

## **Rules governing the 2026 post-graduate traineeship scheme of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)**

### **1. RATIONALE OF THE PROGRAMME**

#### **1.1. General**

These rules govern Eurofound's official post-graduate traineeship scheme. This scheme is addressed mainly to recent university graduates, without excluding those who, in the framework of lifelong learning, have recently obtained a university diploma and are at the beginning of a new professional career.

Eurofound is an equal opportunities employer. Traineeships will be offered on the basis that the candidate has the ability to participate to the extent necessary and will benefit from the experience.

##### *1.1.1. Aims*

The aims of the official in-service training with Eurofound are:

- To provide fresh university graduates with a unique and first hand experience of the workings of Eurofound within the wider European and Institutional context;
- To enable such trainees to acquire practical experience and knowledge of the day-to-day work of Eurofound;
- To provide the opportunity to work in a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-ethnic environment, contributing to the development of mutual understanding, trust and tolerance;
- To promote European integration within the spirit of new governance and - through active participation - to create awareness of true European citizenship;
- To provide the opportunity to recent university graduates to put into practice knowledge acquired during their studies, and in particular in their specific areas of competence; and
- To introduce these graduates to the professional world and the constraints, duties and opportunities therein.

Eurofound, through its official traineeships scheme:

- benefits from the input of enthusiastic graduates, who can give a fresh point of view and up-to-date academic knowledge, which will enhance the everyday work of Eurofound;
- creates a pool of people with first-hand experience of - and trained in - Eurofound procedures, who will be better prepared to collaborate and co-operate with Eurofound in the future; and
- creates long-term “goodwill ambassadors” for European ideas and values, both within the European Union and outside.

#### *1.1.2. Location of traineeship*

Traineeships take place at the headquarters of Eurofound in Dublin, Ireland.

## **2. ELIGIBILITY**

### **2.1. Nationality**

Trainees are selected from nationals of the Member States of the European Union.

### **2.2. Qualifications**

#### *2.2.1. University Diploma*

Candidates must have completed the first cycle of a higher education course (university education) and obtained a full degree or its equivalent by the closing date for applications. For minimum national qualifications required by the legislation in the country where the diploma was obtained (see Annex I).

Eurofound maintains the right to change these minimum qualifications used for the official traineeships programme. Any such changes will be published on the [Traineeships page](#) on Eurofound’s website.

If offered a traineeship, candidates will be required to provide copies of diplomas (or of relevant official certificates) of all university or post university studies declared in their on-line application. For declared ongoing studies, an official declaration from the relevant university must be provided. Applicants whose university or post-graduate diplomas are not issued in one of the official EU languages must provide a translation of these documents into English, which is Eurofound’s working language. Certified copies of all diplomas declared and, if applicable, official *certified* translations will be required if engaged for a traineeship.

### 2.2.2. Languages

In order for the trainee to fully profit from the traineeship and to be able to follow meetings and perform adequately, candidates must have a very good knowledge<sup>1</sup> of at least two EU languages, of which one should be English - the working language of Eurofound.

If shortlisted, candidates will be required to provide the appropriate justification (i.e. diplomas, certificates, proof of having studied in the language in question, etc.) regarding the knowledge of other languages declared on the application form, other than the mother tongue.

### 2.3. Prior employment

As many people as possible should have the opportunity of in-service training within the European administration. Therefore, applications will not be accepted from candidates who, for more than six weeks:

- have already benefited or benefit from any kind of in-service training (formal or informal, paid or unpaid) within a European institution or body<sup>2</sup>, or
- who have had or have any kind of employment within a European institution or body, including anyone who is or has been an assistant to a Member of the European Parliament, an intra-muros consultant or researcher, a temporary staff member, a contract staff member, an auxiliary staff member or an interim staff member of any EU institution, body, delegation or representative office.

Candidates should inform Eurofound's HR Unit of any change in their situation that might occur at any stage of the application process.

## 3. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### 3.1. Submission

Applications should be submitted via the online system, in accordance with the procedures established by Eurofound's HR Unit. All necessary instructions are published on the website. Only applications submitted through Eurofound's on-line recruitment system will be considered. No applications or additional documents will be accepted after the closing date.

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<sup>1</sup> see Europass self-assessment: <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>

<sup>2</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/institutions-bodies\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/institutions-bodies_en)

### **3.2. Eligibility check**

Eligibility of all applications received by the closing date will be examined by Eurofound's HR Unit on the basis of the criteria as set out in these rules.

Eurofound's HR Unit reserves the right to amend the eligibility criteria as and when necessary.

### **3.3. Pre-selection procedure**

#### *3.3.1. Objective*

The main objective of the pre-selection procedure is to provide all Eurofound Units with the best possible choice of candidates with as wide a range of academic disciplines as possible from which the Units can make their final selection. The pre-selection procedure also aims to keep, to the best level possible, gender balance and equilibrium between candidates from the different Member States.

#### *3.3.2. Pre-selection Committee*

Pre-selection is carried out by Eurofound's HR Unit. Its decisions are final and binding. There is no appeal procedure.

The HR Unit reserves the right to amend the pre-selection criteria and procedure as and when necessary.

#### *3.3.3. Pre-selection results*

Pre-selected candidates appear in a database that is available to all Eurofound Units for the final selection process, hereafter called "the database". Generally the database contains over ten times as many applicants as there are training places available.

### **3.4. Final selection procedure**

Taking into consideration the existing conditions (size, absorption capacity, results of the evaluations carried out, etc.) and the budget availability, Eurofound's Executive Director determines the number of trainees to be attributed to each Unit for each period.

Following a search in the database according to specific criteria and an established "profile description", Eurofound Units select their trainees from the list of suitable candidates meeting these criteria. A representative of that Unit will contact the applicant directly for an interview.

### **3.5. Rejection of application**

If an application is unsuccessful at any stage of the application process, depending on the reason for rejection, a candidate may re-apply for a subsequent training period. It is, however, necessary to submit a fresh application, together with requested supporting documents. Candidates not selected for a traineeship will not receive notification.

### **3.6. Withdrawal**

At any stage of the application process, applicants may withdraw their application by informing Eurofound's HR Unit in writing. In such case, they are excluded from any further stage of the process. They may re-apply for a subsequent training period. It is, however, necessary to submit a fresh application, together with requested supporting documents.

### **3.7. Data Protection**

#### *3.7.1 Applicants' and trainees' personal data*

Eurofound, as a data controller, will process applicants' and trainees' personal data in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data (hereinafter referred to as 'EUDPR'). Further information on how Eurofound processes personal data can be found in the relevant [Data Protection Notice](#). Eurofound's HR Unit does not keep applicants' files from one session to another.

#### *3.7.2 Processing of personal data*

If processing of personal data is necessary for the performance of the trainees' job, trainees undertake to do so in compliance with the applicable data protection legal framework, namely the EUDPR, as well as with any internal rules and/or procedures on data protection which might have been adopted by Eurofound.

Trainees may only process personal data which are strictly necessary for the performance of their job.

The requirement for protection of personal data applies at all times while trainees work for Eurofound, and after the employment has ended.

### **3.8. Validity of applications**

Completed applications submitted within the deadline for application are valid until the launch of a new call for traineeships or until 31.12.2026.

#### **4. PLACEMENT PROCEDURE**

Trainees may not be allocated to any sector where a conflict of interest might occur, irrespective of the candidate's prior professional experience or nationality. Relevant information, as provided by the Units, is published on the website.

Applicants can only be offered a single placement for a given training period, subject to provisions of paragraph 5.1.1 below.

Applicants who decline a placement offer will be excluded from the on-going procedure. They may re-apply for a subsequent training period by submitting a fresh application, together with requested supporting documents.

#### **5. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF TRAINEES**

##### **5.1. Duration of Traineeship**

###### *5.1.1. Duration*

The standard traineeship is for a duration of 6 months which may be extended for up to a further 6 months, if mutually agreed and for strong business reasons. A further second extension is not allowed.

###### *5.1.2. The Traineeship itself*

Trainees are placed under the responsibility of a supervisor. The supervisor must guide and closely follow the trainee during their traineeship, acting as mentor. The supervisor must notify immediately the HR Unit of any significant incidents occurring during the traineeship (in particular professional incompetence, absences, sicknesses, accidents, bad behaviour, or interruption of the traineeship) which come to their attention or which the trainee has raised.

Trainees shall be required to comply with the instructions given by their supervisor and with the instructions issued by Eurofound's HR Unit. They must also comply with the rules governing the in-service training programme and the internal rules governing the functioning of the Eurofound, in particular the rules concerning security and confidentiality.

Trainees are allowed to attend meetings on subjects of interest to their work (unless these meetings are restricted or confidential), receive documentation and participate in the work of the department to which they are attached at a level corresponding to their educational and working background. Subject to the approval of their supervisor and providing it does not conflict with the accomplishment of the tasks assigned to them, they are entitled to attend meetings in a department other than the one to which they are attached or in another institution (provided they are allowed access by that institution), unless these meetings are restricted or confidential, with the aim to get an understanding of the objectives and goals of the EU policies.

Visits and trips of relevant interest may be organised for trainees by Eurofound subject to budget availability. Trainees may participate, subject to the conditions of organisation.

### *5.1.3. Interruption*

Under exceptional circumstances, at the written request of the trainee stating the relevant reasons and with proper justification, the Head of Human Resources may, after consultation with the supervisor and the Head of the Unit to which the trainee is assigned, authorise an interruption of training for a given period.

The grant is then suspended and the trainee is not entitled to reimbursement of any travel expenses incurred during that period.

The trainee may return to complete the unfinished part of the placement, but only up to the end of the same training period. No extension is possible.

### *5.1.4. Early Termination of contract*

If a trainee wishes to terminate their traineeship earlier than the date specified in the letter of offer, a written request must be submitted by the trainee to the HR Unit for approval. This request, stating the relevant reasons, must be submitted at least three weeks in advance of the new termination date foreseen, via the supervisor and the Head of the Unit to which the trainee is assigned. Where appropriate, the equivalent part of the grant must be reimbursed to Eurofound.

### *5.1.5. Future Employment*

Admission to a traineeship does not confer on trainees the status of Officials or that of Other Servants of the European Union, nor does it entail any right or priority with regard to an appointment in the services of Eurofound.

Trainees can be recruited after completing their in-service training, as long as the conditions and rules established for employment in the category of staff in which he/she will be recruited have been fully respected and applied. The same applies for ex-trainees who are selected through a call for tender procedure or through a call for expression of interest organised by Eurofound, whether as an individual or as an employee of a selected company.

A person can only benefit from one traineeship experience in Eurofound.

## **5.2. Attendance and absences**

### *5.2.1. Working hours and flexibility*

Trainees should keep the same hours of work and have the same official public holidays, if they fall during their traineeship, as Eurofound staff. The current working time regime is 40 hours per week (Monday – Friday), with flexible working hours and a minimum of 2 days on-site as agreed with Head of Unit.

As agreed with the Head of Unit, a maximum of 5 days per 6-month traineeship may be worked from abroad.

### *5.2.2. Leave entitlement*

Trainees are entitled to 2 days leave per month. This entitlement is acquired pro rata to the months worked counted from the first day of the month. Days of leave not taken are not paid in lieu.

Eurofound's HR Unit oversees that the above rules are respected. Leave requests should respect the needs of the Unit to which the trainee is assigned. They must first be approved by the supervisor/Head of Unit and then checked by the HR Unit.

### *5.2.3. Absence in case of sickness*

In case of sickness, trainees must notify their supervisor immediately, and if absent for longer than two days, must produce a medical certificate, indicating the probable length of absence, which must be forwarded to Eurofound's HR Unit. A trainee who is absent because of illness may be subject to medical checks in the interest of Eurofound.

### *5.2.4. Absence without Leave*

When trainees are absent without justification or without notifying their supervisor/Head of Unit, Eurofound's HR Unit shall instruct the trainee in writing to report to the Unit in which the traineeship is taking place within a week of the reception of the written notification. The trainee should also provide proper justification for his/her unauthorised absence. These days of absence are automatically deducted from the trainee's leave entitlement. The HR Unit may decide, following examination of the justification given, or if no justification is received after this deadline, to immediately terminate the traineeship without further notice. Any overpayment of the grant is to be reimbursed to Eurofound. The trainee will also not be entitled to receive the travel allowance on departure.

## **5.3. Confidentiality**

### *5.3.1. General*

Trainees must exercise the greatest discretion regarding facts and information that come to their knowledge during the course of their traineeship. They must not, in any manner whatsoever, directly or indirectly, disclose, use, copy, share, or permit the use or copying to any unauthorised person of any confidential document or information owned by, or in the possession of Eurofound.

Confidential information means all information owned by, or in the possession of Eurofound that is not in the public domain, and which Eurofound reasonably regards as private. It includes, but is not limited to, commercial agreements, information about financial affairs, information and records about stakeholders, suppliers and employees, computer software and data, as well as other information not known to the public.

Trainees will continue to be bound by this obligation after the end of their placement. Eurofound reserves its legal right to terminate the traineeship and to pursue legal actions against any trainee who does not respect this obligation.

Trainees must not have any professional connections with third parties which might be incompatible with their traineeship (i.e. must not work for lobbyists, legal attachés, etc.), and they are not permitted to exercise any other gainful employment during the period of the traineeship which may adversely affect the work assigned during the traineeship. If a conflict of interest should arise during their assignment, trainees should immediately report this to their supervisor and to Eurofound's HR Unit in writing.

Trainees will be required to sign a non-conflict of interest declaration at the beginning of their assignment with Eurofound.

#### *5.3.2. Contacts with the Press*

Trainees must respect the same rules for contacts with the Press as other Eurofound staff and follow the instructions provided. Eurofound reserves the right to terminate the traineeship and to pursue any person who does not respect this obligation.

#### *5.3.3. Publications*

Trainees must not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any matter dealing with the work of Eurofound without the written permission of the relevant Unit (Eurofound's HR Unit will provide specific instructions on how to obtain such permission and should receive a copy of those permissions together with a copy of any publication or article published). Such permission is subject to the conditions in force for all Eurofound staff. All rights, for any articles or other work done for Eurofound, are the property of Eurofound.

### **5.4. Sanctions and disciplinary measures**

#### *5.4.1. Social behaviour and conduct*

Trainees must exercise their duties and behave with integrity, courtesy and consideration. If the conduct of the trainee does not prove satisfactory, the Head of HR, in response to a reasonable request by the supervisor and after hearing the trainee, may at any moment decide to terminate the traineeship

Trainees who take part in official activities organised for them by Eurofound must respect the timetables and programmes laid down. Eurofound may demand the reimbursement of costs incurred for the organisation of such activities from trainees who absent themselves without due and proper justification.

During their training, trainees must consult their supervisor or, if unavailable, the Head of the Unit to which they have been assigned, on any action they propose to take on their own initiative relating to the activities of Eurofound.

#### *5.4.2. Incapacity of Performance*

The Head of HR, following a justified request by the supervisor, reserves the right to terminate the traineeship if the level of the trainee's professional performance or knowledge of the working language is insufficient for the proper execution of his/her duties.

#### *5.4.3. Wrongful declaration of facts*

The Head of HR reserves the right to terminate the traineeship if at any moment it becomes apparent that the trainee knowingly made wrongful declarations, or provided false statements or papers at the moment of application or during the traineeship period.

## **6. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **6.1. Basic Grant**

#### *6.1.1. Basic amount*

Trainees will be awarded a monthly grant. The amount of the grant is fixed by a Decision of the Executive Director.

The grant will vary pro-rata if less than a full month is worked (e.g. start date mid-month or in case of revocation of the traineeship).

#### *6.1.2. Early Termination of Contract*

If a trainee terminates their contract early, they will be required to reimburse that part of the grant, which they may have received, relating to the period after the termination date.

### **6.2. Insurance**

#### *6.2.1. Sickness Insurance*

Sickness insurance is compulsory. Trainees are expected to arrange their own sickness insurance, or to be holders of a valid European Health Card.

Proof of this insurance must be presented to Eurofound within one week of the start of the traineeship period.

### **6.3. Disability Allowance**

Upon presentation of the proper justification, disabled trainees may receive a supplement to their grant equal to a maximum of 50% of the amount of the grant. The Head of HR may consult the medical advisor to Eurofound if necessary.

### **6.4. Travel Allowances**

#### *6.4.1. The Travel Allowance*

The transfer from the trainee's place of origin to Dublin and return ticket will be reimbursed by Eurofound on production of tickets and proof of payment, provided that the trainee has purchased the cheapest airfare possible.

#### *6.4.2. Minimum qualifying period – distance*

The trainee must complete a minimum of 3 months of the training period to qualify for the travel allowance. Trainees whose place of recruitment is less than 50 km from the place of employment are not entitled to a travel allowance.

#### *6.4.3. Individual missions*

In exceptional cases only, the Head of the Unit in which a trainee has been placed may grant authorisation for a trainee to be sent on mission<sup>3</sup>, on the condition that the mission is of a technical nature and not of a representative one.

For the reimbursement of these mission expenses, the general procedure of reimbursement provided in the Staff Regulations for officials of the European Communities will apply. The expenses will be taken on by the Unit which requests the mission.

Eurofound's HR Unit should always receive a copy of the signed mission order.

### **6.5. Fiscal Arrangements**

Grants awarded to trainees are not subject to the special tax regulations applying to officials and other servants of the European Communities. Trainees are solely responsible for the payment of any taxes due on Eurofound grants by virtue of the laws in force in the State concerned. Eurofound's HR Unit can provide a certificate for tax purposes at the end of the traineeship period. This certificate should state the amount of grant received and confirm that tax and social security payments have not been made.

## **7. CERTIFICATES**

Trainees who have completed the minimum required traineeship period can receive, on request after their training period, a certificate specifying the dates of their training period and the department in which they were employed.

## **8. FINAL PROVISIONS**

The Head of HR is responsible for the implementation of these Rules.

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<sup>3</sup> Mission = business travel

## Annex I

Examples of diplomas for which the level of education corresponds to that required for access to the traineeship:

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY LEVEL EDUCATION (at least 3 years in length)</b>
BELGIUM	Bachelor
ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA	Diplom o ukončení Bakalářského studia
DANMARK	Bachelorgrad
DEUTSCHLAND	Fachhochschulabschluss (6-7 Semester)
EESTI	Bakalaureusekraad (<160 ainepunkti)
ESPAÑA	Diplomado / Ingeniero Técnico
FRANCE	Licence
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ	Δίπλωμα Α.Ε.Ι. (πανεπιστήμιο, πολυτεχνείο, Τ.Ε.Ι. υποχρεωτικής τετραετούς φοίτησης)
IRELAND / EIRE	Bachelor's degree
ITALIA	Laurea – L (breve)
ΚΥΠΡΟΣ/	Πανεπιστημιακό δίπλωμα
LATVIJA	Bakalauradiploms (
LIETUVA	Bakalauras (<160 kreditas)
LUXEMBOURG	Diplôméd'Ingénieur technicien
MAGYARORSZÁG	Főiskolai Oklevél
MALTA	Bachelor's degree
NEDERLAND	Bachelor
ÖSTERREICH	Fachhochschuldiplom (6-7 Semester)
POLSKA	Licencjat – Inżynier
PORTUGAL	Licenciatura
ROMANIA	diplomă de licență
SLOVENIJA	Diploma o pridobljeni visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi
SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA	Diplom o ukončení Bakalářského štúdia
SUOMI / FINLAND	Kandidaatti/ Kandidatexamen Ammattikorkeakoulututkint o / Yrkeshögskoleexamen (min.120 opintoviikkoa) studieveckor)
SVERIGE	Kandidatexamen (Akademisk examen omfattande minst 120 poäng, varav 60 poäng av fördjupade studier i ett ämne)