



European Ombudsman

Emily O'Reilly
European Ombudsman

Mr Günther Oettinger
European Commissioner
responsible for the Budget and Human
Resources

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Strasbourg, 21/09/2017

Decision of the European Ombudsman in inquiry 454/2014/PMC concerning the European External Action Service's practice of offering unpaid traineeships in EU delegations

Dear Mr Oettinger,

In the context of the above-mentioned inquiry, which followed a complaint to my Office, I had to assess whether it is appropriate for the European External Action Service (EEAS) not to pay its trainees in EU Delegations in third countries.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, I found that the EEAS's practice of not paying trainees in its Delegations amounts to maladministration. I thus recommended to the EEAS that it pay all of its trainees, including those in EU Delegations, an appropriate allowance. I referred in this respect to the positive example of the European Parliament which has abolished unpaid traineeships in its Secretariat.

In reply to my recommendation, High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini informed me that she has requested funds from the budgetary authorities for paying EEAS trainees in EU Delegations.

I see her response as a serious commitment to pay trainees in EU Delegations, subject to being granted the appropriate budgetary resources by the budgetary authorities.

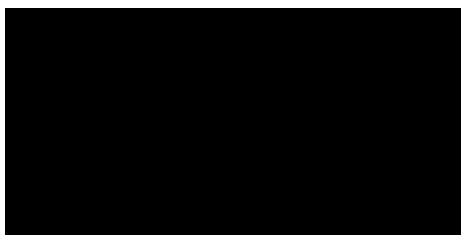
I am sure you will agree that it is important that the EU representative offices around the world should be facilitated in demonstrating their commitment to making traineeships available on an equal opportunity basis, irrespective of background and family resources.



Therefore, **I would respectfully request the European Commission to invite the budgetary authorities to examine this issue carefully when agreeing the budget of the European Union.** I have written also to the budgetary authorities in this respect.

Please find enclosed a copy of my decision in this case for your information.

Yours sincerely,



Emily O'Reilly
European Ombudsman

Enclosure:

- Decision in case 454/2014/PMC