

February 2016

Description of EFTA's Organisational Structure and Related Trainee Posts

[Secretary-General's Office \(SGO\) - Geneva and Brussels](#)

[Trade Relations Division \(TRD\) - Geneva](#)

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Secretary-General's Office (SGO) - Geneva and Brussels

(10 month traineeship)

The SGO supports the Secretary-General as well as the activities of the EFTA Council and its substructures. Furthermore, it assists the Member States in reviewing and updating the EFTA Convention, provides economic analysis for internal use and services the Member States in various political and administrative processes. The SGO also coordinates information services to the Member States and the general public. The SGO has staff both in Geneva and Brussels and has one trainee post in each site.

The SGO trainee in Geneva participates in the preparation for and attendance at the meetings of the EFTA Council and related bodies, and contributes to meeting reports and background notes. S/he also works closely with the Division's Economic Officer in preparing statistics and may help conducting studies related to Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). For this, a good understanding of the field of international trade and FTAs would be an advantage. The trainee should be fluent in English and have some experience in handling statistical data. Skills or interest in information technology, for example the ability to upload information to the EFTA Internet site, will also be an advantage.

The SGO trainee in Brussels works with the Information Officer and the Information Coordinator and has the opportunity to have an impact on the services of the EFTA Secretariat in information and communication. S/he writes a daily press review and participates in editing, publishing and updating content on EFTA's website and intranet, as well as managing social media channels. In addition, s/he is involved in various information and communication projects, editorial work on EFTA's publications and assisting with presentations to visitor groups on the role of EFTA and the EEA Agreement. For this, fluency in English is necessary and a good understanding of the EU institutions is a clear advantage. The information trainee should also be acquainted with the use of Content Management Systems. Knowledge of, or an interest in webmaster tools, photography and photo/video editing will also be an advantage.

Trade Relations Division (TRD) - Geneva

(5/6 month traineeship)

The TRD is in charge of the exploration, negotiation and implementation of preferential trade arrangements with non-EU partner countries worldwide (Declarations on Cooperation, Free Trade Agreements). The TRD has one trainee.

The TRD trainee's main tasks relate to trade in goods and customs issues. They entail technical analyses on market access, review and amendments to customs tariff tables, notifications to partner countries, etc. The TRD trainee post requires experience and knowledge within the field of customs and origin, and candidates are often recruited from EFTA national customs authorities.

EEA Coordination Division (ECD) - Brussels

(10 month traineeship)

The ECD is responsible for the management and coordination of general EEA related work, which consists of organising the meetings of the EEA Council, the Standing and Joint Committees, and the Parliamentary and Consultative Committees by drafting chairmanship programmes, reports, speaking notes, minutes, etc. Moreover, the ECD is in charge of legal and institutional issues, policy analysis and of the management of official documents. The ECD has two trainees.

The ECD trainees assist in the preparation and follow-up of the meetings of the different committees by drafting reports, speaking notes and minutes, and in the organisation of the biannual EEA seminar. They also assist the legal officers in their work by drafting legal memoranda and carrying out specific research on substantive issues related to the EEA/Internal Market.

Goods Division (GDD) - Brussels

(10 month traineeship)

The GDD handles the integration of EU legislative acts related to the free movement of goods into the EEA Agreement and technical issues regarding the free movement of goods. Specific policy areas include competition policy, state aid, intellectual property, standardisation, customs matters, energy, technical barriers to trade, pharmaceuticals and food safety. The division cooperates with EFTA States and the EU institutions in order to facilitate the collaboration between EFTA and the EU.

The GDD trainee assists the division in all policy areas. The trainee's main tasks include conducting research on EU-EEA law integration, drafting reports, proposals, notes and emails, attending external meetings accompanied with – or on behalf of – officers, updating the EFTA website, preparing expert meetings and generally provide assistance to the officers when needed.

Services, Capital, Persons & Programmes Division (SCD) - Brussels

(10 month traineeship)

The SCD is responsible for assisting the EFTA States in the management of the EEA Agreement in the areas of free movement of services, capital and persons, as well as participation of the EEA EFTA States in EU programmes. SCD officers monitor relevant EU developments, support the EFTA States in providing input to EU decision-making, and assist them in the integration into the EEA Agreement of relevant EU legal acts in the above-mentioned areas. The largest fields covered by the SCD are transport, financial services and environment. In addition, the division covers consumer protection, enterprise and Internal Market affairs, social policies, media, education and research. The SCD has one trainee.

The SCD traineeship provides for the opportunity to experience the practical functioning of the EEA Agreement in the areas covered by the division. While concrete tasks will depend on EU developments and on the needs of the division, the SCD trainee typically assists officers in the preparation of working group meetings by making minutes, drafting agendas, reports and emails and by arranging practical aspects of the meetings. In addition, the trainee might be asked to write background notes, to monitor EU policy and legal developments through online research or by attending conferences and expert group meetings, or to prepare tables of information and presentations.

EFTA Statistical Office (ESO) - Luxembourg

(5/6 month traineeship)

ESO is situated in Luxembourg in the premises of the European Commission's Statistical Office (Eurostat) and deals with statistical cooperation within and outside the framework of the EEA Agreement. ESO has one trainee.

The ESO trainee participates in the daily work of the office, and some of the main tasks of the trainee are to monitor the inclusion of EFTA data in Eurostat publications and to identify new EEA relevant legal acts in the field of statistics. The trainee also supports the EFTA Secretariat and the EFTA States on various issues concerning statistics. The ESO trainee is recruited directly from the EFTA national statistical offices through a separate procedure from the other trainees.

Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) - Brussels

(12 month traineeship)

The Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) is the secretariat of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants, and is affiliated to the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in Brussels. The FMO reports to the three Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) through the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC) for the EEA Grants and through the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) for the Norway Grants. Our focus is on reducing economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area (EEA) and strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the 15 Beneficiary States.

The grant schemes are worth €1.8 billion in the financing period 2009-2014, funding 150 programmes and over 6200 projects (implementation of programmes and projects continues until 2017). Key sectors include research and innovation, social inclusion, environment, civil society, and justice and home affairs. The allocation for the financing period 2014-2021 totals €2.8 billion.

The FMO offers an international, stimulating and diverse workplace, with a staff of approximately 60 employees comprising some 15 nationalities.

Every year we have several traineeship places available. As one of the selected candidates you will get hands-on work experience in a truly international and multicultural environment. This can be a valuable opportunity - to put into practice knowledge acquired during studies or work and gain skills to enrich your future career.

What do we offer?

- A traineeship period of 12 months starting on 1 September
- A mentoring system which guarantees that you will be supervised and guided in your work by a dedicated member of the FMO staff
- A quality, stimulating work environment
- A monthly allowance, paid accommodation, reimbursement of travel expenses, and accident/health insurance.

What type of candidates are we looking for?

- Highly motivated individuals from a range of educational and professional backgrounds to contribute to the work of the FMO in line with their expertise
- University graduates
- Nationals of EFTA and EU Member States

What type of work can you expect to do?

The content of the job largely depends on the department you are assigned to. You may, for example, work in the field of communication, law or grant management.

Typical tasks include:

- project management
- coordinating events
- drafting information material and reports
- assessing and communicating progress and results using indicators, statistics and other information

Specific tasks:

The **legal affairs trainee** works on a broad range of legal issues surrounding the management of the grants. Key tasks include:

- resolving problems encountered during appraisal and implementation of programmes and projects
- providing legal support to stakeholders on multiple legal issues as well as interpretation of the broader legal framework governing the grants

The **financial trainee** provides support and assistance to the financial controllers. Key tasks include:

- supporting the financial controllers in their day-to-day tasks including accounting and financial monitoring
- preparing and reviewing financial reports and overviews for internal use and for stakeholders

The **communication trainee** provides support in a broad range of communication activities. Key tasks include:

- developing content (e.g. news articles and project stories) for the external website (www.eeagrants.org), internal intranet, and social media channels
- researching and writing for publications, reports and other information materials

The **results and evaluation trainee** helps assess and report on results achieved through the Grants. Key tasks include:

- preparing statistical reports and data extractions using Excel or SQL
- managing and analysing performance data to underline key results and trends using both quantitative and qualitative information

- working with indicators from Eurostat, UN and other international sources.

The **sectors and funds trainee** works on a broad range of issues related to the thematic areas supported by the grants. Key tasks include:

- supporting programme management
- preparing and giving input to thematic analysis of supported sectors, in addition reporting of results
- maintaining contacts with the Beneficiary States as well as working with the online documentation and reporting system

The **country and bilateral cooperation trainee** works within the team in charge of the day-to-day contacts with the Beneficiary States as well as the coordination of the work to strengthen bilateral relations. Key tasks include:

- analysing and reporting of information and working with the online documentation and reporting system
- assisting in daily follow up of the country portfolios
- preparing annual meetings and MoU negotiation meetings between Donor States and Beneficiary States