



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RB(2023)00231
Thessaloniki, 23 February 2023

DECISION

DIR 02/2023 on Rules governing the traineeship programme at Cedefop

Amending Decision on Rules governing the traineeship programme at Cedefop signed on 15/02/2023, which did not contain Decision number, RB number, and date

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU) 2019/128 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 establishing a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75,

HAVING REGARD to the budget of Cedefop,

WHEREAS it is necessary to draw up rules to govern the traineeship programme organised by the Agency,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1 – Objectives of the traineeship programme

The objectives of the Agency's traineeship programme are:

- To provide opportunities for recent graduates and PhD students to perform tasks that are predominantly in the interest of their training and principally serving to increase their knowledge and to gain relevant experience.
- To provide talented and highly qualified professionals at the start of their careers with a unique and first-hand insight into the work of the Agency.
- To provide the opportunity to contribute to the Agency's mission in a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-ethnic environment, contributing to the development of mutual understanding, trust and tolerance.

Through its traineeship programme, the Agency and trainees:

- Benefit from access to the latest theoretical and technical knowledge that trainees can apply through practical assignments under a supervisor's guidance.

- Benefit from the input of trainees, who can give a fresh point of view and up-to-date academic knowledge, which will enhance the everyday work of the Agency.
- Experience first-hand European procedures and work culture of an EU body that make trainees better prepared to collaborate and co-operate with the Agency in the future.
- Create long-term 'goodwill ambassadors' for European ideas and values both within the European Union and outside.
- Create opportunities for 'reverse mentoring' and learning of the Agency staff, allowing the organisation to adjust to a new workforce entering the job market.

Article 2 – Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for the Agency's traineeship programme, candidates must:

- Be nationals of the Member States of the European Union, or of candidate countries¹ benefiting from a pre-accession strategy, or be EFTA² citizens.
- By the closing date for applications, have completed a standard 3-year higher education degree (minimum EQF 6 level³) corresponding to a complete Bachelor's cycle, or hold a specific educational qualification.
- Have a very good knowledge of at least two Community languages, of which one must be English (the language used in the daily work and all communication at Cedefop). Candidates from pre-accession or EFTA countries must have a very good knowledge of at least English.
- Have not already benefited from any kind of traineeship or employment (formal or informal, paid or unpaid) within a European institution or body for more than 6 weeks.

Article 3 – Status of the trainees

A traineeship is an education and training programme, which is not establishing an employment relationship between the trainee and the Agency.

Trainees are not to be considered as staff members under the Staff Regulations.

Access to employment within Cedefop is only possible through open selection procedures advertised on the Agency website. Trainees are allowed to apply during their traineeship to external Cedefop selection procedures.

¹ See <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/candidates.htm>.

² See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/SEPDF/cache/1357.pdf>.

³ To find out more about European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and National Qualifications Framework (NQF), see <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/nqfs-online-tool/countries>.

Sickness insurance is compulsory for the whole traineeship period and it is not provided by Cedefop. Trainees are responsible for taking out their insurance⁴, registering with their local General Practitioner (GP), and making other private arrangements. Prior to the start of the traineeship, trainees must provide proof of their national or private insurance covering sickness.

During the traineeship programme, trainees are only personally insured against the risk of accidents and death under Cedefop insurance.

Trainees are not staff members of the Agency and Cedefop does not pay for them contribution to social security.

Trainees are responsible for obtaining any documentation required by the Greek authorities and for complying with any relevant national legislation, where applicable.

Article 4 – Duration and size of the programme

There is one annual intake, normally from September to July.

The starting and ending dates of the traineeship may be deferred or brought forward in exceptional and duly justified cases, upon request from the Department to which the trainee will be assigned and in the interest of the service.

In any case, traineeships begin on the 1st or 16th of the month and the total duration should not exceed 12 months.

Trainees may only terminate their traineeship on the 15th or the last day of the month.

The number of traineeship opportunities will vary from year to year subject to the needs of the service and budget availability.

Article 5 – Application and selection process

The selection process is organised in several steps:

- Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions published on Cedefop website, using the on-line application form. Any other applications will not be considered, such as CVs sent by email, profiles on LinkedIn or similar.
- Short-listed candidates, who meet closest the project requirements, are invited to a remote interview with their potential supervisor to discuss the candidate's skills, motivation, reciprocal expectations and to check availability prior to the final selection decision. The interviews are held in English.

⁴ In exceptional circumstances, such as war refugee candidates, Cedefop may cover the costs of a sickness insurance scheme for the trainee.

- Successful candidates will either have a background relating to the activities of Cedefop or to the support functions (for example, information technologies, human resources, accounting and budget, data protection, communications).
- Candidates will be required to provide, prior to the starting of the traineeship, the supporting documents stated in Article 8 of this Decision.
- All applicants are informed about the outcome of their application, including not pre-selected candidates.

Article 6 – Equal opportunities

Being a European Union Agency, Cedefop ensures equality and diversity by providing equal opportunities to all its applicants and preventing discrimination on any grounds.

Cedefop actively welcomes applications from all qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds, across all abilities, without any distinction on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, marital status or other family situation or sexual orientation, and from the broadest possible geographical basis amongst the EU Member States.

Cedefop wishes to further increase the diversity of our trainees to be representative of the diversity of the EU citizens we serve.

Article 7 – Traineeship patterns, working hours and teleworking

Full-time (100%) traineeships consist of **40-hour workweeks**. Trainees' normal working day is 8 hours, from Monday to Friday.

Upon request, trainees may also exceptionally be granted a **part-time** (50%) pattern: 20 hours per week, if combined with university studies and in the interest of the service.

Part-time traineeships cannot be considered as professional experience when applying for a job.

Cedefop's rules on **teleworking** do not apply to trainees. Teleworking may be permitted for up to 3 days of the weekly working time. The trainee must be present in the office at least 2 working days per week.

Teleworking requests are subject to the agreement of the supervisor and must be approved by the respective Head of Department.

Teleworking from outside Thessaloniki shall not be allowed.

Trainees shall organise their work and schedule in cooperation with their supervisor. Trainees shall not be expected to work overtime and shall not be entitled to compensation days.

Article 8 – Traineeship agreement

Prior to commencing the traineeship, successful candidates must provide the following documents:

- Traineeship agreement duly signed
- Solemn declaration concerning permanent address
- Copy of passport or ID card
- Copy of the required educational qualification
- If the traineeship is combined with university studies, official declaration from the relevant university or authorities (stating dates and subject of study)
- A copy of health insurance coverage for the duration of the traineeship
- Declaration according to which the information provided is true and complete and the supporting documents submitted correspond to the originals
- Declaration concerning confidentiality
- Acknowledgment of receipt of the Decision on code of good administrative behaviour
- Financial identification form
- Legal identity form

Where necessary, Cedefop may nonetheless ask individual trainees to provide some or all originals of the submitted supporting documents in the course of the traineeship.

Wrongful declarations, false statements or documents provided at the time of the application or during the traineeship period shall lead to immediate suspension of the traineeship.

Article 9 – Interruption and early termination

Under exceptional circumstances (e.g. sickness, maternity), at the written request of the trainee stating the relevant reasons and with proper justification, the Head of the Human Resources may, after consultation with the supervisor and the Head of Department to which the trainee is assigned, may authorise an **interruption** of the traineeship for a given period.

The trainee 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 traineeship.

The Agency and the trainee have the right to **early terminate** the traineeship, giving one-month notice. Notice must be sent in writing to the Human Resources via the trainee's supervisor, copying the Head of Department concerned and the relevant trainee, and specifying the reasons.

- This shall be the case in situations in which the trainee is no longer available to perform the duties and **request to quit the traineeship**.
Cedefop shall allow trainees to take annual leave during their notice period. Nevertheless, notice given by trainees should be at least double the number of leave days to take. Cedefop may refuse a request for annual leave during a notice period for valid business reasons only.
- The Agency is also entitled to **terminate the traineeship with immediate effect** if there is a reason for doing so, in instances of unauthorised absences, unacceptable and deviant behaviour, integrity issues, theft, fraud, aggression, violence, refusing without good reason to carry out the necessary duties related to the traineeship, and seriously lacking the skills required for the traineeship.
If the conduct of the trainee does not prove satisfactory, the Head of HR, in response to a reasonable request by the supervisor and approved by the Head of the Department for Resources and Support – after hearing the trainee – may at any moment decide to terminate the traineeship.

Article 10 – Absences

Full-time trainees are entitled to 2 days **annual leave** per month. This entitlement is applied pro-rata to part-time trainees (i.e. 1 day off per month).

Leave requests should respect the specific goals of the trainee and the traineeship as such and need to be approved by the supervisor concerned.

Untaken leaves are not paid in lieu.

Trainees are entitled to Cedefop **public holidays**, normally 17 days per calendar year.

The days of **unauthorised absence** are automatically deducted from the trainee's leave entitlement or from the grant in case of negative leave balance.

In the event of:

- **Sickness**, trainees must immediately notify their supervisor and the Human Resources. If absent for more than 2 days, the trainee must submit a medical certificate to the Cedefop Medical Officer, indicating the probable length of the absence.
- **Pregnancy**, trainees shall be granted maximum **maternity leave** of 12 weeks, during which period they shall receive the grant. The leave shall start not earlier than 6 weeks before the expected date of confinement as

shown in a medical certificate, which must be provided to the Cedefop's Medical Officer, and shall end not earlier than 6 weeks after the actual date of childbirth. For health and safety reasons, a trainee who is pregnant must inform the Human Resources at the latest 15 weeks before the expected date of confinement. Maternity leave cannot go beyond the duration of the traineeship period.

Article 11 – Roles, obligations, and responsibilities

Each trainee is assigned a **supervisor**, whose role is to:

- Guide and closely follow the trainee during the traineeship.
- Help the trainee to get familiar with the Agency and to grow professionally by setting individual learning goals, providing training, monitoring the trainee's tasks, and serving as a contact person for questions.
- Notify immediately the Head of Department concerned and the Human Resources of any significant issues or incidents occurring during the traineeship (professional incompetence, unauthorised absences, sickness, accidents, bad behaviour, or interruption of the traineeship), which come to his/her attention, or of which the trainee has informed him/her.
- Complete the evaluation report requested by the Human Resources at the end of the traineeship programme.

During the programme, **trainees**:

- Shall be required to comply with the rules governing the traineeship programme and with the instructions given by their supervisors, the Human Resources, and generally by the Agency.
- 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, disclose any document or information not already made public to any unauthorised person. The Agency reserves its right to terminate the traineeship and to pursue any person who does not respect this obligation. Trainees will continue to be bound by this obligation after the end of their traineeship.
- 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 gainful or non-gainful employment which may adversely affect the tasks assigned during their traineeship. If a conflict of interest should arise during their assignment, trainees should immediately report this in writing to their supervisor, Head of Department, and the Human Resources.
- Must respect the same rules for outside activities as Cedefop staff.
- Must not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any matter dealing with the work of the Agency without prior approval.
- Cannot engage in any training or studies without prior authorisation.

- Are strictly forbidden from having any contacts with the Press regarding any matter dealing with the work of the Agency and must report any approaches by the media to the Press Office without delay.
- May attend meetings on subjects of interest (unless these meetings are restricted or confidential), receive documentation and participate in the work of their department subject to the guidance of their supervisor.
- May participate in training, offered in house and at no additional cost, which is in line with the objectives of their traineeship. The participation is subject to the agreement of the respective Head of Department and the availability of places.
- Must complete the evaluation report requested by the Human Resources at the end of their traineeship.
- Shall receive, after completion of at least 3 months of the traineeship period, a certificate testifying their traineeship in the Agency.
- May also receive a recommendation letter from their supervisor.

Article 12 – Traineeship grants

Trainees are awarded a monthly grant, which is aimed at compensating all trainee's expenses during the period of the traineeship.

Details about the grants can be found in the Annex I.

Trainees are not considered as staff of the Agency. Their grant is not a salary.

No tax and social security are deducted from the grants by Cedefop.

Trainees are solely responsible for the payment of any taxes due on Cedefop grants by virtue of the national laws in force.

The Agency is not responsible for any stipends or allowances of a like nature that the trainee may receive from other sources than the Agency, for which the trainee will bear all associated tax consequences.

The Human Resources will provide a certificate with the amount of the grant received for each calendar year covered by the traineeship.

In case of early termination (by trainee/Cedefop) of the traineeship or termination without notice, the trainee will be required to reimburse that part of the grant, which he/she may have received in advance, relating to the period after the termination date.

Article 13 – Travel expenses

Trainees residing further than 50 km away from the seat of the Agency (i.e. Thessaloniki, Greece) are entitled to a contribution to the travel expenses incurred at the beginning and end of the traineeship.

The postal address (i.e. place of origin) provided by the trainee in a Solemn declaration shall be the place considered for that purpose. Once the traineeship has been awarded, this place cannot be changed.

Details regarding travel expenses reimbursement can be found in Annex II.

Article 14 – Protection of personal data

Cedefop respects the privacy of its trainees and ensures that applicants' personal data are processed in line with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725⁵ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018.

Detailed information on how personal data is processed in the context the traineeship programme can be found in the privacy statement⁶.

Article 15 – Final provisions

This decision comes into force retrospectively from 15 February 2023 and replaces:

- Decision on Rules governing the traineeship programme at Cedefop signed on 15 February 2023.
- Decision on the traineeship scheme at Cedefop of 21 October 2021 (RB(2021)01239).
- Decision on traineeship grants of 12 January 2022 (RB(2022)00019).
- Decision on reimbursement of travel expenses of trainees in Cedefop of 1 September 2020 (RB(2020)00960).

**Juergen
SIEBEL**

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Jürgen Siebel
Executive Director

ANNEXES:

Annex I Traineeship grants

Annex II Reimbursement of travel expenses of trainees

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1725>.

⁶ <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/pages/traineeship-privacy-statement>.

ANNEX I – Traineeship grants

HAVING REGARD to the rules governing the traineeship programme at Cedefop of 23 February 2023, in particular Article 12 concerning traineeship grants.

HAVING REGARD to the policy of the European Commission which allocates monthly traineeship grants of 25% of the basic remuneration of an official at grade AD 5/1.

WHEREAS it is necessary to establish clear rules for the determination of the Cedefop traineeship grants.

WHEREAS it is necessary to put in place a mechanism for the regular adjustment of the traineeship grants.

1) The Cedefop monthly traineeship grant is set at 25% of the basic remuneration of an official at grade AD 5/1, subject to the weighting factor for Greece. This amount is payable to trainees from abroad (Member States of the EU or candidate countries) and to trainees resident in Greece (living more than 50 km from Thessaloniki) who need to move to Thessaloniki for the duration of the traineeship.

2) Trainees resident in Thessaloniki prior to the start of their in-service training receive 75% of the amount referred to in Paragraph 1.

3) Upon presentation of the proper justification, disabled trainees may receive a supplement to their basic grant equal to a maximum of 50% of the amount of the grant.

4) In January of each year, the Human Resources Service will adjust the amounts of the grants referred to in Paragraphs 1-3 based on the annual update of remuneration, as announced in the Official Journal of the EU in December of the previous year.

ANNEX II – Reimbursement of travel expenses of trainees

HAVING REGARD to the rules governing the traineeship programme at Cedefop of 23 February 2023, in particular Article 13 concerning travel expenses.

WHEREAS it is necessary to establish clear rules for the calculation of the expense reimbursement.

1) Travel expenses

Trainees residing further than 50 km away from the seat of the Agency (i.e. Thessaloniki, Greece) are entitled to a contribution to the travel expenses incurred at the beginning and end of the traineeship.

The postal address (i.e. place of origin) provided by the trainee in a solemn declaration shall be the place considered for that purpose. Once the traineeship has been awarded, this place cannot be changed.

The journey should be as direct as possible (stopovers of more than 5 days will not be accepted).

Travelling must be within 1 month before the start date (arrival) of the traineeship period and 1 month after the end of the traineeship period (departure).

The reimbursement of the travel expenses covers the cost of public transport tickets.

The use of car is permitted as an alternative to other transportation means and the reimbursement is established in the form of a unique flat-rate payment (allowance of € 0.28 per kilometre driven) for the distance between the place of origin and the seat of the Agency.

The distance is calculated on the basis of the single direct linear distance ('as the crow flies') and it is established by using the following tool:

<http://www.thetimenow.com/distance-calculator.php>

When a trainee arrives from or returns to a different place than the permanent address, reimbursement of the travel cost shall be based up to the ceiling calculated to the permanent address. In such case, the trainee must provide Cedefop with an example of public transport fare to get from or to the permanent address.

The return ticket will not be reimbursed if the trainee decides to leave Cedefop before completing 3 months or if the traineeship is terminated by Cedefop.

The reimbursement of the travel expenses for the inward/outward journey is granted up to a total maximum of € 800 for travelling within the European Union and up to a total maximum of € 1200 for travelling outside the European Union.

2) Reimbursement

Payments will be processed upon submission by the trainee of a duly completed and signed travel expenses claim form and proof of travelling.