



European Parliament

**Join the
European
Parliament!**



The members of the staff of the EU institutions play their part every day in building the Europe of today and of tomorrow. Working for hundreds of millions of people is a goal they all share, and every EU citizen potentially has the chance to join them. Whether you are interested in traineeships or in embarking on a career at the European Parliament, this guide provides an overview of the opportunities on offer and the application procedures. We hope that it answers all your questions and that one day we will have the pleasure of working with you.

Happy reading!

Unit for Relations with Personnel

Directorate-General for Personnel

The competent authorities exercise broad discretionary powers in the area of recruitment. Please note, therefore, that the information contained in this guide may not in any circumstances be used against the European Parliament in legal proceedings.



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1 Background information on the European Parliament

As the only European institution elected by direct universal suffrage, as it has been since 1979, the European Parliament is one of the cornerstones of democracy in the European Union. This assembly, which has 751 Members in its eighth term, is the voice of more than 500 million Europeans in 28 Member States.

The European Parliament has powers in three main areas: legislative powers, budgetary powers and the power to exercise political scrutiny over the other European institutions. Its role is constantly evolving. By way of an example, EU Member States are required to take account of the results of the European elections when choosing a nominee for the post of President of the Commission. That nominee is then approved by the new Parliament. Under the terms of the Treaty, therefore, the President of the Commission is 'elected' by Parliament, which

means that voters now have a real say in who becomes the head of the EU's executive body.

For more information visit the EP website at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en>, and follow our activities on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/europeanparliament> and Twitter https://twitter.com/Europarl_en

The European Parliament has three main places of work: Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Whilst the Secretariat is located in Luxembourg, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and the departments which work closely with them are in Brussels. This is where political group and parliamentary committee meetings and mini-sessions (additional sessions to the main plenaries) are held. The European Parliament holds 12 one-week part-sessions per year in Strasbourg, its official seat.

The Secretariat is the European Parliament's administration. It consists of 12 directorates-general and a Legal Service. Its role is to assist MEPs in their daily work and to provide facilities and logistical support. The Secretariat also assists the political groups, whilst the MEPs

are supported by their own parliamentary assistants and political group staff. In total, the European Parliament employs some 9 000 people. A wide range of possibilities are on offer, from traineeships to careers in the European civil service.



2 Becoming a European Parliament official



If you would like to embark on a career as an official in the Secretariat of the European Parliament, you first have to pass a competition organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO). The selection procedure involves various tests to assess candidates' reasoning skills, their knowledge of the European Union, their professional skills and their knowledge of an EU language

other than their own. EPSO is responsible for organising open competitions for all the European institutions. Future European civil servants are recruited from reserve lists drawn up on the basis of these competitions.

Recruitment to the European Parliament's Secretariat therefore follows a procedure which is common to all the EU institutions.

While the European civil service embraces many different activities and professions, the eligibility

criteria are the same for everyone. In order to be admitted to a competition, candidates must:

- be a citizen of a Member State of the European Union;
- enjoy full rights as a citizen;
- have fulfilled any obligations imposed on them by national laws concerning military service;
- have a thorough knowledge of two official languages of the European Union, at least one of which must be English, French or German;
- where appropriate, have the necessary qualifications and professional experience for the degree of specialisation required by the post and the grade at which it is published.

All information on current and forthcoming procedures and how to register for them can be found on the website of the European

Personnel Selection Office (EPSO). Further information can be found in Chapter 7 of this brochure.

Areas of activity

The varied and stimulating work performed by the staff of the European Parliament is crucial to democracy in Europe. The countless opportunities for professional development, the multicultural working environment in which 24 official

languages are spoken, and the excellent work-life balance are just some of the advantages of working at the European Parliament. With a view to giving MEPs the support they need, the Secretariat offers a wide range of jobs for candidates

with professional experience in a range of areas:

- Parliamentary assistance,
- linguistic assistance,
- communication,
- management,
- finances,
- information technology,
- legal assistance,
- administration,
- logistical assistance.

Function groups and professions

Staff in all the European institutions are divided into three categories:

Administrators (AD)

There are 12 AD grades. Administrators perform administrative, advisory, linguistic, scientific and management duties. The European Parliament offers a wide variety of career paths for university graduates:

- administrators in parliamentary bodies,
- press officers,
- lawyer-linguists,

- financial administrators,
- translators and interpreters, etc.

Assistants (AST)

There are 11 AST grades. Assistants perform executive duties in all the institution's areas of activity. The wide range of vital tasks they carry out in the areas of budgetary and financial affairs, personnel management, IT and document management, to name but a few, make them indispensable.

Secretaries and clerks (AST/SC)

There are six AST/SC grades. These staff members

perform secretarial and office management duties, and other practical, support and logistical tasks, which in many cases call for the ability to work unsupervised.

Career progression in the Secretariat is governed by the Staff Regulations and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants. Staff are promoted either within the same function group or, on the basis of specific procedures, to a higher function group.



3 Fixed-term contracts in the Secretariat

In addition to careers as an official, the European Parliament also offers fixed-term contracts. The purpose of these contracts as temporary or contract staff members is to provide cover for permanent posts which remain vacant due to an unsuccessful internal or interinstitutional selection procedure, if they could not be filled from a reserve list, or to strengthen a team for a specific purpose. Fixed-term contracts are available for all posts and professional profiles.

Contract staff members are selected following a 'call for expressions of interest' and successful applicants are placed on a reserve list. If selected, candidates are employed in accordance with departmental

needs. Contracts usually run for a maximum of six years.

Contracts for temporary staff members are also usually valid for a maximum of six years. However, open-ended contracts are available for people with certain specific profiles. These types of jobs are rare, and application procedures are usually tailored to the post in question.

Special rules apply to staff recruited on fixed-term contracts. Further information can be found on the European Personnel Selection Office's (EPSO) website:

<http://europa.eu/epso/>



4 Parliamentary assistants

Parliamentary assistants, who work directly for MEPs, make up another category of temporary staff.

Parliamentary assistants help MEPs in their day-to-day work and are either based in Brussels (accredited parliamentary assistants) or in the MEP's home constituency (local assistants); they work in Strasbourg during part-sessions.

Accredited parliamentary assistants work in Brussels and are responsible for compiling background information on important political issues relating to their MEP's work and for writing the draft reports, opinions and amendments tabled by their MEP. They also draft speeches, answer questions from members of the public and look after groups of visitors, and are in charge of the day-to-day running of their MEP's office.

Local parliamentary assistants are based in an MEP's home constituency. They help the MEP concerned with his or her dealings with constituents, authorities and associations. They provide a link between their MEP, the public and local party bodies.

MEPs work closely with their assistants and rely heavily on them, which is why they choose their staff personally. If you wish to apply for a job as a parliamentary assistant, you should contact the office of the MEP concerned directly.

A full list of MEPs – by country and political group – can be found on the European Parliament website at the following address:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/map.html>

5 Jobs in the European Parliament's political groups

Rather than forming national blocs, MEPs at the European Parliament sit in political groups in accordance with their political leanings.

Political group staff help the MEPs in their group with their daily work, and their role is highly political in nature.

They are mainly involved in formulating and defending the political positions that their group will take and drafting opinions on specific topics, but they also do the preparatory work for the reports that MEPs produce.

Staff recruited by the Political groups are normally offered open-ended contracts. Political group staff are divided into the same three function groups as staff in the Secretariat of the European Parliament.

If you want more information on recruitment procedures, or if you wish to apply for a job in a political group, you should contact the group directly.

A list of Parliament's political groups can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en>



6 Traineeships and study visits

The European Parliament's Secretariat offers a range of general and specialised traineeships and study visits which are designed to enable members of the public to familiarise themselves with Parliament's work and activities.

The traineeships are paid or subsidised. They include 'general' and 'journalism' traineeships for university graduates, training placements and translation traineeships.

Applications for all traineeships are completed online. You are advised not to wait until the last day to apply, as the fact that large numbers of applications are being submitted at the same time can overload the system.

Once you have confirmed and sent your online application, you will receive a confirmation e-mail. The message will contain a confirmation number, which you should quote in all future correspondence concerning the traineeship, and a copy of your application in PDF format. If you are offered a traineeship you will be asked to send us a paper copy.

You will find an overview of the various types of traineeships below. More information can be found on the European Parliament's website, including details of the selection criteria, the internal rules and the application form:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/007cecd1cc/Stages.html>

For further information, please contact the relevant departments:

For general and journalism traineeships for university graduates, training placements and study visits:

European Parliament
Traineeships Office
GEO 02A016
Plateau du Kirchberg
2929 Luxembourg
LUXEMBOURG
+352 4300-24284
stages@ep.europa.eu

For translation traineeships:

European Parliament
Translation Traineeships
TOB 02B005
Plateau du Kirchberg
2929 Luxembourg
LUXEMBOURG
+352 4300-23107
dgtrad.translationtraineeships@ep.europa.eu



Traineeships for university graduates - general option or journalism option (Schuman Scholarships)

These traineeships are awarded only to graduates of universities or equivalent institutions. Their purpose is to give such graduates the opportunity to build on the knowledge acquired during their studies and to familiarise themselves with the activities of the European Union and,

in particular, the European Parliament.

They include:

- Robert Schuman scholarships, general option;
- Robert Schuman scholarships, journalism option.

Training placements

The European Parliament offers training placements to young people who, before the application deadline, have obtained a secondary-school leaving certificate corresponding to the level required for entry to university or have completed a

higher or technical course to an equivalent level. Priority is given to students who are required to complete a training placement as part of their studies. Applicants must be aged 18 or over on the first day of the placement.

Traineeship programme for persons with a disability

The European Parliament is an equal opportunities employer and encourages persons

with a disability to apply for its traineeship programmes. This programme offers paid

traineeships to persons with a disability as a positive action measure in an effort to facilitate

their integration into working life. Special arrangements are made for these trainees.

Translation traineeships for university graduates

These traineeships are awarded only to graduates of universities or equivalent institutions. Their purpose is to give graduates the opportunity to build on the knowledge acquired during

their studies and to familiarise themselves with the activities of the European Union and, in particular, the European Parliament.

Translation training placements

The European Parliament offers translation training placements to applicants who, before the application deadline, have obtained a secondary-school leaving certificate corresponding to the level required for entry to university or have completed a higher or technical course

to an equivalent level. These placements are intended in particular for students who are required to complete a training placement as part of their studies. Applicants must be aged 18 or over on the first day of the placement.

Study visits – for specific research

Study visits are designed to give persons aged 18 or over the opportunity to study specific

subjects relating to European integration in greater depth. Applicants also have the option

of carrying out research at the European Parliament's library or historical archives in Luxembourg.

Study visits last a maximum of one month. If you have already completed a traineeship at the

European Parliament, you are asked to wait six months before applying for a study visit.

The European Parliament makes no contribution towards expenses of any kind incurred by visitors.

Traineeships with an MEP or a political group

MEPs and political groups regularly accept trainees in Brussels and Strasbourg. Students and recent university graduates are given the opportunity to experience everyday political life in the European Parliament at first hand. Some MEPs also accept trainees in their constituencies.

Unlike those organised by the European Parliament's Secretariat, these traineeships are not part of Parliament's official programme. Availability

is determined by the ability of a given group or MEP to cater for trainees and traineeships are governed by the relevant internal rules of the political groups and the rules laid down by each MEP. As a result, the terms of the traineeships, their duration, the application deadlines and the remuneration arrangements vary. You are therefore advised to contact the relevant MEP or political group directly.

7 European Personnel Selection Office

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) is responsible for most of the staff recruitment procedures for the European institutions.

It organises the competitions for officials and the tests taken by candidates for non-permanent posts, in particular contract staff members.

All information concerning applications can be found on the EPSO website (<http://europa.eu/epsu>), including:

- a provisional calendar of forthcoming competitions giving details of the relevant fields and the languages in which the competition can be taken;
- official competition notices;
- overview of the application procedure;
- portal where you can follow the progress of your application(s);

- sample tests;
- ...

Competition notices are published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJ) and in national newspapers.

For further information, please contact EPSO:

- **by post:**
European Personnel
Selection Office
Candidate Contact Service
Office C-25 5/40
1049 Brussels
BELGIUM
- **by phone:**
+32 22993131
- **by fax:**
+32 22957488
- **online**

Once you have been placed on a reserve list, you may be contacted by any of the European institutions.

Departments interested in your CV will usually invite you to an interview.

EPSO does not deal with the recruitment of parliamentary assistants or European Parliament political group staff.



8 Work environment

As a European Parliament staff member you will enjoy social security cover (sickness and accident insurance, pension) provided by the Community health insurance scheme, as well as tailored training throughout your career and a working environment where equal opportunities, diversity, staff well-being and environment are respected. Parliament's staff policy also encourages career mobility. Moreover, you will have the option of enrolling your

children in Parliament's crèche and the European schools.

European Parliament staff remuneration is governed by the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union, which apply to staff in all the European institutions. It consists of a basic salary linked to the grade and step at which you have been recruited, your remuneration may include allowances granted on the basis



of your personal circumstances (expatriation allowance, family allowances, etc.). Salaries are subject to European Union tax and social insurance contributions.

Conclusion

Joining the European Parliament offers you the opportunity of an interesting career in a range

of different fields. If you take this opportunity, you will be choosing a unique, multicultural and international working environment.

The European Parliament looks for excellence in a range of areas and recruits candidates with extremely varied profiles. Do you want to be part of this?

What are you waiting for? Join the European Parliament today!



