



**COUNCIL OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

DECISION No 118/07

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Council's Rules of Procedure, and in particular Article 23 thereof,

Whereas the following rules relating to traineeships at the General Secretariat of the Council should be laid down,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

This Decision shall govern traineeships organised by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, subject to the availability of funds and office space.

This programme is mainly aimed at young university graduates.

Article 2

The purpose of traineeships with the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union shall be:

- to give trainees a general idea of the objectives and problems of European integration;
- to provide them with practical knowledge of the working of the departments of the General Secretariat of the Council;
- to offer them personal experience thanks to the contacts made in the course of their everyday work;
- to enable them to further and put into practice the knowledge they have acquired during their studies or professional careers.

Article 3

Admission to a traineeship shall not confer on trainees the status of officials or that of other servants of the European Communities. It shall in no way entitle them or give them priority to be appointed subsequently by the General Secretariat of the Council.

Article 4

Each year, the relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council shall submit requests for the recruitment of trainees to the Human Resources Director. On the basis of those requests and in the light of the funds available, the Human Resources Director shall determine the number of training places to be allocated to each department and the length of the training periods.

Article 5

The General Secretariat of the Council offers three types of traineeship:

- paid traineeships;
- traineeships for trainees required to undergo a training period as a compulsory part of their studies;
- traineeships reserved for national officials.

Provisions relating to paid traineeships are set out in Article 2 to Article 15 of this Decision.

Provisions relating to traineeships undertaken as a compulsory part of studies can be found in Article 16 of this Decision, and those relating to national officials in Article 17 of this Decision.

CHAPTER I: PROVISIONS REGARDING PAID TRAINEESHIPS

A. Conditions of admission and selection

Article 6

1. The following may apply for a traineeship:

- (a) any national of one of the Member States of the European Union or of a State that is a candidate for accession ¹ who
- (b) by the deadline for the lodging of applications has completed at least the first cycle of a course of university studies evidenced by a degree certificate (see table in Annex I for minimum national qualifications) or equivalent.

¹ These applicants will not be eligible until accession negotiations have been concluded.

2. National officials are not eligible for this programme ¹.
3. An applicant must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union and satisfactory knowledge of another of these languages, to the extent necessary to carry out the duties to be performed. In practice, given the areas concerned, a knowledge of at least French or English is necessary.
4. In order that as many European citizens as possible may familiarise themselves with the European institutions, no application shall be accepted from any person who has already received more than eight weeks' in-service training in any department of a European institution or body or an agency or an office of the European Communities ², whether paid or otherwise. The same shall apply to any application from a person who is or has been an adviser's assistant or assistant to a Member of the European Parliament, or a consultant, a researcher, a temporary staff member, a seconded national expert, a contract, auxiliary or interim staff member of any institution, agency or representative office of the European Communities.
5. A traineeship application file shall include:
 - the duly completed application form;
 - a curriculum vitæ;
 - a letter stating the reasons for the application;
 - a legible copy of an internationally recognised passport, or identity card for Schengen area countries, giving the surname, forenames, date and place of birth and the nationality of the applicant ³;
 - a copy of the diplomas or pass certificates held;
 - copies of attestations of professional experience; proof or a substantiated declaration of knowledge of the languages stated on the application form;
 - for applicants for a traineeship in the Private Office, the Policy Unit, certain sectors of Directorate-General E (External and Politico-Military Affairs) and of Directorate-General H (Justice and Home Affairs), proof that they have security clearance "SECRET UE" level, along with a knowledge of the area concerned.

¹ For "national official" traineeships, see Article 17.

² Listed in Annex II.

³ The spelling of the surname, forename and nationality must be the same as on the application form.

Article 7

1. Applicants shall be selected on the basis of their qualifications. The General Secretariat shall make every effort to select them from as wide a geographical area as possible, while taking care to ensure the best possible balance between women and men.

Preference shall be given to applicants who:

- have completed or started an academic study of European integration in the framework of a university dissertation or research work or a scientific publication;
- hold or have held a post in the private or public sector dealing with the activities of the European Union.

2. On starting a traineeship, each successful applicant must produce the following documents:

- an extract from his police record or a certificate of good conduct issued in accordance with the national law of the country of which he is a national;
- the originals of diplomas or pass certificates (which will be returned);
- a medical certificate to the effect that he is fit to work;
- a declaration indicating whether he is in receipt of a maintenance grant, an allowance from any other source or remuneration from his employer and, if so, the amount thereof.

3. In no case may a trainee be appointed to a department of the GSC if a conflict of interest is liable to arise.

4. In exceptional cases, an applicant may be chosen to serve a traineeship in the Private Office or the Policy Unit, or certain sectors of Directorate-General E (External Relations and Politico-Military Affairs) or Directorate-General H (Justice and Home Affairs). No traineeship may be served in any of these units unless the applicant has received security clearance at "SECRET UE" level and proved that he has a knowledge of the area concerned.

Applicants selected to serve a traineeship in a Council Liaison Office are not required to possess security clearance. They shall have no access of any kind to the classified information held by the Liaison Office nor to places where such information is processed and archived.

5. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that all residence formalities required by the national authorities of the country where the traineeship takes place are completed and that they have a valid visa, if required.

6. At the start of the traineeship, the trainee must inform the Traineeships Office of his address in the country where the traineeship takes place.

B. Organisation of traineeships

Article 8

1. A trainee shall be attached to one or more departments of the General Secretariat of the Council.
2. A trainee shall participate in the work of the department to which he is attached at a level corresponding to his educational and working background. His work shall be guided and monitored by a training adviser who shall be responsible for his induction and who shall advise him in the performance of the tasks entrusted to him. The adviser shall inform the Traineeships Office without delay of any significant incident which occurs during the traineeship (in particular unsatisfactory performance, illnesses, accidents, inappropriate behaviour or an interruption of the traineeship) which he has noted or been informed of by the trainee.
3. The length of each training period shall be fixed at five months.

In exceptional cases, the Human Resources Director may fix a shorter training period, of a minimum of three months.

This period may be extended, by way of an exception, but the total duration of the traineeship may not exceed six months. Any extension beyond the fifth month must be unpaid.

The length of a training period served in a Council Liaison Office shall be determined by the Human Resources Director on the basis of a proposal by the head of the Liaison Office. The training period shall not exceed six months.

Article 9

1. Subject to prior authorisation by the Human Resources Director, the Traineeships Office may organise study visits or trips of interest for the purposes of in-service training for the benefit of trainees, subject to the availability of funds.
2. In exceptional cases only, the Director-General of the service to which the trainee is attached may authorise the trainee to go on a mission, provided it is a technical mission with no representative function.
Such authorisation shall entitle a trainee to the reimbursement of mission expenses in accordance with the general rules governing reimbursement laid down in the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities.
These costs shall be borne by the Directorate-General requesting the mission. The Traineeships Office must always receive a copy of the mission order.

C. Trainees' rights and obligations

Article 10

1. General obligations

- (a) A trainee shall be required to work thirty seven and a half hours per week. The hours shall normally be 09.00 to 17.30.
- (b) A trainee shall comply with instructions given by the Head of the Unit to which he is attached or by his training adviser, and with directives from the Traineeships Office.
- (c) A trainee must also observe the traineeship programme rules and the GSC's in-house working rules, especially those on security and confidentiality.
- (d) A trainee shall be authorised to attend meetings on subjects of interest for his work, unless they are restricted or confidential, to receive documentation and to take part in the work of the department to which he is attached at a level commensurate with his educational and professional background. Subject to the agreement of his training adviser, and provided that it does not interfere with the duties he has been allotted, he shall be authorised to attend meetings in an area other than that in which he is working or in another institution (provided that that institution allows him access), unless those meetings are restricted or confidential.

2. Confidentiality

A trainee shall exercise the utmost discretion with regard to any facts or information that come to his knowledge in the course of his training, including in the course of any contacts he may have with representatives of the media. He shall consult the Head of the Unit to which he is attached on any action he proposes to take on his own initiative relating to the Communities' activities.

He shall not, in any manner whatsoever, disclose any document or information that has not already been made public. He shall continue to be bound by that obligation after the end of his training.

A trainee shall not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any text relating to the Communities' activities without first informing the Appointing Authority via the Head of the Unit to which he is attached. If the Appointing Authority does not notify the training adviser of any negative decision on the matter within 30 working days of receipt of the information, publication shall be authorised.

All rights relating to work done during in-service training for the General Secretariat of the Council shall be devolved upon the latter.

The provisions of Council Decision 2001/264/EC of 19 March 2001 *adopting the Council's security regulations* shall apply to trainees.

The General Secretariat of the Council reserves the right to terminate the traineeship of anyone who does not abide by these obligations.

3. Unsatisfactory performance

Following a substantiated request from the Head of the Unit to which the trainee is attached and the trainee adviser, the General Secretariat of the Council reserves the right to terminate the traineeship without notice if the trainee's professional performance or his knowledge of the working language is inadequate for him to perform his duties properly.

4. Erroneous statements

The General Secretariat of the Council reserves the right to terminate a traineeship without notice if, at any time, it becomes apparent that a trainee has made erroneous statements or submitted false declarations or false documents at the time of application or during the traineeship period.

5. Traineeship reports and certificates

At the end of the training period, an activity report shall be drawn up by the trainee and a traineeship evaluation report by the trainee adviser. Both reports shall be signed by the trainee and the trainee adviser, who shall send them to the Traineeships Office. After the end of the training period the trainee shall receive copies of both reports and a certificate specifying the length of the training period and the department to which he was attached.

6. Leave

- (a) Trainees shall be entitled to the same public holidays and days when the offices are closed as other officials of the General Secretariat of the Council.
- (b) A trainee shall be entitled to two days leave per month. This entitlement shall be acquired pro rata to the months worked, counting from the first day of the month. No payments shall be made for leave not taken. Leave taken to take part in competitions, examinations or university work, etc. must be deducted from this entitlement.

However, the Human Resources Director may grant special leave for exceptional duly substantiated reasons.

- (c) Applications for leave must take account of the needs of the department and abide by the rules set out above. They must first be approved by the training adviser and subsequently endorsed by the Head of the Unit to which he is attached or his representative.

7. Interruption of the traineeship

In exceptional cases, following a substantiated request by the trainee, an interruption of the traineeship may be granted by the Human Resources Director.

8. Absence

(a) Sick leave

In the event of illness a trainee shall immediately notify his trainee adviser, who shall notify the Head of the Unit to which the trainee is attached; if absent for more than three days he shall send a medical certificate indicating the probable length of his absence to the Traineeships Office, which shall notify the department to which he is attached. A trainee who is absent because of illness may be subject to medical checks.

(b) Absence without leave

Where a trainee is absent without giving any reasons or notifying his adviser, the latter shall inform the Traineeships Office, either directly or via the Head of the Unit to which the trainee is attached or his representative. The Human Resources Director shall then write to the trainee at the address given when he took up his duties, instructing him to inform the Head of the Unit to which he is attached of the reasons for his absence within a week of the letter being sent. Any day of absence for which no reasons are given shall be automatically deducted from the trainee's leave allowance. The Human Resources Director may decide, after considering the reasons given, or if no reasons have been given by the deadline, to terminate the traineeship immediately without further notice. The General Secretariat of the Council must be reimbursed for any grant that has been overpaid.

Article 11

1. A paid trainee shall be awarded a maintenance grant. The amount of the grant shall be decided every year by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Council, in the light of budget availability.
2. A supplementary grant amounting to up to half of the maintenance grant may be granted to a disabled trainee after consideration of his situation.

3. If a trainee in receipt of a maintenance grant continues, during his in-service training, to receive income from a source external to the General Secretariat of the Council (a maintenance grant, salary or other form of income), he shall have no claim to any financial contribution from the General Secretariat of the Council save insofar as that external remuneration is less than the in-service training maintenance grant. In that event, he shall receive the difference up to the amount of that maintenance grant.

Article 12

1. A trainee who is recruited elsewhere than in Brussels shall be entitled to reimbursement of the travel expenses actually incurred at the beginning and the end of his traineeship period, provided that his place of recruitment is within the geographical limits of the European Union or of a State that is a candidate for accession. Such expenses shall be calculated on the basis of the most economical route by rail (second class), including couchette or sleeper (tourist class) where appropriate, or by air (economy class) if the latter should be cheaper. These expenses shall be reimbursed on the basis of the list of fares drawn up for GSC officials.

For trainees recruited outside the EU or a candidate State, reimbursement of travel expenses shall be calculated in the light of the international airport or the town within the borders of the EU which is closest geographically to the place of recruitment.

For trainees recruited inside the EU or a candidate State, but to serve a traineeship outside the EU, reimbursement of travel expenses shall be calculated as far as the international airport or the town within the borders of the EU which is closest geographically to the place where the traineeship is to take place.

2. A trainee must complete at least half of his traineeship in order to qualify for reimbursement of travel costs. A trainee whose place of recruitment is within 50 km of his place of assignment shall not be entitled to the reimbursement of travel costs. No applications for change of address will be accepted once the decision granting the traineeship has been taken.

Article 13

1. Maintenance grants shall not be subject to the tax system specific to officials and other servants of the European Communities. It shall therefore be for the trainee to discharge his tax obligations himself.
2. The Traineeships Office shall, on request, issue a certificate for tax purposes at the end of the traineeship. This attestation will state the amount of the grant received and confirm that no deductions have been made for tax or social security.

Article 14

1. Health insurance shall be compulsory. Proof of cover must be submitted during the first week of the traineeship at the latest. If a trainee is not covered by a health-insurance scheme, he may, after submitting proof that he cannot be covered by his national insurance scheme, be insured by the General Secretariat of the Council; in that event the trainee's contribution shall be one-third of the insurance premium.

If a trainee serving a traineeship in a Council Liaison Office is not covered by a health-insurance scheme, he may, after submitting proof that he cannot be covered by his national insurance scheme, be insured by the General Secretariat of the Council; in that event the trainee's contribution shall be one-third of the insurance premium. The ceiling on reimbursements payable under such insurance shall be fixed at the same sums and the same percentages as for traineeships carried out in Brussels.

2. Under the conditions laid down in the insurance policy taken out by the General Secretariat of the Council with an insurance company a trainee shall be insured against accident. The General Secretariat of the Council shall bear all of the relevant insurance premium.

Article 15

1. In-service training may be terminated, subject to at least 3 weeks' notice, on a request from the trainee stating the reasons, addressed to the Human Resources Director. In that event, the payment of any maintenance grant shall be proportional to the number of days worked. If the grant has already been paid, the trainee shall be required to reimburse any part of the grant which he may have received for the period not worked.
2. Without prejudice to Article 10(8)(b), if a trainee's conduct is unsatisfactory, the Human Resources Director may at any time, after having heard the trainee, the Head of the Unit to which he is attached, and his training adviser, decide to terminate the traineeship without notice. In that event, the trainee shall be required to reimburse any part of the grant which he may have received for the period not worked.

CHAPTER II: PROVISIONS REGARDING TRAINEESHIPS UNDERTAKEN AS A COMPULSORY PART OF STUDIES

Article 16

1. Rules applicable

Traineeships shall be offered to students who are required to complete a training period as part of their university course. They shall be unpaid. This Article applies only to traineeships undertaken as a compulsory part of studies. Articles 7, 8(1), 8(2), 9, 10 (except 10(6)) and 12 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

2. Admission criteria

The following may apply for a traineeship:

- (a) any national of one of the Member States of the European Union or of a State that is a candidate for accession ¹
- (b) who is a third, fourth or fifth-year student (or equivalent) of a higher-education establishment or university which requires such a period of training to be undertaken as part of the course of study or for access to a profession
or
who is required to do research for a thesis or doctorate.

An applicant must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union and satisfactory knowledge of another of these languages, to the extent necessary to carry out the duties to be performed. In practice, given the areas concerned, a knowledge of at least French or English is necessary.

In order that as many European citizens as possible may familiarise themselves with the European institutions, no application shall be accepted from any person who has already received more than eight weeks' in-service training in any department of a European institution or body or an agency or office of the European Communities ², whether paid or otherwise. The same shall apply to any application from a person who is or has been an adviser's assistant or assistant to a Member of the European Parliament, or a consultant, a researcher, a temporary staff member, a seconded national expert, a contract, auxiliary or interim staff member of any institution, agency or representative office of the European Communities.

¹ These applicants will not be eligible until accession negotiations have been concluded.

² Listed in Annex II.

3. Duration and start of traineeships

A traineeship contract shall be concluded with the trainee for a period of 1 to 5 months, depending on the requirements of the educational establishment.

This period may be extended, by way of exception, but the total duration of the traineeship may not exceed 6 months.

The date on which the traineeship is to start shall be decided with the trainee.

4. Leave

(a) Trainees shall be entitled to the same public holidays and days when the offices are closed as other officials of the General Secretariat of the Council.

(b) A trainee shall be entitled to two days of leave per month, unless stated otherwise in the traineeship agreement signed with the student's educational establishment. This leave shall be acquired, pro rata to the months worked, counting from the first day of the month.

However, the Human Resources Director may grant special leave for exceptional duly substantiated reasons.

(c) Applications for leave must take account of the needs of the department and meet the rules set out above. They must first be approved by the training adviser and subsequently endorsed by the Head of Unit or his representative.

5. Submission of applications

A traineeship application file shall include:

- the duly completed application form;
- a curriculum vitæ;
- a letter stating the reasons for the application;
- a legible copy of an internationally recognised passport, or identity card for Schengen area countries, giving the surname, forenames, date and place of birth and the nationality of the applicant ¹;

¹ The spelling of the surname, forename and the nationality must be the same as on the application form.

- an official certificate from the education establishment certifying:
 - either that the applicant is required to complete a training course as part of his course of study or for access to a profession
 - or that he is required to do research for a thesis or a doctorate;
- a copy of the diplomas or official certificates held;
- copies of attestations of professional experience, where relevant;
- proof or a substantiated declaration of knowledge of the languages stated on the application form.

6. Insurance

- (a) Health insurance shall be compulsory. Proof of cover must be submitted during the first week of the traineeship. If a trainee is not covered by a health-insurance scheme, he may, after submitting proof that he cannot be covered by his national insurance scheme, be insured by the General Secretariat of the Council; in that event, all of the insurance premium shall be borne by the General Secretariat of the Council.
- (b) Under the conditions laid down in the insurance policy taken out by the General Secretariat of the Council with an insurance company a trainee shall be insured against accident. The General Secretariat of the Council shall bear all of the relevant insurance premium.

CHAPTER III: PROVISIONS REGARDING TRAINEESHIPS FOR NATIONAL OFFICIALS

Article 17

1. Rules applicable

This programme is intended for officials from ministries, government or regional agencies and the diplomatic corps of the Member States of the European Union or of a State that is a candidate for accession.

"National officials", for the purposes of this Decision, refers to officials employed by national administrations and paid by them.

This Article applies to traineeships offered to national officials only. Articles 7(3), 8(1), 8(2), 9 and 10 (except 10(6)) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

2. Admission criteria

(1) The following may apply for a traineeship:

- (a) national officials who are nationals of one of the Member States of the European Union or of a State that is a candidate for accession and
- (b) have a university degree or at least three years' professional experience in duties corresponding to a university education
- (c) with a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union and satisfactory knowledge of another of these languages, to the extent necessary to carry out the duties to be performed. In practice, given the areas concerned, a knowledge of at least French or English is necessary.

3. Submission of applications

Applications must be sent to the Human Resources Director, together with an introductory letter from the applicant's home administration, via the permanent representation. The Traineeships Office will consider the possibility of accepting the applicant after consulting the Directorates-General.

An application file for any traineeship open to "national officials" shall include:

- the duly completed application form;
- a curriculum vitæ;
- a letter stating the reasons for the application.

4. Duration and start of traineeships

A traineeship contract shall be concluded with the trainee's home administration for a maximum period of 6 months.

The date on which the traineeship is to start shall be decided with the home administration.

5. A trainee who is a national of a State which is a candidate for accession to the European Union may not under any circumstances have access to meetings, documents or other proceedings relating to his country's accession without the express and/or specific authorisation of the Director-General under whom he is receiving training.

6. Leave

- (a) Trainees shall be entitled to the same public holidays and days when the offices are closed as other officials of the General Secretariat of the Council.
- (b) A trainee shall be entitled to two days of leave per month.

However, the Human Resources Director may grant special leave for exceptional duly substantiated reasons.

- (c) Applications for leave must take account of the needs of the department and meet the rules set out above. They must first be approved by the training adviser and subsequently endorsed by the Head of Unit or his representative.

7. Insurance

- (a) Health insurance shall be compulsory. Proof of cover must be submitted during the first week of the traineeship. The trainee's home administration must certify to the General Secretariat that the trainee will still be covered by the social security legislation applicable to the civil service during the period of the traineeship and that the employer will be liable for expenditure arising abroad.

- (b) Under the conditions laid down in the insurance policy taken out by the General Secretariat of the Council with an insurance company a trainee shall be insured against accident. The General Secretariat of the Council shall bear all of the relevant insurance premium.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 18

The Human Resources Director or, in the event of his absence or indisposition, his deputy, shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decision.

Article 19

Decision No 09/06 of 13 January 2006 is hereby repealed. It shall be replaced by this Decision.

Article 20

These provisions shall apply as from 1 February 2008.

Done at Brussels, 20 July 2007

P. de BOISSIEU

Annex I

Examples of diplomas attesting to an education level corresponding to that required for admission to traineeships ¹

Country	University-level education – at least 3 years
Bългария	Diplom za Vishe Obrazovanie (Диплома за Висше Образование) Bakalavur (Бакалавър) Magister (Магистър)
Belgium FR	Licence ou équivalent, Bachelor
Belgium NL	Licentiaat, Meester, industrieel ingenieur, Gegradueerde Bachelor (According to the Higher Education Act of 4 April 2003)
Ceská Republika	Diplom o ukončení Bakalářského studia
Danmark	Bachelorgrad
Deutschland	Fachhochschulabschluss (6-7 Semester)
Eesti	Bakalaureusekraad (<120 ainepunkti)
España	Diplomado/Ingeniero Técnico
France	Licence
Greece	ΠΤΥΧΙΟ ΑΕΙ/ΠΤΥΧΙΟ ΤΕΙ
Ireland/Eire	Bachelor's degree
Italia	Laurea –L (breve)
Κύπρος/Kibris	Πανεπιστημιακό Πτυχίο
Latvija	Bakalaura diploms (<120 kredīti)
Lietuva	Bakalauras (<120 kreditas)
Luxembourg	Bachelor, Diplôme d'Ingénieur industriel
Magyarország	Főiskolai Oklevél
Malta	Bachelor's degree
Nederland	Bachelor
Österreich	Fachhochschuldiplom (6-7 Semester), Bakkalaureus(rea)
Polska	Licencjat – Inżynier
Portugal	Bacharelato
România	Diplomă de Licență
Slovenija	Univerzitetna diploma
Slovenská Republika	Diplom o ukončení Bakalářského štúdia
Suomi/Finland	Kandidaattin tutkinto/Kandidat examen Ammattikorkeakoulututkinto/Yrkeshögskoleexamen (min. 120 opintoviikkoa/studieveckor)

¹ Situation as at 1 July 2007.

Sverige	Kandidatexamen (Akademisk examen omfattande minst 120 poäng, varav 60 poäng av fördjupade studier i ett ämne)
United Kingdom	Bachelor's degree/Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
Other countries	University level diploma requiring at least 3 years study
Autres pays	Diplôme de niveau universitaire sanctionnant un cursus de 3 ans minimum

Annex II

European institutions and bodies

EU institutions:

- European Parliament
- Council of the European Union
- European Commission (including delegations and representation offices and executive agencies)
- Court of Justice of the European Communities
- European Court of Auditors

Financial bodies:

- European Central Bank
- European Investment Bank
- European Investment Fund

Advisory bodies:

- European Economic and Social Committee
- Committee of the Regions

Interinstitutional bodies:

- Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
- European Communities Personnel Selection Office
- European Administrative School

Other specialised bodies:

- European Ombudsman
- European Data Protection Supervisor