

**Question for written answer E-011537/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: Overcoming abuse and exploitation of unpaid internships by companies in the EU

In 2013 Eurobarometer released a survey of 18- to 35-year-olds, and found that 46 % had completed at least one internship. Unpaid internships seem to be the norm, with almost six out of ten (59 %) respondents not receiving any financial compensation or not enough to cover basic living.

The question that arises is: should unpaid internships be banned in the EU?

On the one hand internships are the first experience of the real world that graduates have, and companies have to invest a lot in the new intern. On the other hand, this is probably true just for a while, and then the trainee's productivity increases and should be rewarded.

Lots of companies use interns instead of hiring paid employees, and pay them nothing. Working for free should not be an option, because it engenders inequality between those who can afford it and those who cannot and is a matter of dignity and fulfilment for the individual.

A good example is the new German minimum wage law: for traineeships of less than three months there is no requirement for pay, but after that the minimum wage rules apply.

How does the Commission intend to overcome this problem of widespread abuse of unpaid young workers?