



Benefits of a European Internship Project (Belgium)

The benefits are numerous to the **trainees**:

- Develop greater awareness of the social, political, and cultural environment of the host country;
- Increase their networking and employability opportunities;
- Develop transferable skills, such as problem solving, teamwork, communication, decision-making, autonomy and flexibility;
- Increase independence and self-confidence;
- Learn and improve language skills to enhance employability prospects;
- Enhance their CV and work portfolio to make them stand from the crowd.

The idea behind promoting European internship is to give pupils of secondary technical education an opportunity to put into practice the lessons learnt while studying within a normal industrial environment, while at the same time enabling them to gain experience appropriate for their future careers.

The trainees that come to Belgium from other countries in the European Union also wish to learn more about the Belgian way of doing things and to develop their language skills.

The following questions represent the main and most common questions asked by the **companies** that provide Work Placements:

What Benefit will my company get out of employing a trainee?

Hosting an international trainee in your organisation can bring many soft and hard benefits to your organisation.

Probably the most obvious one is that it gives you access to a skilled and motivated young person that can **undertake a project** for you which will contribute to the development of your business; perhaps the research you have been meaning to do but simply have not had the time or person to do it.

The trainee comes equipped with specific skills as well as an up-to-date overview of the industry's developments and should become fully productive at an early stage. Many employers are also keen to make (and to be seen to make) a positive contribution towards the provision of a high quality work force for the future.

Having an international trainee as part of your team will also bring *a European dimension* to your company activities, helping you to find out about cultural differences from a business point of view and give you access to different languages, which may help with export development.

It is not unusual for companies to gain favourable publicity as a result of internship arrangements.

How much will it cost me?

There is NO cost to you.

The trainees receive no pay and you do not have to pay any national insurance.

While you are under no obligation to pay trainees on these programmes, many companies do in fact pay the trainee's lunch in the company restaurant or a small amount of money, perhaps to cover bus fares. This is entirely up to you.



What is their status when they are working in my company?

For the duration of their placement, the trainee should be considered as a full member of your team. They will be bound by the same terms and conditions (hours of work, discipline etc) and be expected to work as directed by your management team.

Where will they live?

All trainees have their accommodation organised by the receiving or the sending school.

What if they have a problem while they are living in Belgium?

Should the trainee have a problem while in Belgium, the receiving school will work with the trainee to overcome it. We have a European projects coordinator whose task is to solve whatever problem arises.

What sort of project do they need to do?

On the whole, the trainees do not need any specific project to undertake. Their primary objective is to gain experience in a Belgian company, and want to contribute to your business in whatever way they can.

What about the language?

The language of communication is English. The standard of knowledge of the trainees that come is generally very good. The main issue is one of confidence. Learning English in a classroom and using it in a day-to-day situation is very different.

How do they get funded?

Trainees that come on internship get funding from the European Leonardo Agency for travelling, accommodation and subsistence. It is because of this funding that they are able to live in Belgium and work for you without being a drain on your financial resources.

Conclusion - Benefits to Employers

- Cost effective source of labour.
- Motivated, committed and loyal employee.
- Flexibility in staff deployment and increased productivity.
- Increased awareness of current developments in the particular field of study.
- Breakthrough thinking (not blinkered or stereotyped).
- Generating goodwill within the educational community.
- Payback (putting something back into the community).

More info:

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