

# Meet the ECHA trainees



## **DRAGAN JEVTIC, Serbia**

### **Trainee with the ECHA Evaluation Unit**

**“It is important to have clear ideas of your goals at ECHA so that you end up doing what you want to do”**

Dragan Jevtic wanted to take a break from working in academia and experience the regulatory environment for a while, and so ECHA caught his eye due to its pre-defined traineeship programme.

At the Agency, he worked in the Evaluation Unit, where he was involved in a number of different tasks including scientific support for dossier follow-up and scientific discussion papers.

Dragan also actively participated in the Topical Expert Group in Terrestrial Ecotoxicology.

All-in-all, Dragan has learnt how to apply scientific knowledge in the evaluation and risk assessment of chemicals: “I learnt a lot about the areas I had no connection with before, like substance evaluation and the Common Screening Programme”. In addition, he was able to extend his network, and hopes he will cooperate with ECHA in the future. He would definitely recommend traineeships to other people. However, he believes that what you take in from traineeships depends a lot on yourself.

After his traineeship at ECHA, Dragan was offered a temporary job at the Agency, he then defended his PhD thesis in ecotoxicology in Poland and moved to Brussels to work at the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC).

## **MARC DECKER, United Kingdom**

### **Trainee with the ECHA Legal Affairs Unit**

**“ECHA is well-known and it has a good reputation”**

After studying Law in France and receiving a post graduate degree in Cardiff, Marc Decker worked as a trainee at, among others, the French environmental administration and the Commission. He then joined ECHA, where he worked on litigations, and research on case law of articles relevant to ECHA.

According to Marc, traineeships at ECHA are a good way to open doors later.

He does, however, advise that his particular traineeship is more beneficial for those who want to pursue a career related to chemicals and REACH, as opposed to those who want to get general experience on how to work in a legal team. For Marc, working at ECHA has been very useful as it is where everything happens in the area of chemicals: “It has provided me with a lot of information on European chemicals legislation which will definitely be useful in my future”.





## **FRANCESCA ANGIULLI, Italy**

### **Trainee with the ECHA Risk Management Identification Unit**

**“I am improving my expertise and I have the opportunity to work with very skilled people”**

Francesca Angiulli, a chemist with a BA and MA in Environmental and Applied Chemistry, graduated in 2011 in Italy and has since been working in the private sector. She worked at ECHA as a trainee in the Risk Management and Identification unit, where she contributed to a cross directorate project to harmonise and structure the communication of information on the safe use of chemicals between companies.

“My traineeship taught me a lot. I cooperated directly with environmental and safety managers from different chemical companies and therefore had the chance to know these members in person. This was challenging but at the same time extremely stimulating, which I believe will be useful in my future tasks”.

She experienced a slight culture shock when she first arrived in Helsinki: “the weather, the food, the living style and the people are all so different to my home town,” however, ECHA’s welcoming staff and motivating environment made her adapt to these changes easily. She states she would do it all over again if she could: “Even if you do not have the intention of pursuing a career in the public sector, it is important to know how the field works – ECHA gives you a new perspective on how agencies work from the inside”.

## **ANA RODÉS, Spain**

### **Trainee with the ECHA Communications Unit**

**“It is a great opportunity to see how EU agencies work and at the same time have a good experience abroad”**

Ana comes from Barcelona, Spain, and studied Tourism Management followed by a bachelor in Advertising and Public Relations. Since then, Ana has gained professional experience in both sectors. However, she developed a keen interest in communications and has worked in various communications agencies in Spain.

“I received a warm welcome during my first days at ECHA, yet was slightly overwhelmed by the amount of information to take in. I look back at my time as a trainee as a nice experience, both professionally and personally”.

Ana primarily worked on preparing publications, producing content for the intranet and giving support to the organisation of events for ECHA. Joining ECHA has also given her a broad overview of how EU administration works.

Ana was offered a temporary job at the Agency after her traineeship ended. She warmly recommends traineeships to other people, not just in ECHA but in all European agencies.





**ELISA GRABBE, Germany**

**Trainee with the ECHA Board of Appeal**

**"ECHA has enhanced my career prospects"**

"I've worked with some bigger research projects as well as with the daily routines and translation issues. All in all I feel my tasks were well balanced and I was able to do some really relevant work. It has been very interesting to get some insight into how EU administration works and how a recently established agency operates. Also one of the best things about working at ECHA has been working with people from different backgrounds".

Elisa is sure the time spent in ECHA has enhanced her career prospects.

"People have been really impressed when I've told them about the things I've been dealing with here at ECHA. In the future I'd definitely like to work in an agency again. I have also recommended this kind of traineeship to a friend of mine who is a recent graduate."

**Osiris Alejandro Valdez Banda, Mexico**  
**Trainee with the ECHA Executive Office**

**"Excellent guidance from my mentors"**

"Cooperating with the different units at ECHA helped me to learn and understand more about the importance of the work done here at the agency. At the same time I was able to acquire new skills from the ECHA staff whom I had the pleasure of working with on different projects. I would particularly like to thank my mentors who always helped me by giving excellent guidance and good advice".

"Another advantage of the traineeship period at ECHA is the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment. Working with a good internal network gave me the opportunity to share experiences and to learn. Personally I think the experience of being an ECHA trainee is something highly valuable for my professional development and my career prospects in the future".





**NICOLA TECCE, Italy**

**Trainee with the ECHA Evaluation Unit**

**“Great opportunity to collaborate with professionals”**

“It was really interesting for me to gain some in-depth knowledge of some of Agency’s tasks and to be able to apply my knowledge in environmental sciences. It was also a great opportunity to understand a different reality from the one I experienced during my studies at university and to collaborate with an experienced team of scientists”.

For Nicola, the six-month long traineeship was enough to attain sufficient knowledge of the working procedures in this field and to orient his future choices when he finishes his PhD course.

“In conclusion, I’m really enthusiastic about my experience and if I have the opportunity I’ll suggest to everyone in the same position as me to apply for a traineeship at ECHA”.