

Justification note

Subject: Justification note of the Governing Board Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking, Decision n. GB/14/2026

Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking considers that Commission Decision C(2025)7357 on geographical balance applicable to staff is not suitable to apply by analogy to it, mainly because of the different characteristics of the Joint Undertaking in comparison with a large organisation such as the Commission. Specifically, differences in the establishment plan, especially regarding the limited number of staff, make the obligations set out in the Decision disproportionate, such as prospective analyses, monitoring, and corrective measures. Moreover, unlike the Commission, the JUs rely on highly specialised and scarce profiles, for which recruitment flexibility is essential: even “soft” nationality targets could risk undermining the ability to fill critical positions. The decision also includes assumptions which do not apply to the Joint Undertaking, even though there may be a significant number of AD5-AD8 roles. Finally, some positions are open to non-EU nationals due to the nature of the programme, meaning that any rules on geographical balance should not be limited to EU nationalities. Without adequate corrective mechanisms, applying the decision would carry the risk of arbitrary outcomes, such as classifying certain nationalities as under-represented without any realistic means to address this. For these reasons, the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking proposes to request a derogation allowing it not to adopt Commission Decision C(2025)7357.

In line with the principles of equal opportunities and merit-based recruitment laid down in the Staff Regulations, the GH EDCTP3 JU also recognises the importance of promoting a meaningful geographical balance among its staff. To this end, the JU intends to periodically review available data on the geographical representation of its workforce and recruitment processes, including applications, recruitment outcomes and staff nationality, in order to identify potential imbalances and, where appropriate, consider proportionate measures such as targeted outreach and communication activities to encourage applications from underrepresented participating countries, while fully respecting the principles of merit, transparency and equal treatment, and taking into account the guidance emerging from the work of the Agencies Standing Working Party.