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ASSIGNMENT

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This document presents a fictitious scenario. It has been produced solely for the purpose of this exercise. All references to existing countries, international organisations, private companies, departments and their representatives, etc. have been invented purely as examples. Any views expressed should not be taken to represent the opinions of those bodies or persons. When dealing with the assignment, participants should therefore rely solely on the information presented in the exercise and not on any prior expertise in the field.

For this exercise, you will be asked to take on the role of an Administrator in the Communication Department of the European Commission and member of the 'Yellow Card' working group. All the documentation that you need to prepare yourself for your interview is included in this information brochure. It comprises a number of documents, reports and other information that you need to analyse in order to be able to deal properly with the situations presented to you during the interview.

It is important that you accept the scenario as it is presented. You may print the documents, rearrange them in any order you wish and add comments or make notes as necessary. You may consult the notes you have prepared in advance during your interview. However, you cannot record your interview or take further notes during your interview. Also, please note that there will be no preparation time on the day of the interview.

Neither your knowledge in the field nor your knowledge on the topic of this exercise will be assessed during the interview; therefore, conducting any additional research is unnecessary. This Situational Competency-Based Interview is designed to assess the following general competencies: Leadership, Learning & Development, Resilience and Working With Others.

You will have until the day of the interview to go through the information individually in order to prepare for the interview. The interview will last 25 minutes.

**Please note that for the purpose of this exercise:
the interview will take place on Monday, 8 February 20XX
Last year was 20XX-1, next year will be 20XX+1**

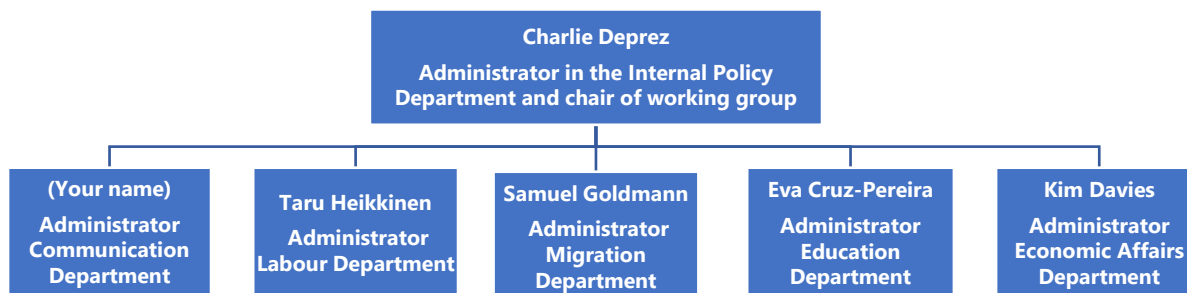
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 'Yellow Card' scheme

The European Union (EU) developed the 'Yellow Card' migration scheme to attract highly skilled workers (HSW) from around the world to come and work in the EU, thereby addressing the skills shortages of the EU labour market. The scheme facilitates the migration of third-country nationals to the EU based on their qualifications and skills and provides these migrants with a number of rights, including the right to (1) travel freely across EU Member States (MS), (2) family reunification and access to the EU labour market for family members and (3) easier access to a permanent EU residence permit.

The 'Yellow Card' working group

The success of the 'Yellow Card' scheme has been very limited since its introduction in 20XX-2. In September 20XX-1, the European Commission appointed a working group to evaluate the bottlenecks in the 'Yellow Card' scheme and make recommendations on how to increase the number of HSW using it.



The 'Yellow Card' Working Group Organigram

The working group's first act was to launch a feedback survey to identify what have been the main hurdles to applying for the 'Yellow Card' scheme in the past. Another important and still ongoing working group action is to revise the information presented on the 'Yellow Card' portal, a website that aims to provide applicants with all the necessary information to apply for a 'Yellow Card'.

The 'Yellow Card' admission procedure

To apply for a 'Yellow Card', third-country HSW must go through a two-step procedure. They must first complete a pre-admission form on the 'Yellow Card' portal, on which the Labour Department of the European Commission performs initial checks on the submitted documents. Applicants are then given the go-ahead to send their application to the national labour administration of the EU MS where they wish to work. Some of the requirements for being issued a 'Yellow Card' include:

- The employment contract in the application must be for at least one year.
- The hiring company must pass a series of background checks by the social and fiscal inspection agencies of the MS involved. These include an examination of the company's tax records and its record of compliance with employment regulations. If irregularities are discovered, an audit may be requested.

- In cases where no labour market data is readily available and no skill shortages can be easily identified in the MS in question, the MS administration has to carry out an examination to establish whether the vacant position could have been filled by a national worker. If proof is found that no efforts were made by the hiring company to recruit a national worker for the vacant position, the 'Yellow Card' application may be turned down.
- Applicants must submit proof that they possess the required qualifications (job experience and/or diploma) specified in the work contract.

On receipt of a 'Yellow Card' application, the MS labour administration in question has 90 days to process it. Admission decisions are then considered final; however, appeals can be filled via the 'Yellow Card' portal.



EXTRACT OF THE WORKING GROUP REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 'YELLOW CARD' SCHEME (13.01.20XX)

REPORT

Feedback survey results

One of the main problems with the current 'Yellow Card' admission procedure seems to be the amount of time it takes to complete the comprehensive company background checks. The large amount of paperwork and form-filling required for the 'Yellow Card' admission procedure places an extremely high administrative burden on the companies trying to hire the applicants.

In addition, the current qualifications recognition process is also a bottleneck: this step of the 'Yellow Card' application procedure seems to take an unnecessarily long time for the MS labour administrations to complete.

[...]

Case study: fast-track certification in MS Ailot

In November 20XX-2, MS Ailot introduced a procedure to allow companies to apply for a certificate that proves they meet all the requirements of the company background checks. This certification process allowed companies to choose when to undergo all the background checks required, saving them much valuable time later on whenever they urgently needed to hire a (third-country) HSW. Results from the case study show that there was a clear increase in 'Yellow Card' applications in MS Ailot after the fast-track certification procedure was introduced.

[...]

Priorities for 20XX

Based on the results of its analysis of the effectiveness of the 'Yellow Card' scheme, the working group has unanimously identified the following as priorities for 20XX:

1. **Exploring options to shorten the 'Yellow Card' admission procedures.** Measures should range from learning from the example of MS Ailot on fast-track certification to exploring how to implement the recent proposal from the European Association of Higher Education Organisations, which aims to accelerate the diploma recognition process by developing a comprehensive database of diploma types and levels issued by third countries and defining what equivalence they should have in the EU.
2. **Improving the way that we currently communicate about the 'Yellow Card' scheme.** Making prospective applicants and companies aware of the existence of the 'Yellow Card' portal will be a major challenge for the future. Identifying individuals and organisations that it could be helpful to involve in future information campaigns about the 'Yellow Card' should be the first step in these communication efforts.

[...]



'YELLOW CARD' WORKING GROUP FORUM

DISCUSSION FORUM

> SHORTENING THE ADMISSION PROCEDURE	
Taru	13/01/20XX
	I would like to share with you the results of a survey that has just been conducted by the Labour Department among around 9000 small- and medium-sized enterprises across the EU: in general, the companies surveyed were not very familiar with the 'Yellow Card' scheme, and the majority thought that 90 days was too long to wait to find out whether or not they could hire someone. In addition, an analysis of MS Ailot's fast-track certification by Paul Veenendaal, a contact of mine at the MS Ailot labour administration, showed that certified companies seeking to hire HSW can save 20 to 30 days per candidate. These results suggest we should seriously think about extending fast-track certification to the rest of the EU MS.
QUOTE REPLY	
> IMPROVING COMMUNICATION	
Eva	27/01/20XX
	I read a nice blog post recently by Lenka Zychóva, Professor of Communication Sciences at Charles University in the Czech Republic – someone who we have already worked with in the past. In her post, she details the ins and outs of a technique called 'Stakeholder Analysis', which I believe could help us define our target groups for a communication campaign. It may be worth checking it out with her!
QUOTE REPLY	
Charlie	28/01/20XX
	I agree with you that this is worth investigating. A colleague once gave me a book on Environmental Policy, in which an entire chapter was devoted to Stakeholder Analysis. Maybe it could help to have a look? Not quite related, but I wanted to let you know that I have been in contact with Tim Würth from the IT Department regarding the content of the 'Yellow Card' portal. Tim has some useful suggestions about how we can increase the impact of the website.
QUOTE REPLY	
Samuel	29/01/20XX
	I know Tim, he is a very creative person! His partner works as a personal chef and Tim shot and edited a number of really fun and entertaining video tutorials for her website. He told me he followed a massive open online course on videomaking to be able to do that. He has more skills under his belt than you might think!
QUOTE REPLY	