

DOES YOUR



COMPANY
WORK
FOR FREE?
SO, WHY
SHOULD I?



WORK IS WORK AND IT MUST BE PAID!

The austerity measures and the impact of Covid 19 transformed the labour market into a very hostile place for young workers.

Unpaid internships are one of the most obvious and prevailing forms of exploitation.

We demand the end of this discriminatory practice!

Young people deserve quality internships that will help them to make the transition from their studies to the labour market.

#BanUnpaidInternships



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The situation of young workers TODAY.

Collected data from all over the EU show that young Europeans are one of the most affected groups by the COVID 19 pandemic.

The precarious position of young people in the labour markets forced them into unemployment, often without any safety net. Their previous (often multiannual) working life was composed of short term and non-standard contracts and employers were not obliged to pay a social security contribution.

The race to the bottom and liberalisation of the market led to an increase in young people who had little choice but to accept unfair working conditions: temporary contracts, 0 hours contracts, bogus self-employment, unpaid or poorly paid internships that often substituted entry-level jobs. In February 2022 European Parliament showed to be a strong ally of young workers when [condemning the practice of unpaid internships](#) and calling for a legal framework to ensure fair remuneration for traineeships.

What do we ask for?

The legislation regulating internships is very different in all member states. We need harmonisation and binding action on the EU level. That is why the goal of our advocacy is a binding legal tool to:

- **Ban unpaid internships that are undertaken to gain professional experience ahead of taking up regular employment and that are outside of secondary or post-secondary education.**
- **Ensure that internships do not replace entry-level jobs in name of upskilling of people who already have sufficient working experience.**

What unfair internships do we want to ban?

Our action is targeted to 'free market' internships - those that take place outside of the educational framework.

Free market internship:

- serves to offer a concrete work-based learning experience to individuals who are either newly entering or re-entering the labour market in the new field.
- is conducted for professional development during a limited time period and its goal is to increase learners' competencies and obtain skills relevant for the labour market.
- consists of activities that are connected with the area of study or professional development.
- is structured and applied to learn through practical experience and leads to the recognition of learning outcomes, under the supervision of a professional(s) with a significant background in the field of the experience.

What are quality internships?



THE QUALITY INTERNSHIP HAS TO HAVE SEVERAL CRITERIA

1. Transparent recruitment process
2. A written agreement between both parties
3. Fair remuneration respecting sectoral/national minimum wage and/or collective agreements
4. Social Protection including healthcare, unemployment, parental leave and pension contribution
5. Skill developments and learning trajectory
6. Supervision and mentoring by professionals in the organisation
7. Decent working environment and guaranteed health and safety conditions

Why legally binding tool?

The high unemployment and high level of precarity among young people were urgently requiring EU action and so EU leaders approved Council Recommendations on Quality Traineeships Framework in 2014. The document included some good recommendations and European Commission is currently conducting a review, however as the tool is only a soft law (non-binding) the large consensus among stakeholders is that the implementation was full of flaws, and in some Member States largely ignored by the employers and/or governments.

Today, we can not waste our time by repeating the same action that did not deliver for young people. Council Recommendations do not bring change to young workers.

CONCRETE MEASURES

- Revision of the Quality Traineeship Framework resulting in binding measures with more focus on fair compensation, learning trajectory, supervision and access to social security (health insurance and unemployment benefits, pension contributions)
- Protecting young people from undertaking several consecutive internships by strict monitoring of the use of contracts aiming to make the transition between the education and labour market.
- Build the capacity of the labour inspectorate to detect and tackle unfair internships, particularly those that replace jobs.
- EU can not fund precarity! No unfair and underpaid traineeships can be supported by public money. Employers can receive and use financial subsidies only if they comply with the quality criteria, legislation and collective agreements.
- Strengthen the protection of interns by establishing channels to report abuse and flag dishonest employers.
- Public institutions should lead by example and offer quality internships only.