparability, objectivity and reliability of data on fundamental rights at a European level, in cooperation with the European Commission and the EU Member States;
- The carrying out, cooperation with or encouragement of scientific research and surveys, preparatory studies and feasibility studies, including, where appropriate and compatible with its priorities and its annual and multiannual work programmes, at the request of the European Parliament, the Council or the Commission;
- The formulation and publication of conclusions and opinions on specific thematic topics, for the Union institutions and the Member States when implementing Union law, either on its own initiative or at the request of the European Parliament, the Council or the Commission;
- The publication of an annual report on fundamental rights issues covered by the areas of the Agency’s activity, also highlighting examples of good practice;
- The publication of thematic reports based on the Agency’s own analysis, research and surveys;

- The development of a communication strategy and the promotion of dialogue with civil society, in order to raise public awareness of fundamental rights and actively disseminate information about the Agency’s work.

The Scientific Committee is consulted on opinion on the draft Agency’s Programming document in line with Article 5a, paragraph 3.

### **The functioning of the Scientific Committee:**

Different from the Management Board, the Scientific Committee is an advisory body that is not involved in the administration and the steering of the Agency. At the same time the Committee is a working body that is involved in the research processes of the Agency. This implies that the members are expected to be committed to make a substantial contribution in terms of time and workload to the Agency’s work; with their input being in the form of reasoned arguments concerning the quality of the Agency’s work, and in particular on the scientific research methodology applied, which may necessitate detailed written contributions.

According to the current working methods, the individual members of the Committee may supervise one or more specific research projects as “rapporteurs” from the inception of the project idea to the publication of the results. However, decisions concerning the “scientific quality of the Agency’s work” are taken in a collective manner by the Scientific Committee’s members. The Committee is headed by its Chairperson<sup>4</sup>. The Chair is assisted by a contact-point within the FRA.

### **Composition of the Scientific Committee:**

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1 of the Regulation, the Scientific Committee shall be composed of eleven independent persons, highly qualified in the field of fundamental rights. The Management Board shall appoint the members following a transparent call for applications and selection procedure after having consulted the competent committee of the European Parliament<sup>5</sup>.

The Management Board shall ensure even geographical representation in the membership of the Scientific Committee it shall appoint. Furthermore, the Management Board aims to achieve a balanced participation between women and men in the Scientific Committee. It will also pay due attention to the scientific

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<sup>4</sup> Art. 19 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

<sup>5</sup> The Committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (“LIBE Committee”).

disciplines and specialisations with the aim of covering the different areas as defined within the Agency's programming document.

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1 of the Regulation, the members of the Agency's Management Board are precluded from being members of the Scientific Committee.

The members of the Scientific Committee shall be experts in one of the disciplines or have an interdisciplinary profile related to or relevant for human rights, inter alia:

- social sciences; including candidates with expertise in the fields of research methodologies and cross-national, comparative qualitative and/or quantitative research;
- law, including comparative constitutional law, EU law and international law;
- political sciences;
- statistics.

### **Term of Office:**

The term of office of the members of the Scientific Committee shall be five years. It shall not be renewed. The members of the Scientific Committee shall be independent and must comply with the rules of confidentiality.

Members may be replaced only at their own request, or in the event of their being permanently prevented from fulfilling their duties. However, where a member no longer meets the criteria of independence, he or she shall resign forthwith and should notify the European Commission and the Director of the Agency. Alternatively the Management Board may declare, on a proposal of one third of its members or of the European Commission, a lack of independence and revoke the person concerned.

In such cases, the Management Board shall appoint the first available person in line on the reserve list as the new member for the remaining term of office. Where the remaining term of office is less than two years, the mandate of the new member may be for a full term of five years. The list of members of the Scientific Committee shall be made public and shall be updated by the Agency on its website.

### **Meetings of the Scientific Committee:**

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 6 of the Regulation, the Scientific Committee shall meet four times a year in plenary session. The meetings shall be held either at the seat of the Agency (Vienna) or remotely via videoconference. Extraordinary meetings may be convened. The members are expected to participate in these meetings and to make a substantial contribution in terms of time and workload, including the review of and comments on material submitted to them – which should preferably be in written form and substantiated.

Members of the Scientific Committee shall be entitled to indemnities related to their participation in the activities of the Scientific Committee.<sup>6</sup>

## **3. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED, CRITERIA OF ASSESSMENT**

### **A. Eligibility criteria**

Applicants for membership of the Scientific Committee must fulfil the following four criteria:

- Have a postgraduate university degree in a relevant scientific area;
- Have seven years of proven professional experience dealing with fundamental rights in the context of disciplines such as the social sciences, political sciences, law and/or statistics - after obtaining the above mentioned degree;
- Nationality of one of the EU Member States or of a State that participates in the work of the FRA as an observer in accordance with Article 28 of Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007, amended by the Council Regulation (EU) 2022/555 of 5 April 2022;
- Thorough knowledge (minimum level C1) of English and a satisfactory knowledge (minimum level B2) of another language of the EU.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Art 24 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights; experts invited to attend meetings<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> NOTE: The working language for all meetings and deliverables – for both the FRA and members of the Scientific Committee - is English. The FRA translates only the final versions of its deliverables into other EU languages, therefore, candidates are expected to have a very high standard of **English (C1 level according to the CEFR)** – listening, reading and writing – as translation and interpretation are not possible with respect to the work of the Committee.

## **B. Selection criteria**

### **ESSENTIAL:**

The **five essential requirements** for the selection of the members of the Scientific Committee are:

- **Scientific excellence:** scientific excellence strictly related to the fields of the mandate of the Agency, demonstrated by publications in relevant fields or other indicators of relevant professional experience engaging in disciplines such as law, social sciences, political sciences, statistics, geography, economics, anthropology or journalism;
- **Cross-national, comparative experience:** extensive experience of having worked and/or conducted qualitative and quantitative comparative research in more than one country in fields closely related to the work of the Agency;
- **In-depth insight concerning fundamental/human rights in practice:** extensive experience with respect to legal, social sciences, policy and/or practical implementation of fundamental/human rights in practice – for instance experience of fieldwork, data analysis, governance and democracy, giving technical advice and legal judgments, having worked for an international governmental or non-governmental organisation, including monitoring bodies;
- **Delivery of opinions and/or recommendations:** Experience in drafting opinions, or recommendations at national or international level related to the fields of interest of the Agency;
- **Excellent Scientific English:** an excellent knowledge of written and spoken English. In the Scientific Committee, English<sup>8</sup> is the language used in oral as well as in written communication.

### **ADVANTAGEOUS:**

The following four criteria will be considered as added **advantages**:

- Holding or having held a permanent professorship or other research driven positions in an academic institution;
- A doctoral degree;

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<sup>8</sup> Art. 4 (2) of the Agency's rules of procedure.

- Professional experience in an interdisciplinary environment, preferably in an international context;
- Experience in disseminating research findings to multiple audiences in an innovative and efficient manner.

In particular the compliance with the above-mentioned essential requirements will be assessed according to the following scale of merit points, facts and evidence:

### **1. Scientific excellence (0-30 points)**

- Relevant scientific publications – minimum of 10 high quality publications;
- Relevant expert opinions, recommendations or conclusions delivered to public authorities;
- Relevant research projects in different EU Member States;
- Relevant teaching in different EU Member States and experience in chairing at international conferences, in participating in international working groups and in multidisciplinary projects.

### **2. Cross-national, comparative experience (0-15 points)**

- Relevant experience of fieldwork, including e.g. multinational surveys, analysing both quantitative and qualitative data;
- Relevant experience in giving policy and legal advice in an international or transnational context;
- Relevant experience in comparison of political systems and comparative constitutional law (EU);

### **3. In-depth insight concerning fundamental/human rights in practice and policy (0-15 points)**

- Relevant experience in public administration or policy, including holding or having held leading positions;
- Relevant experience in the Judiciary, including holding or having held leading positions;
- Relevant experience in Non-Governmental Organizations, including holding or having held leading positions;
- Relevant experience in National Human Rights Institutions or other human rights bodies at national level, including holding or having held leading positions;
- Relevant fundamental rights experience at international level, including holding or having held leading positions.

#### **4. Delivery of opinions and/or recommendations/conclusions (0-15 points)**

- Extensive experience in translating scientific research into relevant recommendations for practice;
- Extensive experience in providing concise and policy relevant expert-opinions to public administrations and NGOs;
- Extensive experience as a scientific editor;
- Experience in communicating fundamental rights to a broader public.

#### **5. Excellent Scientific English (0-10 points)**

- Excellent scientific written English;
- Extensive experience in scientific writing and editing in English.

**The criteria indicated as advantageous will be scored 0-5 points in total.**

The need to ensure a fair geographical and gender balance shall also be taken into account in the selection phase.

### **4. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

Candidates are requested to submit their application electronically through the Agency's website:

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/about-fra/recruitment/vacancies>

**Only** online applications will be accepted. An application will be deemed admissible only if it includes:

- **a letter of interest** (maximum one page);
- **a registration form** whose link can be accessed from the Agency's website in the page related to this Call for Expressions of Interest;
- **a list of scientific publications** in books and peer-reviewed journals, including **the abstracts of the five most relevant articles (three of these abstracts should be in English)**.

Further supporting documents may be requested at a later stage of the selection.

Clarifications on the call and the applications procedure can be requested at the following address:

[selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu](mailto:selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu)

## **5. SELECTION PROCEDURE, APPOINTMENT AND TERM**

### **Pre-selection:**

The Director shall oversee the work of the pre-selection panel for the members of the Scientific Committee. He or she shall chair a pre-selection panel, composed of the Heads of Unit of the Agency and a person appointed for the purpose by the Council of Europe. Two members of the FRA Management Board, as well as one member of the sitting Scientific Committee, may attend the pre-selection panel as observers.

The pre-selection panel shall verify the eligibility of the candidates, in accordance with the eligibility requirements. Failure to comply with one of these requirements will result in the exclusion of the concerned candidate from the next steps of the selection process.

The pre-selection panel shall then assess each eligible candidate according to the requirements for selection.

The Director shall present the results of the pre-selection process to the Agency's Executive Board, including information on the candidates deemed ineligible.

### **Selection:**

The Executive Board shall assess all the candidates on the basis of the established selection requirements.

In this assessment the Executive Board shall take into account:

- The work of the pre-selection panel;
- The need that the areas of expertise of the members of the Scientific Committee shall cover the most relevant fields of Agency' work;
- The need to ensure even geographical and gender balance.

The Executive Board through its Chair shall submit to the Management Board a list of most eligible candidates. This list should include more than eleven and a maximum of twenty-two names. This list will also include merit points, a

conclusion concerning the suitability as a member of the Scientific Committee for each candidate, a record of the candidates not included in the lists mentioned above as well as on candidates deemed ineligible.

The Agency's services shall provide technical and logistical support for the selection process.

### **Appointment:**

On the basis of the list submitted by the Executive Board, the Management Board shall approve a reserve list established by order of merit and appoint the 11 members of the Scientific Committee, after having consulted the competent committee of the European Parliament.

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 2 of the Regulation, members will be appointed for a five-year term, which shall not be renewable.

Potential candidates should be aware that as a consequence of the public procedure of the LIBE Committee sessions, the LIBE Committee may make the names of the candidates and their CVs public. Potential candidates have a right to object to the publication of their data by sending an email to [selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu](mailto:selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu).

## **6. DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT, INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The members of the Scientific Committee are appointed on a personal basis. Members shall undertake to act independently of any external influence. For this reason they will be requested to make a declaration of commitment and a declaration of interest.<sup>9</sup>

A declaration of confidentiality will be requested as well in order to comply with the rules of confidentiality when dealing with information specifically identified by the Agency as "restricted or confidential".<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Art 27 (2) of Rules of Procedure.  
<sup>10</sup> Art 26 (2) of Rules of Procedure.

## **7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

FRA urges anyone meeting the eligibility criteria and interested in becoming a member of the FRA Scientific Committee to apply.

FRA is an equal opportunities employer and ensures that its recruitment procedures do not discriminate on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, gender identity or sexual orientation. FRA is committed to achieving gender balance and therefore female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.

## **8. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA**

Please note that FRA will not return applications to candidates.

The personal information FRA requests from applicants will be processed in line with 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. This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

Should the candidate have any query concerning the processing of her/his personal data, she/he shall address them to: [selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu](mailto:selection-scientific-committee@fra.europa.eu)

For further information with regard to the processing of personal data, please see FRA's Privacy Statement.

FRA's Data Protection Officer can be accessed at the address [dpo@fra.europa.eu](mailto:dpo@fra.europa.eu).

Applicants are entitled to have recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor (<http://www.edps.europa.eu>; [EDPS@edps.europa.eu](mailto:EDPS@edps.europa.eu)) if they consider that their rights under Regulation (EC) No 1725/2018 have been infringed as a result of the processing of their personal data by the FRA.

## **9. DEADLINE**

The closing date for submission of applications is **19/09/2022** at **13:00** (Local time, GMT +1).



**Please note that due to the large number of applications we receive, the system may face problems in processing such amounts of data when reaching the deadline for submission of applications. We therefore advise to apply well ahead of the deadline.**