

Proposed cooperation between the European Parliament and the International Association of Business and Parliament (IABP)

Business placements: format

- ? Placements in one of the IABP member countries¹ for up to ten administrators per year from committee secretariats, and possibly from other services, who would benefit greatly by attaining both general understanding and specific knowledge of the sector they are responsible for (agriculture, finance, media, transport, legal affairs, the judiciary, etc.). The schemes could also offer officials the chance to monitor "on the ground" the impact of existing legislation.
- ? Officials would spend five consecutive days with their selected enterprises², sufficient time to acquire a comprehensive overview of their chosen sector while at the same time compatible with the parliamentary calendar. Suggested periods: identified weeks without parliamentary (or at least committee) activity, summer recess.
- ? The programmes could also feature social events over the preceding and/or following weekends, thereby adding a cultural dimension to the schemes. Where appropriate and feasible, participants could attend follow-up days later in the year to consolidate their learning or to experience different phases of the business cycle.

National parliaments

Parliament officials could also have the chance to spend an internship in national parliaments of the countries concerned, in accordance with a work programme drawn up jointly between the European Parliament and the relevant IABP member.

Preparation and implementation of programmes

Some three months in advance, future participants must clearly define what they are looking for from the scheme (specific objectives and needs, sector/subject matter, duration, etc.). On this basis, the IAPB propose a tailor-made programme and identify a suitable host enterprise. The emphasis is on "learning by doing" and, if they so wish, participants enjoy the opportunity to experience as wide a spectrum of the host company's activities as possible (from shop floor to boardroom).

Cost

No cost: travel and accommodation (mission expenses) aside, the schemes would have no financial implications.

Reciprocity

The Parliament would be expected to reciprocate by holding an annual visit of representatives from host companies (1 day in Brussels: tour of EP premises, followed by lunch with the EP participants and, possibly, a Member).

¹ Belgium, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and the UK

² For certain sensitive sectors, it may be appropriate, where feasible, for officials to divide their time between a private-sector company and a non-industrial organisation (NGO or similar), so as to ensure a balanced perspective.