



European Competition

*12 weeks to
ace your competition*



Plan.
Prepare.
Perform.
Succeed.

This guide helps you organise your work, improve your efficiency, and approach the tests with confidence. It provides a step-by-step roadmap that can be **adapted** based on your experience and expertise across the different tests.


What to do before starting your preparation?

Preparing for an EPSO competition may seem difficult at first.

Depending on the competition you apply for, the tests, weighting, and marking criteria may vary. The key to success lies above all in having a structured and realistic preparation strategy.

We developed this study guide based on the **2026 AD5 competition**, but its methodology can be **adapted to other EPSO competitions**.

Before starting your preparation, it **is essential to read the notice of competition carefully**.

Need help understanding it? Watch our YouTube video: 

Most open EU competitions typically include the following assessments:

- the three reasoning tests: **abstract, numerical and verbal reasoning**
- **the written test**

You can therefore follow this guide and adapt it to the specific tests included in your competition.

Understand the structure of this guide

In each section, you can quickly access the content you're looking for by **clicking on the relevant week**:



We recommend studying for **around 6 hours a week**. This is a suggested guideline only and may vary depending on your pace and needs. This guide provides a structured revision framework, which you are free to adapt.

Test

For each test, find out :

- the goal of the week,
- how to reach it,
- the material to use
- and some tips.



FREE
RESSOURCES



In this guide, we will refer to the preparation tools that will help you progress over the coming weeks:

BOOKS



COURSES



ONLINE TESTS



To understand the differences between the preparation tools and find the ones that best fit your learning style,



check out this video:

You Tube



Below are the essential material to choose from to kick off your preparation:
(The products are presented in a pack but can also be purchased separately)

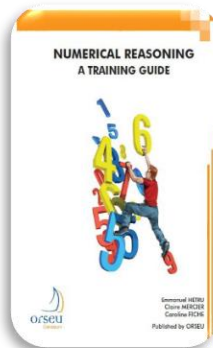
BOOKS



3 Reasoning Tests



**only for verbal reasoning MCQ*



Need to review the basics of maths?
We recommend this book :

COURSES



EU Competition Pack

3 Reasoning Tests + Written test + EU knowledge



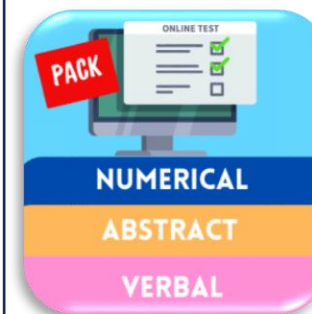
**except for EU Knowledge*

14 hours of online courses
Available anytime for 8 weeks

ONLINE TESTS



3 Reasoning Tests



EU Knowledge

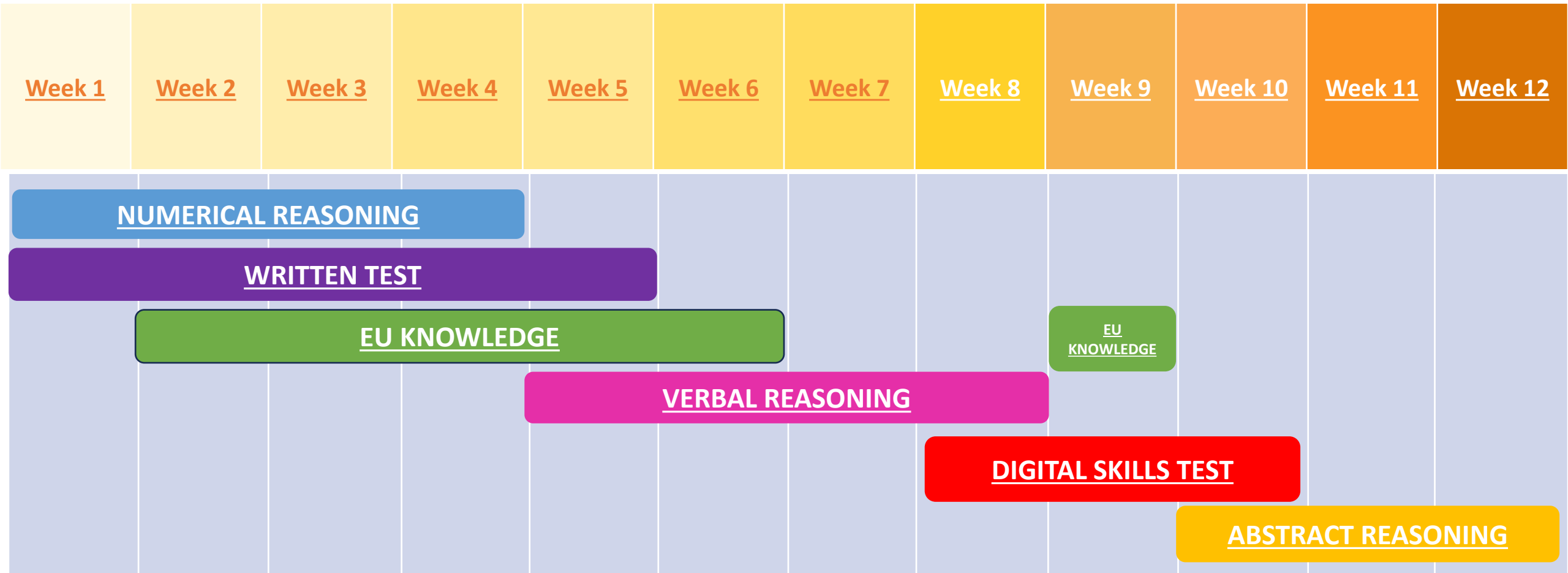
Digital skills



**300Q in Italian version*



Here is an overview of the revision plan:



Click on each section to access the corresponding week.

Week 1



6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Numerical Reasoning



Approach this test with confidence by understanding the methodology

Why does this test worry so many candidates?

A negative memories of maths at school, no regular practice with numbers at work...

Numerical reasoning is accessible to everyone with a good methodology!



Study the methodology with our online courses and/or books to master the fundamentals



It's important to take your time: in this 12-week schedule, you have four weeks to study this type of reasoning.

Take your time to study the methodology, take notes, and **make sure you understand**: this is essential.

Written test



Understand expectations and work on your communication skills

Introduced at the end of 2024, the written test is now a standard component of most open EU competitions*.

- **Document:** available 2 weeks before the test often a communication from the Commission
- **Assignment:** available on test day could be producing a summary, a press release, a speech, a statement, a briefing based on the document



This week, **discover the 5 benchmark anchors** correctors will use to assess your test and **gain a solid methodology** with our [online course](#)



Understanding the scoring benchmarks will help you target your preparation more effectively.

*Internal competitions generally follow a different format, outside the scope of this guide.

AFTER WEEK 1:

Numerical reasoning: you understand the main principles of numerical reasoning.

Written test: you understand what the written test is, what it assesses, and what you will need to work on to improve.

Week 2 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Numerical Reasoning



Translate verbal information into numbers, set up the right operations, & analyse questions to strengthen understanding



This week, **practise with 120 questions** with detailed correction available in [our book](#) to **develop automatic reflexes**



Reviewing detailed correction: Identify logical errors, pitfalls, and inefficient approaches.

Building the right reflexes: Practise targeted questions without time pressure.

Written test



Identify & analyse key features of EU documents



Select a summary, statement, press release, or speech: <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/home/en> to understand EU document writing

FREE RESSOURCES



Analyse purpose, targeted audience, style, tone & structure of each document.

EU Knowledge



Refresh your expert knowledge in the field



Revise the fundamentals with our online course, 'EU Knowledge in a Nutshell' to refresh your knowledge of the EU



Once again, take the time to fully absorb the content.

This course, developed by our partner, the Collegio Europeo di Parma, consists of nine videos, with a total duration of seven hours. You have several weeks to master your knowledge of the European Union.

Numerical reasoning: you apply numerical reasoning concepts to solve questions more accurately and efficiently.

AFTER WEEK 2: **Written test:** you begin to understand the differences between various EU documents.

EU Knowledge: you start revising key knowledge about the European Union.



Numerical Reasoning



Translate verbal information into numbers, set up the right operations, and analyse questions to strengthen understanding

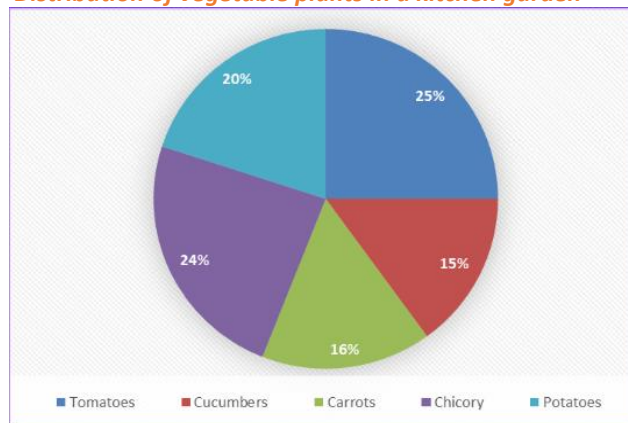


Continue the practice with the questions included in the book to respond more instinctively



Example question:

Distribution of vegetable plants in a kitchen garden



In this kitchen garden, there are 8 cherry tomato plants, and they account for 40% of all the tomato plants. A quarter of the potato plants are sweet potato plants. How many sweet potato plants are there in this kitchen garden?

- a)20
- b)16
- c)4
- d)5
- e)12



Take your time to analyse each question and understand the correction provided.

Detailed correction

- Read attentively the question, the title of the graph & the graph
- Analyse the question

1 Translate verbal information into numerical forms

8 cherry tomato plants = 40% total tomato plants

Nb of sweet potatoe plants = $\frac{1}{4}$ total potatoe plants

2 Convert numerical information into operations

40 \times $\frac{100}{40}$

8 \times ? \rightarrow Total tomatoe plants = $8 \times 100 / 40 = 20$

*Total tomatoe plants = 25% of total plants = 20

*Total potatoe plants = 20% of total plants

20 \times $\frac{25}{100}$

? \times 20% \rightarrow Total potatoe plants = $20 \times 20\% / 25\% = 16$

Nb of sweet potatoe plants = $\frac{1}{4} \times 16 = 4$

*info in the graph

Week 3



6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Written test



Craft EU documents effectively

THIS WEEK

Compare and analyse different EU documents on the same topic: Identify similarities and spot differences in target audience, tone, structure to master EU document conventions

[Click here to view examples of documents:](#)

Statement

Fact sheet

FREE RESSOURCES

Speech

Press release

Continue the practice by selecting another topic and comparing and analysing the related EU documents.

EU Knowledge



Strengthen your expert knowledge in the field



Continue to build the EU fundamentals with the online courses.



Expert EU knowledge requires continuous updating, as institutional priorities, legislation, and policy terminology evolve constantly. Regularly following EU news and institutional communications is therefore essential.

FREE RESSOURCES

FREE RESSOURCES

Numerical reasoning: you have developed strong numerical skills through untimed practice.

AFTER WEEK 3: **Written test:** you understand the structure of EU documents.

EU Knowledge: you deepen and consolidate your understanding of key European Union knowledge.

Week 4 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Numerical Reasoning



Assess yourself under test conditions



Train on our realistic simulation platform with [online tests](#) and 140 questions to practice with embedded calculator and notepad



no pen or paper



Notepad: this is your only way to scribble
Train with the **on-screen calculator** to be faster on test day!

Written test



Craft EU documents effectively



Study one EU communication and **analyse** how different EU documents are structured based on the same communication to spot the differences in EU documents

Click on each document to open it ↓

Communication from the EU commission

Fact sheet

Press release

Q&A

FREE RESSOURCES



Continue practising to sharpen your ability to recognise how EU documents vary in style, structure, and content.

EU Knowledge



Deepen your expert knowledge in the field



Take your learning further with the [online courses](#)



Take a [free quizz](#) to test your EU knowledge

FREE RESSOURCES

Numerical reasoning: you review your numerical reasoning performance and identify gaps in your logical thinking.

Written test: you learn how the EU evaluates written tests, you understand expectations, you can structure your answers and write with purpose.

EU Knowledge: you assess your EU knowledge and address any gaps.

Week 5 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Verbal Reasoning



Understand the reasoning patterns



Study the methodology with our online courses and/or books to build your foundation in verbal reasoning



This test carries significant weight in the final mark for the 2026 AD5 competition: it is therefore wise to focus on this test in order to achieve the highest possible score.

Written test



Practice drafting a summary or briefing note based on an EU communication



Choose one EU Communication that served as document for a previous competition: **EU communication** to practice in test conditions

- Study this document
- Imagine an assignment and draft written test



FREE RESSOURCES

40'

For example: *a summary or a briefing note for your Head of Unit on the 2030-2050 decarbonisation plan*

- Ask a constructive friend to give feedback on your draft

EU Knowledge



Assess yourself under test conditions

You should have finished going through the videos



Practise on our realistic simulation platform with online tests with 450 questions to assess yourself in test conditions



Turn mistakes into learning opportunities by revisiting the topic.

Verbal reasoning: you understand the reasoning patterns.

AFTER WEEK 5: **Written test:** you have completed your first written test under near-exam conditions.

EU Knowledge: you start reflecting on and assessing your EU knowledge to track your progress.

12 weeks to ace your competition

Week 6 6 Hours

Verbal Reasoning



Practise with no time constraints, to acquire automatic reflexes



Start **practicing without time pressure** with the questions included in the book to **build accurate reasoning automatisms**



Watch our YouTube video: we analyse a question



FREE RESSOURCES

A key skill is being able to determine whether given statements are logically deduced from a text.

All of this must be done under strict time constraints, which adds an additional layer of difficulty.

Ultimately, the brain needs time and repetition to adapt to the deductive reasoning process and develop the appropriate cognitive reflexes.

EU Knowledge



Finish answering the questions



Continue and finish testing your knowledge with [our online tests](#).



EPSCO will publish a large document approximately 2 months before the test period.

No document will be allowed on the day of the exam.

AFTER WEEK 6: **Verbal reasoning:** you have strengthened your ability to analyse options and identify the correct answer.
EU Knowledge: you now feel confident in your EU knowledge.

Week 7 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition



Verbal Reasoning



Develop automaticity through untimed practice



Continue answering the questions from our book, with no time constraints.



Verbal reasoning is a decisive component of the 2026 AD5 competition, yet many candidates underestimate how strategic this test really is. Performance is not just about comprehension; it is about applying the right method under time pressure.

AFTER WEEK 7: Verbal reasoning: you feel confident analysing options and selecting the correct answer.

Week 8



6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Verbal Reasoning



Practise under real EPSO-like conditions



Train on our realistic simulation platform with [online tests](#) including 120 questions to assess yourself in testing conditions



By now, you have built a solid foundation in verbal reasoning!

Why is it important to start practising under EPSO-like test conditions now?

- Timed practice trains you to make decisions **under pressure**
- **Highlighter** and **cross-out** tools help you focus on key information and eliminate wrong options efficiently
- **Practising on a simulation platform** replicates the real test environment, so nothing feels unfamiliar on exam day.

DIGITAL SKILLS TEST



Understand what is expected in the digital skills test



The 5 key Digital competencies that will be assessed are:

- ✓ Information and data literacy
- ✓ Communication and collaboration
- ✓ Digital content creation
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Problem-solving

FREE RESSOURCES



This week, read the [European Digital Competence Framework](#) & take notes.

Week 9 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

DIGITAL SKILLS TEST



Test your Digital skills knowledge



Test your knowledge on the [Europass website](#).

FREE
RESSOURCES



Notice which question types correspond to specific skills and identify your areas for improvement.

EU Knowledge



To keep your knowledge of current EU news up to date



Consult core EU policy media sources

EURACTIV

POLITICO

euobserver

FREE
RESSOURCES



Develop regular habits of reading and understanding EU news updates.

AFTER WEEK 9:

Digital skills test: you develop a better understanding of the skills required and the types of questions you'll face.

EU knowledge: you expand your knowledge of the EU by reading EU press releases.

Week 10



6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Abstract Reasoning



Approach this test with confidence by understanding the methodology



Study the methodology with our online courses and/or books, and answering the questions in our book **with no time constraints**.



The abstract reasoning test draws on skills that we do not usually use in everyday life: the ability to visualise geometric transformations (rotations, symmetries, etc.), the ability to spot similarities between complex shapes, and so on. Everyone is capable of developing such skills. It is not a question of intelligence, **but of learning**.

DIGITAL SKILLS TEST



Assess yourself under test conditions



Test your knowledge on our website with 40 questions to complete in 30 minutes.



Strengthen your skills by practising additional questions aligned with those tested.

AFTER WEEK 10: **Abstract reasoning:** you understand the methodology and start answering the questions with no time constraints. **Digital skills :** you identify your strengths and areas for improvement and fill any gaps in your knowledge.

Week 11 6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Abstract Reasoning



Develop automatism and improve your response speed



Keep answering the questions in our book but try to do it a bit quicker!



Abstract reasoning is all about strategy, training the eye, and practice.

The more you train your eye to spot patterns and apply strategy, the faster and more accurate your thinking becomes.

Watch our YouTube video: we analyse a question



Did you get the right answer?

Week 12



6 Hours

12 weeks to ace your competition

Abstract Reasoning



Assess yourself under test conditions



Train on our realistic simulation platform with [online tests](#) including 190 questions



If you've followed our study plan, you've **understood the methodology** and **trained your eye on patterns**. This week, it's time to apply everything in **full simulation practice**: the step that consolidates your abstract reasoning skills.

Why it matters:

- ✓ Practice under real exam conditions
- ✓ Improve time management with the timer

Conclusion

We hope that you have found this guide useful and that it will help you approach the competition with a **clear, structured and effective strategy**.

The level of competition for European competitions remains particularly high. The difference often lies in the consistency of your work, your mastery of the test formats, and your ability to develop quick and accurate reflexes.

Good preparation is not just about working hard, but above all about working in a focused and strategic manner.

We therefore encourage you to practise regularly, analyse your mistakes, remain disciplined in your organisation, and maintain your motivation over the long term.

Every practice session brings you a little closer to your goal. Finally, bear in mind that **joining the European institutions is a demanding undertaking**, but also an **exceptional opportunity to make a tangible contribution to the policies and values of the European Union**.

ORSEU Concours wish you every success in your preparation and hopes to support you all the way to your success.

ORSEU Concours

The partner in your success

