

S&D



FAQS TRAINEESHIPS

S&D GROUP IN THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



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A. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What kind of traineeships do the S&Ds offer?

Paid traineeships of 5 months duration for graduates who already have a university degree with at least 3 years of studies.

Shorter paid traineeships for undergraduates are NOT available in the S&D Group.

The S&D Group does not offer unpaid traineeships.

There are six different funds that you can apply for, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria.

2. Are S&D traineeships paid?

Yes, our trainees receive a traineeship allowance of €1500 per month, the reimbursement of the travel costs between home and Brussels (inward/outward), complementary sickness insurance and accident insurance.

Upon presentation of proper justification, trainees with disabilities may receive a supplementary amount to cover additional living costs related to their impairment.

3. What are the contact details for S&D traineeships?

E-mail: s-d.traineeships@europarl.europa.eu

Web: <https://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/working-with-us/traineeships>

4. Where can I find the internal rules on S&D traineeships?

Internal rules governing the S&D traineeships are available via the [website](#) in both [EN](#) / [FR](#).

5. What is expected from a trainee?

As a trainee, your daily work will vary depending on your profile, the needs of the service and on the team/committee in which you will be allocated. You should expect to perform specific tasks linked to our parliamentary activities and support the work of our MEPs and staff, such as:

- Taking part in all relevant meetings at unit, working groups, committee, and S&D Group level, as well as external meetings; and preparing minutes and briefings notes where required.
- Actively following the legislative procedures of specific reports under the guidance and supervision of the tutor.
- Supporting the administrators in drafting amendments, opinions, reports, letters, background notes, including liaising with the MEPs.

- General administrative support (including preparing correspondence, documents and dossiers for meetings and preparing events and conferences).
- Carry out research on relevant topics.

In addition, you will also be asked to follow, at least once, the work of the European Parliament during its plenary sessions in Strasbourg.

You will be placed under the responsibility of a tutor who will guide and supervise your work. You will also be invited to take part in an Induction Programme, at the beginning of your traineeship, that includes various conferences, meetings, presentations and visits to other EU institutions and sister organisations (in Brussels).

6. What is the deadline for applying?

Applications for traineeships are open twice a year:

- in October, for traineeships starting in mid-February until mid-July the following year;
- in May, for traineeships starting in mid-September until mid-February.

7. How many traineeship places are on offer?

There is a maximum of 20 places per semester.

8. How many applications do the S&Ds receive?

This can vary, but generally, there are 400-500 applications per semester in total for all funds, out of which around 4 - 5% are selected (per semester).

9. What is the duration of an S&D traineeship?

5 months.

10. What are the traineeship periods?

There are two 5 months traineeship periods every year:

- Mid-February to mid-July (first traineeship period)
- Mid-September to mid-February (second traineeship period)

11. Where does the traineeship take place?

It takes place in Brussels.

12. Can I do a traineeship during the summer?

No. There are no traineeships during summer period.

13. Can I apply for a traineeship in different EU institutions at the same time?

Yes, as long as long as you fulfil the eligibility criteria.

B. ELIGIBILITY

14. What are the eligibility criteria?

- be aged at least 18 and maximum 35 on the traineeship start date;
- be nationals of a Member State of the European Union unless the provisions of Article 21 apply;
- share the values of the Group;
- have a university degree (at least a BA or equivalent degree);
- have a thorough knowledge of English or French. A good knowledge of another of the official languages of the European Union is a plus.

15. Can I apply for an S&D traineeship if I have already completed a traineeship at another European institution?

Yes.

16. Can I apply for an S&D traineeship if I have worked as an assistant/trainee for a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), or for another political group?

Yes.

17. Can I apply for a Schuman or Blue Book traineeship after my traineeship in the S&D Group?

No.

18. Is there a maximum age limit for applicants?

In order to apply you must be aged between 18 and 35 years old on the first day of your traineeship.

19. What are the minimum linguistic requirements?

Have a thorough knowledge of English or French. A good knowledge of another of the official languages of the European Union is a plus.

20. I am a non-EU citizen. Can I apply?

Yes. The S&D Group offers a limited number of traineeships to applicants from outside the European Union through the Herwig Kaiser - International Cooperation Fund. If you are selected, you will need to apply for any visas, residence or work permits required. The expenses incurred will be reimbursed by the S&D Group.

21. I am a PhD student. Can I apply?

Yes, if you meet the eligibility criteria.

22. I have completed at least three years of university studies but I have not yet received my degree. Can I still apply?

Yes, but if you are selected you will need to provide an official statement from your university confirming that you obtained your diploma at least one day before the first day of your traineeship.

23. I have a non-EU diploma. Can I still apply for a traineeship?

Yes. However, a translation in EN or FR of the diploma must be provided, together with the description of the EU equivalent degree.

C. APPLICATION

24. How do I apply for a traineeship?

You have to apply online via the link provided on the S&D traineeship website

25. Can I send a spontaneous application?

No, the S&Ds do not accept spontaneous applications for traineeships.

26. Is the application form available in all EU languages?

No, the application form is available in English and French. Your CV (EUROPASS format) and motivation letter must also be drafted in English or French.

27. Can I reuse my application from previous periods to apply again?

No, you have to apply for each traineeship period separately.

28. Should I also list qualifications from primary and secondary school under "Studies"?

You should only list qualifications relevant to the traineeship and areas of interest selected. Generally, primary/secondary school qualifications are not considered relevant, unless they are the only way you can prove your knowledge of certain languages.

29. Can I apply for a traineeship without any work experience?

Yes. You are not required to have any work experience in order to apply for a traineeship.

30. Can I submit more than one application in order to increase my chances of being selected?

Yes. During each application period, you may send a maximum of two applications, only in the case that one of the applications is for the Francis Vals Fund. In case you do not respect this rule, the latest submitted application will be considered.

31. What makes a good statement of motivation?

Given that the selection process is very competitive, your motivation plays a key role in deciding if you are selected or not.

Keep it simple and informative. Tell us why you are applying for this traineeship and explain why this position appeals to you. Give a brief summary of the main characteristics that set you apart from other applicants.

Do not repeat your CV. Use the space to tell us something that will make a difference and will show that you have something valuable to contribute to our political family, our values and to the EU institutions.

32. When will the selection procedure take place?

Validated online applications for the first traineeship period (mid-February to mid-July) will be examined as of November (of the preceding year). Selected candidates will be contacted in December at the latest.

Validated online applications for the second traineeship period (mid-September to mid-February) will be examined as of June. Selected candidates will be contacted in July at the latest.

Successful applicants will receive an offer by e-mail stating the period of their traineeship. Once the offer has been accepted, the S&D Group will send the sample traineeship agreement. Please check your SPAM folder regularly.

33. Do I need to upload any document(s) when applying for a traineeship?

Yes, your CV in the EUROPASS format (EN or FR).

34. Can I change my validated application if I realise I have made a mistake?

Once submitted, it is no longer possible to modify your application.

35. How do I know that my application was submitted successfully?

Once you submit your application, you will receive an automatic email from the system.

36. After the validation of my application, do I have to send any documents?

If not specified differently in the call for applications, there is no need to submit any documents proving your eligibility when you submit your application online.

Once the selection procedure is over, we will contact the selected candidates with an offer. Only then should you submit the requested documents.

D. SELECTION PROCEDURE

37. How are trainees selected?

Trainees are selected based on merit, taking into consideration the information provided in the application form. In some cases, candidates might be interviewed on the phone or via video conference (in this case candidates will be contacted).

The applications for the Francis Vals Fund are assessed by the national delegations.

The applications for all other funds are assessed through selection board panels organised within the secretariat.

In case of equal merit, the S&D Group endeavours to ensure gender balance and geographical diversity.

38. Will I receive feedback if my application is rejected?

All candidates will be notified by e-mail. Individual feedback will not be provided.

39. Will the S&Ds publish the results of the selection procedure?

No, the results are not published. All candidates receive information on the outcome by email.

40. If I decline the traineeship offer, will the offer still be valid for the next traineeship period?

No, if you decline the traineeship offer, you need to apply again.

41. If I decline the traineeship offer, can I apply for the next traineeship period?

Yes, you can apply again if you fulfil the eligibility criteria, but you must fill in a new application in a subsequent call.

42. My application was placed on a reserve list. What are my chances of being selected?

Only in the case of successful candidates refusing the offer, will candidates on the reserve list be contacted, by order of merit. This could happen anytime, although very rarely, even at the last minute just before the beginning of the traineeship.

E. AFTER SELECTION

43. Can I delay the start date of the traineeship?

This can be requested, but rejected because the Induction Programme is an essential component of the traineeship. However, in very exceptional and duly justified cases, it may be possible to delay the start date of the traineeship. The end date of the traineeship will not be affected and remains the same.

44. Can I cancel my traineeship and postpone it to the next period?

No. If you cancel your traineeship, you would need to apply again.

45. Will I receive a traineeship agreement?

Yes. Each selected trainee receives a sample traineeship agreement, which is sent by e-mail prior to the start date. The traineeship agreement will be signed on the first day of the traineeship.

46. Should I provide translations of supporting documents?

Supporting documents are accepted in all official languages of the EU. It is also helpful to provide the English or French version of diplomas, if available.

Applicants whose diplomas are not issued in one of the EU official languages must provide a translation of these documents into English or French.

47. Do the copies of supporting documents need to be certified?

No. Supporting documents need to be sent by e-mail. There is no need to provide certified copies. However, in case of falsification of documents or false declarations, the candidate's traineeship will be terminated.

48. Do I have to send copies of certificates concerning my language skills?

No. The language certificate(s) will not be requested. However, you may be interviewed by phone to assess your language skills at any stage of the selection procedure.

49. Who can help with administrative questions about living in Brussels?

The Expat Welcome Desk of the Brussels Commissioner for Europe and International Organisations will help you, free of charge, with any practical or legal problem that may arise during your stay, such as how to register with your municipality, questions about lease contracts or any other matter regarding settling down in Brussels.

Web: [Brussels Commissioner for Europe and International Organisations](#)

E-mail: info@commissioner.brussels

Phone: +32 (0) 2430 66 00

F. DURING THE TRAINEESHIP

50. Do the S&Ds provide training during the traineeship?

Yes. At the beginning of the traineeship, trainees follow a 5 days Induction Programme with an introduction to the work of the S&D Group and S&D Secretariat in the European Parliament. The programme includes different meetings and visits to other EU institutions (e.g. Council, Commission) and our sister organisations (PES, FEPS, FES, YES, etc.).

51. Can I terminate my traineeship early?

In exceptional cases and based on a substantiated request by the trainee, the traineeship can be terminated early (with a two weeks' written notice).

52. Can I interrupt my traineeship?

On the basis of a reasoned request from the trainee, a traineeship may be interrupted by means of a decision by the S&D Secretary-General. During that period, payment of the monthly allowance will be interrupted and the trainee will not be entitled to any reimbursement of travel expenses associated with the interruption.

53. Do the S&Ds provide accommodation?

No. Trainees are responsible for finding and paying for their accommodation during the traineeship.

54. What are the working hours of the S&D Group in the European Parliament?

Normal working hours are between 8h30 - 13h00 and 13h30 - 18h from Monday to Thursday and 8h30 to 12h30 on Friday (40-hours week). The exact working hours may be decided with your tutor, based on the needs of the service.

55. Am I entitled to annual leave?

You are entitled to 2 days leave per month worked, to be taken in agreement with the tutor and competent HR service but with no right to accumulate these days. Days of annual leave not taken will not be reimbursed.

56. Is there a dress code at the European Parliament?

No, there is no formal dress code. It is expected to dress appropriately to your

functions and tasks. Trainees are recommended to dress “smart casual” and more formally, if protocol requires so.

57. Is it possible to work part time during the traineeship?

No. All trainees have to work full time, namely 40 hours/week.

58. Who will be responsible for me during my traineeship?

Each trainee is assigned a traineeship adviser (tutor) who is responsible for providing guidance during the traineeship.

59. Are the tutors trained in tutoring?

Tutors receive guidelines before the traineeship starts and exchange practices regularly.

60. What should I do if I fall ill during my traineeship?

You should immediately inform your tutor and the traineeship coordinator in human resources. As from the fourth day of absence, a medical certificate is required indicating how long you will be absent.

61. Can I extend the duration of my traineeship?

No. Traineeships run for 5 months and may not be extended.

62. Will I have to travel on mission during my traineeship?

Trainees will be sent on mission to Strasbourg once, and possibly a second time when justified in the interest of the service, to observe parliamentary work. In exceptional cases and if needed, trainees might be sent on missions related to their tasks and/or special activities of the Group outside the usual working places.

63. Can I telework during my traineeship?

Yes. Trainees are allowed to telework 3 half days per week (4 during “Green Weeks”).

G. FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

64. How much is the monthly allowance?

In 2023, the monthly allowance is €1500 per month. Upon presentation of proper justification, trainees with disabilities may receive a supplementary amount to cover additional living costs related to their impairment. The traineeship monthly allowance is paid at the beginning of the traineeship period, and subsequently in the middle of each month that follows.

65. Are trainees insured?

All trainees are insured, free of charge, for the duration of the traineeship. Health insurance is provided by Allianz Worldwide Care. Detailed information can be found on their website. This insurance covers the trainee only (not family members). As a primary coverage, EU trainees must have a European Health Insurance Card from their own country, which covers any periods away from home.

67. Are trainees entitled to allowances?

Trainees are entitled to a travel allowance (€300 ceiling per way), which is a contribution towards the journey between the trainees' home address and Brussels (outward/return). Travel expenses will be reimbursed as long as the travel is taking place up to one month before the start of the traineeship and one month after the end of the traineeship.

In addition, for the plenary session in Strasbourg, trainees also receive an allowance to cover the mission expenses (travel, accommodation, daily allowance) in line with the S&D Group's internal rules on missions.

68. In addition to the monthly allowance, is there other support?

Trainees do not receive any lunch vouchers; however, with the badge, trainees will get a discount in the EP canteens. Trainees are not entitled to reimbursement of public transport expenses. Trainees can benefit from special rates at the fitness centre situated in the European Parliament's premises.

69. Do I need to have a bank account in Belgium?

No, you can use a bank account in another country, provided it is in your name and that it accepts transfers in euros. You will have to bear any costs that may arise from transfers.

70. Is it possible to obtain an advance payment of the traineeship monthly allowance on arrival?

No. It is not possible to receive an advance payment. The first payment will be issued as from the first day of your traineeship, upon signature of the traineeship agreement.

71. Will I receive an advance payment before the start date of a mission?

Yes, automatically. All trainees receive an advance payment of maximum €300, the week before the mission to Strasbourg.

72. Do I have to pay taxes related to my monthly allowance?

As the traineeship is not considered an employment, your monthly allowance is not a salary. Nothing is deducted from your monthly allowance (neither social security, nor taxes). As for social security payments, each country has its own laws, so you should find out how to proceed in your country. As regards taxes, the monthly allowance is subject to the weighting applicable in the country in which the traineeship takes place.

66. Will IT equipment be provided?

Yes. At the beginning of the traineeship, all trainees are equipped with an office PC, a hybrid computer and headsets. The IT equipment will be returned at the end of the traineeship.

67. Will I be sharing an office?

Yes. Trainees share two offices of 4 and one office of 12.

For more information about the S&D Traineeships in the Group Secretariat please read the Internal Rules [EN / FR](#)