

Education



Masked members of the organization Génération Précaire, one of several groups in Europe that focus on the plight of interns, holding a protest in 2011 against young people's employment terms at a Paris department store.

BRIEFLY

Education

Signs of recovery emerge for some M.B.A. programs

Full-time M.B.A. programs are starting to see a revival of interest for the first time since the onset of the global financial crisis, according to a business school admissions survey released last week.

But applications to many part-time and flexible programs — including executive M.B.A.'s — are in decline, according to the annual survey by the Graduate Management Admission Council, which oversees the GMAT standardized entrance exam for many business schools.

For the first time since 2009, a majority of full-time M.B.A. programs worldwide reported stable or rising applications.

Asia bucked the trend, however, with only 46 percent of full-time two-year Asian programs reporting growth, down from 79 percent last year. And among part-time programs, only 29 percent worldwide reported a rise in applications, down from 44 percent last year.

The survey covered 683 graduate management programs at 328 business schools, in 42 countries. CHRISTOPHER SCHUETZE

Dual degrees offered in Canada and France

L'Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, also known as Sciences Po, and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver have joined forces to offer two dual degree programs.

Starting this month, students will be able to earn Bachelor of Arts degrees from both institutions by studying for two years at each. Starting in September 2014, a second program will combine a Bachelor of Commerce degree from U.B.C.'s Sauder School of Business with a Bachelor of Arts from Sciences Po.

The partnership is the first dual degree offering in Canada for the French university and the first foray into international dual degree programs for U.B.C. ELAINE SMITH

Harvard sets goal to raise a record \$6.5 billion

Harvard University has announced a drive to collect \$6.5 billion in donations in the next five years, which, if successful, would be the largest fund-raising campaign in the history of higher education.

The headline figure, however, includes \$2.8 billion in gifts and pledges already secured before the campaign was announced Sep. 21.

The current fund-raising record is held by Stanford University, which raised \$6.23 billion in a five-year campaign that ended in 2011. GRACE TSOI

London Business School seeking £100 million

The London Business School announced a campaign last week aimed at raising £100 million, or \$160 million, over the next five years.

It said the money would be used in part to convert and develop the Old Marylebone Town Hall, which it acquired last year, as part of its campus expansion program. It also announced a £25 million donation from The Batia and Idan Ofer Family Foundation.

The school's plans for the site call for the construction of an additional three-story building with lecture theaters, a library, seminar rooms, faculty offices, a student lounge, and an alumni center. BRIAN CHILDS

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Fight against unpaid internships spreads

NEW YORK

Lawsuits have multiplied in America as resistance has grown in Europe

BY ELLA DELANY

A backlash against unpaid internships in America, manifested in a spate of lawsuits this year, is now spreading to Europe, where the issue of exploitation hit headlines in August with the death of the German intern Moritz Erhardt, 21, after allegedly working at Merrill Lynch's London office for 72 hours without sleep.

Unpaid internships have been around for a long time in the United States, but the number has ballooned in recent years, said Ross Perlin, author of "Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy."

Saxon Baird, 29, a freelance journalist based in Brooklyn, says he has already completed six internships. "Only one internship really paid an amount that I could scrape by on," Mr. Baird said. "In places like Vogue, I was getting paid \$12 a day and working 25 to 30 hours a week. So, while that was technically a paid internship, it might as well not have been."

He said that his internship at Vogue included some perks — like invites to celebrity parties and a few bylines — but he spent a large amount of time running errands, and acting as a substitute for a salaried employee.

Mr. Baird's experiences are increasingly typical of graduates trying to break into the job market, whether in the United States or Europe.

According to the 2011 European Parliament Committee on Petitions, in France and Germany alone an estimated 1.5 million people undertake an internship each year. A European Youth Forum Survey found that around half of Europe's internships are unpaid, and 45 percent do not pay enough to support day-to-day living.

A European Commission report, released last year, found that young people in Europe are increasingly undertaking internships on the open market, outside of an educational framework, after graduating or completing professional training. Governments are promoting such internships across the European Union to address youth unemployment, yet these internships are often unregulated and unpaid, leaving interns vulnerable to exploitation — and they are not necessarily helping graduates to find a salaried job.

An E.U.-wide survey of interns conducted in 2011 by the European Youth Forum found that 37 percent of respondents had undertaken three or more internships. In Britain, a poll by the National Union of Students last year found that 43 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds believed unpaid internships to be a major barrier to employment.

Research conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers in the United States suggests that pay is an important indicator of the value of an internship to graduate job seekers. A

2011 survey found that 61 percent of students who worked in a paid internship were offered a job when they graduated, compared with 38 percent of students who took an unpaid position.

This helps to explain why U.S. graduates are increasingly challenging the idea that they should work for free in order to gain a foothold in the global job market — most notoriously through a series of high-profile class actions against companies including Fox Searchlight Pictures, Atlantic Records and Condé Nast.

In June this year, a federal judge in New York found that the Fox unit had vi-

"Even in the 'sexy' industries like publishing and media, companies are starting to take notice."

olated minimum wage laws by not paying interns on the set of the film "Black Swan."

U.S. Department of Labor guidelines state that an internship must benefit the intern rather than the employee. After the landmark Black Swan ruling, "even in the 'sexy' industries like publishing and media, companies are starting to take notice," said Donald C. Dowling Jr., a junior partner in international employment law, at the New York law firm White & Case.

Mr. Perlin said the ruling — and copycat cases that have followed — may have marked a turning point. "Over 20

lawsuits, a major precedent from a federal judge, extensive press coverage, changing policies at companies and colleges, as well as new campaigns led by young people — all of these are starting to alter dramatically the culture of unpaid work and the internship economy," he said.

U.S.-style class action lawsuits are relatively rare in Europe, even in countries where they are legally possible. Still, European protests against unpaid internships are on the rise. Organizations such as Intern Aware in the United Kingdom, Génération Précaire in France and La Repubblica Degli Stagisti in Italy collect accounts from dissatisfied interns, offer legal information and resources, organize protests, and generate press coverage.

The European Parliament itself offers a variety of unpaid positions, and in July this year a "sandwich protest" saw Brussels interns congregating to protest against unfair working conditions. The protest's Facebook page said, "It is a fact that many interns are working without any reimbursement, without a contract, or in a framework of inappropriate payment and working hours."

These protests are having an impact. Ben Lyons, co-director of Intern Aware, has worked with lawyers in Britain to help interns to come to private settlements with a number of high-profile companies, including the department store Harrods. Mr. Lyons said recent initiatives in Britain have included an investigation by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs into breaches of minimum

wage laws, which has already claimed back almost £200,000, or \$320,000, in unpaid wages for interns, and a new government policy, announced last month, of "naming and shaming" employers in breach of minimum wage laws.

Other European countries are also adopting more stringent regulatory practices. In France, the Loi Cherpion, passed last year, strengthens the legal rights of interns — stipulating, among other things, that interns working for more than two months must receive the minimum wage. In Austria, employers are being offered wage subsidies to keep interns on. Last year's European Commission report suggested that a clear E.U.-wide definition of an intern, greater transparency in the internship recruitment process, and higher levels of compensation for interns would help protect young workers from exploitation.

Young people's skills and qualifications can no longer guarantee their entry into the job market, the commission report said, and regulating and monitoring internships will be key in creating equity of access and fair working conditions.

The commission's recommendations were undercut by the Parliament's unpaid internships, and the fact that its own interns pay less than the minimum wage in Belgium, its host country.

Still, Mr. Lyons said he was confident that regulatory reforms would continue — and spread — across Europe. "We are seeing a rising sense that, as our countries recover from the recession, unpaid internships should not become a structural part of the economy," he said.

A perplexed Morocco confronts gap between graduates' skills and jobs

RABAT, MOROCCO

Despite heavy spending, country sees a failure to adapt to changing needs

BY AIDA ALAMI

Morocco spends about a quarter of its state budget on education, a high proportion by any standards. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the average in developed industrial nations is about 13 percent.

Yet the results have not saved the country from some serious soul searching.

"It's sad to note that the state of education is worse now than it was 20 years ago," King Mohammed VI said in a televised speech on Aug. 20. "How is it that a segment of our youth cannot realize their legitimate aspirations at professional, physical and social levels?"

Thousands of unemployed graduates regularly protest in front of Morocco's Parliament in Rabat, demanding help from the government in finding work in a job market that has become increasingly hostile to new graduates. They say that their education has left them ill-equipped for the workplace. This month protesters blocking the car of Prime

Minister Abdelilah Benkirane were dispersed by riot police.

"Like all young Moroccans, I am worried about my future," said Zainab Bouslama, an engineering student at the University of Kenitra, who will graduate next year. "To find a job in Morocco, I would need money and a network, two things I don't have."

Ms. Bouslama is hoping to find work in the renewable energy sector, a growing industry in Morocco, but she is worried that the education she is getting, in a public system that she faults on quality, will not be enough to win her a place in a job market that she says is often skewed by bribery and favoritism.

"Students do not have an equal chance to succeed," she said, adding that many parents had gone into debt trying to ensure that their children have some chance for a future by paying for them to study in private schools. "The quality of education all depends on the parents' income."

Youth unemployment has risen in recent years above 20 percent and the country faces mounting difficulties in training students and finding jobs for its new graduates despite a big investment.

In all, Morocco spends about 5.4 percent of its gross domestic product on education and about one-third of the country's civil servants work in the sector.

There are about 6.5 million students at elementary and high schools and

600,000 enrolled in higher education.

The king has blamed his government — led since November 2011 by an Islamist party, Justice and Development — for a lack of progress in adapting education to the demands of the job market. In his speech he called for mandatory foreign language training in university degree courses and a new emphasis on vocational and technical training.

Morocco was a French protectorate until its independence in 1956. France built its school system and lessons were mostly in French. In the 1980s, a political decision to reclaim the Moroccan identity resulted in a change in the language of instruction, with elementary and high school classes shifting to Arabic. Most higher education programs, however, remained in French.

Many critics attribute high dropout rates to this language switch. University students, they say, are struggling to learn in a language they barely understand.

"One mistake was not progressively changing the courses to Arabic," said Rachid Mrabet, former director of the Institut Supérieur de Commerce et d'Administration des Entreprises, I.S.C.A.E., a business school in Casablanca.

"Before, teaching was bilingual, but there still isn't any courage to go back to that," Mr. Mrabet said, accusing politicians of reluctance to tackle a potentially sensitive issue: "There needs to be a strong and clear decision and con-



Protesting the lack of jobs in Rabat, Morocco. Youth joblessness is above 20 percent.

sensus on the language issue for reforms to move forward," he said.

Mr. Mrabet said other problems included an excessive focus in graduate training on quantity over quality; a failure to adapt courses to workplace opportunities; overcrowded lecture halls; student strikes; and school financing issues.

The deficiencies of the education sys-

tem and its failure to produce graduates qualified to work in the modern economy are holding back the country's development, said Samir Belfkih, a member of the pro-monarchy Authenticity and Modernity Party who sits on the Parliament's education commission.

"The result remains disappointing because Moroccan universities fail to properly meet the needs of the labor

market and the demands of foreign investors," he said. "The biggest project remains the revision of the state's policy in the field of scientific research, which is the supporting wall of innovation and the creation of wealth."

Instead of hiring graduates of the Moroccan public education system, recruiters tend to look for graduates educated abroad or the products of Moroccan private schools, said Naim Bentaleb, a recruiter with the agency Xpertize, based in Casablanca.

As is the situation everywhere else, the greatest challenge for the education system is to adapt to the changing demands of the economy, Mr. Bentaleb said.

"Call centers are the biggest employers in Morocco with about 50,000 jobs that generally require good skills in French," he said. "In some fields, like I.T., it is difficult to find people with the adequate training."

There are some bright spots: Engineering programs and medical schools are well regarded, Mr. Bentaleb said.

Still, Ms. Bouslama, the engineering student in Kenitra, said things had gotten worse, not better, over the years — from elementary school through to university: "If we speak about urgent reforms that the Moroccan education system needs, I would suggest starting with giving Moroccans equal chances to get an education of quality, without having to pay for it," she said.