Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament

INTERNAL RULES: Governing traineeships in the group secretariat



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CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1
Traineeship programmes

1. With a view to contributing to European education and vocational training and promoting a better understanding of the way the European institutions and the Group in the European Parliament function, the Group offers the following opportunities:

5 consecutive months traineeships:

- The Francis Vals - Fred Matić Fund
- Traineeships for young persons with disabilities
- The Herwig Kaiser International Cooperation Fund
- The Ghilardotti Fund on Equality and Diversity
- The Fund for young persons of Roma origin
- The Michael Hoppe fund for progressive European communication
- The Solange Hélin-Villes Fund for youth with vocational education
- The Fund for young refugees

ARTICLE 2
Organisation of traineeships

1. The amounts needed to finance the programmes will be allocated from the Group's annual budget.
2. Trainees are based in the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels.
3. Traineeships cannot be renewed. No more than one traineeship shall be granted per person.
4. Trainees will be welcomed and advised throughout their traineeship by the competent HR service in the Group Secretariat. Trainees will take part in a programme of information meetings, an induction week and two assessment sessions over the course of their traineeship.
5. Traineeships offer an opportunity to carry out a piece of research related to the work of the Socialists and Democrats in the European Union and of the Group in the European Parliament in particular.
6. One or more tutors (selected staff members of the Group Secretariat) will supervise trainees throughout their traineeships.

7. The calendar year will be divided into two traineeship periods, starting in mid-February and mid-September, respectively (exception to the European elections' year).

ARTICLE 3
General conditions governing eligibility and admission

1. Applicants for traineeships must meet the following conditions:
    a. be aged at least 18 and maximum 35 on the traineeship start date;
    b. be nationals of a Member State of the European Union unless the provisions of Article 26 apply;
    c. share the values of the Group;
    d. have a university degree (at least a BA or equivalent degree), unless the provisions of article 31 apply;
    e. have a thorough knowledge of English or French. A good knowledge of another of the official languages of the European Union is desirable.
2. The Group shall promote equal opportunities, ensure gender balance and exclude all types of discrimination as referred to in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Selection and recruitment procedures are adapted to ensure that they do not disadvantage candidates with disabilities.
3. The trainee can, according to Article 1d(4) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union, request "reasonable accommodation" at the workplace, in relation to the essential functions of the job, which shall mean appropriate measures, where needed, to enable a person with a disability to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer.
4. Trainees must not be party to an employment contract or any working contractual relationship during their traineeship. Traineeships may be undertaken during an employment contract only if they form a part of a vocational education course or academic research activities.
5. The traineeship must not give rise to a situation of a conflict of interests (see article 22). Whenever the possibility of a conflict of interest arises during their assignment, trainees shall immediately report this in writing to the competent HR service, who will take a reasoned decision, following consultation with the Secretary General, as to the consequences thereof.
6. The Group shall not accept any other form of traineeship agreement with a third party.

ARTICLE 4
Application and selection procedures

1. Candidates must apply via the Group's website.
2. The competent HR service will consider the admissibility of applications on the basis of the general conditions governing eligibility laid down in Article 3 and the specific conditions governing eligibility for the various types of traineeship set out

in Chapter III.

3. Applicants will be notified by e-mail of the outcome of the relevant selection procedure and will receive a traineeship offer with posting in one of the services of the Group Secretariat according to the interest of the service and the applicants' preferences.

ARTICLE 5
Documents to be submitted for the application

1. Successful candidates will be asked to submit all the documents listed below to the competent HR service:

    a. a signed declaration by the candidate, concerning the duty of professional secrecy and discretion;

    b. copy of a valid identity document of the candidate;

    c. a curriculum vitae;

    d. documentary proof of the academic qualifications (as specified in Article 3.1).

2. When selected, if applicants do not provide the additional documents referred to in Article 5, or they withdraw or turn down the traineeship offer, they are excluded from that particular period of traineeship.

3. The award of a traineeship shall under no circumstances give recipients the status of official or other servant of the European Union, nor shall it entitle them in any way to subsequent recruitment by the Group secretariat.

ARTICLE 6
Traineeship agreement

1. By the start of the traineeship, a traineeship agreement is signed by the Secretary General of the Group and the trainee. That agreement shall be the only one applicable.

2. When the candidates have been selected for the traineeships they will have to submit the following documents to the competent HR service:

    a. a document issued by a financial institution clearly stating the name of the bank and the account older, the IBAN and BIC/SWIFT code for the payment of the monthly allowance. The bank account should be opened in an EU Member State and be held by the trainee;

    b. a copy of a valid visa for the entire duration of the traineeship in cases of nationals of other countries, where required;

    c. valid proof showing that they are covered by their national health insurance system.

ARTICLE 7
Working conditions

1. Trainees are engaged on a full-time basis.
2. The hours of work shall be those applicable for the Group staff. Overtime shall carry no right to compensation or remuneration in the allowance.

ARTICLE 8
Duties of the traineeship supervisor

1. Tutors shall define a description of tasks and supervise the work of the trainees throughout the duration of the traineeship.
2. Tutors will provide trainees with all necessary information and documents to help them complete their traineeship successfully.
3. Trainees may be required to draw up a study or a project on a subject jointly agreed upon with the tutor/s.
4. Tutors have the obligation to assess the traineeship in writing.

ARTICLE 9
Duration of traineeships

1. The duration of traineeships will be five months.
2. A traineeship shall not be extended or split and shall be minimum five months.

ARTICLE 10
Monthly allowance and tax obligations

1. Trainees within the meaning of Article 1 shall receive a monthly allowance.
2. The amount of the monthly allowance is 1890 EUR. These amounts may be adapted by the Bureau and shall be published on the Group's website.
3. The amount of the monthly allowance shall be the same throughout the traineeship.
4. In case the trainee already receive an allowance or a scholarship from another source, an amount equivalent to this external income shall be deducted from the amount provided for under paragraph 2 of this Article.
5. Trainees shall have sole responsibility for meeting their tax obligations by virtue of the laws in force in the country concerned. The allowance is not subject to Community tax.
6. If the traineeship starts or ends during the course of a month, the monthly allowance shall be paid on a pro rata basis.

ARTICLE 11
Sickness and accident insurance

1. The Group shall take out complementary sickness insurance and accident insurance on behalf of trainees through the official suppliers of the European Institutions, for the duration of the contract only, which provides additional cover over and above the one available under national systems or any other scheme which a trainee may have joined. This insurance covers the trainee only. As a primary coverage, EU trainees must have a European Health Insurance Card from their own country, which covers any periods away from home.

ARTICLE 12
Travel expenses at the beginning and end of the traineeship

1. Trainees will be entitled to reimbursement of the expenses incurred in travelling between their actual place of residence and Brussels (on economy class), within the geographical limits of the Union[1], at the beginning and end of their traineeship if the distance between the two places is more than 50 km.

2. Reimbursement will be effected in accordance with the Group Secretariat rules governing allowances and mission expenses. Travel expenses will be reimbursed as long as the travel is taking place up to one month before the start of the traineeship and one month after the end of the traineeship.

ARTICLE 13
Missions

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

2. All mission orders must follow the hierarchical approval procedure.

3. Their travel expenses shall be reimbursed and they will receive daily mission allowances in accordance with the Group's Secretariat internal rules governing missions.

4. Payment shall consist of:

    a. An advance of €100 per day of mission to Strasbourg

    b. Settlement of the balance on receipt of a duly completed mission expenses claim accompanied by any required supporting documents.

5. The Group Secretariat may recover all or part of the amounts in question should the mission be cancelled or shortened, or if the trainee fails to provide the necessary justifications, or if the expenditure is inferior to the amount of the advance.

6. Once trainees are included on the official mission establishment plan for Strasbourg, they may use the European Parliament's official travel agency, in which case they will not be required to pay the cost of their tickets.

[1] Except in the case of traineeships financed from the Herwig Kaiser International Cooperation Fund.

ARTICLE 14
Leaves and absences, including sick leave

1. The yearly established EP calendar regarding public holidays and office closing days shall apply to traineeships in the Group. Trainees are entitled to two days' leave for each month worked, to be taken in agreement with the tutor and competent HR service. Days of annual leave not taken will not be reimbursed. As regards absences, the Group's Internal Rules apply.

2. Unjustified absence may lead to the termination of a traineeship.

ARTICLE 15
Interruption of the traineeship

1. On the basis of a reasoned request from the trainee concerned, a traineeship may be interrupted by means of a decision by the Secretary-General of the Group Secretariat. During that period, payment of the grant will be interrupted and the trainee will not be entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses associated with the interruption.

ARTICLE 16
Early termination and end of traineeships

1. Traineeships shall end when the period for which they were awarded expires. However, the Secretary General in consultation with the competent HR service may terminate a traineeship before the scheduled completion date with two weeks' written notice:

    - on the basis of a reasoned request from the trainee concerned,
    - if the level of the trainee's professional performance or knowledge of the required language is insufficient for the proper execution of their duties,
    - in case of breach of the obligations and rules on ethics referred under Chapter II,
    - or if the trainee carries out his/her duties and conduct himself/herself not in line with the Group's values,

2. Subject to the trainees fulfilling all their obligations, the competent HR service shall issue them with a traineeship certificate, recording the duration of the traineeship and the service to whom the trainee was attached.

3. Trainees can request a more specific letter of recommendation, provided by the tutor.

ARTICLE 17
Disputes

1. A trainee under an agreement with the Group wishing to challenge a decision taken in application of an early termination shall make a reasoned submission to the Secretary General who as the competent authority shall make a reasoned reply within two months.

2. Trainees can refer to the staff representatives of the Group Secretariat.

ARTICLE 18
Processing of personal data

1. Any personal data generated in connection with the traineeships shall be processed pursuant to 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 Union institutions and bodies, offices and agencies, and on the free movement of such data. Any personal data shall be processed only for the purpose and in the framework of the present Decision. The trainee should acknowledge that their name will be published on the website of the Group for the duration of the traineeship agreement.

CHAPTER II
OBLIGATIONS AND ETHICS

ARTICLE 19
General obligations

1. Trainees shall be required to comply with the internal rules governing the functioning of the Group and its Secretariat, in particular the Code of Conduct of officials and the S&D internal rules governing ethics. Trainees shall also be required to comply with all rules governing security at the European Parliament.

2. Trainees will be required to comply with any instructions issued by their traineeship tutor and their superiors in the service to which they are assigned and to any instructions issued by the competent HR service.

3. Trainees will participate in the work of the service to which they are assigned.

4. Trainees should comply with the laws of the country in which their traineeship will take place, in particular with regard to registration on municipal population registers or visa obligations, where applicable.

ARTICLE 20
Behaviour and conduct

1. Trainees must exercise their duties with loyalty, courtesy and consideration. If the conduct of the trainee does not prove to be satisfactory, the Group and its Secretariat may decide, at any moment, to terminate the traineeship, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the Internal rules.

2. During their traineeship, trainees must consult their traineeship supervisor or, if unavailable, their traineeship coordinator, on any action they propose to take on their own initiative, relating to the activities of the European Parliament.

ARTICLE 21
Confidentiality and duty of discretion

1. Throughout their traineeship, trainees shall be required to conduct themselves with the utmost discretion with regards to the daily work in the European Parliament and the Group. They may not communicate to any person who is not a Member or staff of the European Parliament / Group any documents or information, which come to their knowledge and have not been made public, without the prior consent of the Group. They shall comply with the code of conduct applicable to staff in the European Parliament.

2. Trainees must respect the same rules for contacts with external stakeholders, in particular the press and social media as those for all statutory members of staff and must follow the instructions provided by the competent HR service at the beginning of the traineeship, including the social media guidelines.

3. Trainees shall remain bound by the above-mentioned obligations after the completion of their traineeship.

ARTICLE 22
Conflict of interest, external activities and gifts

1. Trainees must not deal with a matter in which, directly or indirectly, they have any personal interests (e.g. family and/or financial interests), that may impair the performance of their duties. They must not have any professional connections with third parties that may be incompatible with their traineeship.
2. Trainees are not permitted to exercise any gainful employment during the traineeship period that may adversely affect the work assigned to them.
3. Trainees cannot accept gift of any nature above 100 euros, if they relate to their traineeship in the European Parliament.
4. In a situation as described in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Article, or whenever the possibility of a conflict of interest arises during their assignment, trainees shall immediately report this in writing to the traineeship coordinator. The Head of Human Resources will take a reasoned decision as to the consequences thereof.

ARTICLE 23
Publications

1. Trainees must not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any matters dealing with the work of the Group and its Secretariat, without prior written permission of the relevant services.
2. Once the permission has been granted, the trainee should provide a copy of the publication or article to the relevant service.
3. Trainees shall remain bound by these obligations after the completion of their traineeship.

ARTICLE 24
Copyrights

1. The S&D Group and its Secretariat acquires irrevocably worldwide ownership of the results and of all intellectual property rights of work that is performed by the trainee in the framework of the traineeship. The intellectual property rights so acquired include any rights, such as copyright, reproduction, communication to the public, distribution and any other intellectual or industrial property rights.

CHAPTER III

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO THE VARIOUS PROGRAMMES

ARTICLE 25
The Francis Vals Fund

1. The aim of the Francis Vals Fund, which was set up by means of a decision of the Group in 1974 in honour of the memory of its late President, is to give young people an insight into the way in which European Institutions and our Parliamentary group function.

2. Traineeships will be awarded on the basis of a proposal from a national delegation.

3. Each national delegation is entitled to one traineeship per year. The national delegation may choose the traineeship period, while respecting the Group's capacity.

4. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and provide the documents as specified in Article 5.

5. When awarding traineeships, the competent HR service will ensure conformity with the applicants' admissibility and admission criteria.

6. Traineeships shall last five months.

7. In all other respects, the General Provisions will apply.

ARTICLE 26
Herwig Kaiser International Cooperation Fund

1. In 2004 the S&D Group launched the Peace Fund, now called the Herwig Kaiser - International Cooperation Fund, in honour of the memory of the late Austrian Deputy Secretary General of the Group.

2. The aim of this programme is to promote the values of peace, dialogue and cooperation beyond national borders and to champion conflict resolution in vulnerable areas and countries bordering the EU. By way of derogation from Article 3(1), nationals of an applicant country or of a third country, including those with which the Group has a special partnership based on a decision adopted by its Bureau, may undertake a traineeship in the Group Secretariat. The number of trainees will be a maximum of three young persons per year.

3. Applicants from third countries will ensure that they have complied with the relevant visa rules before entering Belgium. Applicants selected will ensure, in particular, that their visa is valid for the entire period of their traineeship and enables them to move freely between Belgium and France. The Group Secretariat will cover visa application expenses incurred from the Belgium authorities.

4. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3, with the exception of EU nationality.

5. A call for applications will be issued by the Secretary General of the Group Secretariat and/or the Leaders of the sister parties/groups in the countries concerned. In specific cases, for example that of Israel and Palestine or South East Europe or other countries, provision may be made for trainee twinning arrangements.

6. 'International Cooperation Fund' trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President(s) of the Group responsible for the policy areas concerned, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources Unit and staff representative of the Group Secretariat.

7. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.

8. Traineeships shall last five months.

9. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 27
Ghilardotti Fund - Equality and Diversity Traineeship

1. Inspired by the work of former Italian MEP and women's rights campaigner Fiorella Ghilardotti, this fund was created in 2004 to enable young people to gain practical experience in the areas of social rights and employment, women's rights, anti-discrimination, equal opportunities and fundamental rights and freedoms.

2. The aim of this Fund is to enable a maximum of three young people per year to carry out research and gain practical experience in the above-mentioned areas. Accordingly, trainees are posted, principally, to the FEMM, EMPL, LIBE, DEVE and AFET committees.

3. Applicants for this Fund must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and have experience or have carried out studies in the areas of social rights and employment, women's rights, anti-discrimination, equal opportunities and fundamental rights and freedoms.

4. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President(s) of the Group with responsibility for these policy areas, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat.

5. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.

6. Traineeships shall last five months.

7. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 28
The Fund for young people of Roma origin

1. The aim of this pr ogramme, created in 2010 is to promote European integration and make fundamental rights a reality for everyone in the EU by providing opportunities for young people of Roma origin.
2. Every year a maximum of three young people of Roma origin will be selected.
3. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and must be of Roma origin or involved in defense of Roma rights.
4. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President(s) of the Group with responsibility for these policy areas, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat.
5. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.
6. Traineeships shall last five months.
7. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 29
Traineeships for young persons with disabilities

1. The aim of this programme, created in 2012, is to promote European integration and make fundamental rights a reality for everyone and to implement the commitment of the Group to increase the number of people with disabilities in the working environment.
2. Each year at least one young person with disabilities will be selected.
3. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and prove, by means of an official certificate, that they have a disability and the degree of that disability and provide details of their specific needs.
4. In order to cover any specific or technical needs, amounts over and above the standard monthly allowance may be given on a case-by-case basis, and in accordance with Article 3.3 of those traineeship rules.
5. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President of the Group responsible, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat
6. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.
7. Traineeships shall last five months.
8. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 30

Michael Hoppe fund for progressive European communication

1. Inspired by the work of the late Secretary General of the S&D Group Michael Hoppe, a firm promoter of European Youth and their engagement in politics, this fund was created in 2022 to enable young people to gain practical experience in the area of political communication within the European Parliament and with EU member states and European citizens.

2. The aim of this Fund is to enable a maximum of three young people per year to carry out research and gain practical experience in the above-mentioned area. Accordingly, trainees are posted, principally, in the Press and Communication and the Department Political Planning and Information Campaign of the S&D secretariat.

3. Applicants for this Fund must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and have experience or have carried out studies in the area of communication.

4. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President of the Group responsible, the Secretary General of the Group or the Heads of department concerned, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat.

5. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality. Traineeships shall last five months.

6. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 31

The Solange Hélin-Villes Fund for youth with vocational education

1. The aim of this programme, created in 2026, is to promote European integration by giving young people in vocational studies the opportunity to be involved in the EU's administrative and decision-making process, notably in the following areas: IT, finance, human resources, graphic and web design, audiovisual and logistics.

2. Every year a maximum of three young people with a vocational education qualification will be selected.

3. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3 and be able to justify a complete cycle of education in a vocational field within the European Union (EQF levels 3, 4 or 5).

4. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President(s) of the Group with responsibility for these areas, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat.

5. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.

6. Traineeships shall last five months.

7. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 32

The Fund for young refugees

1. The aim of this programme, created in 2026, is to promote European integration by giving young refugees the opportunity to make fundamental rights a reality for everyone in the EU and to increase labour integration for young refugees.
2. Every year a maximum of three young people with statutory refugee status in the EU will be selected.
3. Applicants must meet the conditions governing eligibility set out in Article 3, with the exception of EU nationality.
4. The trainees will be chosen by the Selection Committee comprising the Vice-President(s) of the Group with responsibility for these areas, the Secretary General of the Group or the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Organisational and Administrative Affairs, the Head of the Human Resources and a staff representative of the Group Secretariat.
5. The selection will be made solely on the basis of the applicants' profiles and merits, irrespective of their nationality.
6. Traineeships shall last five months.
7. In all other respects, the General Provisions shall apply.

ARTICLE 33

Date of entry into force

1. These internal rules shall repeal earlier rules and enter into force on the 1st of September 2026.