



THE GREEN BOOK

AN IRISH TRAINEE'S GUIDE TO LIVING
AND WORKING IN BRUSSELS 
(& other nice European cities)



VOLUME XII
2018/2019



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Welcome to The Green Book



It gives me great pleasure to introduce Volume XII of European Movement Ireland's The Green Book.

The Green Book is one of our most popular publications here at EM Ireland. It is also a hugely important part of our Grad Jobs in Europe campaign which aims to make Irish students, graduates and jobseekers more aware of the career opportunities available in the EU system, and provides encouragement, guidance and useful advice to help them find and get the position they want.

In the EM Ireland office, we consistently receive encouraging feedback from students, stagiaires and jobseekers who have benefited from the information and advice contained in The Green Book. This little book has continuously grown and evolved to meet the needs of its readers, to reflect the reality of the job scene, and to highlight new career and traineeship opportunities that arise. It is a hugely satisfying element of our work. Over the years we reckon that the many different editions of The Green Book have been perused by people based everywhere from Ballina to Brussels!

As always, we have worked hard to make sure that the information and tips contained in this volume are as up-to-date, accurate and useful as possible. This guide remains relevant and realistic thanks to the ongoing valuable contributions of stagiaires past and present, without whom its existence would not be possible. For that reason, we welcome your thoughts on The Green Book's contents, format and structure.

Your feedback is the greatest indicator that The Green Book is fulfilling its purpose. All comments will be gratefully received and considered for inclusion in future volumes.

Above all else, I hope this guide encourages you to dip your toe in European waters. The staff of EM Ireland are here to lend a helping hand along the way so don't hesitate to call on us - we would be delighted to steer you through the resources available if you are keen to pursue a career in the EU system. And you don't just have to take our word for it about the benefits that an EU career can offer or the opportunities that exist there. Over the next few pages we have included forewords from Irish people who have very important roles in Brussels - we hope these serve to inspire and motivate you.

In conclusion, I want to wish you every success on your path to

“Above all else, I hope this book encourages you to dip your toe in European waters.”

a European career. At EM Ireland, we very much hope that the information contained in these pages will make your career endeavours a little bit easier. We also hope that you will fully benefit from all the advantages of living and working in the EU system, from the networking opportunities to the after-work social scene! To get in touch with us, to learn more about our Grad Jobs in Europe campaign or to enquire about the benefits of student/stagiaire membership of EM Ireland, please visit our website at www.europeanmovement.ie or drop us a line at info@europeanmovement.ie.

Until next time,

Noelle O Connell
Executive Director
European Movement Ireland



Noelle O Connell, Executive Director of European Movement Ireland, presenting The Green Book to Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther Oettinger, at a graduate careers talk in Trinity College Dublin.



Forewords

Commissioner Phil Hogan



I wish all new Irish trainees a big “Fáilte” to Brussels. I can attest that it is a great place to live and offers up many opportunities and possibilities, both professional and social, for young Irish who wish to pursue a career in EU or international affairs. The Brussels Irish network is in many ways like a rural Irish town – it has a theatre group, a St Patrick’s Day festival, a GAA club, a soccer and rugby club, as well

as many other social and cultural outlets, both European and international as well as Irish. It is thus a welcoming place for a young person looking to start off a career here.

It is crucial that talented young Irish people turn their attention to Brussels. The EU is more and more a part of our everyday lives, and shaping the direction of the EU will be the officials working in the Institutions. Ireland has done very well in the past, with people of immense talent rising through the ranks. Outstanding Irish citizens, such as Catherine Day, who recently retired after a very successful decade as Secretary General of the European Commission, have pointed the way for a successful career in Brussels. However, the number of Irish in the Institutions is now subject to a “demographic cliff”, with the numbers set to half in the coming years as new hires will not replace retirements.

It is for this reason that we need a new missionary zeal to recruit Irish to the EU Institutions. I am glad to see that European Movement Ireland is right at the heart of such a campaign. I wish to pay tribute to the work of European Movement Ireland in publishing Volume XII of The Green Book this year. The Green Book is a must read for those setting off on a career in Brussels and offers many tips and insights, both professional and social, which make the transition to a career in the “EU Bubble” all the easier.

Phil Hogan

European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development



Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee TD

I am delighted to welcome you to the latest volume of The Green Book, an invaluable resource for all those interested in working in European affairs in Brussels and beyond. Now at Volume XII, The Green Book has grown in scope and in reach over the years, and I congratulate the team in European Movement Ireland for this unique publication.

Since joining the European Union in 1973, Ireland has made a significant contribution to its development in many ways. Today, hundreds of Irish people work across the EU Institutions and I look forward to further engaging with them in my role as Minister of State for European Affairs and seeing the important impact they have on the work of the EU.

We have a history of punching above our weight when it comes to high-level representation in the EU Institutions. For example, two of the seven Secretaries-General of the European Commission since its foundation have been Irish: David O'Sullivan and Catherine Day. I would like to see such impressive achievements continue, and The Green Book is crucial in offering encouragement and guidance to Irish graduates in their efforts to secure traineeships and sow the seeds for future careers in Brussels. This forms part of the EU Jobs Ireland campaign, coordinated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which offers information services, advice and support for anyone considering an EU career.

The publication of Volume XII of The Green Book comes at a time when it is more important than ever to strengthen and support Irish voices in the EU Institutions. Ireland is a fully committed member of the EU and our future interests are best served by remaining firmly within it, so I encourage all of you to consider a career in this field.

**“We have a history of punching
above our weight when it comes to
high-level representation in the EU
Institutions.”**

Indeed, there has never been a better time to apply for a traineeship or a job in Brussels. Irish people have the reputation as being hard-working and highly-skilled, and there is demand for young professionals with an excellent education, fluent English and strong communication and networking skills. The opportunities have never been greater, including through the Irish language, and I would urge you all to take advantage of them.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Helen McEntee TD
Minister of State for European Affairs



Minister of State for European Affairs Helen McEntee TD addressing EM Ireland Brussels Connection event in the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU in March 2018.



Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly

First, let me welcome you to Volume XII of European Movement Ireland's The Green Book – an invaluable asset for all those seeking to gain an understanding of the European Institutions or taking the first steps towards a career in European affairs.

The EU faces a time of unprecedented challenge. Be confident of every individual's capacity to face that challenge and seek to build an EU that serves its citizens with passion and integrity.

This book builds on the wealth of practical experience of those who have gone before you. You will meet many of these people over the coming months- remember that they all started where you are today so seek them out, ask questions and take their advice. Few problems or challenges are unique and people are only too willing to give a helping hand to newcomers.

Critical to a good start is an appreciation of the different cultures you are about to be exposed to. Understanding this multicultural environment, taking time to discover the diverse backgrounds of your trainee colleagues, will be professionally invaluable. Learning to work and to thrive in such an atmosphere will help you to understand the challenges and the opportunities of the EU and its Institutions and is not something that can be gleaned from a textbook.

Take risks. Embrace the good fortune of being here. Push yourself beyond your comfort zone. Yes, join the many wonderful Irish sports and cultural clubs and groups, but dare yourself to move beyond that as well. Every nationality will have their special days, their special traditions, which they too will want to celebrate far away from home. So get yourselves invited!

Finally, I hope you find this guide useful as you begin navigating your way around this city. I have no doubt that the great majority of you will look back on your first years in Brussels with great fondness and pride and with strong professional and personal relationships made for a lifetime to come. And you will be a credit to your home country.

Best wishes in the coming weeks and months.

Emily O'Reilly
European Ombudsman

EU Ambassador to the USA

David O'Sullivan



Welcome to Volume XII of European Movement Ireland's The Green Book. This essential guide will help you navigate the European Institutions, search for a traineeship or a job, and acquaint yourself with life in Brussels and beyond. European Movement Ireland is to be congratulated on producing such a useful and user friendly guide to the city that I have come to think of as my adopted home. Brussels is indeed a wonderful place to live and work, and this guide will help you get the best out of the experience.

These are challenging times for the European Union. But I remain convinced that the process of European integration is a noble political experiment which offers the best prospects of securing peace, stability, and prosperity for our people at home and a chance to be a force for good globally. Since I joined the European Commission in 1979, the number of Member States has more than tripled, from nine to the current 28, including 12 from the former Soviet bloc.

As well as our common values of democracy, human rights, freedom and the rule of law, we share a single market, robust Institutions and a single currency for 19 of our Member States. All our Member States are far better off now than when they first joined the Union. The European Union is the largest economy in the world and an important actor across a range of international crises, from humanitarian and development assistance to standing up for Ukraine against Russian aggression, and from brokering peace in Libya or Syria to securing the end of Iran's nuclear military ambitions.

My European career of over 35 years has allowed me to serve Europe in a variety of capacities and places from Brussels to Tokyo, and now as the EU Ambassador in Washington. My job now is to steward the important bilateral relationship between the EU and US, explaining to Americans Europe's position on important policy issues and reporting what's happening in the US to people back in Brussels. I see how much Americans want a strong EU able to contribute to the resolution of the many crises we face across the globe.

I guarantee that experiencing the way the EU works at first hand - whether from within the Institutions or from the perspective of business or civil society - will change the way you look at the world. Many of us came thinking to spend only a few years, only to become so fascinated by

the excitement of the challenge that we ended up staying permanently!

I am sure that this guide will help you in whatever capacity you come to Brussels; whether your stay is of limited duration or becomes a lifetime commitment!

David O'Sullivan

**Ambassador of the European Union to the United States
and Head of the Delegation of the European Union
to the United States**



Catherine Day

Welcome to Volume XII of European Movement Ireland's The Green Book. This handy guide tells you all you need to know to make your way through the European Institutions and to enjoy and benefit from living in Brussels. Ireland may have a small population but we can make a big impact. From my own experience of working in the EU, I can see that young Irish people have the potential and the capabilities to make valuable and long-lasting contributions to the work of the EU, in tandem with their counterparts from across the continent. Through their Grad Jobs in Europe campaign, EM Ireland works tirelessly to inform Irish students and graduates of the job and traineeship opportunities available to them across the EU. Whatever your reasons for coming to Brussels, and whatever your future European careers goals, this book is the most useful guide you can have in this process.

For those of you who have only just arrived in the city and who are about to embark on a traineeship, congratulations and welcome. You are taking the first valuable steps in a European career path. Regardless of where you go from Brussels, or what you do after your traineeship experience, the EU will play an important role in your professional and private life. Spending time in this city will offer you ample opportunities to develop both professionally and personally; to gain insight and understanding of the EU Institutions and political processes; and to experience cultures from across Europe.

For those of you who have been here a little longer and are looking to make your stay more permanent, I can say with confidence that Irish people have an extraordinarily strong reputation in this city. We are known to be hardworking, diligent, committed – and we know how to network. I hope these strengths will stand to you in your job hunt.

I would love to see the number of Irish graduates working in the EU Institutions increase. Throughout the ups and downs of recent years Ireland's commitment to helping the EU to develop and succeed remains very strong. I hope some of you will choose to invest your energies in building the next generation of the EU's unique story. I have no doubt that The Green Book will equip you with the tools you need to succeed and settle in this city.

Catherine Day

European Movement Ireland Honorary President

David Garrahy



I am delighted to introduce you to Volume XII of European Movement Ireland's The Green Book. As Chair of the Brussels Branch of EM Ireland I look forward to welcoming you to Brussels and the 'Eurobubble'.

For those of you who are about to start a traineeship, congratulations, and for those of you who are applying, good luck. The application processes and the idea of moving to a new city can seem daunting but I am sure The Green Book will make the prospect a bit less intimidating.

Despite having a different language and culture, as a citizen of the European Union Brussels is your home. The EU has been constructed by the work and idealism of thousands of Irish men and women, whether they have worked in the Institutions or throughout the seven Irish EU presidencies.

Culturally you should also feel at home. The European system is influenced by the ways of working and inspiration from all the different member states of the EU. Your contribution is as valid as any other European and you must not be afraid to make it. Yes, there are often clashes – but working these out consensually is the European way.

Working in the EU system gives you the opportunity to improve yourself and your skills – whether that be learning a new language or working in a new area. It also gives you the chance to think about how you can help strengthen the EU and help it fulfil its essential mission of further uniting Europe and building a better world. Be aware that you follow the path of many Irish people before you who helped construct this Europe. We look to you to give the EU novel ideas, alternative leadership and new approaches.

David Garrahy

Chair

European Movement Ireland Brussels Branch

Join the EM Ireland Brussels Branch

You are at the heart of the EU at a crucial time - the forthcoming months until Brexit in March 2019 and the European Elections in May 2019 will be a crucial one for Ireland's role in the EU into the future.

If you want to play your part in influencing these monumental moments you should join us in the European Movement Ireland Brussels Branch. The Branch exists to bring Ireland's community in Brussels together in support of the European project and ensure their expertise, views and energy are taken into consideration in these crucial debates.

This year we are planning to hold a European Elections debate, workshops on social media and the EU as well as the impact of Brexit. If you are interested in joining please email brusselsbranch@europeanmovement.ie

Brussels Connection

Twice a year, EM Ireland holds a Brussels Connection event for the Irish network in Brussels. This event is a great way for new trainees to network with the EM Ireland community in Brussels. We hold these events every October and March to coincide with the new intake of trainees. For more information contact info@europeanmovement.ie.



EM Ireland Brussels Branch Committee 2018

Acknowledgements

At EM Ireland we are extremely proud of this little Green Book and we make sure that a huge amount of time and effort goes into updating, fact checking and designing each volume so that the information in these pages is as up-to-date and readable as it can possibly be. To that end, we owe our sincere thanks to the following for all their help, knowledge and support:

- Eoin O'Shea BL;
- Thanks to Noel Clehane, inaugural chair of European Movement Ireland Brussels Branch, BDO, for all his work and support for the The Green Book over the years;
- David Garrahy, Chairman of the EM Ireland Brussels Branch and the Branch Committee;
- European Movement Ireland stagiaires past and present;
- The Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the EU Jobs team;
- The Office of the Minister of State for European Affairs;
- The Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU.

All of the stagiaires who have passed through the doors of the European Institutions and Agencies in Brussels and beyond, and everyone who has taken the time to share their traineeship experiences and stories with us – thank you for your insight, wisdom and honesty.



Chapter 1:

Getting There

So what is a stage?

Stage/stagiaire is French for traineeship/trainee. In Brussels, you'll often hear the French terms being used in place of the English.

A stage is a traineeship that usually lasts an average of between three and six months. Depending on the credentials of the stage in question, it's an opportunity to gain valuable experience at the start of your career, and is often seen as a rite of passage to the world of work in Brussels.

The following pages give details of the stage programmes in the major EU Institutions and Agencies, as well as information on opportunities in some other organisations.

As you begin your search for the perfect stage, it will be useful to bear the following points in mind.

- **All application processes are different.** Apply for as many stages as possible to be in with the best chance of finding a position, but remember to tailor each application to the programme or organisation in question. The main Institutions will receive thousands of applications for each stage intake and only have a limited number of spaces to fill. Even the smaller, lesser-known organisations can be inundated with CVs and cover letters. One small spelling mistake can be the difference between an offer and a rejection.
- **Don't let the high levels of competition put you off.** Yes, there is big demand for many of the stage programmes, but this shouldn't stop you from applying. Think of it this way: there have only ever been seven people to hold the post of chief civil servant in the European Commission and two have been Irish – David O'Sullivan and Catherine Day.
- **Don't worry too much about language, although it's worth making the effort.** Brussels is full of people who speak countless languages perfectly. This can be daunting at first, but you will soon learn that native English speakers are very useful to have around an office. While English is the unofficial 'lingua franca' of the Eurobubble, giving

native English speakers a bit of an advantage, it is still worth learning or practicing French to get around the city. Also, many employers, especially the EU Institutions, look for traineeship and job candidates with knowledge of more than one language.

- **Speaking of languages, many of the language eligibility requirements for traineeships refer to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).** So if you see 'C2 French required', or 'minimum level of B2 German necessary', that's a CEFR standard! For more information on how to assess your own language abilities via CEFR, visit <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>
- **There are hundreds of European stage opportunities - more than will fit in this book.** Just because a company or organisation is not included in this guide doesn't mean that they don't accept trainees. Many small offices recruit stagiaires so it's always worth sending a speculative application.
- **Keep an eye on the European Movement Ireland website - www.europeanmovement.ie.** The EM Ireland website and Facebook and Twitter pages are regularly updated with details of the latest European stage opportunities. We also have a weekly Jobs & Traineeships list which you can sign up to on our website.
- **You can't do multiple stages.** Well, not with the EU Institutions and Agencies at least. You will be ineligible for most Institutional stage positions if you have already done more than six weeks work with a different EU Institution (or Agency or Delegation or with an MEP, etc.). You get one good shot at an EU stage so make it count!

The following pages are organised into five sections to help guide you through the available stages and their application processes:

1. Writing your CV and Cover Letter;
2. Europass;
3. Stages in the EU Institutions;
4. Stages in the EU Agencies;
5. Other Stages.

To save you from getting lost, we've indicated where in Europe these stages are too!

Writing your CV and Cover Letter

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a motivational letter that accompanies a CV and any other supporting documents in a job application. The purpose of a cover letter is to bring added value to your CV and make the employer want to meet you.

This is your chance to sell yourself and stand out from other applicants. It's probably the first thing a potential employer will read, so it's worth putting in the time and effort to make a good impression. A well-written cover letter will increase your chances of being called for interview.

The first paragraph should specify why exactly you want to work for the particular organisation. In the second paragraph you should discuss the personal motivation behind your application. Why is it that you are the best and most qualified person for the job? What will you bring to the position? The final paragraph should include details of how to contact you for interview.

Tips for a Successful Cover Letter

- Always address your letter to a named individual. If you don't know the name of the relevant person, call the organisation to find out. Your initiative will be appreciated.
- Be enthusiastic about the position.
- Spend time researching the organisation and show that you have knowledge of their work, values and achievements. Explain how your experience will benefit the organisation.
- Describe how your skills and experience match the job advertised. Illustrate them using specific examples.
- Expand on relevant parts of your CV to support your application.
- Be confident but don't exaggerate your achievements.
- Mention how the position would add to your long-term career goals.
- Avoid using stock sentences and generic phrases.
- Keep it brief and concise. A cover letter should not exceed one A4 page.

- Use short, uncomplicated sentences.
- Always check for spelling mistakes.
- Ask someone to proofread your cover letter before sending it. They might have some useful feedback.

Tips for your CV

- Tailor your CV to each application, including the information most relevant to the position and editing out anything less relevant.
- Keep your potential employer in mind as you write your CV. Pepper your application with keywords from the organisation's website and job description. This will send a subliminal message to the employer that you understand and share the organisation's ethos.
- Use active verbs such as “develop”, “manage” and “create” and avoid using long, cumbersome sentences.
- Keep your CV short and to the point. It should not exceed two A4 pages.
- Be sure that your CV is clearly laid out. Use bullet points to make reading easier for the employer.
- Don't cram the pages with information. Leave some clean space.
- Be consistent in your style. Fonts and headings should be in the same format.
- As in the case of your cover letter, check your CV for spelling mistakes, and ask someone to read over it before sending off your application.



Europass

What is Europass?

Europass documents have been designed so that your skills and qualifications can be easily understood throughout Europe. From time to time, stage or job applications will specifically request a “Europass CV”. This helps employers from abroad understand your professional skills and qualifications. It is essentially your “pass” into the working world of the EU. Five documents make up your Europass:

1. Europass CV;
2. Language Passport;
3. Europass Mobility;
4. Certificate Supplement;
5. Diploma Supplement.

The first two documents are easy to create by filling in the templates online. The last three documents are copies of official certificates issued by education and training authorities. These certificates could come from your university, for example, or your host institution during an Erasmus programme.

What is the Europass CV?

The Europass CV is a standardised format of CV. It is designed so that different European recruitment offices can understand the skills and qualifications of applicants, whatever their nationality. The template is available on the website, along with example Europass CVs to guide you.

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/editors/en/cv/compose>

What is the Language Passport?

The Language Passport is the EU’s standardised rating system for language ability. On the website you can grade your knowledge according to your listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing skills. Detailed instructions help you figure out your level quickly and easily. Examples are also included in this section.

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/european-skills-passport/language-passport>

What is Europass Mobility?

Europass Mobility is a document that records the skills and experience acquired during time spent in another European country. The document should be made available by the two partner organisations involved in the mobility project. If, for example, you did a foreign exchange programme while you were studying, you should approach your home and host universities about this document.



<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/european-skills-passport/europass-mobility>

What are the Europass Certificate and Diploma Supplements?

Considering that the EU has over 4,000 higher education institutions, there is a need for clarity on how degrees, diplomas and certificates from the various Member States match up to one another. The Europass Certificate supplement for vocational graduates and the Europass Diploma for higher education graduates were created to ensure that national qualifications are understood in a European context.

If you weren't given these documents when you graduated, contact the registration office of your educational institution.

Where can I access the Europass website?

All Europass documents and instructions can be found on the website:

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

Who should I contact if I need more information about Europass?

Irish National Europass Centre,

Quality and Qualifications Ireland,

26/27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0)1 905 8100

Email: info@europass.ie

Website: www.europass.ie

Stage Application Opening Dates and Deadlines

October 2018 - December 2018

(Dates are subject to change, please always refer to the institution website)

October 2018	
1 October	Application for CoR stage opens (Autumn 2019 stage) Deadline for EDPS stage (March 2019 stage)
31 October	Deadline for ECA stage (February 2019 stage)
November 2018	
1 November	Application for EP Robert Schuman Stage opens (March 2019 stage)
30 November	Deadline for EP Robert Schuman Stage (March 2019 stage)
December 2018	
1 December	Applications for ECA stage opens (May 2019 stage)

January 2019 - December 2019

(Dates are subject to change, please always refer to the institution website)

January 2019	
1 January	European Commission Blue Book Stage (October 2019)
3 January	EEAS JPD programme announced (2019-2021 session) Applications for EESC stage open (September 2019 stage)
31 January	Deadline for ECA stage (May 2019 stage)
February 2019	
1 February	Applications for the Council of the EU stage open (Autumn 2019 stage) Applications for ECJ stage open (October 2019 stage) Applications for EDPS stage open (October 2019 stage) European Ombudsman stage opens (September 2019)
March 2019	
1 March	Deadline for EDPS stage (October 2019 stage)
15 March	Deadline for Council of the EU stage (Autumn 2019 stage)
31 March	Deadline for EESC stage (September 2019 stage) Deadline for COR stage (Autumn 2019 stage) Deadline for European Ombudsman stage
April 2019	
1 April	Applications for COR stage open (Spring 2020 stage) Applications for ECA stage open (September 2019 stage)
15 April	Deadline for ECJ stage (October 2019 stage)
May 2019	
31 May	Deadline for ECA stage (September stage 2019)
June 2019	
1 June	Application for EP Robert Schuman Stage opens (October 2019 stage)
31 June	Deadline for EP Robert Schuman Stage (October 2019 stage)
July 2019	
1 July	Applications for ECJ stage open (March 2020 stage) Applications for EESC Stage opens (February 2020 stage)

15 July	Deadline for European Commission Blue Book stage (March 2020 stage) Deadline for COR stage (Spring 2020 stage)
September 2019	
1 September	Applications for EDPS stage open (March 2020 stage) Applications for ECA stage open (March 2020 stage)
15 September	Deadline for ECJ stage (March 2020 stage)
30 September	Deadline for EESC Stage (February 2020 stage) Deadline for COR stage (February 2020 stage)
October 2019	
1 October	Applications for COR stage open (September 2020 stage) Deadline for EDPS stage (March 2020 stage)
31 October	Deadline for ECA stage (March 2020 stage)
November 2019	
1 November	Application for EP Robert Schuman Stage opens (March 2020 stage)
30 November	Deadline for EP Robert Schuman Stage (March 2020 stage)

EU Institutions

The European Commission (EC)

Brussels, Belgium; Luxembourg and the European Commission Representations around Europe

The European Commission stage programme is the biggest and probably the best-known initiative of its type in the European Institutions. There are two traineeship periods: one in the summer (1 March – 31 July) and one in the winter (1 October – 28 February). The programme lasts five months and is highly competitive. Of the approximately 15,000 applications received for each traineeship period, around 700 people are selected. Of this group, approximately 15 are Irish.

There are two types of traineeship in the Commission:

1. Administrative Traineeship

This is the stage in which the majority of people will participate. Opportunities are available in all Directorates-General and services of the European Commission (these are the Commission's 'departments', similar to the various departments in the Irish civil service, e.g. Department of Finance/Agriculture/etc.), including the Cabinets of the Commissioners.

2. Translation Traineeship

The translation traineeship is with the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT), and has a different application process to the Commission's main administrative traineeship.

Paid?

Yes, these traineeships are paid. The grant is around €1,176.83 per month although this figure is subject to change. In addition, travel expenses to and from Brussels at the beginning and end of the stage are usually covered.

Eligibility

- A Bachelor's degree;
- You must not have undertaken work experience (paid or unpaid) in any of the other EU Institutions for a period longer than six weeks. Note that this also includes all bodies, Agencies, Delegations or working with an MEP;
- You must meet the language requirements. For the administrative traineeship, you must have certified C1/C2 knowledge of at least 1 of the 3 working languages of the Commission, excluding the mother tongue. For those applying with mother tongue English, this means that they will need to prove C1/C2 knowledge of French/German. For a translation traineeship, you must be able to translate into your main language (which must be an official EU language) from two other official languages. One of the two latter languages must be English, French or German;
- There is no upper age limit for the European Commission traineeships.

Don't forget, Irish is an official EU language!

Application Process

1. Fill out the application form. An important part of this is the section where you list the areas of the Commission where you'd most like to work, so make sure you do your research in advance. Submit your application as early as possible, in order to avoid access problems related to system overload close to the deadline. The form is accessible via this link: www.ec.europa.eu/stages.

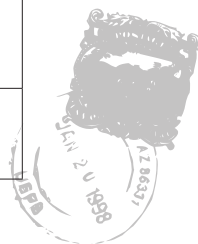
2. When the deadlines have passed, approximately 5,000 candidates – 2,500 for each stage period – are chosen to go to the next round. It is at this stage that you will be asked for supporting documents to prove what you have stated in the application form. The details of these preselected candidates are put in a database known as the Blue Book.

3. Commission departments review the Blue Book and choose their stagiaires

4. Applicants are notified if they are successful.

Note: The Blue Book database is only used for the European Commission's administrative stage application procedure. The translation section has separate eligibility criteria and systems.

	Opening date of online applications	Closing date of online applications
March Traineeship	mid July	end of August
October Traineeship	mid January	end of January



Tip: Brussels time is one hour ahead of Irish time

The majority of people who apply to the European Commission stage programme have qualifications in law, politics, international relations and economics. That said, the Commission is also looking for people with qualifications in other fields ranging from aerospace engineering to sports management and nursing.

Note: You can only apply for one type of traineeship per cycle (either the administrative traineeship or the translation traineeship).

Useful Websites:

For more information on stages in the Commission, and to view the online application form, visit the website: www.ec.europa.eu/stages

Find the answers to frequently asked questions about the traineeship application process here:

https://ec.europa.eu/stages/faq_en

What is the Blue Book?

The Blue Book is a large database containing information on all the people who have advanced to the second round of the European Commission's traineeship application process.

Commission officials will look through this database to get an idea of your academic background, language skills and interest areas. Based on this information they will decide if you are suited to working in their department.

I'm in the Blue Book: What Next?

If you make it into the Blue Book, contact EU officials in the departments in which you'd like to spend your traineeship, to tell them that you'd like to work for them. This is a time when being a part of the Irish network can work to your advantage. There are plenty of Irish people in the Institutions. Get in touch and they might be able to help you.

If you need help finding out who you should be talking to within a particular sector, you can always contact European Movement Ireland or the European Commission Representation in Ireland (http://ec.europa.eu/ireland/home_en) for advice on who to approach!

Joint Research Centre (JRC)

The mission of the European Commission's JRC is to support EU policies with independent evidence throughout the whole policy cycle. Located across five different countries, the JRC hosts specialist laboratories and unique research facilities and is home to thousands of scientists working to support EU policy.

There are two types of traineeship:

- training related to the preparation of a thesis for a university degree;
- training after university education within five years after the last university degree.

The traineeship is generally hosted in the JRC office in Brussels, Belgium and lasts three to five months. Contracts begin on either the 1st or the 16th day of the month. There is a monthly basic allowance provided, around €900. Candidates must speak at least two official EU languages, one of which should be one of the working languages (English, French or German), and must not have undertaken work experience (paid or unpaid) in any of the other European Institutions or bodies.

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/working-with-us/jobs/temporary-positions/jrc-trainees>.



If you're interested in hearing from someone with first-hand experience, email us at info@europeanmovement.ie.

In the meantime, you'll find testimonials from some former stagiaires on the following pages...

Testimonials

Cian, Legal Service, European Commission

"The service has traditionally been very Francophone – though it varies from team to team – but don't let the language thing worry you. They are happy to have native English speakers and proofreading will probably be a big part of your job. Also, in my team at least, while meetings are nominally run in French, the administrators will respond in either English or French, whichever they feel more comfortable.

There is 5-a-side football every Thursday in a local sports hall for which there is a longstanding tradition that stagiaires do not have to pay to play but are supposed to run more and score more goals. The service tries to ensure that everyone gets to a hearing in Luxembourg. It's three hours away, and trains conveniently run from Schuman. Your trip will be completely reimbursed by the Commission (including a hotel) and you are entitled to an extra €90 as expenses on the trip. If you go a second time you have to pay for everything yourself. There is a cheap (€20) and clean place called Luxembourg City Hostel located relatively near the Courts as well."

"Another bonus of a smaller DG is that all fonctionnaires seem to know each other quite well, which creates a very close-knit and sympathetic work environment."

Peter, DG ECFIN, European Commission

"DG ECFIN is in Beaulieu, a Commission complex situated in a quiet southwestern suburb of Brussels. When they were constructed, the initial intention was to use some of the buildings for a shopping centre, but that fell through and the buildings were converted for use as office space. Beaulieu is largely closed plan and many stagiaires can expect to have their own office or share with just one person. Although Beaulieu is located a considerable distance from the city centre and the European district, there are excellent transport links which mean that stagiaires located there need not be isolated from the larger Schuman/stagiaire community. The primary metro connection to Beaulieu is the Number 5 Metro Line (direction Herrmann-Debroux - if you are leaving from anywhere other than Hermann-Debroux). Although there is a stop named Beaulieu, depending on your building, it may actually be quicker to access the offices from the Demi metro stop.



For those working in Beaulieu, the radial pattern of the public transport system does mean that the choice of location for accommodation is very important as changing metros or buses can be time consuming and annoying. So, if you're based in Beaulieu, it's better to live somewhere serviced by the Number 5 Metro Line or a bus service that goes there. Thus, the city centre areas, and those around Place Flagey, are best due to their proximity to Brussels' various amenities and direct stops at Delta which is one stop before Beaulieu and is walkable. Not many stagiaires choose to live in Beaulieu itself."

Emilie, DG JLS

"DG Justice, Freedom and Security (or JLS as it is most commonly known) is situated right beside Place Luxembourg. Though not in the true EU epicentre (eg Schuman), there is plenty going on around the building that allows you to still feel in the heart of EU Affairs. With the Parliament a stone's throw away, and the common watering hole of European fonctionnaires (Plux) 1 minute from the exit, DG JLS is ideal for any stagiaire.

With Justice, Freedom and Security constantly growing in importance in the EU, you are sure to find JLS very interesting and fast paced. Since the DG is not so large, the stagiaires are given a lot of responsibility and are included in their units' work at all times. Stagiaires tend to share an office with another stagiaire but you can also be lucky to get your own, depending on space in your particular unit. Another bonus of a smaller DG is that all functionaries seem to know each other quite well, which creates a very close-knit and sympathetic work environment.

Though there is no canteen in DG JLS, the Research canteen further up Rue Luxembourg is close by and most stagiaires tend to congregate there at lunchtime. The Berlaymont and the Council are only about a 10-minute walk which is quite handy if you have any business to do around Schuman.

Both French and English are spoken in the DG with the division seeming to be equal. All unit meetings seem to be held in both languages depending on the speaker's preference. The DG also organises Yoga and Pilates classes twice a week which is a nice way to meet other stagiaires and functionaries. The stagiaires also organise football, teaming up with another DG such as RELEX.

Regarding transport, the closest metro station is Trône, though there are also plenty of buses stopping at Place Lux. If you are lucky enough to live in Ixelles or Eterbeek, the DG can be walking distance away which is of course beneficial to your morning routine!

All in all, DG JLS is a very motivating and fast paced environment. All the projects that are going on are vital for the development of Justice Freedom and Security so you can be guaranteed to be working in areas that are constantly in the news. This can make you feel like you are really doing something in the world of the European Union."

The European Parliament (EP)

Brussels, Belgium; Strasbourg, France; Luxembourg and the European Parliament Information Offices around Europe

There are three main types of traineeships associated with the European Parliament:

1. Traineeships in the General Secretariat;
2. Traineeships in the Political Groups;
3. Traineeships with MEPs.



Paid?

Sometimes. It depends on the traineeship you do. For the traineeships with the General Secretariat, you will receive approx. €1,252.26 per month.

1. General Secretariat

Within the General Secretariat of the Parliament, there are a number of traineeship options. Full details regarding eligibility requirements, payment, deadlines and stage duration are available on the Parliament Traineeship website and we would advise you to consult this for full details: <https://ep-stages.gestmax.eu/website/homepage>

Traineeships for university graduates (Robert Schuman traineeships)

These paid traineeships are awarded for a period of five months (March to July and October to February). Applications for the March to July session are made in November and applications for the October to February session are made in June.

Applicants to the Robert Schuman traineeship must:

- be a national of an EU Member State or applicant country;
- be over 18 on your traineeship starting date;
- have a university degree;
- have a thorough knowledge of one of the EU official languages;
- not have worked for more than two consecutive months within an EU institution or body;
- not have carried out a visiting junior or senior academic position of maximum six months.

The process and structure of the Schuman traineeships are currently under revision and the next application period, starting on 1 November, will have a new procedure. When the new internal rules are updated, more information will be available at: <https://ep-stages.gestmax.eu/website/homepage>

From November 2018, the Translation Traineeships will be integrated into the Schuman Stage rather than having a separate application process as has been done previously. Applicants must have a university degree and have a perfect knowledge of one of the official EU languages and a thorough knowledge of two other official languages of the EU.

Finally, applicants for the Journalism Option must demonstrate professional experience as evidenced either by works published, or by membership of an association of journalists, or by a qualification in journalism.

Note: every year, 21,000 people apply for traineeships at Parliament. Only 900 are taken...! Make sure your application is fully completed and as good as it can be before you submit it.

Training Placements

These training placements are an opportunity for applicants who have a secondary school leaving certificate corresponding to the level required for entry to university, or who have followed a higher or technical course of study to an equivalent level, to gain experience in the European Parliament. Priority is given to applicants who are required to complete a training placement as part of their course of study, although there are opportunities for non-compulsory placements too. All details are available on the Parliament website.

Translation Training Placements

These training placements are an opportunity for applicants who have a secondary school leaving certificate corresponding to the level required for entry to university, or who have followed a higher or technical course of study to an equivalent level, to undertake translation training. These placements are particularly aimed at students who are required to complete a training placement as part of their course of study.

Useful Website

Visit the Traineeships page of the European Parliament website for full information on all of the above opportunities: <https://ep-stages.gestmax.eu/website/homepage> (and, of course, you can get in touch with us at EM Ireland!).

2) Political Groups

There are eight political groups in the European Parliament. They all have different systems and policies for stagiaire recruitment. The best thing to do is contact them directly about upcoming opportunities in the Group and also in the Party HQ. Below is a list of the groups and their websites.

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)

<http://www.alde.eu/>

Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)

<http://www.efddgroup.eu/>

Europe of Nations and Freedom

<http://www.enfgroup-ep.eu/>

European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)

<http://ecrgroup.eu/>

European People's Party (EPP)

<http://www.eppgroup.eu/>

European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)

<http://www.guengl.eu/>

Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)

<http://www.greens-efa.eu/>

The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)

<http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/>

3) MEPs

Individual MEPs choose their own trainees as they need them. It's advisable to start looking within your own constituency/country, though you could apply for a position in any office, regardless of the MEP's nationality. You could look at the Members of the different European Parliament Committees to see which MEPs are working on the policy issues you're interested in. Here is a list of the Irish MEPs as a starting point: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ireland/en/your_meps

Stagiaire payment is at the discretion of the individual MEPs. Apply in August to maximise your chances of success.

The rules about traineeships with MEPs are changing. Keep an eye on the European Parliament website for updates.

“The motto of the European Union is ‘Unity in Diversity,’ and I think the Parliament, more than any Institution, is the embodiment of this motto. It is the grout which sits between - and brings together - the European citizen and her Europe. It is a tremendous privilege to come to work every day and work with incredible individuals from all over the Union and gain invaluable exposure to new ideas and new ways of doing things. In many ways it's like being on Erasmus 24-7!”

– Karl, Political Adviser and Social Commentator

Testimonials

"I completed a traineeship in the office of an Irish MEP. This type of traineeship is different to the more structured traineeship programmes in the Parliament. MEP trainees are hired directly by the MEP, rather than by the Parliament. Every MEP decides whether or not they accept trainees, and if they do, when and for how long they take them on, and if they pay them or not. This means that you may or may not be there at the same time as the trainees on the official programme of the Parliament's General Secretariat. However, because there are so many trainees floating around in the various different parts of the building, there's plenty of opportunity to mix and make friends and contacts. The European Parliament Stagiaires Association organises plenty of social events and conferences. The paintballing tournament against the Commission was one of the highlights during my time here!

My work has been really varied and interesting. One moment I'm dealing with constituent queries and the next I'm researching policy. The Brussels job market may be competitive, but anyone I've met who was really determined to stay has found a way. In my own case, my MEP extended my internship. Through that I got a place on a traineeship in a political group. Where there's a will there's a way!"

- Ciara, MEP Office

Noelle, Legal Service, European Parliament

"When you arrive in to work for the Parliament, your first impression of working here is the information meeting that's held in the morning. It can be quite daunting listening to how to register yourself as a tenant, etc which is a concept unknown to us Irish.

After the information meeting, we are told to go and find our supervisors, cue everyone getting lost, everyone asking everyone else where you are meant to go and then getting even more lost. So eventually you find your supervisor and your office and all is well!

Then the next daunting step is the canteen. I think most stagiaires have the same experience with the canteen... first of all you, again, get lost both trying to get there and trying to get back. Then you have massive queues, and the horrible job of trying to find a seat! Don't worry, it all gets better. The longer you are there, the more you develop a talent for being able to arrive in the canteen, have your food chosen and paid for within ten minutes. One thing that helps is looking up the menu before going down! There are not as many stagiaire parties organized in the Parliament as there are in the Commission, but don't worry there are still plenty of parties. It's mostly house parties, such as house-warming parties at the start of the stage, but they keep happening right through to the end. Also Pullmans on Place Lux will become your local.

Although, make sure your entire stage does not consist of after work drinks in Pullmans and then house-parties at the weekend. It is so easy to get caught up in the European bubble, so do try and explore some of the good bars that Brussels has to offer, including those which aren't located on Plux! As part of your stage, you get to go to Strasbourg for a week which is a great experience. Most of us went to the December session which was good because the agenda was interesting and we also got to see the Christmas markets as well. Note that in the Parliament you also get a half-day on Fridays which is nice!

A good idea is to organise the transport yourselves as it is more fun and cheaper than getting the train. We hired mini-vans and then booked a hostel outside the city so the trip was very reasonably priced. Due to the fact the Christmas markets are on, the accommodation in Strasbourg gets booked up extra fast for December. If you organise it right, then renting mini-vans and staying in a hostel that is not in the centre of Strasbourg, will save you a lot of money. We stayed in the hotel Formule 1, Rue De La Gare, 67700 Monswiller. We rented an Opel Vivaro mini-van for €235 from Budget Rent a Car Avenue Louise 91, 1050 Brussels. The stage in the Parliament is a truly enjoyable experience, it is tremendous fun, you work with people of all different nationalities, and the work is diverse and interesting. Enjoy it!"

The Council of the European Union

Brussels, Belgium

The Council of the European Union is the Institution that shares legislative powers with the European Parliament. It represents the executives of Member States. A government minister from each country attends Council meetings. The Minister in question is decided by the topic being discussed. For example, if the meeting relates to agriculture, Ireland's Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine will attend. Meetings are chaired by the country that holds the Presidency of the Council, which is held for 6 months by each country on a rotational basis. Ireland last held the Presidency from January to June 2013.

There are three types of traineeship in the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC):

- paid traineeships;
- compulsory training period as part of a student's studies;
- traineeships reserved for national officials.

There are two five month traineeship periods - 1 February to 30 June and 1 September to 31 January. The Secretariat receives about 4,000 applications each year for the 100 available paid traineeship places. Each type of traineeship has its own application procedure and deadlines.



Paid?

Paid trainees receive a monthly grant of €1,176.84, a restaurant reduction card and travel allowance. Compulsory and national official trainees do not receive a traineeship grant, though compulsory trainees receive the travel allowance and restaurant reduction card.

Note: If you are selected you will be asked to supply several supporting documents (including copies of your diplomas or official certificates, copies of attestations of your professional experience and proof of your language knowledge). It's best to have them ready in advance.

Application process: The online application is available here: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/trainee/>

Eligibility

- You must be an EU citizen or a citizen of a candidate country that has concluded EU accession negotiations;
- For paid traineeships, you must have recently graduated from a university or equivalent higher-education establishment and have a degree certificate or equivalent;
- You must have a thorough knowledge of French or English as they are the main working languages at the GSC;
- Applications will not be accepted from candidates who have already benefited from any kind of training (paid or unpaid) or employment for more than six weeks within an EU institution, body, agency or office.



Useful Websites

At the bottom of <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/jobs/traineeships/frequently-asked-questions/> there's a very handy FAQ doc on the Council traineeships!

European Court of Justice (ECJ)

Luxembourg

The job of the European Court of Justice is to make sure that EU legislation is interpreted and applied in the same way in all EU countries, so that the law is equal for everyone. It ensures, for example, that national courts do not give different rulings on the same issue. The Court also makes sure that EU Member States and Institutions do what the law requires. The Court has the power to settle legal disputes between EU Member States, EU Institutions, businesses and individuals.

Every year, the Court of Justice offers a limited number of paid traineeships lasting a maximum of five months. Traineeships are generally undertaken in the Directorate-General for Translation, the Research and Documentation Directorate, the Communication Directorate, the Protocol and Visits Directorate, the Office of the Legal Advisor for Administrative Cases, the Registry of the General Court or the Interpretation Directorate (here traineeships are of a ten to 12 week duration).

There are two five month traineeship periods - 1 March to 31 July (applications accepted between 1 July and 15 September) and 1 October and 28 February (applications accepted between 1 February and 15 April).

Paid?

The grant paid is €1,120.00 net per month.



Eligibility

- You must hold a university degree in law or in political sciences (with majority content law) or for traineeships in the Interpretation Directorate, a diploma in conference interpreting;
- A good knowledge of French is desirable.

Application Procedure: Applicants must apply using the EU CV Online Application (https://ec.europa.eu/dgs/personnel_administration/open_applications/CV_Cand/index.cfm?fuseaction=premierAcces&langue=EN) during the appropriate time periods.

Useful Website: http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_7008/traineeships

European Central Bank (ECB)

Frankfurt, Germany

The ECB is the central bank for Europe's single currency, the Euro. The ECB's main task is to maintain the euro's purchasing power and thus price stability in the Euro Area. The Eurozone is made up of 19 Member States.

ECB traineeship vacancies are published on their website as they arise during the year. As there are no fixed application dates, it is recommended that applicants register on the ECB's website and they will contact you if a position becomes available.

In addition to their traineeship programme, the ECB also offer a Graduate Programme, aimed at attracting talented recent graduates with a postgraduate degree, preferably a PhD, in one of a broad range of disciplines and a keen interest in central banking. The two-year programme gives participants valuable work experience and an insight into the ECB's tasks and working methods. More information on eligibility requirements and the application process is available here: <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/careers/what-we-offer/graduate/html/index.en.html>

Paid?

A grant of either €1,050 or €1,900 per month is available, depending on the tasks you will be expected to perform and on your relevant qualifications (unless otherwise stated in the vacancy).



Eligibility

- You must be at least 18 and be fluent in English and in another official language of the Union;
- You must be a national of an EU country or an acceding country;
- You must have completed at least a Bachelor's degree and since your most recent qualification -
 - you should have a maximum of 12 months' professional experience;
 - you should have been a trainee for no more than six months;
 - you must not have been an ECB trainee or worked for the ECB. The same applies for those who are working or have worked for the ECB (e.g. as staff members, consultants, agency staff).

Application Process: Register online and search for available positions at:
<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/careers/vacancies/html/index.en.html>

Successful candidates will be required to submit a number of documents to the ECB before starting their traineeship – the link above has all the relevant info!

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Brussels, Belgium

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is a consultative body of the European Union and its goal is to bridge the gap between Europe and organised civil society.

The EESC offers both long term and short term traineeships.

Long Term Traineeship

A five month traineeship available to university graduates from EU countries. Applicants from non-EU countries may be granted a traineeship exceptionally. The spring stage starts on 16 February and the application period is between 1 July and 30 September. The autumn stage starts on 16 September and the application period is between 3 January and 31 March. The grant paid is approx €1,176.84 per month and you may get a contribution towards your travel expenses.

Short-term Traineeship

Unpaid traineeships for between one and three months for university students and recent graduates who are required to complete a period of in-service training as part of their degree. You can apply for these at any time of the year.

Eligibility:

- Applicants must have a thorough command of at least one EU language and a satisfactory command of another EU language, one of which must be English or French. Applicants from non-Member States are required to have a good command of English or French.

Application Process: For both the long-term and short-term traineeships you must submit an online application form.

Further details of the EESC traineeship, and the online application form, are available at: <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/work-with-us/traineeships>

The Court of Auditors (ECA)

Luxembourg

The European Court of Auditors is the external auditor for the EU and checks that EU funds are correctly accounted for and spent in compliance with the rules and legislation, while having regard for achieving best value for money.

The Court of Auditors has 15-20 trainees at any one time depending on budget restraints. Stages last for a maximum of 5 months and have varying start dates.

Paid?

Traineeships may or may not be paid. If you are compensated, the monthly allowance will be around €1,120.

Eligibility

- You must be an EU national;
- You must either hold a recognised university-level degree or diploma or have completed at least four semesters of university studies in a field of interest to the Court (audit/budget, accounting/administration, human resources/translation/communication, international relations/legal);
- You must not have benefited from a traineeship in the Court before. You must have a thorough knowledge of one official language of the European Union and a satisfactory knowledge of at least one other official European Union language.

Application Process: All applications are placed in a central folder. Units will make requests to the stage coordinator as they require trainees.

Further details can be found here: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/traineeshipcomplet.aspx>



European Union External Action Service (EEAS)

EU Delegations around the world

The EEAS Junior Professionals in Delegation (JPD) programme enables young, talented and promising university graduates who hold at least a Master's degree from an EU Member State to gain first-hand experience of the work of the Delegations. The EEAS opens a call for expression of interest every 24 months. The next call, for the round 2019-2021, will be published in January 2019. The EEAS covers the expenses of two JPD posts per Member State. The trainees will be offered a fixed term of 12 months, with the possibility of renewing for an additional 12 months.

Note: Some of the larger Delegations also offer more informal traineeships, separate to the JPD process. Search online for your preferred Delegation to see if this opportunity is on offer there. For example, the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington DC offers unpaid internships throughout the year for university students who must complete a placement as part of their course. The EEAS also hires 60 trainees per year through the Commission's Blue Book scheme.

Eligibility

- You must be a national of an EU Member State;
- You must hold a Master's degree in a field relevant to the activities of the Delegations;
- You must have excellent command of English and/or French. Knowledge of other languages is an asset;
- Professional experience and extra-curricular activities such as volunteering or publication of papers and articles are an important asset.

Paid?

JPD Participants will get a basic monthly grant of €1,375 plus a monthly accommodation contribution of €1058 as well as a number of other additional financial contributions.

How to apply: The application form is available from: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/2463/junior-professional-delegation-jpd_en

Applications must be made through the authority for your Member State. For Ireland this is the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Details can be found on the above website.

Committee of the Regions (CoR)

Brussels, Belgium

The mission of the Committee of the Regions is to involve regional and local authorities in the European decision making process at the earliest stage through mandatory consultation with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on key policy areas of regional concern.

There are two traineeship periods in CoR: from 16 February to 15 July (application period between 1 April and 30 September of the preceding year) and from 16 September until 15 February (application period between 1 October and 31 March). The CoR has 20 traineeships available for each period. The application process is long and thorough, so it is advisable to research the system and prepare your documentation in advance.



Paid?

The grant paid is approx. €1,170 per month. You also receive a 50% discount on a public transport ticket.

Eligibility

- You must be a national of an EU country or an applicant country;
- You must have obtained a full undergraduate degree by the closing date for applications;
- You must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the EU and a satisfactory knowledge of another EU-working language (one of which has to be French or English).

Application Process: There are seven phases in the application process:

1. Submitting the application form online;
2. Application form is validated by the CoR;
3. Candidates are pre-selected by different units of the CoR (short-listed candidates will be informed by the Traineeships Office and will be requested to upload a number of documents);
4. Interviews;
5. Document check (the Traineeships Office checks whether the documents you supplied are consistent with the information you put in your application form – so take care when filling this in!);
6. Final selection of successful candidates;
7. Starting your traineeship and receiving your contract.

Useful Website: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/about/Pages/traineeships.aspx>



Committee of the Regions Short-term Study Visits

The Committee of the Regions also offers unpaid short-term study visits to students who have at least a Bachelor's degree. This visit serves to allow the student visitor to complete a project of direct interest to a specific unit of the CoR that has been clearly established in advance.

These study visits are open to any national of an EU Member State or a State which is an official candidate for accession (though applicants of third countries may be awarded a short term study visit in certain cases), provided that you have a Bachelor's degree and that you can show you need to deepen your knowledge of the CoR for professional, academic or research reasons. Learn more about the study visits here: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/about/Pages/traineeships.aspx>

The European Ombudsman

Strasbourg, France and Brussels, Belgium

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in the Institutions and bodies of the European Union. The current European Ombudsman is Irish woman, Emily O'Reilly.

The Ombudsman offers traineeships twice a year to university law graduates. The traineeships take place either in Strasbourg or in Brussels according to the needs of the office. The duration of the traineeship is 4 to 12 months.

There are usually two traineeship periods, one beginning on 1 September and the other on 1 January. Deadline for applications is usually around 31 March each year.

Paid?

Trainees who don't receive a salary or other financial support will be paid a scholarship during the traineeship period. Scholarships for trainees who do receive external financial support will be determined on an individual basis. Trainees who are not entitled to claim travel expenses from any other source will be reimbursed the cost of travel between their place of residence and Strasbourg/Brussels at the beginning and end of the traineeship.

Eligibility

- You must be a national of an EU country;
- You must have a university degree in law and be at an advanced stage of professional training, or research, in EU law;
- You must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the EU and a good knowledge of a second. A very good knowledge of English is required while knowledge of French would be an advantage.



Application Process : The application form is available here: <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/office/careers>. Here you will also find some useful information on the application process.

The form should be sent to the Office of the European Ombudsman along with the following supporting documents:

1. A copy of your CV;
2. A cover letter (preferably typed) explaining in English the reasons for applying for the traineeship;
3. Copy of diplomas, degrees, or certificates (publications could be requested at a later stage if required);
4. Copy of ID card/passport;
5. A financial declaration stating that you will not receive any external financial support for the duration of the traineeship.

Website <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/>

European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg

The European Investment Bank is the long-term lending bank of the European Union. The task of the Bank is to contribute towards the integration, balanced development and economic and social cohesion of the EU Member States.

1. Graduate Recruitment and Development Programme

EIB has put in place a Graduate Recruitment and Development (GRAD) programme aimed at recent graduates looking to gain early professional hands-on experience in a leading European Institution and a major international financial player. The duration of the graduate contract is for a maximum period of four years.

2. General Traineeships

Aside from this graduate programme, the EIB offers a limited number of traineeships for university graduates with less than one year of professional experience. Traineeships normally last between 1 and 5 months and are based at the EIB's headquarters in Luxembourg. Trainees receive a flat-rate monthly allowance and travel costs to and from Luxembourg at the beginning and end of the traineeship. Trainees must cover their own accommodation costs.

If you wish to apply for a traineeship in the EIB, visit the website and respond to one of the current traineeship opportunities. Learn more about these traineeship opportunities here: <http://www.eib.org/en/about/jobs/work-with-us/internships/index.htm>

Paid?

The graduate contract is a fixed monthly basic salary, currently set at €3562.91. It offers benefits such Health and Pension Scheme coverage and accident insurance.

Eligibility

- You must have a university degree in a field related to the Bank's activity;
- You must also be a national of one of the EU countries or of an applicant country having started accession negotiations with the EU;



- You should have no more than two years' work experience since graduating, excluding summer jobs and traineeships;
- Excellent knowledge of English and/or French is necessary.

Application Process: You must apply for specific positions published under “Current Vacancies” on the EIB website. New vacancies are posted regularly. Once you find a position that suits your profile, apply on-line. Before starting your application, take the time to prepare your motivation letter (in English or French) as well as your CV – you will need both of these to complete your application. Your application will be retained for a period of five years from the application date in the EIB database.

Website: <http://www.eib.org/en/>

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)

Brussels, Belgium

The European Data Protection Supervisor is the independent supervisory authority at EU level that is responsible for monitoring the processing of personal data by the EU Institutions and bodies, advising on policies and legislation that affect privacy. The EDPS hosts on average two trainees twice a year for a five-month session. The traineeships start in October and in March. Trainees receive approximately €950 a month.

Eligibility:

- You must be an EU national;
- You must have completed the first cycle of a higher education course (three years of university education) and obtained a full degree or its equivalent;
- You must have a very good knowledge of at least two of the official EU languages, one of which must be English or French;
- Applications will not be accepted from candidates who, for more than three months, have already benefited from work experience (paid or unpaid) with another European Institution or body.

Application Process

To submit their application, candidates are obliged to send:

- The official application form, completed in English or in French;
- A letter of motivation to the attention of the Supervisor;
- A CV;
- The names and contact information of two persons of reference.

Applications should be sent to stage@edps.europa.eu. In the subject of the email, you must mention the Unit you would like to work in (your application may be considered for other Units besides the one you have chosen). Applications received outside the application period are automatically rejected. For further info, see: https://edps.europa.eu/about-edps/recruitment_en#traineeship

Website:<https://edps.europa.eu/>

5. European Agencies

EU Agencies perform specific tasks in order to support the EU countries and their citizens. Over 40 Agencies have been established across Europe. They operate in a huge range of areas and fields of expertise. All of the Agencies listed in this chapter offer some type of traineeship programme, though the duration, eligibility requirements, type of work, application processes and payment arrangements vary with each one. There are a handful of EU Agencies that don't currently offer traineeships – we have excluded them from this volume of The Green Book.

European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)



Lisbon, Portugal

Based in Lisbon, the Agency provides technical assistance and support to the European Commission and Member States in the development and implementation of EU legislation on maritime safety, pollution by ships and maritime security. It has also been given operational tasks in the field of oil pollution response, vessel monitoring and in long range identification and tracking of vessels. EMSA offers traineeships for a period of three to six months. Maintenance grants should be expected by successful applicants yet will vary annually dependent on budget constraints. There are two traineeship periods, one commencing on 1 March and the other on 1 September.

Eligibility: To apply you need to be a university graduate and a national of an EU country. There is also space for non-EU nationals especially from Norway and Iceland. Knowledge of English is required and EU nationals should have a second official EU language.

Website: <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/recruitment-info/trainees.html>

European Medicines Agency (EMA)



London United Kingdom

The Agency's main responsibility is the protection and promotion of public and animal health, through the evaluation and supervision of medicines for human and veterinary use.

Traineeships in the EMA last for a maximum of eighteen months (via three consecutive six-month contracts) and are open to those who have a background relating to the activities of the Agency, i.e. pharmacy, medicine, life sciences, healthcare, chemistry or information technologies. Applications from recently qualified lawyers with an interest in pharmaceutical regulatory affairs, or recently qualified candidates with an interest in human resources, budget or accounts are also welcome. Candidates with a background in communications, public relations or the web can also apply.

The Agency pays a maintenance grant of £1,550 net per month. You will also receive a travel allowance.

There are two possible traineeship intakes per year, starting on 1 October and 1 April. These are advertised on the Jobs@EMA Portal: <https://career5.successfactors.eu/career?company=europeanmeP>.

EMA usually advertise traineeship opportunities two to three months before the two intakes.

Website: www.ema.europa.eu

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)



Lisbon, Portugal

The EMCDDA was established in 1993 and exists to provide the EU and its countries with a factual overview of European drug problems and a solid evidence base to support the drugs debate. Today it offers policymakers the data they need for drawing up informed drug laws and strategies. It also helps professionals and practitioners working in the field to pinpoint best practice and new areas of research. The EMCDDA offers a number of paid and unpaid traineeships which are published once a year on the Agency's job vacancies webpage. Applications for these positions are due for submission between 1 November and 31 December. The training periods last between three and eight months. Information can be found on: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/jobs>

Eligibility: Preference is given to citizens of the EU, Norway and Turkey. Applicants must have a thorough knowledge of English and must be university graduates, though positions are open to a wide variety of academic disciplines including law, sociology, criminology, social sciences, medicine, statistics, etc.

Website: www.emcdda.europa.eu

European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA)



Crete, Greece

The Agency's mission is to have a high level security information network in the EU. In an effort to achieve this, it works with the EU Institutions and EU countries. ENISA seeks to develop a culture of Network and Information Security for the benefit of citizens, consumers, business and public sector organisations in the European Union. ENISA offers paid traineeships from three to twelve months long. English is the official working language of the Agency. Please see the ENISA website for the various areas in which traineeships are offered. Applications which do not specify a chosen area of interest will be dismissed.

Eligibility: You must be an EU national or from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein with very good knowledge of English and one other official EU language. You must also be a university graduate.

Website: www.enisa.europa.eu

European Railway Agency (ERA)

Valenciennes, France



ERA was set up to help create an integrated railway area by reinforcing safety and interoperability. The Agency also acts as the system authority for the European Rail Traffic Management System project, which has been set up to create unique signalling standards throughout Europe.

ERA traineeships last between three and five months and start on either 1 March or 1 October. The application period for the March-July traineeship is usually in December and the application for the October-February traineeship in June. Trainees receive a grant of approx. €1,200 per month and travel expenses are reimbursed.

Eligibility: ERA takes on EU and non-EU citizens with a degree and excellent knowledge of English and one other official EU language (or non-EU language in the case of non-EU citizens).

Website: https://www.era.europa.eu/agency/recruitment/traineeships_en

European Training Foundation (ETF)

Torino, Italy



ETF's aim is to help transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy.

The Foundation offers traineeships lasting six months, though this can be extended to twelve months. Maintenance grants are available, though the value of this grant varies depending on the traineeship position, and travel expenses may also be covered. The 'Jobs' section of the ETF website should be checked regularly for traineeship opportunities.

Eligibility: Trainees must be from EU Member States or ETF partner countries and have a university degree. English is the main working language of the ETF.

Website: www.etf.europa.eu

European Insurance and Occupational Pension Authority (EIOPA)



Frankfurt, Germany

EIOPA's core responsibilities are to support the stability of the financial system, transparency of markets and financial products. They also protect policyholders, pension scheme members and beneficiaries. EIOPA is commissioned to monitor and identify trends, potential risks and vulnerabilities stemming from the micro-prudential level, across borders and across sectors.

EIOPA offers traineeships for between one and six months. The grant paid is approx. €1,300 per month. Vacancies are advertised on their website.

Eligibility: Candidates must be a national of an EEA member state. You must be enrolled in or have completed a university degree and have a very good command of oral and written English. Candidates should also have a background relating to the activities of EIOPA, particularly in one of the following areas: consumer protection, corporate affairs, corporate support, oversight and supervisory convergence, policy, risks and financial stability, supervisory processes department.

Website: <https://eiopa.europa.eu/>

Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)

Angers, France



The CPVO manages a system of plant variety rights covering the 28 Member States. A system for the protection of plant variety rights has been established by European Commission legislation. The system allows intellectual property rights, valid throughout the EU, to be granted for new plant varieties.

Website: www.cpvo.europa.eu.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)



Vienna, Austria

FRA's goal is to ensure that the fundamental rights of people living in the EU are protected. The Agency does this by collecting and analysing data in the EU to help Institutions and Member States understand and tackle challenges to fundamental rights. Since December 2015, Professor Michael O'Flaherty, who is from Ireland, has been Director of FRA.

FRA offers paid internships lasting a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve months twice a year, starting on 1 March and 1 September. Traineeship places are offered in the following FRA departments: Director's Office; Corporate Services; Equality and Citizens' Rights; Freedoms and Justice; Fundamental Rights Promotion

There is a second year-long traineeship open only to Roma candidates. FRA also accommodates study visits from academics and professionals.

Eligibility: Trainees are selected from nationals of EU Member States and EU candidate and potential candidate countries with a university degree and very good knowledge of English and another official EU language. FRA encourages candidates with disabilities to apply.

Website: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/vacancy/2018/traineeship-programme-2018-2019>

European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)



Alicante, Spain

EUIPO is responsible for managing the EU trade mark and the registered Community design. The Office also works with the IP offices of the EU Member States and international partners to offer a similar registration experience for trade marks and designs across Europe and the world.

EUIPO offer four types of traineeships:

- Pan-European Seal Professional Traineeship Programme;
- Traineeships for young professionals;
- Traineeships for junior IP employees;
- Unpaid internships.

Eligibility: These traineeships have various eligibility requirements. All the information is available on the EUIPO website.

Website: <https://euipo.europa.eu/ohimportal/en/traineeships>

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)



Budapest, Hungary

CEPOL's role is to develop, implement and coordinate training for law enforcement officials. CEPOL contributes to a safer Europe by facilitating cooperation and knowledge sharing among law enforcement officials of the EU Member States.

CEPOL offers paid traineeships which are advertised on their website at different times during the year. The grant paid is approx. €1,159.44. Candidates must submit their application using the Europass CV and follow the instructions specified in the traineeship vacancy notice.

Eligibility: Candidates must be enrolled in or have completed a university degree. They must have B2 level French and English as a minimum. English is the working language of CEPOL. Candidates must be a national of an EU Member State.

Website: <https://www.cepola.europa.eu/>

Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CDT)



Luxembourg

The Translation Centre's mission is to meet the translation needs of the other decentralised Community Agencies. It also participates in the Inter-institutional Committee for Translation and Interpretation. Director of the CDT is Máire Killoran, who is from Ireland.

Traineeships last from three to six months. Trainees receive a monthly grant amounting to 25% of the basic monthly salary of a temporary member of staff. Consult the CDT's webpage for opening traineeship opportunities.

Eligibility: You must have completed at least four semesters of university studies or equivalent and have some initial experience in one of the CDT's areas of activity. You will also need to have thorough knowledge of one official EU language and a satisfactory command of another EU language. Good knowledge of either French or English is an advantage.

Website: www.cdt.europa.eu

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)



Solna, Sweden

ECDC is an EU Agency with the aim of strengthening Europe's defences against infectious diseases.

The traineeship programme runs every year for a period of three to nine months. ECDC pays a monthly grant of €1,505.17 and a travel allowance. ECDC welcomes applications from candidates with a background relating to the Agency's activities.

Eligibility: You must be a national of an EU Member State or from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. You will need to have a university degree or equivalent and a very good command of English. Knowledge of additional EU languages is an asset.

Website: www.ecdc.europa.eu

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)



Thessaloniki (Pylea), Greece

Cedefop is the EU Agency that promotes the development of vocational education and training (VET) in the European Union. VET aims to meet the needs of the citizen in the labour market and society in Europe.

There is one traineeship period annually from 1 October to 30 June. Trainees not living in Thessaloniki prior to the traineeship are currently awarded a grant of around €940.29 per month. Travel expenses (within certain limits) are also reimbursed.

Eligibility: Trainees are selected from nationals of EU Member States and candidate countries. You must have a degree and very good knowledge of at least two EU languages, of which one should be English. Applicants from candidate countries must have very good knowledge of at least English.

Website: www.cedefop.europa.eu

European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)



Vigo, Spain

Set up in 2005, the EFCA coordinates fisheries control and inspects the activities of EU countries. It also assists them to cooperate and comply with the rules of the Common EU Fisheries Policy.

The Agency offers a limited number of traineeships to candidates who successfully pass the selection procedure for traineeships with the European Commission and make it into the Blue Book.

Website: www.efca.europa.eu

European Foundation of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)



Dublin, Ireland and Brussels, Belgium

Eurofound was established in 1975 to contribute to the planning and design of better living and working conditions in the EU. It carries out its role in partnership with governments, employers, trade unions and the EU Institutions. It monitors trends and developments in the quality of work and life, industrial relations and structural change and explores and assesses policies and practices.

The majority of traineeships are located in the Dublin offices of Eurofound. There will be a small number of traineeships in the field of Information and Communication at the Liaison's Office in Brussels. The standard traineeship lasts six months and can be extended for up to a further six months. Trainees will be awarded a monthly grant of around €1,410.

Eligibility:

- You must be an EU national or a national of a candidate country. Some non-EU national positions are also available.
- You must have a university degree.
- Candidates from EU countries must have very good knowledge of at least two official EU languages, of which one should be the working language of Eurofound (English).
- Candidates from non-EU countries must have very good knowledge of English, the working language of Eurofound.

Procedure: Traineeships are advertised by the HR section of the website. Be aware that only applications submitted through Eurofound's online recruitment system will be considered. Make sure to keep an eye on Eurofound's website for traineeship opportunities.

Website: www.eurofound.europa.eu

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)



Bilbao, Spain

The EU-OSHA works to make European workplaces safer, healthier and more productive for the benefit of businesses, employees and governments and to promote a culture of risk prevention to improve working conditions in the EU.

Stagiaires are recruited as they are needed. Please note that the EU-OSHA will not acknowledge spontaneous applications or traineeship requests. Opportunities are posted on the Agency website as they arise.

Eligibility: Candidates must be EU or EEA nationals, with a recognised university degree and some experience (academic or professional) in the areas of work of the Agency. Candidates must also speak English and one other EU language.

Website: www.osha.europa.eu

European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)



Cologne, Germany

EASA was set up to promote the highest common standards of safety and environmental protection in civil aviation in Europe and worldwide. Traineeship opportunities are for 12 months and are published on the Agency's website each year. Traineeships are paid but the grant amount available varies from year to year.

Eligibility: EASA traineeship candidates are usually required to have a background that is relevant to the activities of the Agency. Applications will be accepted from graduates and from students who have completed at least two years of university studies and intend to do a voluntary or mandatory traineeship.

Website: www.easa.europa.eu

European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)



Warsaw, Poland

Frontex was created as a specialised, independent body of the EU to coordinate operational cooperation between EU countries in the field of border security. Frontex accepts trainees for periods of between three and twelve months. Visit the Job Opportunities page of the Agency's website to view opportunities as they arise. The monthly traineeship maintenance grant for 2018 is €720.

Eligibility: As with most other stagiaire positions, Frontex traineeships are not generally open to candidates who have already worked or completed a traineeship in an EU Institution, Agency or body. However, Frontex may consider applications from candidates who have interned at other EU Institutions if they present particular value for the Agency.

Candidates must be EU nationals or nationals of a member state of the Schengen Area. They must also have a full degree or equivalent in an area relevant to Frontex's activities, and have excellent English.

Website: www.frontex.europa.eu

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)



Parma, Italy

The EFSA covers food and feed safety, nutrition, animal health and welfare, plant protection and plant health. The Agency is the keystone of EU risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. Paid traineeships and short-term study visits are on offer with the EFSA. Lots more information and calls for applications are available on the Agency's website.

Eligibility: Traineeships are open to PhD researchers, young graduates and students who can select two different areas of interest related to their studies in the fields of plant health, food ingredients, pesticides, GMO, emerging risks, legal affairs, communications, HR, etc. Candidates must be able to work through English.

Website: www.efsa.europa.eu

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)



Helsinki, Finland

The ECHA is the driving force among regulatory authorities in implementing the EU's chemicals legislation for the benefit of human health and the environment as well as for innovation and competitiveness. ECHA helps companies to comply with the legislation, advances the safe use of chemicals, provides information on chemicals and addresses chemicals of concern.

ECHA offers traineeships for periods of between three and six months. Visit the website for stagiaire recruitment advertisements. There are up to 20 graduate traineeship opportunities per year in fields such as chemistry, toxicology, biology, environmental science and technologies, law, communications, finance, human resources and ICT. The traineeships usually start in March or September. Trainees receive a monthly grant of approximately €1,300.

Eligibility: Recent university graduates and holders of a technical or professional qualification of an equivalent level can apply. Public or private sector employees working in fields relevant to applicable chemicals legislation are also eligible. Candidates must be able to work through English.

Website: www.echa.europa.eu

European Asylum Support Office (EASO)



Valletta, Malta

EASO was set up by the European Parliament and the Council. It acts as a centre of expertise on asylum and contributes to the development of the Common European Asylum System.

Website: www.easo.europa.eu

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

Vilnius, Lithuania



EIGE was established to contribute to and strengthen the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and the resulting national policies, and the fight against discrimination based on sex. Equality between women and men is a fundamental right, principle and core value of the EU. Traineeships are advertised on the EIGE website as they become available. They typically last for up to six months.

Eligibility: Traineeships are open to graduates with a background in the social sciences or humanities who have some initial experience in issues related to gender equality. Candidates must speak one official EU language, and have a satisfactory knowledge of at least one other EU language. One of these two languages must be English.

Website: www.eige.europa.eu/

Eurojust

The Hague, The Netherlands



Eurojust was set up in 2002 to improve the fight against serious crime by facilitating the co-ordination of action for investigations and prosecutions covering the territory of more than one EU country with full respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Eurojust does not publish vacant posts for traineeship positions, as the placement of each applicant is based on qualifications and the needs of each unit. Interested candidates should complete an application form and submit it with a letter of motivation and details of your desired start date and traineeship duration. Traineeships at Eurojust are unpaid and last between three and six months. The application form can be downloaded at: <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/careers/Pages/Internships.aspx>.

Eligibility: You have to be a national of an EU country and have an academic profile or professional career relevant to Eurojust's activities. A minimum level of B2 in English is required.

Website: www.eurojust.europa.eu

European Agency for the Cooperation of the Energy Regulators (ACER)



Ljubljana, Slovenia

ACER fosters cooperation among European energy regulators to create a more competitive, integrated market which offers consumers more choice and an efficient energy infrastructure guaranteeing the free movement of energy across borders, enhancing security of supply for EU businesses and consumers. ACER is a central institution in the creation of a Single EU Energy Market.

ACER has an open call for traineeship positions - application details can be found here https://acer.europa.eu/en/The_agency/Working_at_ACER/Pages/Traineeship-Programme.aspx.

Eligibility: Three to six month paid traineeships are on offer to university graduates who are nationals of an EU Member State and who have a background that is relevant to the activities of the Agency. A minimum of two EU languages is required, with one to be an excellent level of English.

Website: www.acer.europa.eu/

European Agency for the operational management of large scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA)



Tallinn, Estonia and Strasbourg, France

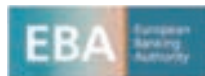
eu-LISA provides long term solutions for the operations management of large scale IT systems which are essential instruments in the implementation of the asylum, border management and migration policies of the EU.

eu-LISA offers paid traineeships to graduates. As they become available these positions are posted on the eu-LISA website.

Eligibility: In addition to the usual eligibility requirements, eu-LISA expects candidates to be open to European matters, contribute to the work of the Agency with a fresh point of view and have a proactive attitude.

Website: www.eulisa.europa.eu

European Banking Agency (EBA)



London, United Kingdom

The EBA is an independent authority which works to ensure effective and consistent prudential regulation and supervision across the European banking sector. Its overall objectives are to maintain financial stability in the EU and to safeguard the integrity, efficiency and orderly functioning of the banking sector.

The EBA offers paid traineeship opportunities to graduates for a period of six to nine months.

Eligibility: The EBA takes applications for traineeships from nationals of EU member states, Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland and candidate countries upon their accession. A good knowledge of English is required, as well as a full degree or equivalent by the closing date for applications. The application also calls for a motivation letter, copies of education diplomas (e.g., your degree), and a CV in a Europass format.

Website: www.eba.europa.eu

European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency (GSA)



Prague, Czech Republic

Satellite navigation has had a major impact in many areas of society, business, service provision and daily life. The aim of the GSA is to design and enable services that fully respond to user needs, while continuously improving the European Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) services and Infrastructure. By developing a new generation of GNSS, the EU is laying the foundations for high-technology industry development, job creation and economic growth.

The GSA offer lots of paid student and graduate traineeship opportunities, all of which are advertised on their website (they also accept ad hoc applications from interested and qualified candidates, but these are unpaid positions).

Eligibility: Candidates must be citizens of the EU or Norway, have some prior experience in the GSA's areas of the work, have a degree or attestation from their university, and have thorough knowledge of one EU language and satisfactory knowledge of another (one to be English).

Website: www.gsa.europa.eu

European Police Office (Europol)



The Hague, The Netherlands

Europol is the European Union's law enforcement Agency whose main goal is to help achieve a safer Europe for the benefit of all EU citizens. They do this by assisting Member States in their fight against serious international crime and terrorism.

Europol offers a range of three to six month paid traineeships, details of which are available on the Europol website. The grant paid in 2018 is €783 per month. Travel expenses may also be covered.

Eligibility: Candidates should have a level of education which corresponds to completed or ongoing university studies or vocational training relevant for the tasks of Europol. Candidates should have very good knowledge of at least two EU languages (one of these to be English, the working language of Europol).

Website: www.europol.europa.eu

European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)



Paris, France

ESMA contributes to safeguarding the stability of the EU's financial system, as well as enhancing investor protection. ESMA works in the field of securities legislation and regulation to improve the functioning of financial markets in Europe, strengthening investor protection and cooperation between national competent authorities. One of its main tasks is to regulate credit rating agencies.

ESMA welcomes spontaneous applications for traineeships in its different divisions.

Eligibility: Candidates should have experience in the areas of expertise of ESMA and preferably a background in law, finance, economics, statistics or communications. Candidates must have a full degree and good English.

Website: www.esma.europa.eu

European Defence Agency (EDA)



Brussels, Belgium

The EDA was established to support EU Member States and the Council in their efforts to improve European defence capabilities. All Member States participate in the EDA except for Denmark. The EDA offers five paid, year-long traineeships. The traineeships start on 1 October or 16 October and the grant paid is approx. €1,176.84 per month. The EDA offers these traineeships to applicants who have a background related to the EDA's operational activities.

Eligibility: To apply you must be a national of an EU Member State which participates in the EDA and have a Bachelor's degree. You must have a very good knowledge of two participating Member States languages, one of which must be English. Applications should be made on the EDA website.

Website: <https://www.eda.europa.eu/home>

European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)



Paris, France

The EUISS is the Union's Agency dealing with the analysis of foreign, security and defence policy issues. The Institute's core mission is to provide analyses and fora for discussion that can be of use and relevance to the formulation of EU policy. In carrying out that mission, it also acts as an interface between European experts and decision-makers at all levels. Traineeships at the EUISS take place twice a year (from September to January and February to June) and will be advertised in advance on the EUISS website. Trainees are paid a monthly stipend of approx. €1,000 and Paris based trainees may receive an additional €200 as a cost of living adjustment.

Eligibility: EUISS traineeships are open to candidates with a Master's qualification in a field related to political science, international relations or equivalent. Candidates must have fluent English and thorough knowledge of at least one other European language. Candidates will also ideally have some relevant experience.

Website: www.iss.europa.eu

European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen)



EUROPEAN UNION
SATELLITE CENTRE
Analysis for decision making

Madrid, Spain

SatCen supports EU decision making in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in particular of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including European Union crisis management operations. It provides analysis of satellite imagery and collateral data, including aerial imagery, and related services.

SatCen offers paid traineeships for graduates subject to availability. The normal period for training is six months.

Eligibility: In addition to traineeships for external projects, from time to time SatCen seeks young university graduates with a specialisation in the area of remote sensing. The number of traineeships available depends on need, available capabilities and budgetary possibilities. Candidates must have very good English.

Website: www.satcen.europa.eu

Fusion for Energy (F4E)

Barcelona, Spain

F4E is responsible for providing Europe's contribution to the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), the world's largest scientific partnership that aims to demonstrate fusion as a viable and sustainable source of energy.

F4E offers four to nine month paid internships in its offices in Barcelona (Spain), Cadarache (France), or Garching (Germany), starting in October.

Eligibility: The traineeship programme is open to university graduates who are nationals of an EU Member State or Switzerland and who have very good knowledge of English, the main working language of F4E. Candidates must have a university degree and have very good knowledge of English and another EU language.

Website: www.fusionforenergy.europa.eu/



European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Budapest, Hungary

The EIT's mission is to increase European sustainable growth and competitiveness, reinforce the innovation capacity of the EU Member States, create the entrepreneurs of tomorrow and prepare for the next innovative breakthroughs.

The number of traineeships on offer at the EIT varies from year to year depending on the needs of the Institute. Keep an eye on the EIT website for available opportunities.

Eligibility: The EIT accepts applications from citizens of the EU, EEA, EFTA, EU candidate countries, and from the USA, Japan, South Korea and the BRICS countries. Candidates must have a university degree and have very good knowledge of English and another official EU language.

Website: www.eit.europa.eu/



Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)



Riga, Latvia

BEREC was established in 2009 and works to contribute to the development and better functioning of the internal market for electronic communications networks and services. It does so in order to bring benefits to consumers and businesses alike. BEREC assists the European Commission and the national regulatory authorities in implementing the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications.

BEREC established its first traineeship programme in 2016. Three profiles are offered:

1. Human resources area - Administration and Finance Unit
2. General area - Programme Management Unit
3. Administrative area - Programme Management Unit

Trainees are entitled to a monthly grant which varies annually. Training periods are initially offered for a period of six months with the option for an extension of up to twelve months.

Eligibility

- You must be an EU national.
- You must have successfully completed at least three years of a university course or equivalent education in a field of interest to BEREC.
- You must have a very good knowledge of at least two EU official languages, including English at level C2 to fully profit from the traineeship.

Website: www.berec.europa.eu

Executive agencies

Executive agencies are set up for a limited period of time by the European Commission to manage specific tasks related to EU programmes. There are currently six executive agency and they recruit trainees through the Commission Blue Book Programme (see pages 28-33). Visit the Commission's Traineeship webpage: www.ec.europa.eu/stages/

European Research Council (ERC)

Brussels, Belgium

The ERC's mission is to encourage the highest quality research in Europe through competitive funding and to support investigator-driven frontier research across all fields, on the basis of scientific excellence.

The ERC selects its trainees from the official European Commission Blue Book. If you want to become a Blue Book trainee, check out our section on the Commission earlier in this chapter or visit the Commission's Traineeship webpage: www.ec.europa.eu/stages/.

Website: <https://erc.europa.eu/>



Research Executive Agency (REA)

Brussels, Belgium

The REA is a funding body created by the European Commission to maximise the efficiency and impact of EU research and innovation programmes. The Agency has no political mandate and instead focuses on managing research proposals and funded projects.

The REA regularly offers recent graduates the opportunity to do a five-month paid traineeship, as part of the European Commission scheme for trainees. There are two sessions per year, starting in March and October, with applications opening in July/August and January respectively.

Website: https://ec.europa.eu/info/jobs-european-commission/experts/working-research-executive-agency_en#traineeships



Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA)

Luxembourg



CHAFEA's main aim is to improve the implementation of the Community public health programme. The Agency is also entrusted with tasks in the field of consumer protection and food safety training.

Website: www.ec.europa.eu/chafea/

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Brussels, Belgium



EASME was set-up by the European Commission to manage several EU programmes on its behalf. EASME manages most of COSME, the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, including the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), and part of Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, amongst others.

Website: www.ec.europa.eu/easme/

Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA)

Brussels, Belgium



INEA's main objective is to increase the efficiency of the technical and financial management of the programmes it manages.

Website: www.ec.europa.eu/inea/

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

Brussels, Belgium



EACEA is responsible for the management of certain parts of the EU's funding programmes in the fields of education, culture, audiovisual, sport, citizenship and volunteering. EACEA manages the Erasmus+, Creative Europe and Europe for Citizens programmes.

Website: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea_en

Testimonial

I did my traineeship in EACEA, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, one of five main EU Agencies that help manage EU programmes. Specifically, EACEA manages aspects of EU programmes relating to education and culture - the biggest one being Erasmus. I did my traineeship in the Director's office, so I was helping with the work associated with running the Agency. Education and culture policy was a bit of a departure from my previous experience and not a policy area I saw myself specialising in, but working in my unit was a very unique insight into the functioning of the European Commission, which was exactly what I wanted to gain from the traineeship. EACEA works with four 'parent Directorates-General' in managing its programmes - DG EAC, DG CONNECT, DG HOME and DG ECHO - so I was able to see the interaction between DGs and Agencies, but also get an idea of how different DGs interact with each other, which was really interesting. Working in a more directly citizen-facing area meant that a part of my role was assisting with handling responses to MEPs and the European Ombudsman, and seeing how the Commission interacts with the public was also really great.

Ultimately your experience in the EU Institutions will depend hugely on your DG and unit, so it's difficult to give an accurate impression based on a very specific experience. We were about 20 trainees in the Agency, and to this day I'm not 100% sure what some of them did on a day-to-day basis - a feeling that was definitely shared by others. However, I think some aspects are unique to the Institutions. One of the things that really struck me was not only how multicultural the Institutions are, but also how multilingual. It's true that on a day to day basis you don't really need a second language, but it definitely helps. Most units work mainly in English, but I knew of a few that operated mostly through French, and people would switch between languages in meetings more often than you'd think. Basically if you do have another language or two, it's the perfect place to dust off those cobwebs and practice as much as possible. More generally, my advice to anyone starting

a traineeship in the Institutions is: don't expect to solve all the EU's problems during your five months there, but go to as many meetings, etc. as you can, and talk to as many people as possible. Five months go by fast and you'll be surprised at how much you pick up just by being there and talking to people – or how some seemingly inane conversation with a random person in the lift could make something you've been wondering about for days click into place!

As for Brussels itself, in my experience it's not a city you either love or hate, but rather a city that inspires very strong mixed feelings depending on the time of year and how much interaction you've had with the public administration on a given day. Brussels is a slow burner – there's always something going on, but it won't be immediately obvious. You have to work a little bit to get to know it, and more than any other place I've experienced, it's a real city of villages – the different communes have quite different vibes. This, however, is not only what makes it more interesting overall, but also what keeps it interesting through the dark winters and longer work days! When combined with the international feel of a city in which just over a fifth of residents are non-Belgian, it makes for a place that's very full of life – and very hard to leave!

- Danaí Lazari

Joint Undertakings

Joint Undertakings are agencies of the EU which have been set up to ensure the efficient execution of EU research, technological development and demonstration programmes. They are public-private partnerships which are industry-led and they tend to be quite sector-specific.

There are seven Joint Undertakings and many of them offer traineeships throughout the year. You should keep an eye on their websites for announcements of new opportunities.

- Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership Joint Undertaking (ECSEL)n - <https://www.ecsel.eu/>
- Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2 Joint Undertaking (FCH) - <http://www.fch.europa.eu/>
- Innovative Medicines Initiative Joint Undertaking (IMI) - <https://www.imi.europa.eu/>
- Single European Sky ATM Research Joint Undertaking (SESAR) - <https://www.sesarju.eu/>
- Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking - <https://shift2rail.org/>
- Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking - <http://www.cleansky.eu/>
- Bio Based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI) - <https://www.bbi-europe.eu/>

6. Other Stages

Outside the EU Institutions and Agencies, there are numerous NGOs, trade groups, Chambers of Commerce, think tanks, public affairs companies and other organisations (based in Brussels and elsewhere) that may recruit trainees on a paid or unpaid basis. Many of these will change their trainee policy on a yearly basis so use this section as a guide and contact your preferred organisations directly, or check their websites, if you're keen to apply. If there are no traineeships advertised by the organisation of your choice, consider sending in a speculative application in case an opportunity arises.

European Movement Ireland



Dublin, Ireland

European Movement Ireland is a not-for-profit organisation working to develop the connection between Ireland and Europe and ensuring that European issues are discussed in Ireland in a reasoned, robust and fair manner.

European Movement Ireland has developed a highly successful stage programme, which requires a three to four month commitment. Stagiaires are accepted on a rolling basis, depending on the organisation's projects and work programmes, and we are always keen to hear from interested candidates.

Eligibility:

- Third-level degree in a field suitable to the organisation e.g. European Studies, Law, Politics, Economics, etc.;
- The ability to work as part of a team, in a busy office;
- Good research skills, as well as good communications skills, both oral and written;
- Good knowledge of the European Union;
- Experience with Microsoft Office, including Word and Outlook.

Suitable candidates can apply for the EM Ireland stage programme by emailing a CV, cover letter and dates of their availability to info@europeanmovement.ie

Website: <http://www.europeanmovement.ie/internships-and-opportunities/>

European Movement International



European
Movement
International

Brussels, Belgium

The European Movement is a network of organisations that has mobilised citizens and advocated for a democratic, federal and enlarged union since 1948. It is open to all political, economic, social and cultural trends in civil society and its objective is to contribute to the establishment of a united, federal Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for basic human rights.

Eligibility: Our colleagues in European Movement International offer internships to people who are in full time education and require a placement as part of their course. Contact the organisation directly for more information or to apply.

Website: www.europeanmovement.eu

Ibec Europe



Brussels, Belgium

The Ibec Europe office represents the interests of Ibec members at European Union level on an individual, sectoral and national basis through its advocacy work in the EU Institutions on draft policy and legislation directly affecting members. The office is located in the heart of the European quarter in Brussels. Ibec actively engages with the European Commission, MEPs, the Irish Permanent Representation to shape and influence draft policy and legislation to benefit Irish business.

Eligibility: Keep an eye on the Ibec website for traineeship vacancies. They also offer an IR/HR Graduate Programme, details of which are also available on the Ibec site.

Website: www.ibec.ie

Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU (Perm Rep)



Brussels, Belgium

The Perm Rep in Brussels brings together under one roof civil servants from nearly every Government Department, making it Ireland's biggest diplomatic mission abroad.

Their job is to negotiate and lobby on behalf of Ireland. Working with government ministers and the Irish administration as a whole, they make sure that Ireland has its say on all EU laws and decisions. By acting as the link to the wide range of people and institutions in Brussels, the Perm Rep is at the heart of Ireland's interaction with the EU.

Internships at the Perm Rep are advertised on the Rep's website and via the EM Ireland Jobs and Traineeships list as they become available. Good language skills and knowledge of French is usually an advantage, if not a requirement.

Website: www.dfa.ie/prep/brussels

United Nations Brussels Office



UNITED
NATIONS
BRUSSELS

PARTNERING
WITH THE
EUROPEAN
UNION

Brussels, Belgium

The United Nations Brussels Office maintains and develops the partnership between the UN and the EU Institutions. It also plays a role in bringing together some 25 UN agencies, funds and programmes represented in Brussels to act as a coherent team and speak with one voice in European fora in relation to policy and advocacy with the EU.

The various UN agencies and offices in Brussels recruit interns each year. If you are interested in becoming an intern here, visit the "Jobs" page of the website below.

Website: www.unbrussels.org

Council of Europe

Strasbourg, France



Similar names for different Institutions and organisations can be confusing. Between the Council of the European Union, the European Council and the Council of Europe, it's very hard to know what's what! We've already had a look at the traineeship in the Council of the European Union (see page 42) and we know that this is the EU Institution where the Member States' government representatives sit, i.e. the ministers of each Member State with responsibility for a given area. The European Council is the Institution within the Council of the European Union that defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union. It is made up of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, together with its President and the President of the Commission. Finally, the Council of Europe, based in Strasbourg in France, is a human rights organisation comprising 47 members, including all EU Member States. The Council of Europe advocates freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly and equality, and the protection of minorities. It is an entirely separate organisation from the EU.

Traineeships in the Council of Europe can last anywhere between eight weeks and five months. Two official traineeship sessions are held each year – usually from March to the end of July and from September to January of the following year. Due to the large number of applications the Council receives, it is strongly recommended to apply at least one month before the deadline. Traineeships in translation have recently been introduced. You should note though that all the internships in the Council of Europe are unpaid.

Eligibility: You must be a national of one of the Council of Europe Member States, have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and very good knowledge of one of the two Council of Europe official languages (English or French). If you are applying for the translation traineeship, you must be French or English mother tongue.

Website: www.coe.int

European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)

Brussels, Belgium



EUROCONTROL is an intergovernmental organisation with 41 members committed to building a Single European Sky that will deliver the air traffic management performance required for the twenty-first century and beyond. The organisation runs a traineeship programme which allows undergraduate students, graduates and PhD students to benefit from professional exposure at one of their sites across Europe. These traineeships range between two and twelve months and receive a monthly allowance of €900.

EUROCONTROL also has a graduate programme which offers graduates 3 years' experience in 3 different business areas. You can find plenty more information on the graduate programme at: <https://www.eurocontrol.int/jobs>

Website: www.eurocontrol.int

EUROCHAMBRES



Brussels, Belgium

EUROCHAMBRES, the European Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, serves the interests of every sector and every size of European business.

Jobs and internships are advertised on their website.

Website: <http://www.eurochambres.eu>

ETUC European Trade Union Confederation



Brussels, Belgium

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) speaks with a single voice on behalf of European workers to have a stronger say in EU decision-making.

Jobs and internships are advertised on their website.

Website: <https://www.etuc.org/en>



EU Jobs Ireland is a strategy to promote awareness of the career and traineeship opportunities the EU Institutions offer and to support Irish graduates in applying for them.

This strategy is led by the Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee TD, in cooperation with European Movement Ireland, the European Commission Representation in Ireland, the European Parliament Information Office in Ireland, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Public Appointment Service.

Through the website, newsletter and social media, EU Jobs Ireland aims to keep you up to date on the latest EU career and traineeship opportunities. Regular information seminars are held in Dublin, Brussels and across third level institutions through a team of EU Career Ambassadors. There is also training and support available to Irish candidates preparing for EU recruitment competitions.

You can find out more on:

The website: <https://www.dfa.ie/eujobs/>

Twitter: @eujobsireland

Facebook: [eujobs.ie](https://www.facebook.com/eujobs.ie)

Email using the form on: <https://www.dfa.ie/eujobs/contact-us/>

EURES – Your First EURES Job

EU Member States, Norway and Iceland

YOUR FIRST EURES JOB (YFEJ) is a mobility scheme. It helps young people aged 18 to 35 from any of the EU countries, Norway and Iceland to find a work placement – job, traineeship or apprenticeship – in another country. EURES provides information, recruitment, matching, and pre- and post-placement support to young people. The scheme provides direct financial support to individuals for interview trips, language courses, some relocation costs, recognition of qualifications, supplementary trip allowance for candidates with special needs and/or from the most outermost EU regions and subsistence allowance for trainees and apprentices. Placements last at least three months for traineeships or six months for jobs and apprenticeships.

Eligibility:

- You must be a national and legal resident of an EU country, Norway or Iceland;
- You must be aged 18 to 35 at the time of application;
- You must be seeking a job in another EU country, Norway or Iceland;
- You must be a jobseeker or job-changer, but not necessarily a first-time mobile candidate;
- You can have high or low qualifications when applying;
- Work experience is useful but not essential.

Application Process:

To find out the nearest contact point to you and the participation conditions, go online at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eures> and <http://ec.europa.eu/social/yourfirsteuresjob> and follow the relevant links.

For further information see:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/documents/10182/16255/Your%20first%20EURES%20job%20-%20Guide.pdf>

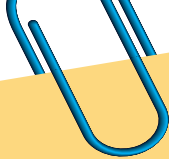


Chapter 2:

Living There



Living in Brussels



Things to bring with you.

- Tea bags - Barry's Tea can be found in Brussels but at extortionate prices! Lyons is more difficult to come by.
- Photocopies of your passport and passport photos - these may come in useful when tackling the administrative side of moving to Brussels and starting your stage.
- A French dictionary.
- A guide book.
- An umbrella - you'll soon learn that the weather in Brussels is extremely unpredictable.
- Bed linen - most landlords don't provide this. It's best to bring your own or organise to buy some during your first couple of days.

Congratulations - You've Arrived! Now What?

1. Find a Temporary Bed

As is the case with most places, the pictures provided in online property advertisements for the Brussels market are not always reliable. If at all possible, it's easier and wiser to look for accommodation when you're on the ground. Some people fly out for a weekend to view properties a few weeks before their start date. Others come a couple of days early. Either way, there are plenty of hotel and hostel options to house you during your search.

It should be noted that unlike in other cities, hostel and hotel prices drop significantly at the weekend. This is because many of the professionals who are in Brussels for business are not there at the weekend, causing demand to fall. www.tripadvisor.ie and www.hostelworld.com are excellent resources where you'll find honest reviews from past customers.

2. Find a New Home

The best place to start looking is the internet, but as mentioned above, you should follow up with viewings. If you do some research in advance from home, you can set up apartment viewings in your area of preference. Beware of scams and be sure to check the locations of properties on Google Maps as well as their proximity to your workplace. Some districts are much larger than you might think.



Additionally, you can walk around the areas in which you'd like to live looking for "à louer" ("For Rent") signs in windows. If you do see these orange signs, act fast and contact landlords and agencies directly.

Price: The average rent rates for stagiaires are between €400 and €700. Unfortunately there is not much consistency between what people pay and the quality of their accommodation. You should be able to find a room in a relatively nice shared apartment in the EU quarter for €500-€550 inclusive of bills. If you would prefer to live alone in a studio or bedsit, expect to pay a bit more. There is high demand for properties towards the start dates of the traineeship periods of the main Institutions, so it's best not to delay your search. At the same time, there are plenty of places available, so if you're well prepared you won't have a problem finding a flat.



TIP:

Join the Facebook group "Flat board for EU Stagiaires". It's used to advertise accommodation, as well as the need for accommodation and flat mates.

Remember:

Many landlords will insist on a one year lease. Some of them may allow you to move out early provided that you sub-let the room, but you should always verify this first. Don't be too scared by the idea of a three year or nine year lease, which are also commonplace. These leases actually give the tenant more freedom to move out before the lease is finished. Again, you should always verify this first.

With a one year lease, the landlord tends to keep a lot of the responsibility for the upkeep of the property. Bear in mind that with a three year or nine year lease, the tenant tends to have more responsibility for the upkeep of the property, but the rent tends to be cheaper.

The standard deposit is two months' rent. In general, tenants are asked to pay this deposit plus the first month's rent before moving in.

Unfurnished apartments are a common phenomenon. This can be inconvenient, but the rents are often much cheaper.

Useful Websites

BruKot	www.brukot.be/
Brussels Destination	www.brusselsdestination.be
Expatriates.com	www.expatriates.com/classifieds/belgium/hs
ICA	http://www.icab.be/residence_programme.php
Immoweb	www.immoweb.be/fr
R e s i d e n t i a l Accommodation in Brussels	www.easylanguages.com/languages-abroad/living-in-residence-in-brussels_225
The Bulletin (weekly English Magazine about life in Brussels)	www.thebulletin.be
Vlan newspaper	www.vlanimmob.be
Flatshare	www.appartager.be
Easy Life in Brussels	www.easylifeinbrussels.be
Zimmo	www.zimmo.be

TIP: There are also some Facebook groups, frequented by people who are looking for a place or renting theirs. Although the group names are in French, there are a lot of international people on these groups, and many posts are in English. These groups are particularly good for setting up last-minute, quick viewings:

- BXL A LOUER - de bouches a oreilles
- Bxl à Louer - de bouche à oreille (II)
- BXL à Louer
- BXL A LOUER : STUDIO/APPART/COMMERCE

3. Choose your District

There are loads of areas to choose from in Brussels - here are some thoughts as to where you might want to stay for your few months....

Ixelles

Ixelles is a very lively part of the city, with lots of shops, bars, restaurants and other amenities. The district is very big, with lots of distinct little neighbourhoods with their own style, so be sure to check the distance and transport links between potential flats and your office. Flagey, Place Stéphanie and Châtelain are all nice. Boniface, Place de Londres, Porte de Namur also have great character and are near

the Institutions. Cimetière d'Ixelles is where students from Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) live, so it's really animated and can be cheaper.



Etterbeek

This is an excellent area in that it's close to the main Institutions, Place du Luxembourg, Flagey and other places you'll be spending much of your time. On the other hand, some parts can seem dead at the weekend and at night. There are plenty of supermarkets like Colruyt, Aldi, Delhaize and Carrefour, and every Sunday there is a lovely market at Place Jourdan. There is also a sports centre with a swimming pool in the La Chasse area of Etterbeek on Rue des Champs 71.



Saint Josse-ten-Noode

Saint Josse-ten-Noode is a 15 to 20 minute walk to Schuman (where most of the European Institutions are located). It's half way between the European quarter and the centre. It's close to Madou metro station and to Tour de Madou, where DG Competition is based. While it's easier to find cheaper accommodation here, parts of this area have a reputation for being unsafe.



"In my personal experience I really enjoy living in Saint-Gilles as the daily market, variety of Art Nouveau cafes and homes give it a strong neighbourhood and truly Brussels feel. But it is further away from the EU area and you will probably have to be prepared to take a metro to your DG." – Ciara, Former Stagiare

Saint-Gilles

Saint-Gilles is a mixed area. Some parts are less safe and others are young and bohemian. The Parvis de Saint-Gilles is the focal point of the district. It hosts a daily fruit and vegetable market from 8am to 2pm, which is a lot bigger at the weekend. There is also a lovely Monday night market on the square right in front the Commune de Saint-Gilles. A good selection of reasonably priced bars and restaurants can also be found around the Parvis. Brasserie de l'Union, Potemkine and Maison de Peuple are some examples. Many of the bars have free music at the weekends. The architecture in the area is strongly influenced by Horta, and built in art nouveau style. If you would like to learn more, visit the Horta Museum on Rue America.



City Centre

"I find living in the centre good (De Brouckère/Saint Gery). You save money on taxis at the weekends and there are a lot of amenities like supermarkets, internet cafes and shops. However it can feel a bit dodgy at night time...definitely wouldn't be comfortable walking home alone. It is also a bit dirtier than other districts." – *Aine, Former Stagiaire*



City Centre vs. Suburbs

One stagiaire's opinion – Aislinn McCrory, Former Stagiaire

"Everyone wants to live in the city centre right? Well, in Brussels not quite. There are lots of advantages to living in such a central location but it's important to note the downsides of having a Brussels 1000 address.

Pros: Surprisingly, the rent in the centre of Brussels is actually quite cheap. When looking for accommodation, I viewed some houses and flats in the suburbs (nearer to Evere where I work) and these places were in fact much more expensive. It is actually possible to get a room for around 0400 with bills included in the heart of the city. Obviously the big plus points are the facilities: everything from cinemas and bars to supermarkets and launderettes are all in walking distance if you live in the centre. Anything worth seeing that isn't in the centre is easily accessible as most metro and bus lines pass through De Brouckere.

Cons: To put it bluntly, De Brouckère just isn't as pretty as many of the other districts. It's dirtier and well, a bit rougher. If you are female, walking alone after dark isn't the most comfortable experience as groups of young men tend to hang around the metro entrances and on corners, staring, muttering at passers by and being generally intimidating. Most of these men are harmless but it still isn't nice. There are lots of good bars and clubs in De Brouckère but unfortunately most stagiaire drinking based meetings seem to take place elsewhere (at Place Lux, Place Jourdan or in the general Schuman area)."

4. Register with the Belgian Authorities

EU citizens can remain in Belgium for up to three months without registering. However, if you're taking up employment or self-employment, you're required to register. This includes stagiaires. Each commune has a different office. The addresses and procedures of each office can be found here: http://be.brussels/brussels?set_language=en. Most communes will allow you to make an appointment.

Warning!

There will probably be a long waiting list to register. Apply for an appointment early because you may have to wait a month or two to see someone. Another option is simply turning up at your commune building and queuing (however in Etterbeek they will certainly not see you). This may take some time and there is no guarantee that you will be dealt with.

Once you have made the appointment, the commune will arrange for the police to visit your address and make sure your name is on the door. All they need to do is check from the outside – they don't need to speak to you or ask to come in.

To register or not to register?

Many people register, many don't. Some claim that it's too much hassle if you're only staying for five months. Legally, however, you are obliged to do so. In addition, if you stay on after your traineeship, you may come up against problems if you haven't registered.

What does the registration process involve?

You should always call to confirm this beforehand because each commune is different. Be warned that you may end up having to go back multiple times as they sometimes ask for new or different documents each time! In general though, you will be asked to provide the following:

- Two photocopies of your passport;
- Proof of address (your lease will suffice);
- Your contact details in Belgium;
- Your stage contract;
- Four passport photos;

Your medical insurance card.

It's usually free to register, but they may charge you €30 if you request an electronic ID card. At the appointment a representative from the commune will review the documents and if they are satisfied you will be registered.

Regarding the electronic ID card, it is worth requesting one if you have already gone to the trouble of registering. It can be useful when purchasing train tickets online, for example. If you ask for a card, you will be first given a receipt, and a PIN code will be posted to your address within a few weeks. To collect the card, you need to return to the commune office with the PIN.



5. Get a Bank Account

It is not strictly necessary to open a Belgian bank account because you can arrange to be paid into your Irish account. If you choose to do so however, to avoid the extra bank charges, you will need to book an appointment and bring three documents:

- A photocopy of your passport;
- A copy of your stage contract;
- Proof of address in your home country.

On average you will need to wait a day between making the appointment and opening the account. You can choose from several different banks. These all offer short-term accounts for six months, which can be closed or left open after this six month period. They all provide roughly the same services and there is no big difference between them. There are a number of bank branches around Schuman that are specifically equipped to set up new accounts (including accounts for stagiaires). There should be no problem finding an English speaker to deal with, but the queues get extremely long at lunchtime, so try to go at another time. There are several bank branches in the Parliament itself, so if you are based there, the procedure is very straightforward.

All the major banks - ING, KBC and BNP Paribas Fortis - have basic current accounts that don't charge fees so long as you only use their ATMs and do your transfers online.



Bancontact (Mister Cash) is similar to a debit card in Ireland. It operates in the same way that Maestro does. Generally both types of card are accepted in the same shops. You can also use it back home to withdraw money from any machine that accepts Maestro.



6. Go Shopping

You may have to put some thought into this because supermarkets and other shops are mostly closed – or have shorter opening hours – on Sundays. The exception to this is every first Sunday of the month, when the shops in the city centre open specially. During the week, shops are open until 6pm or 7pm.

Smaller night shops can be found throughout the city. There is not necessarily much consistency in their opening hours other than the fact that they're open late. They are generally more expensive than regular supermarkets, but can be handy if you need a last minute litre of milk or bottle of wine.

Tip: If you need to do a big food shop, Aldi and Lidl both have stores across the city so it should be no problem to find one near your neighbourhood or office.

**WARNING:
NEARLY
ALL SHOPS
CLOSE ON
SUNDAYS!**



Furniture

It's possible to furnish or decorate your flat on a small budget. There is a branch of IKEA located in Anderlecht, and a 5 minute walk from CERIA metro station. A second branch can be found in Zaventem.



TIP: If you need household products like towels and plates and only have time to get them on your lunch break, it might be best to go to the Metro Shop in De Brouckère. Household goods are difficult to come by in the European quarter. It only takes 15 minutes from Schuman station to De Brouckère. The shop is located in the station so you'll avoid the crowds on the street.

Working in the Institutions

Don't let the language barriers completely put you off.

One of the first things you will notice is that many people on your stage programme are excellent at languages. As mentioned before, however, you are already at an advantage as a native English speaker. The working languages of the EU Institutions are English, French and German, with most of the work done through the first two, and more again in English.



“Je suis désolé mais je ne parle pas français. Est-ce que c’est possible de parler en anglais s’il vous plaît? Merci beaucoup.”

(Sorry but I don’t speak French. Would you mind if we spoke in English? Thank you very much.)

It’s well worth practicing your languages. If you already have even a little French, it’s worth brushing up and using the opportunity of being in Brussels to practice as much as you can. It’s a great chance to learn or develop other EU languages too, considering that you are in a multicultural city with people from all over Europe – so you can always find a way to practice with native speakers.

The European Parliament Stagiaires Association (EPSA) and the European Commission’s Stage Committee run free language classes taught by trainees for trainees. Not only is this a good way to brush up on your language knowledge, it is a great way to meet other trainees. There are also countless evening classes in Brussels. Private schools can be quite expensive but an excellent investment.

TIP: If you have to translate words from one European language to another, try the InterActive Terminology for Europe (IATE) portal. This can be accessed via the following URL: <http://iate.europa.eu/> For Dutch, the Huis van het Nederlands (www.huisnederlandsbrussel.be/) coordinates language classes and subsidises the fees – eighty hours of beginners Dutch will cost you about €72, and it’s about half that if you have registered with a Brussels commune.

Remember that there are lots of other European Institutions... and lots of other stage programmes. There are a huge number of stagiaires working in and around Brussels in a variety of institutions and organisations. It is well worth making contact with them to hear different perspectives on both the system and the city. Alternatively, you might like to organise an event where you could meet as a group. If you're having difficulty making contact with other trainees, contact the European Movement Ireland office for advice.

Take the opportunity to develop your skills.

The weight of your workload will largely depend on your DG and Unit. Often supervisors are not used to having trainees or presume that you'd rather socialise than work. If you find yourself in a position where you're bored and looking for tasks to fill your time, the best thing to do is talk to your colleagues. Many officials are former stagiaires themselves and understand how boring it can be if you have no work to do.

Tip: Get used to accepting business cards. Everyone passes them around all the time and you should consider investing in some yourself.

Health Insurance

If you're doing a traineeship in an Institution, they'll require proof of health insurance, such as an EHIC card. For treatment in Belgium, it's worth signing up with one of the "Mutuelles" - under that system, a GP consultation is about €30 and prescription fees are largely covered.



TIP: There are countless interesting conferences happening in Brussels. If you find something relevant to you, ask your supervisor if you can go and offer to write up a paper on it afterwards. The intranet pages of the individual Institutions are a good place to look for upcoming events. Take note though, it's best to get the approval of your supervisor if you plan on putting down your stagiaire title and DG on the card.

You'll also find lots of interesting events here:

<http://agenda.euractiv.com/agenda/>
<https://www.euagenda.eu/>
<http://10times.com/brussels-be/conferences>

Most of the Institutions' buildings are in the same general area, but not all in the same place.

Many of the Commission's offices are based outside the main building, the Berlaymont. As a Commission stagiaire, there's a sizeable chance your office will be a little away from the centre of European affairs, the Schuman roundabout. The following link shows the addresses of all Commission buildings: http://ec.europa.eu/oib/buildings_en.cfm.

The buildings, on the other hand, are a bit more centralised. They are all in the vicinity of Place du Luxembourg. Besides the offices and parliamentary facilities themselves, the main buildings house a gym, supermarket, drycleaners and hairdressers, as well as several bank branches, cafés and restaurants. It's a big place that takes a while to get used to. The easiest way to learn is by getting lost! The MEP offices are laid out according to political groupings. The S&D Members, for example, are all on the same few floors.

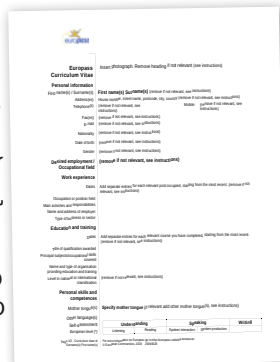
Get involved in your stagiaire association. The main Institutions have democratically elected, stagiaire-led associations that run a myriad of events throughout the stage. They operate similarly to student unions at universities. The structures of these organisations vary from Institution to Institution. The Commission's stage committee is formally recognised by the Institution and receives funds to support its work. The Parliament's stagiaire association (EPSA) is fully independent and receives no financial support, but nevertheless runs a comprehensive programme of activities. Obviously the efficiency and productivity of each committee is down to the initiative of the elected board. As a general rule, however, you can expect them to run a variety of language classes, club nights, job conferences and trips away. It's well worth running for a position if you've got good organisational skills. You'll meet lots of people and it will look great on your CV. Of course, you can still get involved if you don't want to take on the responsibility of a structured role. The Commission's stage committee often has sub-committees for everything from kayaking to knitting. If there's something in particular that interests you, find some likeminded people and make it your own. EPSA boards will often recruit volunteers to help out with the newsletter, website, social media and events.

Usually each stage intake will have its own Facebook page so you can get to know other stagiaires before you go. For example, 2018's October stage at the Commission has a group called "EC Traineeship October 2018". Other groups use similar name formats.

EPSA has an official umbrella group for Parliament trainees: www.facebook.com/groups/espaoofficial. In addition to this, there will usually be individual pages for the different stage periods.

Advice

- Always have a few hard copies of your CV on you, or pop a soft copy on a USB stick to carry around. In the past, some stagiaires have been asked to bring a CV to pass around the team. You may also be asked for a copy at training days.
- You are entitled to two days off per month. Talk to your supervisor and the stage coordination office to confirm details.
- If you do a winter stage, you can expect approximately a week off at Christmas. At Easter you will get around three days off. There are also plenty of long weekends in the summer months. The following is a list of public holidays in Belgium for 2018 and 2019:



Belgian Public Holidays 2018

1 January - New Year's Day	21 July - Belgian National Holiday
2 April - Easter Monday	15 August - Assumption Day
1 May - May Day	1 November - All Saints' Day
10 May - Ascension Day	11 November - Armistice Day
21 May - Whit Monday	25 December - Christmas Day

Belgian Public Holidays 2019

1 Jan - New Year's Day	15 Aug - Assumption Day
22 Apr - Easter Monday	1 Nov - All Saints' Day
1 May - May Day	11 Nov - Armistice Day
30 May - Ascension Day	25 Dec - Christmas Day
10 Jun - Whit Monday	
21 Jul - Belgian National Holiday	

Salaries

If you work at the European Commission, you can expect to receive a grant of €1,175 per month. General Secretariat trainees at the European Parliament can expect to receive approx. €1,250 every month. Salaries in other Institutions vary, and some positions are unpaid, so it's best to check the details before accepting an offer. Based on the Commission and Parliament grants, it's possible to break even after paying rent. You can live relatively cheaply in Brussels if you go to the right places.



Stagiaire Party?

If you like organising parties, you can do so independently or propose an idea to your stagiaire association.

Interesting Fact:

The first ever stagiaire party was organised by two Kerry men in 1973 - Liam Crowley and Frank Wall.

Tips for the Party Organisers:

- Your first port of call is the stage committee (SC): this is where you can set the date of the party, get the money for your budget and help with advertising. You should ideally have one main contact person, i.e. the event coordinator who liaises with the SC. You'll have to have a treasurer as well because the SC needs to have a proper budget before they give you the money.
 - Make your party stand out! As there are parties organised nearly every week, you have to get people interested by doing something different, such as, a change of location, Saturday instead of Friday night, having a live band instead of just the DJ, or supplying food. We had home-made Breton Crepes on sale and also organised some Irish and Scottish dancing. If your budget allows, supply a free drink at the beginning and you're on to a winner!
 - Fancy-dress should really be optional as some people may be discouraged from going if they think that they have to dress up as leprechauns, whereas other people are only too happy to don a kilt for an evening!
 - Make sure you agree certain things with the venue, including price of drinks for the whole evening and the amount of profit you get on each entrant.
 - Regarding profits, we gave all our profits to the Solidarity stagiaire group who were aiming to reach their €7000 target.
- Have fun! Louise & Aine, Former Stagiaires

Institutional Food

The main cafeteria at the European Parliament is where the majority of staff and trainees go for lunch. The quality of the food varies from day to day, and drops significantly during the summer – when the MEPs and officials are on holidays! It is however very good value, and most people can find something to their taste. If you're looking for somewhere quieter, try the café in the JAN building. A favourite haunt for a post-lunch coffee is the famous Mickey Mouse bar on the third floor of the PHS building. It's excellent for people watching!

There are cafeterias in many of the European Commission buildings, the biggest being in the Berlaymont. Alternatively the Breydel building on Avenue d'Auderghem offers a lovely view of Parc du Cinquanteenaire.

It is also possible for Commission trainees to eat in the Council canteen, or in the Parliament canteen, but only after 13:30!

TIP: Staigiaries may get a discount on many meals. Even without the discount, meals are subsidised in the EU Institutions canteens so you can eat pretty well for around €5.



**"The Plat du Jour will keep you alive
but ultimately, it will kill you."**

**- Stephen Buckley, Cabinet of the Commissioner
for Research and Innovation**



TIP: Going for a coffee after lunch is commonplace in the Institutions. It normally costs around €1, or slightly more if you request the better quality coffee, Café Illy, by ordering a "premium".

What happens if...

...you get sick.

European Commission: Phone your advisor immediately (this is the person to whom you are assigned on the first day). After two days' absence, you'll need to provide a medical certificate from a doctor. On your return to the office, send the original certificate to the traineeships office in DG EAC on Rue Joseph II. It's very important that you keep a photocopy for the stage coordinator in your DG (a separate person from your advisor).



The Community Help Service (CHS) is a useful point of contact to have if you need to find an English speaking doctor in your area. The CHS Help Line provides a listening ear for anyone who feels in need of emotional support, from those feeling lonely or suffering culture shock, to those feeling depressed or experiencing family problems. It also doubles as a general information service. Visit www.chs-belgium.org.

European Parliament: You should inform your supervisor if you're not coming to work. You can make an appointment with the Medical Service to see a doctor or call in to see a nurse. Medical certificates cannot be issued by this service, however, so you will have to go to a GP outside the Parliament if you need one. It should be sent directly to your supervisor if you're absent for more than three consecutive days.

...you need to leave the stage.

Leaving the stage is a straightforward process. People will often leave early if they are offered a full time position elsewhere. All that is required is that you give three weeks notice to your supervisor and the traineeships office, so that they can hopefully find someone to replace you.

...you lose your passport

Get in touch with the Irish Embassy in Belgium for assistance. Contact details are at the end of this chapter. Note that this is different to the Irish Permanent Representation to the European Union. The broad distinction is that the Perm Rep deals with issues relating to the European Union, and the Irish embassy with Irish people living in Belgium.



General Tips about Life in Brussels

Travel

Public transport is very efficient in Brussels and in Belgium in general. You can get anywhere in Brussels without a car so it's a good idea to learn how the system works to save money on taxi fares. Even though the price of tickets is not nearly as expensive as it is in some other big European cities, it's still a good idea to buy a weekly or monthly pass if you are a regular commuter. The main transport company in Brussels is STIB – they run the metro, bus and tram lines. On their website they list lots of different ticket options – from daily commuter 'Season Tickets' to tourist and visitor passes. A monthly STIB 'Season Ticket' costs €49 and can be purchased online as well as via certain retailers. Visit www.stib.be to see all the options and find the one that's right for you.



Metros and trams in Brussels start at around 5am or 6am every morning and stop at various stages at night. There are a number of night bus routes in the city at the weekends, which tend to run until about 3am. For more info and up-to-date timetables, check the STIB website.

“It may well save you over €50 a week in taxi fares depending on how much of a night owl you are!”

– Dan, Former Stagiaire

Tip: Download the STIB app so you can track your transport. This will save you from standing at bus stops or on metro platforms for indefinite lengths of time (especially in the Brussels winter!).

**Note:
Uber is popular, though most places are more or less within walking distance of either Schuman or Brussels city centre.**

Getting To and From the Airport

The 12 and 21 buses go straight to Brussels International Airport from the European Quarter. The 12 is the express line and takes about 30 minutes depending on traffic (Operates Monday to Friday until 8pm). The 21 stops more often and takes a little longer (Operates Monday to Friday after 8pm and all day Saturday, Sunday and holidays). One journey costs €4.50 when purchased in one of the machines at the stop, or €6.00 inside the vehicle. Ten-journey tickets cost €32. In addition, up to 4 trains per hour connect the airport to Brussels North, Brussels Central and Brussels Midi stations.



Charleroi Airport is further away. There is a company called Charleroi Transfer, which organises taxis to collect people from their front door and take them directly to the airport - more information can be found on their website: <http://charleroitransfer.com/>. Brussels City Shuttle from Brussels Midi station costs €17 one way if you buy your ticket on the bus. A one way ticket costs €14.20 if you buy it online, or cheaper if you book in advance.

Phoning Home

The cost of roaming in the EU has steadily decreased, which is good news for stagiaires making the weekly Sunday phone call home! On 15 June 2017, a new EU Regulation came into effect which largely abolished roaming charges in the EU and the EEA. The new 'Roam Like at Home' rules mean that mobile phone users with EU and EEA mobile operators will not have to pay anything more than they would at home to make or receive calls while travelling within the EU or EEA. However, there are still some limits on mobile data usage so make sure you contact your operator to find out what is and isn't included in your plan!

One of the most popular pre-paid providers in Brussels is Mobile Vikings (www.mobilevikings.be). They offer 5GB data, unlimited texts and 50 minutes for €15 per month, and then you can use the credit as normal if you're calling home (which is the expensive part). The only inconvenience is that you have to order online - it's easier if you have a Belgian address for this. Coverage is good and they're quick at posting things out.

Look Online

There are some great blogs and Facebook pages where you can find out about Brussels off the tourist path. One example is Best of Brussels, which provides information on gigs, quirky Bruxellois events and restaurants among other things - <https://thebestofbrussels.wordpress.com/>

Should You Carry Your Passport?

“In my experience, as someone who has lived in Brussels for over twenty years, the issue of carrying your passport and ID becomes very important in particular circumstances – firstly when going out at night, and secondly when travelling around Belgium. It is true that under Belgian law you are required to carry your passport/ID with you at all times. In reality, however, provided you have some form of photo ID, you should be fine.” - Dan

All foreign nationals planning to stay in Belgium for more than 90 days are considered residents. All residents of Belgium over the age of 12 are required to carry their identity cards with them at all times. Though random ID checks are no longer permitted under Belgian law, a police officer can ask to see your identity card if they have reasonable cause to suspect you of having committed a crime. If you don't show your card, you can be held under 'administrative arrest' for up to 12 hours until your identity and your right to be in Belgium can be officially established.



Stop, look, listen.

“Jaywalking is taken very seriously in Belgium and can result in fines. “Remember the old adage of looking twice before you cross the street... they are crazy drivers here!”

- Áine, Former Stagiare

Recycling

You will need three types of bin bag. The blue bags hold what is known as PMD – plastic, metal and drinks (carton, cans etc.) The yellow bags are for paper and cardboard. The white bags are for food and general waste. Standard black/grey bags like the ones we use in Ireland will not be collected even though they are sold in most supermarkets. There's a handy app called 'Recycle' that reminds you which bin to put out on which day. If you're not living in a serviced complex, this might make sense of the mess of colours and collection days.



Bookshops

Most bookshops have an English language section. There's also a Waterstones on Boulevard Adolphe Max, which is like every other Waterstones on the planet. Another option is Sterling Books on Rue du Fossé au Loups. This is near Rue Neuve – the main shopping street in the centre. A great place to have a good look around is Filigranes on Avenue des Arts.



**“There’s a second-hand book shop I really like in Châtelain called Nijinski. It’s on Rue du Page”
– *Nora, Former Stagiare***

Madame Pee Pee

This is the person who looks after the bathrooms in bars and restaurants. He or she will sit at the entrance with a saucer of coins and charge you between 30c and 50c to use the facilities. Even if you’ve already paid into a club or cinema, you’ll generally be asked to pay. On the positive side, it results in clean bathrooms!

Keep fit!

Basic Fit (www.basic-fit.be) has gyms close to the Institutions – two near Schuman and one beside the Parliament. We are told the services are basic but good value. It’s €29 per month with no minimum contract or €20 per month if you subscribe for a year. If you’re in the Council, we hear that there’s an exercise room with a trainee rate of €30 per year or part thereof. There’s a public swimming pool close to Schuman in Ixelles (Rue de la Natation, off Rue Gray) which is one of the oldest in Belgium and well worth a visit just for its wrought-iron and glass roof. There’s a complex pricing system depending on your employment and commune of residence, but you’ll never pay more than €3 for a swim.

Belgium GAA

With over 100 members Belgium GAA compete across all four Gaelic Games – Hurling, Camogie, Men's' and Ladies' Gaelic Football. Based in Brussels, the clubs is one of the more established clubs in European GAA, although by normal standards Belgium GAA is a young club only founded in 2003. Since then the club has gone from strength to strength, winning numerous European Championships across all four in the last number of years.



Belgium GAA website is where you can find all the information you need to know about the club, and if you're interested, why not dropdown and give it a try? Training takes place on Monday and Thursday evenings on the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) campus and newcomers are always welcome. If you'd like to give it a go, simply get in touch by sending an email to pro.belgium.europe@gaa.ie.

Website: <https://belgium-gaa.be/>

A Spot of Culture.

If you're under 25, you'll get discounted tickets! The Magritte Museum is very interesting and relatively cheap. There are often fantastic exhibitions at the Bozar, and some are free. For all you need to know about the European Parliament and EU affairs, visit the Parlamentarium on the Parliament's esplanade. It's lots of fun and open seven days a week. Entry is free of charge.



Eating

The following are some nice, affordable restaurants. For a full and comprehensive list, see www.resto.be.

Maison Antoine, Place Jourdan, Etterbeek Friteries in Belgium are ranked, and “Chez Antoine” has taken the first spot for many years now. More than just a regular friterie, Chez Antoine is an institution. It has 40 different flavours of sauce and some amazing chips. There are no seats but you are allowed to eat your chips both in and outside many of the bars and cafés around Place Jourdan. Be prepared to queue every time you go, and often for quite a long time (especially on Sundays). Directly across the road from Chez Antoine is the popular pizza restaurant, Mamma Roma. Pizza is sold by weight so you can mix and match toppings.

Musical Instruments Museum Terrasse Café, Old England Store, Near Place Royale The Museum has a rooftop terrace with a beautiful view of Brussels. The food is very nice but expensive. Unfortunately the service isn’t great so expect to be there for quite some time.

Fin de Siècle on Rue des Chartreux (beside the Bourse) This is a lovely place to bring your parents but it isn’t so expensive that you can’t go there with friends too. They do great Belgian dishes at reasonable prices.

Restaurant Vincent, on Rue des Dominicains, just off Restaurant Street This restaurant is a little bit more expensive but worth it if you like your steak. The location allows you to soak up the atmosphere of Restaurant Street without the substandard food!

Restobières, Rue des Renards 32, 1000 Bruxelles Located in the Quartier des Marolles, this small, traditional Belgian restaurant is well worth a visit. Beer is used as an ingredient in all dishes. It is equally close to Porte de Hal and Louise metro stations.

Le Deuxième Element, Rue Saint-Boniface 7, 1050 Ixelles Said to be the best Thai food in Brussels, it’s also very reasonably priced. The nearest metro station is Porte de Namur. (Note that there are plenty of good restaurants located on Place Boniface, including L’Ultime Atome, which is particularly nice for Sunday brunch, and Mano à Mano, which does lovely pizza.)

Centro Cabraliego, Rue Haute 171, 1000 Bruxelles This is a rough and ready, smoke-filled Spanish bar located in the Marolles (near the bottom of the lift at the Palais de Justice) that serves €2 beers, unmeasured whisky shorts and very good, cheap tapas. Only open at the weekend, this place is a Brussels institution. Punters often visit nearby nightclub, Havana, after closing time. Bring some Spanish friends because they will be given even cheaper prices.

Soleil d’Afrique, Rue de Longue



Vie 10, 1050 Ixelles Located in the heart of Matongé – the Colognese district – this is a great place for delicious, authentic African food at low prices. It's good fun, especially with a big crowd, and close to Boniface and Porte de Namur metro station

Taverne du Passage, Galerie de la Reine 30, 1000 Bruxelles It's worth going here at least once, especially if you're with someone you'd like to impress. It serves very traditional Belgian food and is quite expensive. The décor hasn't changed since World War Two when it was frequented by German officers.

Gluten Free Brussels

"There are a handful of restaurants that do specifically gluten-free food. Watch out though, as some restaurants will tell you that the food is gluten free without really understanding what gluten is - I have been told that a beer-based sauce was gluten-free. Some restaurants don't have a salad option, which can make eating out quite difficult. However, the people in the restaurant Fin du Siècle do know what they are talking about and you can be guaranteed a really good and reasonably priced meal (not, however, if you are also vegetarian, as the vegetarian option generally has gluten in it). I have it on good authority that it's one of the best restaurants in Brussels." – Ruth



TIP: Brussels is known for having great mussels and, if you are so inclined, there are numerous restaurants you can visit to sample this speciality.

Chocolate

Chocolate is a serious business in Brussels. There are so many varieties that it's difficult to find the best of the best. Mostly it's a matter of personal taste. The good news is that in Brussels you can easily justify a chocolate obsession with tales of cultural tradition. For instance, a visit to the Neuhaus shop in the beautiful Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert is in fact an excursion to a historical site. Originally opened as a pharmacy by Swiss born Jean Neuhaus in 1857, it is known as the home of the original "ballotin" – the small cardboard box in which chocolates are often served in Belgium. Furthermore, Mr. Neuhaus' grandson invented the praline in 1912.

Another place to sample chocolate is Place du Grand Sablon. Here you will find a Wittamer shop – the favoured brand of the Royal Court. In the same area you will also find the more avant-garde Pierre Marcolini shop.

Friteries are everywhere in Brussels, and Belgians love to eat there. You can obviously eat quality fries in those places, but also all types of hamburgers. One unique Belgian speciality is called the "mitraille" (meaning machine gun), it is a sort of sandwich with meat, (hamburger or sausage, etc.) fries, sauce, and vegetables inside. Perfect for when you are really hungry, don't want to wait too long

"Between various trips throughout Belgium and Holland, open air concerts outside the King's Palace, crashing various embassy and Perm Rep receptions, chatting with random prime ministers at summits, Wednesday nights at Place du Châtelain, Thursday nights at Place Lux, mitraillettes on Place Jourdan and much much more, it was certainly an unforgettable two months working at the Council. The work experience gained has resulted in two job offers in the past month, but the friends I made will be for life." – Jim Maher, Council of the European Union, Translation and Document Production

Going Out

Contrary to what some people might say, Brussels is far from boring. Here are a few popular places for the evenings.

The Tavernier, 45 Chaussée de Boondael, Ixelles, 1050 Brussels The Tavernier, with its old authentic atmosphere, welcomes a variety of people, many of them students in Ixelles. Located near the “Cimetière d’Ixelles”, it offers a wide variety of drinks, live music, and a spacious terrace.

The Montmartre, 344 Chaussée de Boondael, Ixelles, 1050 Brussels The Montmartre is a nice, relaxed café where you can meet friends by day to listen to music and play pool or darts, or by night for live music, a spot of dancing or a good ol’ karaoke sesh.

The Big Game, 5 Rue Henri Maus, 1000 Brussels The Big Game is the best bar to watch live sports in Brussels. Located in the center of the city, just near the Grand-Place, you won’t miss any of the action there with the crazy amount of TVs inside the bar. They also run a Happy Hour at night.

O’Reilly’s Irish Pub, 1 Place de la Bourse, 1000 Brussels If you ever feel home-sick, O’Reillys will make you feel better. This nice Irish pub, located just near the Grand-Place, offers a warm welcome, great atmosphere at night, Guinness, international drinks and homemade food.

Délirium Café, 4 Impasse de la Fidélité, 1000 Brussels With more than 3,000 on offer, Délirium Café holds the world record for the most varieties of beer you can find at one place. Located in the city centre, there’s a real international crowd here eager to discover the best beers Belgium has to offer.

Stoemelings, 7 Place de Londres, 1050 Brussels Stoemelings is a favourite bar to meet people after work. Located fairly close to the Institutions, there is still a mixed clientele. Note that it is closed at the weekends.



“The greatest trick Brussels’ nightlife ever pulled is convincing the world it doesn’t exist.” - Joe

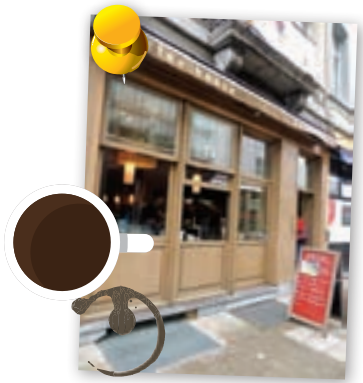
Good Coffee

The following are some of the many cafés are worth seeking out:

Café de la Presse, 493 Avenue Louise, 1050 Bruxelles

Karsmakers Coffee House, Rue de Trèves 20, 1050 Brussels

Sucré Salé, Place Fernand Cocq 10, 1050 Brussels



“As you will most likely be new to Brussels, the allure of Irish pubs may be too strong to resist. There are other attractions in Brussels, many of which are located either in the city centre or around Cimetière d’Ixelle. However, do be cautious when planning an outing to a new venue. There are a number of very cool and very enjoyable bars and clubs scattered around Belgium that you will enjoy, but you must also realise that they may not be in very nice neighbourhoods (eg. ‘The FUSE Nightclub’ in St. Gilles). Therefore, it is always a good idea to plan a visit to these places during the day (especially in the case of clubs) and/or in the evening (in the case of bars). By doing this you will be aware of the area and, if you or your friends decide that you don’t like the area, you’ll still have the rest of the evening to get back to the city centre while public transport is fully functional.” *Dan, Former Stagiare*

If you would rather socialise outside the pub, why not go bowling or to the cinema?

Crosly Bowling

www.crosly.be

Boulevard de l’Empereur,
1000 Brussels - 02 512 08 74

Brussels Bowling

www.brusselsbowling.be

Avenue des Saisons 92/C,
1050 Brussels - 02 640 22 13

Cinemas

UGC De Brouckère and **UGC Toison d’Or** are standard multiplexes.

Brussels also has some excellent art house cinemas such as:

Cinematek, Rue Baron Horta 9, 1000 Brussels

Styx, Rue de l’Arbre Bénit 72, 1050 Brussels



Gigs

Brussels is at the crossroads between Amsterdam, London, Paris and Cologne, so there are plenty of gigs to keep music enthusiasts busy. Bigger venues include Cirque Royale, Botanique and Ancienne Belgique. A good website for concert listings is www.agenda.be. Luckily ticket prices are considerably lower than they are at home.

Summer stagiaires will experience May's fantastic three-day jazz festival. If you prefer more intense musical experiences, why not try the the Rock Werchter Festival that usually takes place at the end of June/start of July? It's much cheaper than its Irish counterparts, as is Dour Festival.



“Dour Festival was one of the best musical experiences, if not overall experiences, of my life.

It rained like mad all weekend, so it was lucky I brought my wellies with me from Tipperary - I was the envy of all the Belgians!”

– Sophie, Former Stagiare

The Action Card

The Action Card is sold by the Commission stage committee at the start of each intake of trainees. The money they raise in sales goes towards funding their activities. Like a student card, you can use it to get discounts in certain shops, cafés and bars. Action Card holders will also be offered cheaper prices for tickets to events organised by the stage committee.

TIP:
Beware
the
strength
of Belgian
beer!



The Gay Scene

Rainbow House and Tels Quels are good places to go to link with the gay scene in Brussels. They both advertise events and parties elsewhere, in the clubs and beyond.

<http://rainbowhouse.be/>

<http://www.telsquels.be/>

Big events to watch out for include Pink Screens and L-Week in November, and Pride in May.

<http://www.pinkscreens.org/?lang=fr>

www.pride.be

Also worth having a look at www.patroc.com/brussels/. It offers a fairly comprehensive guide to gay bars, club nights, festivals and much else in Brussels and across Europe.

Useful Websites

General Contacts	
European Movement Ireland	www.europeanmovement.ie
European Movement Ireland Jobs & Internships	http://www.europeanmovement.ie/ category/jobs-and-traineeships/
European Movement Ireland Brussels Branch	http://www.europeanmovement.ie/ brussels-branch/
European Commission Traineeships	www.ec.europa.eu/stages/index_en.htm
European Parliament Traineeships	http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00047/ Traineeships
European Parliament Stagiaires Association	www.epsaofficial.eu
European Commission Representation in Ireland	www.ec.europa.eu/ireland
European Parliament Information Office in Dublin	www.europarl.ie
European Personnel Selection Office	www.europa.eu/epso/
EU Jobs Ireland	https://www.dfa.ie/eujobs/
EuroBrussels Jobsite	www.eurobrussels.com
Euractiv News	www.euractiv.com
About the EU	www.europa.eu/about-eu/agencies/

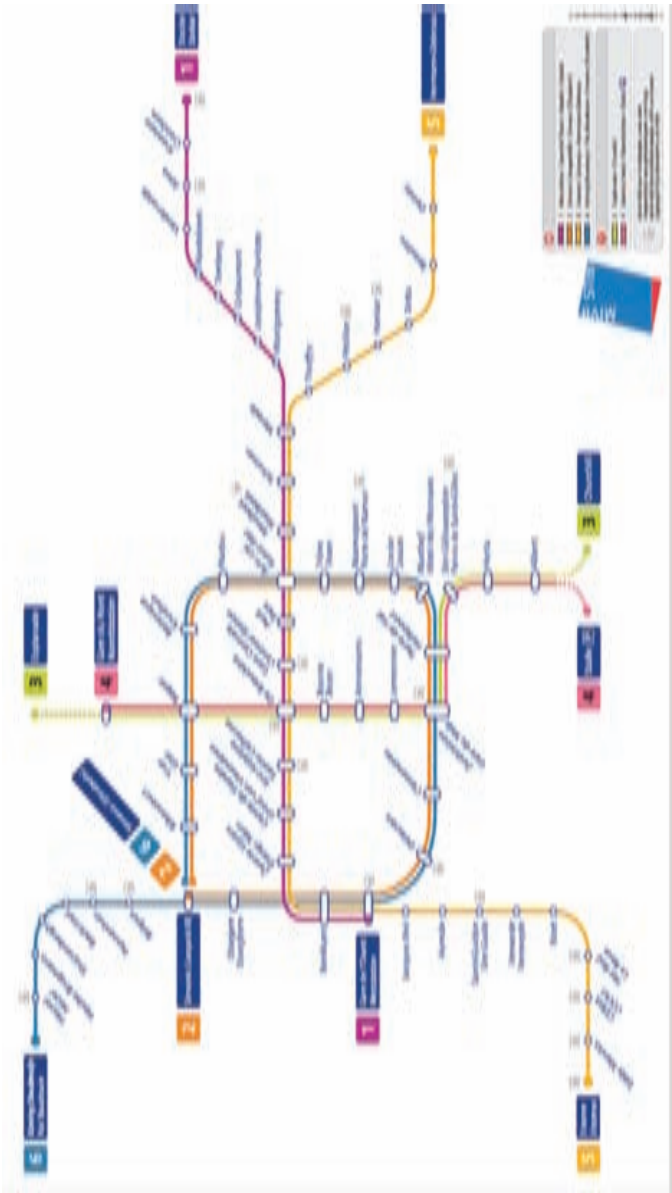
Diplomatic Contacts - Brussels

Embassy of Ireland in Belgium	
Her Excellency, Helena Nolan, Ambassador	Rue Froissart 50, 1040 Brussels, Belgium Phone: +32 2 282 3400 www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/belgium/
Irish Permanent Representation to the EU	
His Excellency, Declan Kelleher, Permanent Representative	Rue Froissart 50, 1040 Brussels, Belgium Phone: +32 2 282 3200 www.dfa.ie/prep/brussels/

Map of the European Area of Brussels



Metro Map





Living in Strasbourg

A Quick Geography Lesson

There seems to be some confusion as to where exactly the city of Strasbourg is, with some people convinced that it is located in Germany. Well, no. Strasbourg is located in north-eastern France, although it is very close to the border with Germany. It is the capital city of the region of Alsace; both the city and region are historically German-speaking explaining the Germanic names. In fact, Strasbourg was part of Germany for two periods in its recent history, following the Franco-Prussian war from 1870 to 1918 and during World War II from 1940 to 1944, and there remains an interesting Franco-German culture in the city. As a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation, Strasbourg is the seat of many European Institutions and organisations including the European Parliament and the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the Council of Europe. As a result, Strasbourg shares the unusual honour of being the seat of international organisations without being a national capital with only two other cities: New York and Geneva.



The European Quarter

Many of the European Institutions and organisations in Strasbourg are located in the European Quarter, in the north-west of the city. Tram line E runs through the area; if coming from the train station, change at stop République. The Louise Weiss building of the European Parliament is particularly impressive, but is only busy during plenary sessions: one week in a month.



The Practicalities



Language Requirements

Despite the historic Franco-German characteristic, the lingua franca of Strasbourg is most definitely French. You may hear some German being spoken around the city but that will most likely be coming from the hordes of German tourists! The regional dialect of Alsatian can still be heard in the smaller towns around Alsace but rarely in Strasbourg. While it is common to catch many different languages being spoken around the city due to its international nature, large University (where there are around 20% foreign students) and European Institutions, in places like shops, banks and restaurants, you'll usually be communicating through French so have your few handy phrases and French dictionary at the ready!

Getting There

By train: Strasbourg's train station (Gare de Strasbourg) is the second largest in France and is part of a very well-connected rail network. The TGV (*Train à Grande Vitesse* or high-speed train) is very comfortable and connects Strasbourg with, for example, Paris in less than two hours. Trains between Strasbourg and Paris Est train station leave almost hourly. There are two daily direct trains to Brussels that take around four hours 30 minutes. It is also possible to take more regular trains connecting through Paris or other French or German cities, but these tend to take longer.



The train station is only a five minute walk from Strasbourg city centre and there are a few SNCF (the French national rail company) kiosks around the city, including where Rue de Turenne meets Rue de Rivoli. Tickets can also be purchased online and sent to your home address within seven days, so make sure you're planning ahead if you're choosing this option. E-tickets are also available which may prove an easier option.

TIP: If under the age of 26, make sure you specify the 12-25 age grouping when booking tickets to avail of lower prices. If you are planning on doing a lot of rail travel, you should consider investing in a SNCF carte jeune (youth card). The card is €50 in a one off purchase and is available for those aged between 18 and 27. It guarantees 25% off travel and can offer up to a 60% reduction on train ticket prices. Cardholders can also get access to special last minute deals.

By plane: Strasbourg's small and fairly limited international airport Strasbourg-Entzheim Airport (SXB) can make it quite tricky to fly to the city. It is possible to get some connecting flights though. If you do fly into Strasbourg airport, take the shuttle train from just outside the arrivals hall to Strasbourg train station. They leave regularly and take less than ten minutes.

TIP: It's cheaper to buy your train ticket to the city on the platform and not from the machines in the arrivals hall.

It might be necessary to fly to other nearby airports. EuroAirport (Basel-Mulhouse-Freidberg, BSL) is a larger airport and is serviced by Ryanair to Dublin. EasyJet also flies to this airport from many European destinations. To get from this airport into Strasbourg, take the short shuttle bus ride from just outside arrivals (be careful to exit the airport through France, not Switzerland or Germany!) to Saint Louis - Haut Rhin train station and then take the train to Strasbourg. The train journey takes just over an hour and it is recommended to buy your tickets in advance from SNCF. It is also important to make sure that the time of your flight arrival fits with a departure time of a Strasbourg-bound train.

Baden-Baden Airport (Flughafen Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden, FKB) is served by Ryanair from London Stansted and other cities, and by Air Berlin with flight connection possibilities through Berlin. You can take bus 285 to Baden-Baden Hauptbahnhof (main train station) and get the train to Strasbourg. There are some shuttle services to Strasbourg, the airport provides a list of different companies (<https://www.baden-airpark.de/en/directions-and-parking/taxi-shuttle-services/shuttle-services/>). This takes about an hour and, again, it's better to buy your tickets in advance (www.bahn.de).

Frankfurt am Main Airport (FRA) is one of Europe's busiest and best connected airports. From the airport, you can get the train to Strasbourg in 2-3 hours (www.bahn.de). Alternatively, Lufthansa operates a shuttle bus between the airport and Strasbourg which takes 2.5 hours. Specify Strasbourg Bus Station (XER) as your destination, although the bus actually stops outside the train station and the Hilton Hotel in the European Quarter, and Lufthansa will include the bus as part of your journey price and times.

Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG) is another one of Europe's busiest and best connected airports. From Paris you can take the TGV to Strasbourg, with a couple of trains leaving directly from the CDG train station every day. If those train times don't fit with your flight arrival though, take the train from the airport to Paris Nord and walk for 10 minutes to Paris Est where trains to Strasbourg leave frequently.

By bus: Several different bus companies (<https://www.eurolines.eu/node,> <https://www.ouibus.com/>) offer connections between Strasbourg and other European destinations. This is by no means an exhaustive list so do shop around online! Although these tend to be considerably cheaper than train or air travel, their departure and arrival times are often quite awkward. Buses arrive in Strasbourg's bus station beside the Rivetoile shopping centre, tram stop Etoile-Bourse.



Finding Somewhere to Live

The best place to start looking for somewhere to live is online, but be sure to follow up your virtual house-hunt with viewings. www.leboncoin.fr is the best and most frequently cited website to find accommodation. It's worth posting an ad on the site yourself (it's free) explaining what you're looking for in the *demandes* section as well as looking at ads other people have posted in the *offres* section. As with all online house hunting, be wary of offers that look too good to be true – they probably are! If you're looking for a shared apartment, you're looking for a *colocation*. If you're looking for your own place, you're looking for an *appartement* or a *studio* which is a one room apartment. Accommodation can come furnished or unfurnished – it

TIP:
People sell almost everything on www.leboncoin.fr so it's also a good website to check if you're looking for tickets, bicycles, etc.



depends on the place and the landlord. It should be easy to set up viewings from home if you plan to come to the city a few days before your stage starts or for a weekend a few weeks before your starting date. If you do, be aware that there are plenty of hotels across a wide price range around the city but that it can be quite difficult to find hotel availability during European Parliament plenary weeks. Also be aware that hotel rooms tend to be cheaper at the weekend than during weekdays. www.ciarus.com is a good hostel possibility not far from the city centre.

The average rent for a shared apartment according to recent figures is €400 - €450, and approximately €550 for a private apartment or studio. Naturally the further out from the city centre you go, the cheaper prices get, with the average private apartment costing approximately €440 in the suburbs. Generally, it is best to sign a lease and you must, under French law, have insurance in your own name, not just in the name of the landlord. You can get this through your bank.

You might be able to claim CAF (Caisse d'allocations familiales): financial housing aid from the French state towards your rent. You'll need to submit an online form. The system and requirements can be unclear so check out www.caf.fr for more details or visit the CAF office on Rue de Berne near the University.

Choose your District

Strasbourg is one of the 10 largest cities in France with the population of its urban community reaching nearly 500,000. There are a few large residential suburbs of Strasbourg, like Neudorf or Cronenbourg, where there are lots of accommodation possibilities. It's fairly easy to get to and from these areas but it's better to live closer to the city centre where there are plenty of accommodation possibilities. Strasbourg has many different areas with different feels to them:

City centre, around Place Kleber, the Cathedral and Grand Rue:

This is largely considered to be the best area to live with beautiful city sights and lots of facilities like shops, bars and cinemas on your doorstep. It's also well served by public transport and feels fairly safe. Unsurprisingly though, it is also usually the most expensive area in which to rent.

Krutenau: This is quite a student-y and bohemian area with a lovely atmosphere and lots of little restaurants, cafés and bars. It is close to the University on one side and the city centre on the other, and is not far from the European Institutions. Here, it's best to walk or have a bike as the city buses and trams don't always fit through the little windy streets!

Gare/Les Halles: This area between the train station and city centre has plenty of facilities and is well serviced by public transport, but is quieter and not so pleasant to walk around at night.

Museum of Modern Art: The area around the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain is a more recently-developed area which has many students and is more multi-

cultural. It is well-serviced by public transport and is only a ten minute walk from the city centre. It tends to be cheaper to rent there than in other areas, but it also feels less safe at night.

Esplanade: This area right beside the University has many apartment blocks and hosts lots of students. It is well-serviced by public transport, has good facilities, but is not as charming as other areas.

L'Orangerie: The area between the European Institutions and the city centre is a convenient place to live to commute from. It's quiet and has a nice park, Parc de l'Orangerie, which is lovely to hang out in during the spring and summer.

Robertsau: Many of the staff of the European Institutions live in this residential suburb, just beyond the European Quarter. It is possible to rent rooms in nice, family houses here. It's close to work but quite far from the city centre and any night life.

Transport

Buses and trams: The public transport system is very good in Strasbourg and there really is no need for a car to move around the city. There is an extensive bus network and, something that might surprise Irish folk in the city, the buses tend to be on time...! The star of the show in Strasbourg is really the tram network though, which is the largest in France. There are six tram lines and the trams are usually convenient, on time and comfortable.

You can buy tickets to use on the buses or trams from machines at any of the tram stops, but it's best to buy them in packs of ten as they're cheaper this way - €1.70 for one or €14.00 for ten. You can buy single tickets directly on the buses but not on the trams. If you are aged between 19 and 25, you can buy an unlimited monthly ticket (*Badgéο carte*) for use on buses and trams for only €26.60. For those aged 26-64 the cost leaps to €50.80. To get your *Badgéο carte*, bring your ID and a passport photo to the CTS (the Strasbourg transport company) boutique on Rue du Jeu des Enfants, just off Homme de Fer. You can top it up monthly at machines at any of the tram stops.

On the CTS website, www.cts-strasbourg.fr you can plan your journey from A to B with the site providing times and necessary connections using both the buses and trams (*recherche d'itinéraire*). In general the bus and tram networks are well interconnected.



On your bike: Strasbourg is also a very bicycle-friendly city with the largest cycle network in France made up of 560km of cycle paths. You can also take your bike on the trams on either of the two end carriages, except at rush hour (from 7-9am and 5-7pm).

There is also a very successful city bicycle system called Vélhop (you'll recognise it by its distinctive green logo). You can rent Vélhop bicycles by the hour, day, week or even month from one of the Vélhop kiosks, including in the train station. They come with a basket and lock. Long-term rental subscriptions (one to 12 months, with a mandatory maintenance visit every three months) mean you manage your bike freely, i.e. you don't need to store it in Vélhop stations. If you are under 26 years old, a Vélhop will cost €23 for a month, €28 for three months, or €68 for a year. For everyone else, it costs a little more. If you have a charged Badgéo carte it is possible to get a discount.

For more information on bicycles and discounts visit <https://velhop.strasbourg.eu/>

Note: You will need to pay a €150 deposit in cash or by cheque.



By Segway: Experience Strasbourg a different way by renting a Segway to tour the city, from €15 at One City Tours (www.onecity-tours.com). The store (at 5 petite rue du Vieux Marché aux Vins) is open from 10am-7pm and offers rentals from a minimum of 30 minutes up to two hours. It is not likely that this will be your frequent mode of transport, but it will certainly give you a unique view of the city!

The Perks

Sights

Strasbourg is a beautiful city and a popular tourist destination. In the very centre is the magnificent, Gothic-style Strasbourg Cathedral (Cathédrale Notre-Dame-de-Strasbourg). Standing at 142 metres, it was the tallest building in the world when it was built. Its remarkable pink hue comes from the sandstone used in its construction. It's possible to climb to the top where you can get a great view over the city.

Tip: Entrance to the Cathedral is free on the first Sunday of the month, as is entrance to all the city's museums.



The Cathedral is in the historic centre of the city, Grand Île (literately "Grand Island", as it is an island in the River Ill which runs through the city). The entire Grand Île was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988 as an exemplary example of a medieval city. Also on Grand Île is Petite-France (Little France), a small, beautiful area of medieval half-timbered houses (maison à colombages) and covered bridges.

Place due Marché-aux-Cochons-de-Lait

One of the most charmingly picturesque areas in Strasbourg is Place due Marché-aux-Cochons-de-Lait (The Suckling Pig Market). This square, near the Maison de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame, was previously an ancient market where the Alsatian specialty of suckling pig was traded. It is now home to many cafes, restaurants with much traditional fare available to try. This square is the ideal place to sit and people watch, while taking in all the beautiful surroundings and lively atmosphere.



Parc de l'Orangerie

Parc de l'Orangerie is the oldest park in Strasbourg. It is located to the south east of the Palais de l'Europe and was created in the 19th Century for the Empress Joséphine. The park holds a beautiful waterfall, a miniature farm and many other surprises. If you're looking for a relaxing break the park is a definite must see for any traveller visiting Strasbourg.

Cave Historique des Hospices de Strasbourg

This wine cellar is located in a medieval basement of the city's old hospital. If you're stopping by, make time to do the short tour which gives great insight into the believed medicinal properties of wine for the patients that were housed in the hospital. The tour is free too so definitely worth a visit! There are no free tastings, although the cellar has a vast selection of Alsace wines available for purchase.

Museums

If you're a fan of the museum trail, Strasbourg is most definitely the city for you. There's a heap of different museums scattered around the city. Read on for more info or visit the centralised site: www.musees.strasbourg.eu

General Information:

- Standard Price for admission to each of the various museums is approximately €6.50.
- Students under 25 are able to avail of reduced prices in some museums.
- Discounts are provided for group bookings but numbers are generally restricted to over 25 people.
- There is a day pass available for approximately €12 which allows entrance into multiple museums

The Palais Rohan

The Palais Rohan (former residence of Strasbourg's Bishop-Princes) holds three unique museums. The first floor houses the Musée des Beaux-Arts, which has an extensive collection of painting from French, Dutch, Italian and other Masters from the middle ages to modern times. The museum of Decorative Arts is on the ground floor while the basement holds the Archaeological museum which displays a host of French antiques.

Musée Alsacien

The Musée Alsacien holds an extensive amount of folk art, furniture and costumes, transporting guests back to the 18th and 19th centuries. The museum also has a diverse range of rooms that represent the differing interiors of regions of Alsace. Note: The museum is closed on Tuesdays.

Historical Museum

The Historical Museum holds a massive exhibit of paintings, graphic art and weapons. A point of interest is that a few rooms are dedicated to the Napoleonic era.

Musée d'Art Moderne & Contemporain

Across the street from the Historical Museum is the Ancienne Douane (Old Customs House) which now holds the Musée d'Art Moderne & Contemporain featuring art from the 19th and 20th centuries including work by Hans Arp, Braque and other artists.

Musée Zoologique

This Zoological Museum is one of the richest in France - one million insects, 18,000 birds, 1,500 mammals, 60,000 marine invertebrates, 9,000 skeletons, 11,000 fish and reptiles... you get the idea! Note: The museum is closed on Tuesdays.

Aubette 1928

The entire Aubette complex was designed as a complete work of art, with the intention of 'placing people within the paint rather than in front of it'. It holds regular events such as dancing, performances and multimedia works. Note: The museum is closed on Mondays, Tuesdays and Sundays and has no entrance fee.

The Oeuvre Notre-Dame Museum.

This museum includes some of the finest masterpieces of medieval sculpture, obtained from the Notre Dame Cathedral among others. Note: The museum is closed on Mondays.

The Tomi Ungerer Museum - International Illustration Centre

This museum is focused on the 250 graphical works of Tomi Ungerer, a Strasbourg cartoonist and illustrator, including his children's books advertising posters and his satirical drawings. Note: The museum is closed on Tuesdays.

The Print Room

The Print Room is in the shadow of the Cathedral and holds 200,000 items of the most varied work from fine art to folk art. It is free to visit and due to its proximity should definitely be on your list when visiting the cathedral. However visits are only possible through appointment only so be sure to book in advance (visit <https://en.musees.strasbourg.eu/en/print-room>).

Things to Do

There is plenty going on in Strasbourg. Visit La Boutique Culture on Place de la Cathédrale to inquire about concerts, exhibitions, performances and more. You can also buy tickets for events here. It's a good idea to keep an eye on magazines like Rue89 Strasbourg (www.rue89strasbourg.com) and Coze (www.coze.fr) for more information on upcoming events too.

Culture

The city has a network of 11 museums, from fine art to Alsatian culture. As mentioned before, there is free entry on the first Sunday of every month. There is also the beautiful National University library on Place de la République and the large André Malraux *médiathèque* near the Rivetoile shopping centre where you can rent books, comics, DVDs and CDs (mostly in French, so great for improving your language skills!) for a small annual subscription.

The Université Populaire Européenne (9 Place de l'Université) offers reasonably-priced classes on everything from French language, to dance, to cooking.

Night Life

www.zenith-strasbourg.fr is an arena which regularly hosts big international acts. The Opéra du Rhin and Théâtre National de Strasbourg have interesting programmes, and there is an Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg which performs frequently.



A Good Meal

Strasbourg and Alsace are famous for their food and restaurants. Some nice, affordable restaurants include:

L'Épicerie, 6 Rue du Vieux Seigle This informal, trendy and inexpensive restaurant serves only tartines (really good and surprisingly filling open toasted sandwiches), side salads and soups. It also has good desserts, wine and retro drinks. Service is available from noon until midnight.

Au Brasseur, 22 Rue des Veaux This micro-brewery is perfect for a fun beer and tarte flambée (an Alsatian speciality – a very thin pizza-type base with fromage blanc or crème fraîche, onions and lardons).

TIP: Go during their Happy Hour (5pm-6.30pm during the week) for half price beer and €3 tarte flambées!

Le Tarbouche, 22 Rue de la Krutenau This Lebanese restaurant serves very tasty mezze-type plates for good prices. It's a small place with high tables and stools and seating outside during the summer months. It's very popular so don't be surprised if you have to wait for a spot.

TIP: You can order your food to go and eat it by the river nearby.

Chez Yvonne, 10 Rue du Sanglier This restaurant is for special occasions, like when your parents come to visit and want to treat you! It's one of the most well-known restaurants in the city and is a traditional 'winstub', literally "a room where one can get wine", a typical Alsatian restaurant with lots of dark wood, cosy atmosphere and traditional Alsatian food.

Don't leave Strasbourg without trying other Alsatian specialities like choucroute (sauerkraut, usually served as a dish with potatoes and many different types of meat – best eaten with strong mustard) and, of course, wonderful Alsatian white wines like Riesling and Gewürtztraminer and light red wines like Pinot Noir. Alsace is also home to the Kronenbourg brewery.

Note:

It can be quite difficult to be a vegetarian in Strasbourg – the vegetarian option is often understood as fish. Bistrot & Chocolat (8 Rue de la Râpe) is a nice vegetarian restaurant (and chocolate shop) that does a particularly good brunch.



Bars

There are a lot of bars in Strasbourg, particularly around the Cathedral and Krutenau areas. A few favourites include:

L'Artichaut, 56 Grand Rue This bohemian-atmosphere bar serves good drinks and food (sandwiches, quiche, salad), and has a pool table in the back and live jazz every Thursday night.

The boats anchored along Quai des Pêcheurs include some nice bars. Café Atlantico serves drinks and has a nice brunch on Sundays. Barco Latino is a Cuban-style bar, located near the Rivetoile shopping centre, with loud Latin music downstairs at the weekend.

Jeannette et les Cycleux, 30 Rue des Tonneliers This cool and popular café-bar is owned by the same people as L'Épicerie.

Bar les Aviateurs, 12 Rue des Soeurs This bar is particularly busy during European Parliament plenary weeks when it is packed with people who have travelled from Brussels.

There are a few Irish pubs around the city including Molly Malone's (Place d'Austerlitz), The Dubliners (? Rue du Vieux Marché aux Poissins), and The Irish Pub (13 Rue Vauban) which has cheap beer and burgers and a table quiz every Sunday night.

Clubs

Strasbourg doesn't have a heavy club scene, but if you want a late-night dance head to Café des Anges (5 Rue Sainte-Catherine).

TIP: If you can make it to 5am, grab some freshly-baked croissants in the nearby *boulangerie*, Au Pain de mon Grand-Père. There's no other late-night food in Strasbourg!

Cinema

For a small city, Strasbourg has quite a few cinemas, many of which can be found around the Place Kleber area. UGC Ciné Cité beside Rivetoile shopping centre is a standard multiplex. Cinéma Odysée (3 Rue des Francs Bourgeois) is a much smaller, art-house cinema with a beautiful main screen.



Feeling Festive?

At the end of November and throughout December, Strasbourg becomes the “Capital of Christmas” with lights all around the city and Christmas Markets in different squares throughout the city. It’s lovely to drink a hot wine (vin chaud) and eat Alsatian Christmas biscuits (bredela) while wandering around the stalls.

Festival Voix Romanesque Route is an interesting festival that is held at the end of summer with a focus on music from the middle ages. The festival has a thematic element which previously has focused on The Crusades, pilgrims and courtly love. Definitely something a bit different! Note: Reduced rates are available if a booking is made before mid-August.

Note: Hotel accommodation gets booked up very quickly at this time of the year, and the price tends to increase dramatically so book in advance if you’re expecting visitors.

Alsace

Alsace is an interesting region to explore. The famous Route des Vins is a great weekend trip – hire a car and follow the well-signposted road through beautiful villages, driving through acres of vineyards and visiting producers to try their wines. It is possible to visit some of the villages by train from Strasbourg. Colmar is worth a day-trip this way for example, but doing the Route by car is best.

It’s possible to get a TER Alsace (SNCF regional train network, although it stretches as far as Basel) weekend group ticket: for 037 a group of 2-5 have unlimited travel within the network on either a Saturday, Sunday or holiday.

The nearby Vosges Mountains and the Black Forest are popular for hiking and mountain biking, and the Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg is one of the most visited attractions in France. On a clear day, there is a spectacular view from the castle across the Alsace plain, the Vosges Mountains, the Black Forest and even, sometimes, the Alps. Entrance is usually 09 but is free on the first Sunday of the month. Take the train to Sélestat where there is a shuttle for 04, ticket valid for the whole day, to and from the castle.



The Details

Shops

Note! Shops are, pretty much, all closed on Sundays. Make sure to get to the supermarket before then because otherwise it's difficult to find anywhere open to get even the basics.

Generally, supermarkets are open Monday-Saturday until around 8pm but some outside the city centre even close for lunch! Branches of major French supermarkets like Simply and Leclerc are all around Strasbourg, and there are also some German discount chain supermarkets like Lidl and Norma.

High-street shops can mostly be found in Place des Halles, around Place Kléber and in the Rivertoile shopping centre. There is an IKEA to the west of the city; take tram A and D to stop Rotonde where there is a free shuttle bus to IKEA every 20 minutes or so.

The German town of Kehl is right across the River Rhine, a 20-minute cycle from Strasbourg city centre. The nicest route is through the Jardins des Deux Rives (a park that spreads across the French-German border) and over the Pont de l'Europe footbridge. Otherwise, you can take bus 21 right into the centre of Kehl. You can also take tram line D all the way to Kehl-Bahnhof (Kehl's train station). When you're living in Strasbourg, Kehl is definitely worth a trip – not for the sights, in fact it's not a particularly pretty town, but to do your shopping... You'll pay significantly less in the Aldi and Lidl there than you would in Strasbourg!



Boulangeries

You'll find *boulangeries* everywhere for your daily *baguette* or *bretzel* snack. Be sure to try *kougelhopf*, another Alsatian speciality: a baked bread in a distinctive shape which can either be *sucré* with sugar and almonds or *salé* with onion and lardons.

Banks

Branches of all the major French banks, like BNP Paribas, Société Générale and Crédit Mutuel, are in Strasbourg. Really, there is little difference between them. To open an account, you'll have to book an appointment. Make sure to bring ID and proof of address, and get ready to date and sign a lot of documents! If you do not have proof of address, it is possible to get

a non-residential account. However, the downside of this type of account is that you are not eligible for a credit card or an overdraft. The person you open your account with will become your contact in the bank and you'll have to speak with them if you want to make any later changes to your account.

French Public Holidays 2018

- 1 January - New Year's Day

30 March - Good Friday (only in Alsace and Moselle)

2 April - Easter Monday

1 May - May Day

8 May - Victory in Europe Day

10 May - Ascension Day

21 May - Whit Monday
- 14 July - Bastille Day

15 August - Assumption Day

1 November - All Saints' Day

11 November - Armistice Day

25 December - Christmas Day

26 December - St Stephen's Day (only in Alsace and Moselle)

French Public Holidays 2019

- 1 January - New Year's Day

19 April - Good Friday (only in Alsace and Moselle)

22 April - Easter Monday

1 May - May Day

8 May - Victory in Europe Day

30 May - Ascension Day

10 June - Whit Monday
- 14 July - Bastille Day

15 August - Assumption Day

1 November - All Saints' Day

11 November - Armistice Day

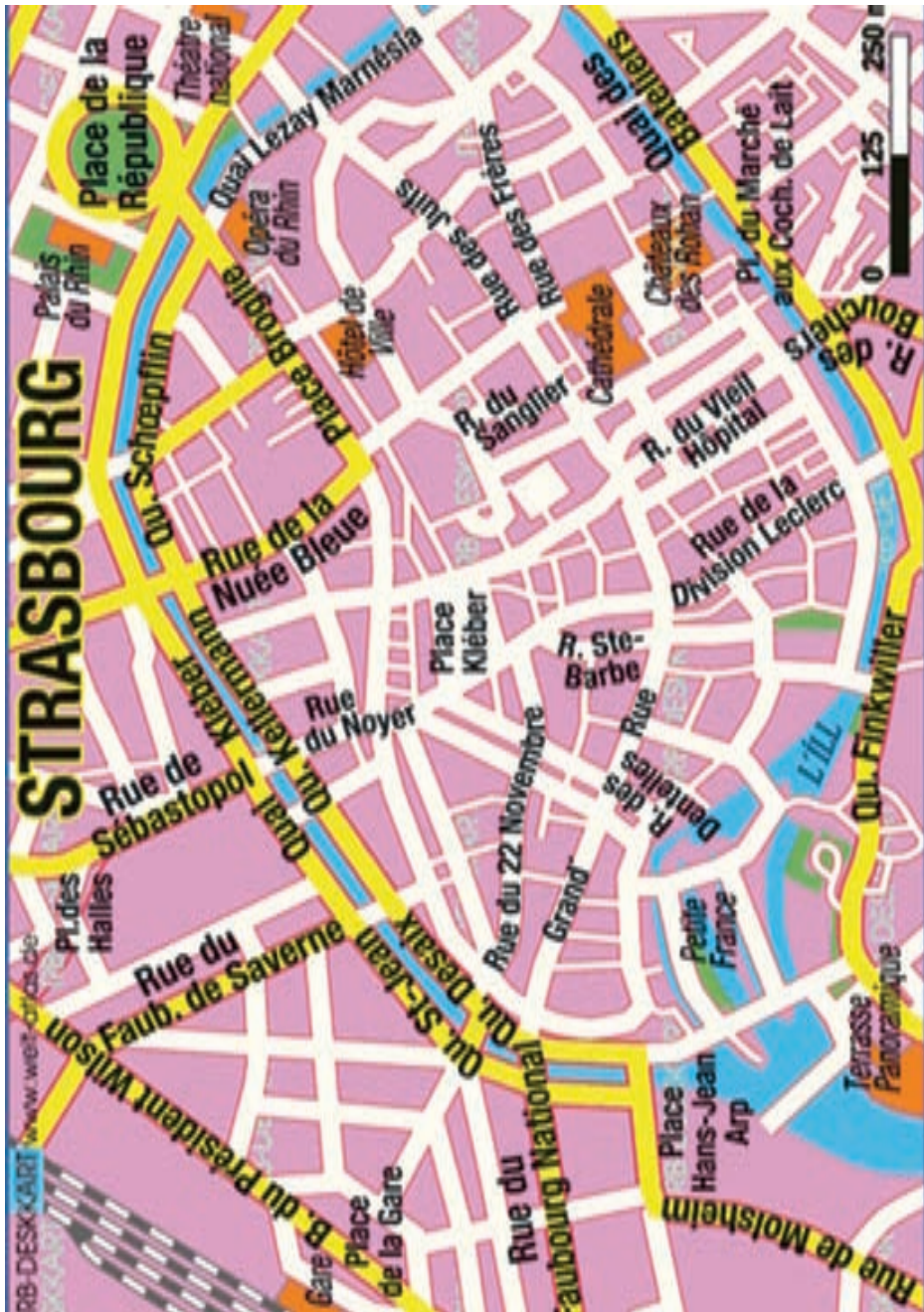
25 December - Christmas Day

26 December - St Stephen's Day (only in Alsace and Moselle)

Diplomatic Contacts - France

Embassy of Ireland in France	
Her Excellency, Patricia O'Brien, Ambassador	12 Avenue Foch (entrance 4 rue Rude), 75116 Paris, France Phone: +33 1 4417 6700 www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/france/
Irish Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe	
His Excellency, Keith McBean, Ambassador	11 Boulevard du Président Edwards, 67000 Strasbourg, France Phone: +33 3 8814 4920 www.dfa.ie/prep/strasbourg/

Map of Strasbourg



Tram Map





Chapter 3:

Moving Up the Ladder

What Next?

There are countless different ways to find a job in Brussels, whether it be via the official EPSO competitions of the Institutions, or a different route. Undoubtedly there are lots of opportunities, whatever your field.

This chapter is designed to help you combine the skills you already have with the valuable experience you have gained during your traineeship, with a view to finding a job. For more information and advice, contact the European Movement Ireland office directly.



Should I stay...

A view from a former stagiaire who got a job in Brussels.

“Although a certain number of stagiaires have always stayed on in Brussels for work after their stage, this number surely increased in light of the recent recession in Ireland. There are plenty of opportunities for work in Brussels and often in very interesting areas which you simply couldn’t get work in elsewhere. The downside is the bad conditions young newly-qualified workers have to accept, namely pay or lack thereof! Unlike Ireland, unless you have one to two years’ work experience most private companies will insist on taking you on an internship basis for anything from three months to a year, or even more. Many of these internships are unpaid; the best ones pay a little more than a stage in the EU Institutions. Law firms are the exception here. They often take on unqualified law graduates as stagiaires for six months to a year, but they’re usually relatively well-paid.

“The thing about low-paying internships is that they’re often the only way into an organisation or particular sector. If you can find one which pays enough to break even, it’s worth it for a few months as a way of getting good experience, making contacts and hopefully being offered a job after! The other thing which stands out is the quality of candidate these jobs attract. It might seem crazy to an Irish person in their late twenties/early thirties with Bachelor’s degrees, Master’s degrees, even PhDs and years of internships under their belt to apply for a three month unpaid post, but it’s utterly normal for many Italians, Germans and other nationalities.

“Before I paint too bleak a picture though, it is worth remembering how well-received Irish graduates/stagiaires are in most companies and organisations. It’s hard to overstate the advantage of being a native English speaker. In addition, Irish university degrees are held in pretty high regard, graduates tend to be young and have a reputation for being hard-working, enthusiastic and, generally, just well liked. In the networking capital of Europe, traits like that often really appeal to employers!

“As for finding a job, often the hardest part is finding out that the job exists. Signing up to an agency is one way to start the job hunt e.g. Eurobrussels or Start People. The problem is, because these are so popular there are always big numbers of applicants for every decent offer. The online EU paper, www.euractiv.com, is another good source of job advertisements. It can be the case that companies and organisations will only advertise on their own website which means you have to already be aware that they’re there.

“If you’re looking at lobbying either for private companies or NGOs, one way to get a comprehensive list of people to contact is to check the Commission’s

registry of lobbyists and then check their individual websites. Even if there's no position advertised, it's often worth sending in a CV stating your interest. The same goes for MEPs, think-tanks and large companies. For the latter it could be worth looking at every large company which has a base in Brussels (everyone from Panasonic to Levi's to Toyota has an office here) and seeing if they need people in their public affairs or legal section or whatever other area you plan to go into. As for eligibility for jobs, many advertisements, though not all, will stipulate a Master's degree in a relevant area. Most will look for more than one language, usually English and French. That said, more often than not the office language tends to be English. It's also pretty common to see a requirement of 'experience in a community Institution' which is when the stage really reveals its use! It can take a while to find something interesting so it's usually not a bad idea to start looking before your stage ends. Also, feel free to ask officials in your unit for any suggestions or recommendations. They will probably have contacts and, in my experience, most are more than happy to make an introduction and usually give you a plug as well.

"The problem with the Brussels job scene is that it's a buyer's market so you do have to sell yourself and don't sell yourself short. The opportunities and jobs here are impossible to find in most other cities. You just have to keep an eye out for what's going on. Keep yourself open to suggestions and new people and there's every chance of finding a perfect job."

- Nora, Former Stagiaire

TIP: There is a general rule that if you have done a paid stage in one of the Institutions, Agencies or bodies, you are disqualified from doing another.

....or should I go (home)?

Previous stagiaires have gone on to work in business consultancies, law firms, the civil service and a variety of NGOs and international organisations based in Ireland. Wherever you end up, we hope that you stay interested in European affairs. If you do go home, there are two main ways you can do this:

Get involved with European Movement Ireland in Dublin! We are a not-for-profit organisation that works to develop the connection between Ireland and Europe and to ensure that European issues are discussed in Ireland in a reasoned, robust and fair manner. We lead several education campaigns and outreach programmes, with a view to communicating Europe in a clear and comprehensive way.

Join the EM Ireland main branch in Dublin to avail of a range of membership benefits and services, including regular ebulletins offering insight and analysis of topical EU issues, bespoke research services, EU career advice and invitations to regular expert briefings, members events and networking opportunities. Learn more about membership at www.europeanmovement.ie. Alternatively, for those of you now staying in Brussels, why not get involved with our Brussels Branch? Learn more on page 151-2.

Tips for Finding a Job in Brussels

1. Edit your CV

As mentioned in the first chapter of this book, competition for jobs is high in Brussels. It is therefore vital that you update your CV regularly. Many Brussels-based job seekers have similar backgrounds and experience. A clear, well-written CV will help you stand out from the crowd. Focus on the areas that make you unique, and ensure that all spelling, punctuation and formatting is perfect.

It's also wise to have your CV in Europass format. Check that all spelling and punctuation is correct and ask friends and family for feedback.



Useful Websites:

Europass: <http://www.europass.ie> or

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

EURES: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/>

2. Build your Network

A good place to start is by telling your former stage supervisor, employers and college lecturers that you're looking for work. They might have some advice or forward your details to someone looking to fill a position. Beyond that, if you're planning on job-hunting there, get yourself some business cards as soon as you arrive in Brussels and go to as many events as possible, meeting as many people as possible. Get in touch with Irish expat clubs, European GAA clubs and consulates. You may make some useful contacts.

Another possibility is to get in touch with someone working in an area of your interest. Ask them if you can take them for coffee to talk about their career and experience. This may not get you a job in a direct sense, but you'll probably come away with new leads and fresh ideas.

Opportunities often arise by chance. You'd never know who might think of recommending you for a position in the future, particularly if you've gone to the effort of setting up a meeting with them previously.

Try and join some networks relevant to your area of work or interests. www.meetup.com offers a huge range of options for potential networking and socialising. Equally, various professional networks and associations will have a presence on Facebook. Be selective and safe in the groups you join but do try and put yourself out there as much as possible to grow your web of contacts and maximise your chances of landing work.

Tip: If you attend conferences or seminars on European issues, ask for a copy of the speaker's business card and keep it on file for the future.

Useful Websites:

EM Ireland job and internship opportunities webpage:

<http://www.europeanmovement.ie/category/jobs-and-traineeships/>

EuroBrussels: <https://www.eurobrussels.com/>

EurActiv: <http://jobs.euractiv.com/>

3. Another Traineeship?

Traineeships have their place in the world of work, and can certainly be an excellent way to get useful work experience. However there are many employers who take advantage of young workers. Remember that by their very nature, traineeships should have a “training” dimension, and should contribute to progress in the professional development of trainees. Don’t be afraid to have and maintain high standards. Look at European Movement Ireland’s website for job and stage opportunities. By becoming a member of the organisation, you can receive frequent updates about European affairs, including employment opportunities.

4. Why Not Try Volunteering?

What better way to add to your achievements than by giving something back to your new community? Not only will you help your fellow citizens and add to your skill set, but you’ll also build on your CV. Furthermore, volunteering is an excellent way to fill your time when you’re between jobs.

It’s worth remembering that volunteering opportunities can come in many shapes and sizes. You can gain valuable experience even by helping to organise an exhibition or festival. Donating your time to a cause will show that you are a proactive and determined person. These are qualities that are always attractive to employers.

European Voluntary Service

European Voluntary Service (EVS) is an EU funded programme for 18-30 year olds and is coordinated by Voluntary Service International (VSI) in Ireland. The programme funds travel, accommodation, food and pocket money as well as preparation, on-arrival training and personal support during the project. Volunteering opportunities are available from two to 12 months with accredited hosting organisations (shorter periods and extra financial support are available for those with extra support needs e.g. those who have a disability and unemployed people).

To search the EVS project database and contact VSI, see their website: <http://www.vsi.ie/volunteer/longterm/evs.html>

European Solidarity Corps

Launched in 2016, this is a new EU initiative for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. Such projects can last two to 12 months and will usually be located within the EU Member States. Projects can include helping to prevent natural disasters or rebuild afterwards, assisting in centres for asylum seekers, or addressing different social issues in communities. It is possible to register when you are 17 years old, but you cannot start a project until you are 18-30 years old. To join the European Solidarity Corps, use the registration process online on the European Youth Portal.

You might find some more useful tips and suggestions on the following websites:

Learn more about the European Year of Volunteering: <https://www.servethecity.be/>

European Volunteer Centre: www.cev.be/

European Youth Portal: http://europa.eu/youth/country/76/theme/45_en

Young Professionals in Foreign Policy: <http://www.yppf.org/brussels>

Voluntary Service International <http://www.vsi.ie/>

European Solidarity Corps: www.europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en

5. Make A Wish List

Make a list of all employers you'd like to work for, and devise ways of arranging meetings with them. Joining a young professionals network like Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YPFP) can help in this process. It is also worth keeping an eye on activity in the Facebook groups of the various stage programmes, where jobs are often advertised.

Considering how many applications they receive by email, it might be worth cold-calling some employers to see if they have any vacancies. This will mark you out as someone who is pointedly applying for a particular organisation, rather than someone who is applying to anyone and everyone. Likewise, if you start the process by sending a CV, consider following up with a phone call.

TIP: Get inspired on Europages: <http://www.europages.co.uk/>

Turning a Stage into a Job

Here is some advice from former stagiaires who went on to find work in their chosen fields in Europe:

"In my experience, it's vital to make professional connections and meet as many people in your area of interest as possible, if you want to find a job in Brussels.

"During my traineeship I tried to take full advantage of the opportunity to get exposure to new ideas and to meet people in my field, by going to conferences and events as much as possible.

Apart from improving my knowledge of the relevant policy area, I found that the 'networking' opportunities they presented allowed me to make professional connections I never would have made otherwise. These contacts turned out to be crucial for me: after months of job-hunting and interviews where I was just one of many candidates, somebody I had met at a conference got in touch to say that her office was about to start recruiting... and the rest is history!

"I believe that this is where the importance of making professional connections and meeting people really came into play in my job-search; I heard about a vacancy I might not have heard about otherwise, and early on in their recruitment process too. In saying that though, there's no "one size fits all" formula, so what worked for me might not be right for you. However, professional connections will always be important, so it helps to be aware that there are lots of different ways to make contacts here, besides the standard networking at conferences etc. The Irish community, for example, is small and close-knit, and having English as our first language gives us a huge advantage that can't be underestimated. Volunteering as an English language editor or a writer for any of the hundreds EU Affairs and diplomatic magazines and websites is another option.

"Overall, there's no such thing as a bad opportunity to broaden your network - every little thing helps. Good luck!"

- Louise, Stagiaire, European Parliament



“... you are very lucky to have experience working inside the European Institutions so be sure to emphasise what you can offer.”

“Completing a stage will put you in a great position to find employment, particularly in Brussels. While some stagiaires are kept on for another three months or so as intérimaires, others look for work with the Parliament or the Council. Your time as a stagiaire should help familiarise you with the whole EU setup and help give you an idea of which path you wish to take.

"Those who wish to work for the Commission can apply to work as a contract agent. These positions are limited, so the best way to ensure you have a good chance is to enter the EPSO competitions. Most stagiaires will apply for the AD5 or AST competitions. This involves psychometric testing; a lot of which is done in your second language, which will need to be strong.

"For those who wish to go down the private sector route, there is no shortage of trade associations, lobby groups and NGOs located in Brussels with a view to influencing EU policy. Your insider experience and familiarity with the EU is highly valued in these kinds of organisations and there is such a wide range of them in Brussels that any area of interest is covered. There are also plenty of consultancy firms and research groups in Brussels that are keen to take on stagiaires. There are a huge amount of organisations located in Brussels because the EU is there, and you are very lucky to have experience working inside the European Institutions so be sure to emphasise what you can offer. Being young and energetic doesn't do any harm either!"

- Al, Stagiaire, DG MARE, European Commission

“It is because of the network of people that I became acquainted with during my time in Brussels that I came to hear about the position...”



"The stage is not only an amazing experience but it's the ideal starting point if you want to have a career in the EU Institutions.

"I remember at the 'Welcome Conference', this guy, past stagiaire I think, saying not to waste this opportunity – referring, of course, to all the events, nights outs and trips away that would be organised! Don't get me wrong, the social aspect of your stage will be (and I'm talking from experience here) an integral part of your five months in Brussels. However, if you are serious about forging a career in the EU then it will pay dividends to put in the hours at work.

"When people think about jobs in the EU, they automatically think 'EPSO', 'Open Competitions', etc. While this is true if what you're after is permanent civil service employment, there are also other types of contracts offered which do not involve the arduous process associated with the 'Open Competitions', e.g. interim contracts and temporary contracts.

"I finished my stage in DGT (Irish translation) at the end of February and on the 1st of March I began work as an interimaire with 'The Publications Office of the European Union' in Luxembourg. The job entails proofreading the Irish language version of the 'Official Journal', as well as other general publications of the EU.

"It is because of the network of people that I became acquainted with during my time in Brussels that I came to hear about the position, and it is because of the wealth of experience I obtained on my stage (I was required to sit a proofreading exam) that I passed the exam and was offered the position.

"Brussels, being at the heart of the EU, is in my opinion THE place to be if a job in the EU is what you're after!"

- Laura, Stagiaire, DGT, European Commission

"Very early on in my stage at the Council of the European Union I realised that I wanted to stay in Brussels. I was elected as trainee spokesperson along with three others and having this position behind me really proved invaluable when it came to looking for a job.

"I found my job by trawling through Brussels jobs sites - EurActiv jobs, EuroBrussels, Twitter pages, websites etc. I specifically wanted a job in Political Communication so only applied for jobs in that area. Two days after I applied for my job I was called for interview. There was a written test before the interview, which was new to me, but I felt I handled it well. The interview itself was very straightforward and to be honest I walked out of there feeling it could go either way. To my delight I got called for the second interview but had to wait 6 weeks until September! Take note: in August Brussels shuts down so don't expect any interviews to take place!

"I used that time wisely however and did as much research on the organisation and its policies as I could. The second interview was much more intense. In total six people interviewed me over a period of an hour and a half. I also had another written test to complete before the interview. Two days later I got a call to say I had the job and, as they say, the rest is history.

"So how do you stand out when ultimately everyone who you are competing with is qualified for the job? It's down to the personal touches. Do you do any volunteering? Are you politically active? What hard skills do you have that others may not - Indesign, Photoshop, coding, video editing? Are you well connected in Brussels? Also, and perhaps most importantly, never underestimate the power of being a native English speaker!

"Brussels is a great city to live and work in. Out of the eighty or so people who did the traineeship with me, about six of us are still in Brussels. We still meet up nearly every week and I know that I have made some lifelong friends. So my advice to you is that if you are currently doing a stage and think you would like to stick around Brussels afterwards, start working towards that now. Chance your arm and ask high-level officials to meet you for coffee and give you advice, attend all the (relevant!) events you snag an invite to and gradually build your network - it could make all the difference in the end."

-Mary-Kate,
Stagiaire, Council
of the EU



Permanent Jobs in the EU Institutions

Now that you have paid your dues as a stagiaire in Brussels, you are likely considering staying put and looking for a permanent job. For many of you, this will involve applying to the various European Institutions. The application process for these jobs is a little more complicated than most but we have broken it down for you here to make that next career step a wee bit easier to take...

The Concours (Open Competition)

All permanent staff for the EU Institutions are recruited through open competitions, commonly referred to as 'concours' in all languages. These competitions are organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) and offer job opportunities in all the EU Institutions. The roles available are in different fields like Communication, Translation, Interpretation, IT, Finance, etc. Graduates can apply for so-called 'Administrator' profiles whereas non-graduates can apply for 'Assistant' profiles. The selection procedures for the respective profiles are published at different times of the year.



EU Job Profiles Explained

Wondering about the difference between ADs and ASTs (besides a consonant or two)? Wonder no more...

Administrators (AD)

Administrators play very important roles in the EU Institutions - particularly with regard to drafting new legislation and implementing EU law. Administrator roles vary depending on what EU Institution/DG they are recruited by. During the application process you must choose one of the following areas you would like to work in:

European Public Administration (generalist profile where you may end up working on policy development and administration)

- Law

- Audit
- Communication
- External relations

What You Need

All candidates must have a degree and meet the EU's language requirements (those pesky languages...). Although a degree in any field is often acceptable, some AD posts will look specifically for graduates of math and statistics, law, economics, commerce or accounting – be sure to read the EPSO competition notices carefully for specific requirements. Applicants should also have excellent university grades. A good knowledge of EU policies/Institutions and/or managerial experience will also really add value to your application, as can postgraduate qualifications and a previous traineeship in one of the EU Institutions.

Entry Levels

There are two common entry grades for administrators:

AD5 – generally no professional experience is required

AD7 – Several years of relevant experience is generally a requirement

Assistants (AST)

Assistants are involved in the daily function of the EU Institutions. Their responsibilities regularly include budgetary work, computing and document management.

Like that of an administrator, assistants are employed (usually in a supporting role) in the number of different areas, including:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| • Secretarial | • Research |
| • Financial | • Communication |
| • Administrative | • Policy development and communication |

What You Need

Candidates for AST positions do not need a third-level degree to apply. However, they do need meet the language requirements of an EU official, have relevant experience and a recognised second level qualification.

Entry levels

Entry level grades for Assistants range from AST1-AST11. These grades are based on experience - the higher the grade you work at, the higher the salary you'll receive, and the longer you work in the EU the higher your grade becomes. Common entry level for assistants is AST 1 to AST 3, however AST 3 requires several years of experience.

Specialist Profiles

Permanent officials with very specific skills and experience are regularly recruited by the EU under 'specialist profiles'. These include the following:

- Nurses
- Scientific researchers
- Nuclear inspectors
- Specialists in food safety
- Computer scientists
- and many more....

The competition stages for specialist profiles vary slightly to that of non-specialist administrators. Instead of computer-based tests at stages two and three, applicants have what the EU calls a 'CV sift' where their CV and previous experience is examined. The recruitment time for specialists also takes close to nine months.

Current opportunities can be found in EPSO's planning map for Competitions: <https://epso.europa.eu/>

Where To Apply:

EPSO competition notices for different specialist profiles are advertised throughout the year where you will find the specific requirements listed.

Selection Procedures

EPSO is responsible for recruiting staff across the EU Institutions and agencies. Each institution recruits its staff from a centralised pool of applicants.

To work in the Institutions of the EU, you will need to have a good command of at least two European languages: your main language (which must be one of the 24 official languages of the EU) plus either English, French, German. For example, for Irish applicants, if English is your main language, then you will need to have satisfactory knowledge of either French, German, for your second language. Alternatively, if you have excellent knowledge of Irish, English could then qualify as your second language. (Other languages may qualify as your second language – please see competition notice)

As well being tested on professional skills and knowledge, the following competencies are assessed during the assessment centre stage of the selection procedure:

- Analysis and problem solving
- Communicating
- Delivering quality and results
- Learning and development
- Prioritising and organising
- Resilience
- Working with others
- Leadership

Competition Stages

Stage 1: Register with EPSO and set up your account

Fill out online application form, declaring your languages, and submit it to EPSO.

Stage 2: Computer-based tests

If you validate your application before the deadline, you will be contacted to book a slot for the computer-based test. You will be asked to pick a time slot that suits you best. These slots fill up quickly so book early to avoid disappointment.

These computer-based tests take place in designated test centres in all EU countries. This stage will assess your verbal reasoning (designed to test your ability to comprehend complex written texts), numerical reasoning (designed to assess your ability to efficiently analyse numerical data, such as statistics) and abstract reasoning skills. You take these tests in your main language. You will also sit a situational judgement test, in your

Stage 3: E-tray exercise

If you score one of the highest overall combined marks in the computer-based tests, you will be invited to sit the e-tray exercise held in your language 2 in one of EPSO's designated test centres. The e-tray exercise will test four of the general competencies: Analysis and problem solving; Delivering quality and results; Prioritising and organising; Working with others.

Stage 4: Assessment day in Brussels

Here the emphasis is on job-related competency-based testing, but EU knowledge will also be assessed. This assessment can vary from one to two days, depending on the type of competition you have applied for, conducted in your second language (except for profiles requiring specific language skills). There will be a group exercise, an oral presentation and interviews. For the General Graduate Grade there will also be a comprehensive case study related to the field for which the candidates have registered (such as Law or Economics). For Translators or Interpreters there will be practical linguistic tests.

Stage 5: Reserve List

Candidates successful at the assessment centre stage above will be placed on a 'reserve list'. This is basically the cream of the crop of candidates, all put together on one list for the various Institutions to select employees from. While getting onto the reserve list is a significant achievement, and it does confirm your eligibility to be employed by any EU Institution, it unfortunately does not guarantee you a job with the EU. Once you make it onto this list, it's time to contact EM Ireland for advice and guidance on how to maximise your chances of success.

Remember...

Competitions for different areas open at different times of the year so keep an eye on <https://epso.europa.eu/> and www.dfa.ie/eujobs and www.europeanmovement.ie for up-to-date information.

The full application process can take several months.

More detailed information about each competition is available on the EPSO website www.epso.europa.eu



Permanent Language Jobs in the EU Institutions

Like all the permanent jobs in the EU, permanent language jobs require candidates to first pass the concours organised by EPSO. The competition stages for those who would like to work with languages in the EU Institutions are similar to those already outlined for assistants, administrators, etc., but with some variations depending on the language job profile that is being recruited. And, unfortunately, it still takes five to nine months to complete the selection procedure starting from the date of publication of the competition notice.

Vacancies in all of the profiles outlined below are announced by a competition notice posted on the EPSO website, which gives full details of the job, the eligibility criteria and the selection procedure. Visit <http://europa.eu/epso/apply/jobs/> to find all the information

What You Need

Applicants for all linguist profiles are required to have:

- A perfect command of your mother tongue/main language (language 1);
- A thorough knowledge of English, French or German (language 2) and the ability to translate out of it;
- A thorough knowledge of a second official language of the EU (language 3) and the ability to translate out of it (proof-readers are not required to have this third language).

For fluent Irish speakers, you have the possibility to opt for English as your second language and then either French or German as your third, possibly making the process a wee bit more accessible. During the competition stages, candidates will be tested on all three of their languages, as well as the core competencies required for all EU jobs. For all permanent language jobs, the verbal, abstract and numerical reasoning computer-based test stage will be conducted in your language 2, with interpreters also having to sit some of these tests in language 3. On top of that, you will have to sit additional 'language tests' for all three of your languages. These tests will vary depending on the linguist profile you are applying for - read more about these profiles below.

NOTE: As the selection procedure may be subject to changes, always check the EPSO website and relevant competition notices for the details.



To learn more,
have a look at:
[http://blogs.
ec.europa.eu/
eu-careers.info/
linguists/](http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eu-careers.info/linguists/).

Linguist Profiles

(a) Translator

While no professional translation experience is needed to become a translator at one of the EU Institutions, in addition to the language skills outlined above applicants must also have:

- Completed a university course in any discipline and have obtained a degree;
- An ability to grasp varied and complex issues, manage information and communicate effectively;
- A capacity to work consistently and under pressure - translators often have to work to very tight deadlines;
- A familiarity with economics, financial affairs, legal matters, technical or scientific fields - more often than not, the texts you will be required to translate will be quite technical

When to Apply?

Open competitions for translators are published every year in June or July (and at various times for translators at the Court of Justice, who must be legal/linguistic experts) but the languages required vary from year to year. Candidates are recruited according to the needs of the different Institutions and interested candidates should consult EPSO regularly to see if their language skills match those required.

The selection process for translators focuses on language knowledge and skills in translating.

Useful Websites

European Parliament: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/organisation-and-rules/multilingualism>

European Commission – Directorate General for Translation: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/index_en.htm

European Court of Justice – Directorate General for Translation: http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_10742/Directorate-General-for-Translation

(b) Conference Interpreter

Conference interpreting at EU level is a specialist skill that must be learned. For those of you thinking about applying for this profile, you need to have a postgraduate qualification in conference interpreting or several years professional experience in the field, as well as the required language skills.

NOTE: The most important language for an interpreter is their mother tongue - applicants must be able to express themselves eloquently and coherently in it.

Where to Train

Postgraduate degrees in conference interpreting are offered by a number of universities across Europe (in Ireland, it's NUI Galway, in case you were wondering) and, best of all, it is not necessary to have studied languages at undergraduate level to be eligible for this qualification. For a full list of EU recognised conference interpreting courses around Europe see: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/docs/cooperation/list_universities_europa.pdf

Check out the DG for Interpretations YouTube channel for some insight to the role at <http://www.youtube.com/user/DGInterpretation>.

Useful Website: Take a look at the interpreter selection pages of the EU Institutions here: http://europa.eu/interpretation/index_en.htm

(c) Lawyer-Linguist

EU lawyer-linguists play a vital role in law-making, making sure that all new EU legislation has the same meaning in every European language – a fairly tall order when you think about it! Lawyer- linguists are more than translators; they provide assistance on legal terminology and offer legal analysis in cooperation with other departments.

In order to become a lawyer-linguist, you must have:

- The level of languages mentioned at the start of this section (to work in the ECJ, these language skills must include a thorough knowledge of French);
- A law degree

- Previous experience of translating legal texts is an asset.

Selection for lawyer-linguists can be launched at any time throughout the year, although it tends to be either in spring or autumn. The selection procedure focuses on both legal knowledge and language skills. Positions are advertised on https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_7007/en



(d) Proofreader/Language Editor

EU proofreaders work on texts in their native language. Their main responsibilities include:

- Preparing texts in terms of style and typography;
- Ensuring manuscripts are ready for press release;
- Participating in the design of publications.

Good news also for you bilingual folk: proofreading positions do not have a three language requirement! You must speak an official EU language plus have a good command of second language (English, French or German). Again, to work in the ECJ, applicants must have at least a reasonable knowledge of French.

Applicants need to have five years' experience or two years' experience plus post-secondary level education to apply. Part of the selection procedure will include a number of proofreading tests.

Current proofreading job opportunities can be found on EPSO at: <http://europa.eu/epso/beta/apply/job-offers>



Temporary Jobs in the EU Institutions

Temporary or contract agents cover a variety of tasks and expertise for periods ranging from a few weeks to often several years. These contracts offer a perfect opportunity to get great work experience in a multilingual European environment. Read about the various temporary positions available within the EU Institutions and Agencies below.



Temporary Contracts

Temporary contracts are available for a wide range of jobs in the EU Institutions. The length of employment for someone recruited on a temporary contract can vary; at the Commission for example, it is for a maximum of six years (you can always sit the concours while working for the EU on a temporary contract though!). Unlike permanent contracts, the selection and recruitment of the EU's temporary agents is run by the individual EU Institutions and Agencies according to their staffing needs and applicants do not have sit EPSO exams.

Your salary, benefits, and working conditions as a temporary agent are essentially the same as those of permanent officials. This covers the range of family allowances including expatriation allowance and medical insurance. As a temporary agent you may also be entitled to a temporary unemployment allowance when your contract expires.

Opportunities for temporary contract work with the EU are listed on the various individual EU Institution websites, websites of the various Permanent Representations to the EU and the EPSO website here: http://europa.eu/epso/apply/jobs/temp/index_en.htm.

Fixed – Term Contracts (CAST)

EU contract staff are pulled from a pool of candidates kept on a database organised by EPSO. Unlike with an open competition, there is no assessment stage for candidates undertaking fixed-term contracts and the number of candidates is not predefined.

The application procedure to get your name into the CAST database is

made up of two stages. For generalist profiles the process begins with verbal, abstract and numerical tests and is followed by a competency test. For those applying for a specialist profile, such as nursing, engineering and scientific research, selection begins with a review of the candidates CV before the competency test.

Successful candidates will be kept on EPSO's database for three years.

Further information can be found at: http://europa.eu/epso/apply/how_apply/fixed/index_en.htm





Seconded National Experts (SNEs)

SNEs work at the EU Institutions on a temporary basis and usually come from the civil service of EU Member States. Experts from international organisations and universities are also sometimes recruited. The idea behind the programme is that these national experts will share their experiences and expertise in particular policy areas with EU staff and in return will take back knowledge of EU policies and processes to their national administrations.

In order to become an SNE, candidates must have at least 3 years work experience. National employers still pay SNEs their salary throughout the duration of their secondment; however the EU offers compensation for the extra costs of living abroad.

If you are interested in becoming an SNE, your first port of call should be with your national Permanent Representative to the EU, who will be able to advise you on current opportunities.

For more information, visit <http://www.publicjobs.ie> and type 'Seconded National Experts' into the site's search bar.

Have we missed, mistaken or misinterpreted something?

If you have comments on this book, we'd love to hear from you. We're always looking for new information and opinions on life in the Eurobubble, so would greatly appreciate your advice. Send us an email to info@europeanmovement.ie and we'll do our best to include your feedback in the next edition of The Green Book.

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