

Internship of the Department of Maritime Studies has been included in the Operational Program "Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning" of the NSRF 2014-2020 and is co-funded by the European Union - European Social Fund (ESF). Internship lasts for 3 months of full-time employment for students and takes place within the period May-September, with the exact starting and ending dates being determined each year by the Scientific Responsible who is appointed by the General Assembly of the Department.

*The institution of student internship* has been included in the curriculum of the Department of Maritime Studies of the University of Piraeus in order to offer students work experience, in addition to the excellent theoretical training that it provides. The internship is optional as students are given the opportunity to choose it as a "course of choice". Also, the internship concerns domestic employment, it is carried out only in the 8th semester and concerns the students who are in the fourth year of their studies. The process of Internship Program implementation takes place in two stages: a) the call to participants and the registration of the applications and b) the relevant information to the companies and the selection of students for their participation in the internship program.

During the procedure of the call and the registration of the internship applications, the Internship Office, in consensus with the Scientific Responsible who has been appointed for the internship, announces in prominent places at the University's premises and on the Internet (website of the department and on the Internship Platform *praktiki.unipi.gr/e-praktiki*) the Call for Internship Applications, which contains information about the submission and also the submission deadline. Students are then invited to submit their application form electronically, accompanied by their curriculum vitae and analysis of their grades.

Through the selection process which is announced in detail each time, transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination of the requested in the program participants in terms of gender, race, color, ethnic or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability or chronic illness, age, family or social status, sexual orientation, identity or gender characteristics, are guaranteed. At the same time, the relevant information for the companies and their selection for participation in the Internship Program are getting in progress.

During the progressing of the Internship Program, Quality Control is carried out by the Scientific Responsible and the staff of the Internship Office, through ongoing contact with the participating students and host organizations (shipping companies) in order to contribute to the monitoring of the progress of the program and also to solve any possible problems.

The way the internship is being applied by the Department of Maritime Studies connects academic studies with the demanding workplace of shipping companies aiming mainly at the acquisition of professional experience which in turn will allow the students to strengthen their CV and improve their prospects for future employment. In addition, the internship aims at familiarizing the students with real working conditions and modern technologies, acquiring additional skills (communication, networking and teamwork) and generally preparing them for undertaking positions of responsibility in the future. The ultimate goal is the

development of a communication channel between the Department and the labor market, through the students' potential and their absorption.

The Department of Maritime Studies has succeeded to gain an excellent reputation and recognition by the shipping companies for its academic work, and this fact is evidenced by the continuing increase of the number of students that the companies ask for traineeship. The students of the Department of Maritime Studies during their internship are employed in virtually all the sections of shipping companies, with their predominant preferences focused on the sections of Chartering and Operation. The results are very satisfactory, as it turns out that a fairly high proportion of our students are absorbed into the labor market at the end of their internship, since they get positively assessed for their job performance by the shipping companies.

The Department is particularly active following a fully extroverted policy that includes training excursions to shipping companies at regular intervals, as well as the invitation and participation of shipping managers at the Department's events.