

Making the railway system  
work better for society.

# RULES GOVERNING TRAINEESHIPS AT ERA

## Article 1 – General

These rules govern the traineeships scheme of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA). It is addressed mainly to young university graduates<sup>1</sup>, 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. It addresses also seconded trainees, students preparing a thesis and students having an obligation due to their curricula to undergo a traineeship.

The aims of the traineeships at ERA are:

- To provide trainees an understanding of the objectives and activities of ERA.
- To enable trainees to acquire practical experience and knowledge of the day-to-day work of ERA in the different fields of activity of the Agency.
- To promote European integration within the spirit of new governance and through active participation to create awareness of true European citizenship.
- To enable trainees to put into practice knowledge acquired during their studies, or professional careers.

Through this traineeships scheme ERA can benefit from the input from young graduates, who bring a fresh point of view and up-to-date academic knowledge.

The number of traineeships placements to offer depending on the level of funds available and on the capacity of each Unit to accommodate trainees.

There are four types of in-service traineeships:

### 1.1 Standard traineeships, divided into 4 sub-types:

**1.1.1 Traineeships after university education (or its equivalent):** this type of traineeships is for persons who have obtained a university degree or equivalent diploma. A monthly grant is paid for this type of traineeships and travel cost when taking up duty and when leaving the agency are reimbursed.

**1.1.2 Thesis traineeships:** this type of traineeships is for students who are attending university or an equivalent educational institution and are preparing a degree thesis or its equivalent. The purpose of the traineeships must be directly related to the subject of the thesis. A reimbursement, up to € 300 per month, for accommodation is paid On the basis of supporting documents.

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<sup>1</sup> See annex I for examples of EU diplomas giving access to traineeship

**1.1.3 Secondment traineeships (from private or public entity):** this type of traineeships is for persons who are already working and who are willing to familiarise themselves with ERA's operational activities. It is mainly addressed to ERA stakeholders. No grant is paid and no reimbursement is made for this type of traineeships.

**1.1.4 Traineeships under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission covering cooperation programs with third countries** "(for example, IPA or EUMedRail grant agreements)": this type of traineeships is made to welcome designated officials by third countries in order to implement the signed grant agreements.

## **1.2 Student traineeships:**

Student traineeships is designed to allow students, having an obligation due to their curricula, to undergo a period of traineeships. This period cannot exceed a total duration of two months. No grant is paid and no reimbursement is made for this type of traineeships.

## **Article 2 – Requirements for admission**

### **2.1 Nationality**

Trainees are selected among nationals of the Member States of the European Union, among candidates of an acceding country or of the European Economic Area. However, a limited number of nationals of other third countries are also accepted according to the available resources and in accordance with the operational priorities of ERA.

A copy of the passport or the national identity card shall be provided together with the application as proof of nationality.

This requirement does not apply when trainees are selected under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission as referred to in Article 1.1.4.

### **2.2 Qualifications**

#### **2.2.1 University degree, diploma or equivalent**

Candidates to a standard traineeships must have completed the first cycle of a higher education course (i.e. university education) and obtained a full degree or its equivalent by the closing date for application (see Annex 1). ERA reserves the right to change these minimum qualifications used for the traineeships programme. Any such changes will be published on ERA website.

For declared on-going studies an official statement (or transcript) from the relevant university must be provided. When applying for a traineeships, certified copies of all diplomas declared and, if applicable, official certified translations might be required.

Traineeships under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission as referred to in Article 1.1.4 are not subject to this requirements.

**2.2.2** Trainees intending to be seconded from a private or public entity shall additionally produce secondment letter from their respective employers confirming their acceptance of secondment.

**2.2.3** Candidates for student traineeships must provide a traineeships "agreement" issued by the school/University the terms of which must be compatible with the legal framework applicable to ERA,

including these rules. In particular, such agreement should make clear that the students are covered by a valid sickness scheme for the entire duration of the traineeships at ERA.

#### 2.2.4 Languages

In order for the trainee to fully profit from the traineeships and to be able to follow meetings and perform adequately, candidates must have a very good knowledge of at least two EU official languages, of which one should be English.

However, applicants from non-EU Member States must possess excellent command of the English language and good command of a second language (not necessarily an official EU language).

### 2.3 Priority criteria

#### 2.3.1 Priority will be given to candidates who have not:

- Already benefitted from any kind of traineeships (paid or unpaid) within a European institution or body<sup>2</sup>, or
- 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, a local agent, an auxiliary staff member or an interim staff member of any EU institution, body, delegation or representative office.

2.3.2 In case of equally qualified candidates, ERA might give priority to applicants on the basis of the results obtained during their studies.

2.3.3 Traineeships under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission as referred to in Article 1.1.4 are not subject to this requirements.

## Article 3 - Application process

**3.1** Applications should be made in accordance with the procedures published on the website and should be submitted online to ERA, together with the supporting documents, no later than the closing date mentioned on ERA website.

**3.2** The keeping of files respects Regulation (EU) n° 2018/1725 regarding personal data<sup>3</sup>, whether the applications gave rise to selection and assignment or not.

**3.3** Traineeships under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission as referred to in Article 1.1.4 are not subject to this requirements.

## Article 4 – Selection and assignment procedure

**4.1** The pre-selection is carried out by the Human Resources Team, which draws up a list of candidates to be considered. This list is then opened to each Unit to operate the final selection. The final assignments are addressed to Human Resources Team.

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<sup>2</sup> See annex II EU Institutions and Bodies

<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EU) No 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, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

**4.2** The selection procedure also aims to keep, to the best possible level, gender balance and geographical representation. There is no appeal procedure.

**4.3** Successful candidates are selected on the basis of qualifications and/or experience.

**4.4** Successful candidates are informed by email of the period of the traineeships, the Unit to which they have been assigned and the list of final documents they should provide prior to commencement of the traineeships.

**4.5** Assigned trainees are obliged to provide any documents and certificates required by the Human Resources Team at the time of their assignment. They are responsible for making sure that they have the correct visa, where applicable, and that they obtain all the documentation required by the French authorities.

**4.6** Trainees may not be assigned to any Unit where a conflict of interest might occur.

**4.7** Traineeships at ERA does not in any way imply that trainees are permanently or temporarily employed by ERA.

**4.8** Admission to traineeships at ERA does not grant trainees the status of temporary agent or that of any other category of staff of the European institutions and bodies, nor does it entail any right or priority to an appointment by ERA.

## **Article 5 - Rights and duties of trainees<sup>4</sup>**

**5.1** Each trainee shall work under the supervision of a Traineeships Mentor who will be designated by the Head of Unit before the traineeships period. The Mentor must guide and closely follow the trainee during his/her traineeships.

**5.2** 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 Unit/Team to which they are assigned at a level corresponding to their educational and professional background.

**5.3** Trainees must not have any professional connections with third parties which might be incompatible with their traineeships (i.e. they must not work for lobbyists, legal attachés, etc.) and they are not permitted to exercise any other gainful employment during the period of the traineeships which may adversely affect the work assigned during the traineeships. Should a conflict of interest arise during their assignment, trainees shall immediately report to their Mentor and to the Human Resources Traineeships Coordinator in writing.

## **Article 6 – Conduct, social behavior and disciplinary measures**

**6.1** Trainees shall comply with the instructions given by their Head of Unit/Team Leader. They must also comply with the rules governing the traineeships program and the internal rules governing the functioning of ERA, in particular the rules concerning security and confidentiality, as well as with health and safety regulations.

**6.2** Trainees must exercise their duties with respect, impartiality, tolerance of differences, teamwork, politeness, clear communication and integrity. In their contacts with the public, trainees shall be guided by the principles of openness and transparency, as well as courtesy, helpfulness and efficiency.

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<sup>4</sup> See annex III for more information on Trainee's duties and Mentor's responsibilities

## Article 7 – Confidentiality

### 7.1 General

Trainees must exercise the greatest discretion regarding facts and information that come to their knowledge during the course of their traineeships. They must not, in any manner whatsoever, disclose to any unauthorized person any document or information not already made public. They will continue to be bound by this obligation after the end of the traineeships. ERA reserves the right to pursue any person who does not respect this obligation.

### 7.2 Contacts with the Press

Trainees shall refrain from contacts with the Press unless authorized in writing by their respective Traineeships Advisers. ERA reserves the right to terminate the traineeships and to pursue any person who does not respect this obligation.

### 7.3 Publications

Trainees must not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any matter dealing with the work of the Agency and/or the European Commission and European Institutions in general without the written permission of the relevant services. The Human Resources Team 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 ERA staff. All rights, for any articles or other work done for the Agency and/or the European Commission and European Institutions in general, are the property of the Agency.

## Article 8 – Duration

### 8.1 Standard traineeships:

Each year, one session Standard traineeship is organised by ERA for a duration of ten months from 1<sup>st</sup> September until 30 June of the following year.

Traineeships start on the first working day of September and end on the last working day of June. However, in exceptional and duly justified cases, the date of commencement may be deferred, as long as the final date of traineeships is respected. Traineeships periods may not be repeated or extended beyond the maximum length laid down in these rules or beyond the end of the traineeships session.

### 8.2 Student traineeships:

Students can apply at any moment of the year for a period of a maximum of two months. A traineeships session could be scheduled at any moment of the year, provided ERA Units have enough capacity to accommodate trainees.

### 8.3 Traineeships under grant agreements between the Agency and the European Commission:

Duration of this type of traineeships is determined in the agreement with the grant agreement signed with the Commission.



## Article 9 – Termination of traineeships

### 9.1 General

Traineeships finish at the end of the agreed period. However, on receipt of a justified request from the trainee, submitted through his/her adviser, the Executive Director or his delegate may terminate the traineeships beforehand.

### 9.2 Misconduct and disciplinary measures

**9.2.1** The Executive Director or his delegate may terminate the traineeships at any moment if it becomes apparent that the trainee knowingly made wrongful declarations or provided false statements or documents at the moment of application or during the traineeships period.

**9.2.2** The Traineeships Mentor must be notified of any infringements regarding behaviour of the trainee and, in turn, shall inform the hierarchical superior. The Executive Director or his delegate, after consultation with the Head of Unit concerned and the trainee, may at any time decide to terminate the traineeships on the grounds of the trainee's behaviour.

**9.2.3** If the conduct of the trainee does not prove satisfactory, the Head of Unit/Team Leader, following a discussion with the advisor and the trainee, may at any moment propose to the Executive Director or his delegate the early termination of the traineeships.

**9.2.4** ERA reserves its right to terminate the traineeships and to pursue any person who does not respect the obligations related to confidentiality stated under Article 7 of the present document.

**9.2.5** In case of unjustified absence longer than 5 days, ERA reserves the right to terminate the traineeships.

### 9.3 Termination procedure

**9.3.1** In case of termination of the traineeships, ERA shall give a seven-day written notice.

**9.3.2** No appeal procedure is foreseen.

## Article 10 - Financial matters

### 10.1 Grants

**10.1.1** Without prejudice to the subsequent paragraphs, Standard Trainees shall be awarded a monthly grant to which applies the weighting factor of the previous year. The grant is paid in pro-rata when the traineeships starts later than the first of the month or finishes before the end of the month. The amount of the grant is decided periodically by the Executive Director and will be published on the ERA website. This amount may be reduced/increased under specific circumstances such as in the case where a grant is already paid by another institution, or in case a grant agreement referred to in article 1.1.4 specifies the amount of the grant.

**10.1.2** Standard Trainees under the schemes of secondment from private or public entities are not entitled to any financial compensation whatsoever from ERA and they shall make their financial arrangements at their own responsibility.

**10.1.3** Standard Trainees who are students preparing a thesis for a university or post-university degree are not entitled to either a grant nor to travel allowance. Accommodation allowance may be provided by means of derogation up to a maximum of 300€ per month subject to submission of invoices/hotel bills. This amount is subject to modification by the Executive Director.

**10.1.4** 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 ERA may consult its medical service for an opinion if deemed necessary.

**10.1.5** Grants awarded to trainees are not subject to the special tax regulations applying to officials and other servants of the European institutions and other bodies. Trainees are solely responsible for the payment of any taxes due on such grants by virtue of the laws in force in the State concerned. A certificate for tax purposes will be provided at the end of the traineeships period.

**10.1.6** Student trainees of sub-type 1.2 above do not receive any kind of payment from ERA. In particular, they neither are reimbursed accommodation fee nor travelling expenses (without prejudice to section 10.3.3 hereafter).

**10.1.7** The grant paid to trainees under grant agreements referred to in article 1.1.4 is financed within the dedicated budget.

## **10.2 Travel allowance (only applicable to standard traineeships)**

**10.2.1** ERA shall pay a travel allowance to compensate for the expenses incurred at the beginning and at the end of a standard traineeships.

**10.2.2** Trainees whose place of residence is less than 50 km from the seat of ERA are not entitled to a travel allowance.

**10.2.3** The basis for the calculation of reimbursement shall be:

- A second-class rail fare for the shortest and most economical standard return route by rail (also applicable in the case of a journey by car).
- Where the journey includes not less than six hours of night travel between 22.00 hours and 07.00 hours, the cost of a sleeper on production of the ticket, or where the journey includes night travel of less than six hours between 22.00 hours and 07.00 hours the cost of a couchette on production of the ticket.
- The cost of seat reservations and transport of necessary luggage, as well as supplements for special fast trains on production of the relevant tickets and/or vouchers.

**10.2.4** The reimbursement shall be processed only on production of the original tickets documenting the trip or map print out in case of travel by car.

**10.2.5** Where the distance by rail between the place of residence and ERA seat exceed 500 km, or where the route includes a sea-crossing, trainees shall be entitled to travel by air. Reimbursement shall be based on the most economical airfare on production of the ticket and of the boarding pass.

**10.2.6** First or business-class travel, taxi fares, car rental, cancellation/travel insurance, taxes other than airport tax will not be eligible for reimbursement by ERA.

**10.2.7** The postal address in the application form shall be considered the place of residence. No request of address change will be granted once the decision to award a traineeships has been taken.

**10.2.8** Trainees who need a visa for entering the EU will be reimbursed for the cost of such visa as well as for any other reasonable costs (excess luggage charge) incurred in relation thereto upon production of the original payment receipts.

**10.2.9** ERA will cover additional expenses and provide travel tickets for trainees under grant agreements referred to in article 1.1.4 as foreseen in the signed grant agreement.

### 10.3 Missions

**10.3.1** In exceptional cases, the Head of Unit in which a trainee has been placed may grant authorization for a trainee to be sent on mission, on the condition that the mission is of a technical nature and not of a representative one.

**10.3.2** For the reimbursement of these mission expenses, the general procedure of reimbursement provided in the Staff Regulations and in the applicable Guide on missions will apply. The expenses will be taken on by the Unit which requests the mission.

**10.3.3** Student trainees may be sent on mission exclusively to ERA meeting premises in Lille. Prior authorization from the school has to be granted. Travel expenses by train (second-class rail fare) from Valenciennes to Lille and back will be reimbursed on production of the original tickets. No daily subsistence allowances and no hotel expenses will be paid or reimbursed.

**10.3.** Trainees under grant agreements referred to in article 1.1.4 may be granted authorization from the Head of Unit to go on mission of technical nature. They might also be granted authorization to go on mission to participate to meetings related to their country of origin.

### Article 11 - Sickness insurance

ERA does not cover sickness. Trainees must provide proof that they are covered by a valid sickness insurance scheme for the entire duration of the traineeships (for nationals of the Member States, this means the E111 form or a document showing that the trainee is covered by private insurance). Proof of the insurances must be presented to ERA prior to the commencement of the traineeships period or on the first day at the latest.

The cost of sickness insurance will be reimbursed to trainees *under grant agreements referred to in article 1.1.4* as long as it is foreseen in the relevant grant agreement.

### Article 12 - Working hours and absences

**12.1** Trainees must comply with the working hours in force and have the same official public holidays as ERA staff during their traineeships.

**12.2** Trainees, excluded student ones, are entitled to two days leave per each month worked. Days of leave not taken are not compensated in any way. Leave requests must be approved by the Traineeships Mentor and then checked by the Human Resources Team.

**12.3** In case of sickness, trainees must notify their Mentor immediately, and if absent for longer than three days, must produce a medical certificate, indicating the length of absence. Such absence cannot result in an extension of the duration of the traineeships at ERA.

### Article 13 - Reports and Certificates

**13.1** At the end of their traineeships, standard trainees must submit a report on their activities during the traineeships period to their adviser.

**13.2** Standard trainees will receive, after their in-service traineeships period, a certificate specifying the dates of their traineeships period and the Unit/Team to which they were assigned.



**Article 14 - Final provisions**

The Head of Resources and Support Unit is responsible for the implementation of these rules.

These rules will enter into force on the day specified in the ED Decision on the engagement of trainees for an in-service traineeships.

**ANNEX I****EXAMPLES OF EU MEMBER STATES DIPLOMAS GIVING ACCESS TO THE TRAINEESHIPS PROGRAMME**

COUNTRY	UNIVERSITY LEVEL EDUCATION – AT LEAST 3 YEARS IN LENGTH
BELGIUM FR	Bachelor
BELGIUM NL	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
GREECE / Ελλάδα	Δίπλωμα Α.Ε.Ι. (πανεπιστημίων, πολυτεχνείων Τ.Ε.Ι. υποχρεωτικής τετραετούς φοίτησης)
IRELAND / EIRE	Bachelor's degree
ITALIA	Laurea – L(breve)
Κύπρος / KIBRIS	Πανεπιστημιακό δίπλωμα
LATVIJA	Bakalaura diploms (< 160 kredīti)
LIETUVA	Bakalauras (<160 kreditas)
LUXEMBOURG	Diplôme d'Ingénieur technician
MAGYARORSZÁG	Főiskolai Oklevél
MALTA	Bachelor's degree
NEDERLAND	Bachelor
ÖSTERREICH	Fachhochschuldiplom (6-7 Semester)
POLSKA	Licencjat – Inżynier
PORTUGAL	Bacharelato
SLOVENIJA	Diploma o Pridobljeni Visoli Strokovni Izobrazbi
SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA	Diplom o ukončení Bakalářského štúdia

SUOMI / FINLAND	Kandidaatti / Kandidat examen Ammattikorkeakoulututkinto / Yrkeshögskoleexamen (min. 120 opintoviikkoa / studieveckor)
SVERIGE	Kandidatexamen (Akademisk examen omfattande minst 120 poäng, varav 60 poäng av fördjupade studier i ett ämne)
UNITED KINGDOM	Bachelor's degree / Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

## ANNEX II

### EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

#### EU INSTITUTIONS

- European Parliament
- Council of the European Union
- European Commission (including Delegations and Representation offices and Executive Agencies)
- Court of Justice of the European Communities
- European Court of Auditors
- European Ombudsman

#### FINANCIAL BODIES

- European Central Bank
- European Investment Bank
- European Investment Fund

#### ADVISORY BODIES

- European Economic and Social Committee
- Committee of the Regions

#### INTERINSTITUTIONAL BODIES

- Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
- European Communities Personnel Selection Office

*DECENTRALISED AGENCIES*

- Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER)
- Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)
- Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)
- European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX)
- European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA)
- European Asylum Support Office (EASO)
- European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)
- European Banking Authority (EBA)
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)
- European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)
- European Environment Agency (EEA)
- European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)
- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)
- European GNSS Agency (GSA)
- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)
- European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA)
- European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)
- European Medicines Agency (EMA)
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)
- European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)
- European Police College (CEPOL)
- European Police Office (EUROPOL)
- European Public Prosecutor's Office (in preparation) (EPPO)
- European Railway Agency (ERA)
- European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)
- European Training Foundation (ETF)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
- Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM)
- Single Resolution Board (SRB)
- The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST)



- Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT)

#### *AGENCIES UNDER COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY*

- European Defence Agency (EDA)
- European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)
- European Union Satellite Centre (Satcen)

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#### *EXECUTIVE AGENCIES*

- Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA)
- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
- European Research Council Executive Agency (ERC Executive Agency)
- Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized enterprises (EASME)
- Innovation & Networks Executive Agency (INEA)
- Research Executive Agency (REA)

#### *EURATOM AGENCIES AND BODIES*

- EURATOM Supply Agency (ESA)
- European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy (Fusion for Energy)

#### *EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY (EIT)*

- European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

## ANNEX III

### Trainee's duties and Mentor's responsibilities:

- *The trainee will be placed under the responsibility of a Mentor (designated by the Head of Unit);*
- *The Mentor can only be responsible for one trainee per traineeship period;*
- *At the start of the traineeship the Mentor has to prepare a general introduction, including a discussion on the tasks to be performed by the trainee. Those tasks are part of a structured work assignment and of the learning objectives to be achieved by the trainee during the traineeship period and they must be laid down in writing and signed by the Mentor and the trainee;*
- *The trainee will be as much as is possibly (and legally) feasible involved in the everyday Team/Unit work;*
- *The trainee is expected to adhere to all orders given by his/ her Mentor;*
- *The trainee is responsible for performing the tasks he/she has been assigned to and to keep the Mentor updated about the progress of these tasks;*
- *The trainee shall not perform any tasks on his /her own initiative and / or without supervision of a Mentor;*