



2020/2005(INL)

29.10.2020

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

with recommendations to the Commission on quality traineeships in the EU
(2020/2005(INL))

Rapporteur for opinion: Niyazi Kizilyürek

(Initiative – Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure)

PA_INL

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible:

- to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:
- 1. Acknowledges that traineeships are an excellent way of getting to know the labour market; stresses that traineeships should be understood as a limited period of work practice, which should help young people to gain confidence in their capacities, develop work-relevant skills, as well as professional experience, and improve their employability by increasing their chances of obtaining regular employment; reiterates the need to promote best practices in the field, especially with regard to the integration of traineeships as part of professional work experience;
- 2. Considers that traineeships should, in order to facilitate access to regular employment, whether in private firms, the third sector or the public sector, offer strong hands-on training and learning content, safeguard adequate working conditions, such as fair payment, suitable working hours, health and social coverage and appropriate mentoring, including adequate professional feedback and counselling, and should in no case be a substitute for regular jobs or a precondition for a job placement; insists that adequate working conditions and remuneration should be guaranteed to all trainees, regardless of the fact that they are undertaken as part of an educational or training programme ("curricular traineeships"); stresses that the mentor's function must be a key factor in assessing and guiding the trainee by implementing a training project that is relevant and appropriate to the work, which must determine the trainee's skills and abilities developed during the traineeship period; notes that prolonged periods of traineeships could have significant negative social security consequences for young people, in particular in terms of the accumulation of pension rights and access to unemployment benefits;
- 3. Insists that all traineeships should promote inclusiveness, especially with regard to young and vulnerable people with fewer opportunities; insists that it is crucial to ensure participation in traineeships for persons with disabilities by taking appropriate measures to increase awareness and accessibility; insists that participation in traineeships should support gender equality and be ensured to young people from vulnerable backgrounds such as migrants and refugees, and hard-to-reach population groups; also underlines the need for traineeship opportunities for NEETs and young people coming from rural or isolated areas, and for people with visual and hearing impairment and all groups whose inclusion in society is crucial to their successful integration;
- 4. Notes that the latest available statistics¹ highlight the persistence of a large proportion of unpaid or low-paid traineeships across Europe, which may hinder equal employment opportunities; notes that, according to those data, 59 % of respondents who had concluded a traineeship had not received any financial compensation for their last experience, whereas of those receiving some form of remuneration, only 53 % considered that the amount received was sufficient to cover basic living costs;

¹ Flash Eurobarometer 378, "The experiences of traineeships in the EU".

underlines the need for common quality traineeship framework at Union level to be put in place and promoted through Union programmes; underlines that such a framework should be used by all Member States as a guideline in order to increase the quality of traineeships across the Union, taking into account that each Member State legislates separately; underlines the need to include in traineeship programmes, regardless of their length, trainings on protection from, and prevention of, harassment and bullying in the workplace;

5. States that there is a risk of some misuse of traineeships by some employers which requires action on appropriate level; invites the Commission to propose adequate guidelines and monitoring mechanisms, especially in the framework of Erasmus+ programmes; calls on the Member States and the Commission to work to ensure quality mobility experiences based on the principles of the European Quality Charter for Mobility, which makes clear that the quality of information, preparation, support and recognition of experience and qualifications, as well as clear learning plans and learning outcomes drawn up in advance, have a demonstrable impact on the benefits of mobility; considers that more effort needs to be put into developing an internal market for trainees, so that the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired during traineeships, and training cycles especially, may be taken into account;
6. Underlines the risks of unpaid traineeships and calls on the Commission to put further safeguards in place to prevent such situations;
7. Welcomes the appearance of digital traineeships; calls on the Union institutions to develop such formats and recalls the importance of keeping the quality standards for traineeships high in the current context;
8. Calls on the new Commission to put forward an updated proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships in order to broaden the scope of the current Quality Framework for Traineeships, covering all types of traineeships and taking into consideration the strict link between the quality of the traineeship and the employability outcome; stresses the importance of all key players' involvement (the social and business partners, civil society organisations, educational institutions and, in particular, youth organisations) in formulating guidelines and monitoring and evaluating implementation of traineeship practices in Member States, following the framework;
9. Notes that the principle of active support for sustainable labour market integration and the commitment to enhance qualifications and skills of young people is a crucial part of the Commission efforts to promote upward convergence in working conditions and that this is the rationale of the European Pillar of Social Rights; therefore, calls on the new Commission to support the proper implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights into concrete actions that would benefit young people across the Union; calls on the Commission and the Member States to introduce legislation reducing labour costs for business and promote incentives to provide training programmes that include the possibility of employment by the same employer, thereby facilitating the transition from traineeship to regular employment; calls on the Commission to encourage and support Member States to make use of the European Social Fund+ and the European Regional Development Fund, as well as other European funds for the 2021-2027 programming

period to enhance the number and quality of traineeships in the Union; believes that Union-funded programmes promoting access to traineeships, such as the Erasmus+ programme, as well as traineeships within the Union institutions should be at the forefront in the promotion of inclusivity and accessibility; invites the Commission to study possible ways to ensure more transparency and to provide easier and better access to funding in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme and other Union-funded programmes with particular regard to the financial conditions of the applicant and the living cost in the working place; points out that insufficient advantage is taken of traineeship opportunities with the European Solidarity Corps in comparison with volunteering activities and calls on the Commission to give preference to traineeships instead of jobs within the programme's occupational strand;

10. Stresses that, according to Eurostat, the youth unemployment rate in the Union was 14,9 % at the beginning of 2020 and that the inevitable social effects of the outbreak of COVID-19 will acutely impact the Union's labour market, triggering more severe effects than the 2008 financial crisis; therefore, in order to better support youth labour market integration measures, invites the Commission to evaluate the Youth Guarantee in view of turning it into a properly funded, permanent mechanism; underlines the changes generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of work, traineeships and skills and calls for an adaptation of practices in the field;
11. Stresses the need to ensure gender balance among trainees in business or institutions and points to the desirability of striving for diversity; cautions against possible bias-based profiling in recruitment procedures.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	27.10.2020
Result of final vote	+ : 23 - : 2 0 : 3
Members present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Christine Anderson, Andrea Bocskor, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Ilana Cicurel, Gilbert Collard, Gianantonio Da Re, Laurence Farreng, Tomasz Frankowski, Romeo Franz, Hannes Heide, Irena Joveva, Petra Kammerevert, Niyazi Kizilyürek, Predrag Fred Matić, Dace Melbārde, Victor Negrescu, Niklas Nienaaß, Peter Pollák, Marcos Ros Sempere, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Andrey Slabakov, Massimiliano Smeriglio, Sabine Verheyen, Salima Yenbou, Theodoros Zagorakis, Milan Zver
Substitutes present for the final vote	Pernando Barrena Arza

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

23	+
PPE	Andrea Bocskor, Tomasz Frankowski, Peter Pollák, Sabine Verheyen, Theodoros Zagorakis, Milan Zver
S&D	Hannes Heide, Petra Kammerevert, Predrag Fred Matić, Victor Negrescu, Marcos Ros Sempere, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Massimiliano Smeriglio
RENEW	Vlad-Marius Botoș, Ilana Cicurel, Laurence Farreng, Irena Joveva
VERTS/ALE	Romeo Franz, Niklas Nienaß, Salima Yenbou
GUE/NGL	Pernando Barrena Arza, Niyazi Kizilyürek
NI	Isabella Adinolfi

2	-
ID	Christine Anderson, Gianantonio Da Re

3	0
ID	Gilbert Collard
ECR	Dace Melbārde, Andrey Slabakov

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention