Tasks during the traineeship - domains explained by trainees

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What does a traineeship involve?

Depending on the needs of the service, your daily work would generally be equivalent to that of junior administrator officials at the beginning of their career e.g.:

- preparing meetings and drafting minutes
- attending meetings of COREPER and Council preparatory bodies
- researching on a particular project
- translating documents
- compiling documentation, writing reports

You will be placed under the responsibility of a traineeship adviser who will guide and supervise your work. You will also be invited to take part in a training programme which includes different conferences and visits to other EU institutions in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg.

Profiles

Given that English and French are used extensively for internal communication within the GSC, a good knowledge of English or French and the ability to communicate in one of these languages is required.

The majority of applications currently come from candidates with qualifications in law, political science, international relations, EU studies and economics.

The GSC is also looking for trainees with qualifications in other fields, such as: translation, human resources, computer sciences, agricultural technology, communication, education studies, biochemical engineering, health and food safety, energy management, environment, aerospace engineering, graphic design, multimedia, etc.

Contact

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Domain "Council Library"

"Our role within this department is varied. We contribute to the library's publications (e.g. Think Tank Review and the New Books List) and participate in editorial meetings. We frequently work with social media (especially Twitter), attend and deliver presentations to delegates, newcomers and fellow trainees. The library and research environment is an interesting place to work in, as our duties frequently change from researching and writing political briefs to collaborating on projects with colleagues."

Aoife, trainee in the Council Library Unit (2017)

More information:

Domain "Counter Terrorism"

"The unit is covering a broad range of issues related to the fight against terrorism, such as prevention of radicalization, cooperation with internet companies, cyber security and new technologies, border security, CT partnerships with priority countries in North Africa and the Middle East, Turkey and the Western Balkans, legal and judicial issues, promoting information collection, sharing and analysis. The team works closely with the colleagues in the Council Secretariat, the EEAS, the Commission, JHA agencies, Member States and also have frequent contacts with the EP, third countries, researchers, think tanks and the private sector. The intern will attend meetings and report, and may be asked to produce policy papers and support the work of the unit and his advisers in various ways. A strong academic background in CT, excellent oral and drafting skills in English and prior relevant work experience (such as internships) are an asset."

Côme, trainee in the Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit (2018)

"My tasks have involved conducting research and writing reports and policy proposals for my unit. The topics so far include the Gulf Crisis and terrorism in the Caribbean, Philippines and Venezuela. I have also had the opportunity to attend internal meetings, and represent the department at external meetings in the European Parliament and EEAS. The team is currently involving me in organising a major upcoming conference with NGOs and the Iraqi delegation."

Sana, trainee in the Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit (2017)

More information:

Domain "Data Protection Officer"

"Conduct research and legal analysis on data protection and privacy related issues, get familiarised with the new data protection legal framework and assist the Data Protection Officer and the other members of the unit in dealing with practical questions of data controllers, getting involved in the awareness raising campaign in the GSC over the new rules through the preparation of presentations, draft guidelines on the new rules, review EDPS guidelines and news on data protection and privacy related issues, attend meetings of the Working Group on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX) and report about the meetings to the Data Protection Unit."

Alexandra, trainee in the Data Protection Unit (2018)
More information:

Domain "Development and ACP; Africa; Asia-Oceania; United Nations"

"As a trainee in the Directorate for Foreign Affairs, Development Unit, I am mainly covering Africa and UN related issues. My main task is to attend and help prepare the Africa Working Party, which deals with a wide range of topics, including political and economic developments within each country, development issues, human rights, election observation, rule of law, and security. I conduct research on recent developments in the African countries, in particular with regards to migration and human rights and prepare briefings and draft reports of the outcomes of the Working Party. Apart from the Africa geographical area, I am also involved in UN related topics, as well as the High Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration, currently dealing with the Global Compact for Migration and its on-going negotiations in New York. The area and issues that I cover are very broad, providing a good opportunity for me to acquire skills in many different areas and to learn to keep track of a range of issues simultaneously."

Jasmin, trainee in the Development Unit (2018)

More information:

Domain "Digital communications: web and social media"

"In the web communication team you will help to develop both the web page of the Council of the EU as well as nourish the social media with different types of content. It is a really varied domain given that you will be challenged to think both analytically in order to understand the behaviour of the different social media as well as creatively, given that you will help develop many campaigns of different nature (Infographic, videos, events etc). In this position you will learn to create a whole communication campaign: starting with the brainstorming session, you will also participate in the development of it, publication and final ending. This is a really dynamic position that never gets boring or repetitive and that will give you a good insight of how a big institution that communicates in 24 languages works daily."

Guadalupe, trainee in the Digital Communication Unit (2018)

Domain "Education, Culture, Youth, Sports and Audiovisual"

"The unit works with a range of topics which are quite different. This can be very stimulating on one hand, but also very challenging if one has no prior knowledge of the areas. However, normally the trainee will focus on one or two areas depending on interest and experience rather than dealing with all of them. The tasks usually include taking notes at meetings, writing reports, briefing members of the staff on certain topics, etc. The trainee will have quite a lot of flexibility in terms of structuring his/her schedule and tasks."

Sebastian, trainee in the Education, Culture, Youth, Sports and Audiovisual Unit (2018)
Domain "Employment and social policy, gender and non-discrimination"

"Topics are weighted more to employment and labour policy rather than social issues. Tasks consist mainly of attending meetings (working parties, drafting sessions, Coreper, trilogues, committee hearings in the Parliament) and writing summaries of those meetings to be distributed to the rest of the Unit. We also have tasks of a more administrative nature, like compiling Member States' feedback of Impact Assessments or arranging amendments by MEPs into tables to help prepare the Presidency for negotiations with the Parliament. I think the tasks give a trainee a much firmer understanding of both EU policy (you cannot do any of the tasks without first familiarising yourself with the topic in question) and of the EU legislative procedure."

Rose, trainee in the Employment and Social Policy Unit (2018)

"As a trainee, my work is divided between employment policies and social policies. I'm currently working on the social legislative proposals, mainly the ones related to Work-life Balance, European pillar of social rights, Regulation of social funds agencies and Anti-Discrimination files. I regularly participate in different meetings (Social Questions Working Parties, meetings between the Council, the Commission and the Parliament, COREPER, Council meetings etc.), I take notes and produce internal reports and assist Council administrators. The trainees can also follow relevant work Committees in the EP. I also do research, that can later be used, for example, to prepare negotiations with the EP and I monitor the social media (mainly Twitter) of EU institutions, NGOs, think tanks and other relevant stakeholders. More than this, I regularly attend conferences/round tables/discussions about relevant topics in the field of employment, gender equality, accessibility and report to the Council. Other tasks involve following Think Tank publications or helping the press office to monitor statements of the ministers."

Sandra, trainee in the Employment and Social Policy Unit (2017)

Domain "Environment and Climate Change"

"As a trainee you will work on international climate issues such as various COP conferences, but also on more EU internal environmental policy (e.g. Circular Economy, Car Emission Standards) and climate policy (EU ETS, LULUCF). Be prepared to deal with highly political, but also very technical issues. You will follow working groups, COREPER, Council meetings and trilogues and assist administrators in their daily tasks. You will also write reports on external conferences taking place in Brussels."

Anna, trainee in the Environment, including International Affairs Unit (2017)

Domain "Fisheries"

"The trainee is expected to send each day a press review related to fisheries. We also have to attend the weekly working parties, take notes and help with the Outcome of Proceedings (a document sent out to all stakeholders, summarising the parties' positions). The trainee monitors the European Parliament's
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PECH committee activity and informs colleagues on the outcome of their sessions. In addition, we also help and support the team with various punctual tasks."

Rebecca, trainee in the Fisheries Unit (2017)

More information:

Domain "Fundamental rights"

"If you chose this domain, you will work in collaboration with the FREMP working party dedicated to issues related to fundamental rights, including rule of law or gender equality issues for instance. Your work will be varied, depending on the most pressing issues, but you will have to attend the working parties, draft reports, do research to prepare backgrounds and briefings. It is a very interesting internship if you’re passionate in the defence of fundamental rights and if you want to see how the Council acts concretely in this domain."

Manon, trainee in Justice Unit (2018)

More information:

Domain "Graphics and Publications"

"This traineeship provides a thorough insight into the production process of publications of most various kind: from leaflets and brochures to Presidency’s report and elegant hard-cover albums about Europe. It gives an opportunity to discover, step by step, how the Council publications are created and also to assist this process on its different stages. Most often it involves working with and on a text: reviewing and proof-reading of manuscripts, amending and updating them, data research and search for photos. Sometimes it is also possible to follow or even participate in the process of conceptualisation of new publications or of text updates."

Joanna, trainee in the Graphics and Publications Unit (2017)

More information:

Domain "Home Affairs"

"I am a trainee in Home Affairs, dealing with migration and asylum issues. During the traineeship I have attended Council preparatory bodies dealing with Immigration, Frontiers, Asylum and Migration covering both political issues like the negotiation of the UN global compact on migration and technical matters dealing with asylum legislation. Often, I write reports on these meetings as well as for conferences and events relevant for the team. Further, my tasks have included summarizing legislation and Member State comments or analysing new drafts. Part of my daily work is a regular migration update monitoring the arrivals into the EU, up-to-date statistics and news. Generally, I often deal with numbers and excel tables, research migration and asylum related issues and update briefings in coordination with the team."

Lea, trainee in the Home Affairs Unit (2018)
"I am working in the unit dealing with migration and asylum topics. Every day I prepare the Daily Migration report which gives an overview on migration via the main routes. It includes figures of the arrivals and the most important headlines concerning developments/decisions/comments in the field of migration, resettlement, returns, relocation, visa-policy etc. and is circulated by email. I also work with migration figures from the Commission, Eurostat and Frontex and prepare tables, statistics and graphs that depict the situation and compare them with previous years. I write comments in order to summarize the conclusions that can be drawn from the statistics. Moreover, I assist my unit in preparing the presidency for meetings. After the meetings, we compile the comments from Member States and include them in the proposal that is being discussed."

Katja, trainee in the Home Affairs Unit (2017)

"In the Home Affairs unit we are working on Visas, Schengen and Borders and we are dealing with several proposal regarding SIS II and Visa Waiver Agreements, Visa Facilitation Agreements and the recast of Visa Code among other proposals like e-visa. We attend Working Parties, meetings with the presidency and sometimes JHA council and trilogues and we report on the outcomes of those meetings or working documents. We also study the proposals so we get to know the state of play."

Virginia, trainee in the Home Affairs Unit (2017)

More information:

Domain "Human resources"

"My tasks during the traineeship: shadowing HR representatives in all phases of the selection process (pre-selection meeting, draft of interview questions, observer during the interviews, post-assessment etc.), developing a survey to assess staff perceptions over the rotation exercise of General Administrators, assistance in daily operational HR activities (e.g. staff notes, preparing presentations on Prezi, recordkeeping of weekly unit meetings), review of the Council's social media tools related to management recruitments and employer branding, familiarization with the Council's HR practices (e.g. secondments and mobility, evaluation and promotion system etc)."

Dimitrios, trainee in the Staffing and Mobility Unit (2018)

Domain "Human Resources - Equal Opportunities"

"The traineeship position in the Equal Opportunities unit is focused on four areas of interest: gender equality, persons with disabilities, work-life balance, and discrimination. The position gives a double opportunity. On the one hand, it offers the chance to work in the field of Equal Opportunities by assisting with awareness-raising activities, monitoring and reporting on relevant developments at EU level, undertaking research on specific topics, and preparing policy notes. On the other hand, this traineeship position offers as well the opportunity to gain experience in the Human Resources area, by analysing statistical data, organizing internal events, and drafting articles for intranet."

Laura, trainee in the Equal Opportunities Unit (2018)

"As a trainee in the Equal Opportunities office you will be involved in projects on four broad topics: gender equality, work-life balance, non-discrimination and persons with disabilities. Specifically, you will contribute towards making the Council a more diverse workplace that grants equal opportunities to individuals of different backgrounds and abilities. Trainees are also organising events and writing articles on the above-mentioned topics for the internal webpage."

Antonia and François, trainees in the Equal Opportunities Unit (2017)
Domain "Human Resources - Staff and organisational development"

"For this role, the main tasks involve writing or editing articles written by colleagues and uploading them onto the intranet, Domus, or having them featured in the internal newspaper, Consilium Journal. Another task is interviewing colleagues from all over the GSC and writing articles about their work."

*Chloe, trainee in the Organisational Development Unit (2018)*

"The tasks in the Staff Development Unit include the following: assist training coordinators in the development and launch of (new) training initiatives, including Participatory Leadership events. Participate in all the phases of a Training Course from preparation, to implementation and follow up. Help in the preparation and running of the Reverse Mentoring project, by keeping communication with the participants, organizing meetings, writing articles for the Domus pages and reporting final feedback. Editing and preparing communication e-mails inside the house, regarding the initiation or implementation of some projects. Revising the Intranet pages of SDU on DOMUS, adapting materials and manuals to the GSC standards. Contributing with ideas for the communication strategy of the EU learn platform, preparing and adapting old files to EU learn format. Assist colleagues in the organization, design and follow-up of different project presentations on intranet communication (Career paths, SDU video, Refreshed mentoring etc.)."

*Andreea, trainee in the Staff Development Unit (2018)*

"Training, coaching and career development of (new) employees and teams. As a trainee you get the chance to develop yourself in the fields of change management, human resource development and organisational skills. Examples of tasks include: development of new courses, drafting reports on teambuilding, several communication and IT projects and an innovative project on reverse mentoring."

*Jasper, trainee in the Staff Development Unit (2017)*

Domain "Information and communication technologies"

"My role is to contribute to the operation of Change Management on a weekly basis by assisting the manager in assessing Request for Change, participating in Board meetings, preparing the agenda and producing the minutes of the meeting and formal notifications of the Board's decisions. I contribute also to the operation of Problem Management by assessing candidates and assisting specialists in the application of problem investigation methodology when required."

*Alessia, trainee in the Operational Service Management Unit (2017)*

"The Corporate Networks unit deals with networks and network security services and is mainly composed of two teams, engineering and operations, which handle different aspects of these services. I am dealing with several interesting topics relating to network security, ranging from documenting best practices to ensuring a smooth transition of projects to implementation. Under the guidance of experienced engineers, I am allowed not only to engage directly with the tools required to implement these tasks, but to also liaison with both internal and external stakeholders."

*Anthony, trainee in the Corporate Networks Unit (2017)*
Domain "Interinstitutional Relations and Codecision"

"I assist the political administrators with their various works with the European Parliament committees, in particular AFCO, AFET and LIBE, with the rotating Presidency and during the plenary sessions in Brussels and Strasbourg and the European Summits. Thus, my most important tasks are regulatory and legislative watches, press and social media reviews, written inputs as briefings, memoranda or analytical and summary reports concerning parliamentary proceedings or working groups formed by the Council and the European Commission. In particular, I am taking part in the General Affairs Working Group's missions."

_Manon, trainee in the Interinstitutional Relations Unit (2018)_

More information:

Domain "Law - Lawyer linguist"

"I am learning what lawyer linguists do on a daily basis in Council files and legislative procedure files. I accompany lawyer linguists to inter-institutional meetings and experts meetings and work on files independently with lawyer linguists supervision. I am also learning how lawyer linguists contribute to the work of the General Secretariat of the Council and to the EU legislative process."

_Diana, trainee in the Quality of Legislation Unit (2017)_

Domain "Media monitoring and Research"

"In Media monitoring you contribute to writing the daily products: selecting the relevant articles and writing summaries on the relevant topics of that day. This could be on Macron and Trump's "bromance", the latest European Council or EU-Russia relations. You also take part in ad hoc monitoring according to Tusk's schedule and the European Council summits, as well as writing media intelligence reports on specific countries ahead of Tusk's visits. You learn how to use search engines such as Factiva and how to monitor twitter activity. You have the opportunity to attend press conferences and play an important role reporting from these during the Council summits."

_Jessica, trainee in the Media Monitoring and Research Unit (2018)_

Domain "Outreach and Events"

"As a trainee in the Outreach unit, you are one of the few inside the Council that have a lot of contact with the public during working hours. It's a very hands-on team where you need to switch between different tasks very quickly and frequently. Your main task is to organize the visits for visitors and accompany them inside the buildings while providing them information about the European Council and the Council of the EU. Furthermore it might be a huge benefit if you know how to communicate in different languages and how to handle with different cultures."

_Gerjan, trainee in the Outreach Unit (2018)_

More information:
Domain "Protocol, meeting and political events organisation, logistics, infrastructures"

"My unit is the engine behind protocol: we are doing the administration, helping in the financial issues, handling the delegates’ expenses of the member states and most importantly, doing the procurement procedure for the Protocol Directorate. My job is simple: help the work of my colleagues to achieve an easier, faster and more efficient progress in our tasks. I am helping to organize and categorize the files of the directorate, creating efficient and simple excel tables for the procurement projects, so my co-workers can handle these cases more easily. I am also getting a useful inside look, how the events and summits are organized."

Gábor, trainee in the Financial Verification Cell Unit (2018)

Domain "Tax Policies, Regional Policy and Export Credits"

"Being a trainee in the Budget, Tax and Regional Policy unit, I mainly followed political meetings to draft new legislation in the field of Tax law (DAC6, CCTB, Digital taxation, List of non-cooperative jurisdictions). Day to day work consisted in drafting summaries of articles or conferences I was sent to. I also had to merge Member States comments on draft legislation or create documents to explain the work of the code of conduct group and the listing process of the EU (non-cooperative jurisdictions). All my colleagues were very helpful, friendly and trying to give interesting things to do since the beginning to the end of my traineeship."

Julian, trainee in the Budget, Tax and Regional Policy Unit (2018)

More information:

Domain "Translation - Terminology"

"My task is to translate (subject to revision) legal acts, political acts, administrative documents and general information documents for citizens and organisations. I am also participating in various translation-related workshops, e.g. CAT tool training, workflows, use of terminology databases, and also numerous language related-meetings, e.g. quality controllers meetings, language experts meetings, topical seminars on the work of other EU institutions and external bodies."

James, trainee in the English Language Unit (2017)

"My main task is to translate various kinds of Council (and, on occasion, of other EU institutions’) documents from English into Estonian, by making use of all the available databases and translation tools. This is accompanied by background research and terminology work, including contacting experts, if necessary, and updating the terminology database IATE. An important part of my work is also to discuss the corrections made by my adviser and, in doing so, ensure the continuous improvement of my translations."

Mari-Liisa, trainee in the Estonian Language Unit (2017)

"In the French Language Unit most of your work consists in translating from your foreign languages into French, and in taking part in terminology projects. You will discover how a unit of this kind works, see the different types of documents which need to be translated and all their specificities, and work on a
broad range of subjects. Last but not least, you will also get the chance to attend meetings, conferences and training sessions on linguistic issues and topics of EU interest."

*Amélie, trainee in the French Language Unit (2017)*

"I am a translator trainee at DGA 3B, Hungarian Language Unit. During the first few weeks of the traineeship I concentrated on getting to know my colleagues and the tools and resources available for me, but even later on my advisers made certain that I have the opportunity to take part in trainings (Trados, IATE), meetings (Unit meetings, Working Parties) and discussions so that I can better understand the organisation and the tasks of the Translation Service. My daily work is usually focussed on translation, the Unit actively seeks to provide me with a variety of translation projects and review my texts in the most thorough way I have ever experienced."

*Nikolett, trainee in the Hungarian Language Unit (2018)*

"The main task is translation of documents from English and occasionally from French into your mother tongue. All translations are done with SDL Trados Studio. At the beginning of the traineeship you are introduced to different IT tools and databases that should be used on a regular basis in your work. You are asked to translate various types of documents – Council documents (some for internal use/others more public and politically visible), texts for the website, sometimes videos etc. Each of these has to be translated according to the best practices and relevant guidelines. Contrary to what you may have experienced as a freelance translator, translation at the GSC is about team work – there is a strong interaction between colleagues with a focus on mutual feedback. Additional responsibilities include terminology research and development (at a basic level) and revision of translated documents."

*Santa, trainee in the Latvian Unit (2018)*

"Our main tasks in the Polish Language Unit have been translating different law documents (e.g. drafts of regulations, decisions, amendments, minutes, etc.). These documents are prepared for meetings (e.g. of special Working Groups) or produced subsequent to them. We also do terminology work. This means check if certain notations of specific topics translated into the Polish language can be adopted to terminology data bases (for example IATE). This also improves and secures the process of translating."

*Kamila and Renata, trainees in the Polish Language Unit (2017)*

"My main tasks are the translation of English and French institutional texts into Spanish. When I arrived I mainly translated agendas to get used to the Council "language", but after a few weeks I had the chance to start translating texts with a more interesting content (Finances, Conclusions, statements about different issues). I also help the Terminology Unit feeding IATE with new terms. Besides these tasks I’ve had the chance to learn something about the pre-translation process aligning documents thanks to the assistants in my unit (something you don’t usually learn)."

*Marina, trainee in the Spanish Language Unit (2018)*

"As a trainee at the Swedish Language Unit I translated documents from English and French into Swedish and became familiar with most text types of the General Secretariat. I learned how to use relevant tools and databases and got an insight into the important terminology work. I also participated in meetings, activities and conferences on various topics. I got a better understanding of the workings of the Council in an inter-institutional context thanks to exercises and seminars regularly arranged by the trainee office. Being a trainee at the Council is such a great experience!"

*Eva, trainee in the Swedish Language Unit (2018)*
More information:

Domain "Transport"

"I had the possibility to attend meetings between the Council of the EU, the Commission of the EU and the Member States, as well as trilogues between the EU institutions on all transport-related sectors, including land, aviation and shipping, and on all transport-related issues, such as connectivity, safety, reduction of emissions etc. Moreover, I assisted my unit in drafting reports and summaries and in attending seminars and conferences. Overall, I gained a thorough insight into the role of the EU institutions and various actors in the EU legislative procedure in order to establish common transport policy."

Stella, trainee in the Transport Unit (2017)

More information: