

# Interreg staff exchange

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Recommendations and considerations  
November 2016



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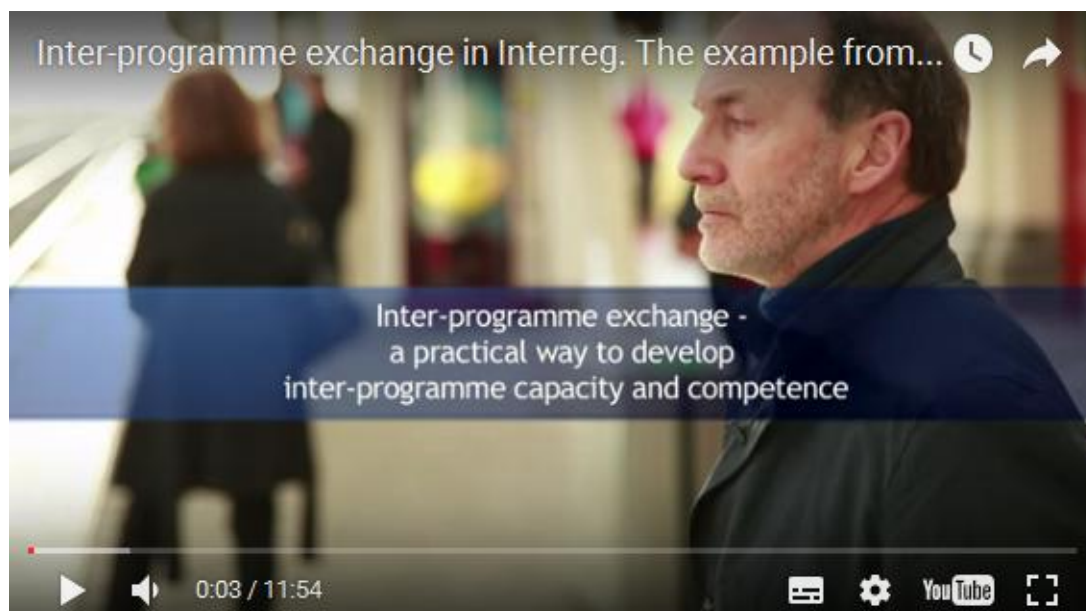
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# Introduction

Back in 2014, Interact started its activities in the field of inter-programme capacity and competence with a survey among Managing Authorities, Heads of Joint Technical Secretariats and secretariat staff members. The findings of this survey<sup>1</sup> laid the ground for various activities and events dealing with capacities and competences to work beyond one's own programme and possibilities for better cooperation, coordination and synergies between different funding sources within and beyond Interreg.

It quickly became obvious that the starting point is to know each other, to know with whom possibly to cooperate and coordinate. As this common knowledge seemed and seems to need some improvement, various options were discussed. And in this context, the idea of an Interreg staff exchange was brought up – inspired by Sus Bergmans from the Interreg Programme Flanders – The Netherlands. He had, on his own initiative, contacted another programme's Joint Technical Secretariat and organised to work there during one year for one day a month, combining work in two programmes. With this experience, Sus inspired the participants of an Interact workshop in April 2014 in Riga, Latvia – and hence Interact in working on this issue.<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> The study "Inter-programme capacity and competence in ETC/Interreg" (November 2014) is available at [http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field\\_fields\\_of\\_expertise\\_tid=32#400](http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field_fields_of_expertise_tid=32#400).



<sup>2</sup> This experience was later on documented in a short movie available at [http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field\\_fields\\_of\\_expertise\\_tid=32#o=library/video-inter-programme-exchange-interreg-example-interreg-flanders-netherlands-programme](http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field_fields_of_expertise_tid=32#o=library/video-inter-programme-exchange-interreg-example-interreg-flanders-netherlands-programme).

In 2016, Interact compiled a small working group consisting of programme representatives who had indicated their interest to work with this topic. During 2016, this group actively worked on the draft, via working meetings, exchanged e-mails and is proud to present its recommendations.

A big thank you goes to Ms Marcela Glodeanu from the Managing Authority of the Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria Programme, Mr Bram De Kort, Head of the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg Flanders – The Netherlands Programme, and Mr Thorsten Kohlisch, former Head of the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg South Baltic Programme, who devoted significant resources and contributed with their own and their programme experiences. A special thank you also to Jesica Papusa, former Communication Officer at the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Romania-Bulgaria Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013, and Sus Bergmans for their willingness to serve as 'living examples' of something which otherwise might appear on the first instance as pure theory and wishful thinking. Last but not least thank you also to the Alpine Space Programme for allowing us to use some of their experiences related to an internship in the programme.

To conclude, some words from Sus Bergmans from April 2015 when presenting his experiences at an Interact event should be quoted: **"Just do it!"**

#### **Some general remarks and suggestions for reading and using this publication:**

- This publication does not intend to present the one and only truth on how a staff exchange among Interreg Programmes can be organised. It is to provide an inspiration, to highlight the possibilities but also challenges. 
- The various models, templates, formulations etc. provided in this publication can be used, but don't have to be used. Feel free to adapt them to your concrete needs and circumstances.
- This paper is not a final, but a living document. Meaning, it has and will be tested against reality – and later on complemented with more and more real case experiences which hopefully those of you doing (or may already having done) such exchange will share with us. Any feedback is most welcome ([philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net](mailto:philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net)). 

## 1. The motivation for an Interreg Staff Exchange



### Why?

Skilled and motivated staff is the key to success in our business of European cooperation. Exchange can to a large extent help motivate staff and upgrade their skills and competences.

Staff exchange, in addition to inter-programme meetings and ad-hoc contacts, can be used as an effective HR management tool. By giving an employee the possibility to work in another programme structure for a limited period of time, apart from other cooperation formats such as regular exchange meetings between programme teams or the participation in Interact events, **you invest in the concrete staff member, but also in the programme.** Firstly, breaking up the box and allowing staff members to go, literally, beyond their own programme, will motivate staff members. Secondly, it will help staff members to develop a broader view and understanding of other funding programmes, policies, and the overall framework. This allows and makes them deliver a better job as it tackles the challenge of explaining to beneficiaries the differences between programmes, especially when programmes overlap geographically. In the best case such staff exchange even enables the staff members and the programme to coordinate and cooperate with other programmes creating synergies between both programmes.

### Opportunity or risk?

When reading the term staff exchange some questions or even doubts may come to your mind, especially if you are in charge of managing staff:

*We already have plenty of new tasks on our desks – and now I should even send some of my staff “away”? People may leave the programme after two or three years – why making such investment? Wouldn’t such exchange further increase the risk of “losing” good people?*

Of course, these (and other) questions are valid. However, before putting this publication aside, we invite you to switch the perspective and consider the idea of staff exchanges as an opportunity to actively tackle those risks and concerns, which exist anyway.

In the Interreg community, regular exchange meetings and interprogramme contacts are organized quite frequently, by programmes, DG Regio and/or Interact. Actual staff exchange however is rare. Two of our colleagues – Jesica Papusa from the CBC Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2007-2013 and Sus Bergmans from the Interreg Flanders – The Netherlands Programme – pioneered in an actual exchange: Jesica as intern in the Central Europe Programme for four months from January to March 2012 and Sus during one year for one day a month in the North West Europe Programme in 2013. We would like to present here their personal experiences. Through their working experiences in other programmes, Jesica and Sus became better at their jobs in their own programmes and are helping their own programmes up to this date to function better. Therefore, you will meet Jesica and Sus throughout the whole document.



Jesica Papusa

© Jesica Papusa



Sus Bergmans

© Interreg Flanders – The Netherlands Programme

## 2. Strategic considerations



Jesica and Sus, how did you get the idea to do such exchange/internship?  
Was it your own idea or your supervisor's? Why were you interested in doing it?



**Jesica:** "All started in August 2011, when on the Interact website was posted a vacancy announcement for the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013. Analysing the conditions, I decided to apply for the project officer position within the Joint Technical Secretariat of the programme. I was invited to the interview held on 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2011, at the premises of the Managing Authority of the Programme in Salzburg (Austria). Lacking background knowledge and experience in transnational cooperation were the reasons for not considering me the right person for this position. However, the Managing Authority proposed me to join a traineeship at the MA and/or JTS for a limited period of time that would enable me to gain some more experience in the field of transnational cooperation. The decision to join this traineeship was grounded by my professional goal to extend my knowledge and practice in European Territorial Cooperation programmes."



**Sus:** "I am and have always been eager to learn and more than reading books or following courses I prefer to have interesting experiences. Inter programme exchange is an excellent opportunity for that because you meet new people, you explore new cities and places, you can exercise other languages and on top you can learn a lot in a short period about the daily work of programmes. For me the exchange was part of my personal development plan, so it was my personal idea but heartily supported by my employer. This experiment was also new for my organisation, but my employer concluded it could stimulate other colleagues."

### 2.1. The 'Why' or: is there a win-win-win?

In order to successfully engage in staff exchange, and to organise a mode of staff exchange that benefits your own programme as well as the host programme, and of course the involved employee(s), it is important to first consider the following strategic considerations:

- Why, if so, could staff exchange be **beneficial to (y)our programme?**
- In which manner can staff exchange help us reach our strategic objectives?  
In what term and under what conditions could it help reach which objectives?



- Why, if so, could staff exchange be **beneficial to the involved employee's personal development**, his or her competences or motivation?
- In which manner can staff exchange help us reach the employees' personal development objectives? In what term and under what conditions can it help to reach which objectives?
- How can we use the skills developed by the individual staff member through the exchange afterwards for the benefit of the programme?
- Why, if so, could the exchange of our employee be **beneficial to a host programme**?
- In which manner could staff exchange help a host programme reach its strategic objectives? In what term and under what conditions can it help to reach which objectives?

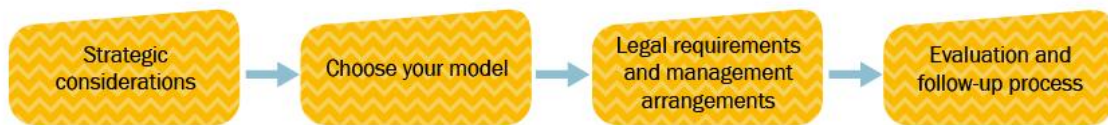
It is suggested, as a first step, that all of the above questions are answered separately by the employee interested in an exchange, as well as by his or her employer (programme management, Managing Authority or Head of Secretariat, or HR coordinator), apart from each other. Bringing these answers together will reveal whether a first match – that between the employee and the employer – is possible, and whether there's a case for a proposal to another programme. In other terms, matching these strategic considerations tells you whether all involved parties could benefit.

#### Like to be the host?

So far we focused on the initiative coming from your programme and its staff member, interested in an exchange to another programme. Of course the initiative could come from the other side, the potential host programme. Maybe your programme needs temporary staff or likes to tap into the experiences and competences of other, 'more mature' programmes. In this case, it is still important to think about what 'win-win-win' situation can be achieved. It is still (or even more!) important to formulate a 'good deal' to a fellow programme and its individual staff members.

#### Flowchart

In fact, this question about the 'why', these strategic considerations are the first step and we would like to take you down in this and the following sections the path to consider staff exchange as a management tool, a way to successfully organize staff exchange, to reap the benefits for the staff concerned as well as your programme respectively organisation, and to avoid any possible risks. First, we will sketch what strategic considerations should be made, before considering (specific types of) exchange. We will present some models for exchange, and the legal requirements and practical management arrangements that could accompany their implementation. Last but not least, we will look at the follow-up and evaluation process, needed to optimize the benefits of any exchange activity.



## 2.2. What do we wish?

Secondly, and only if there seems to be a win-win(-win) for all parties involved, it can be fruitful to go 'in-depth', as employer and employee. How can the benefits of an exchange be maximized? What purpose(s) would an exchange have for us? And what does this mean in relation to the following aspects:

- the global scope of the exchange
- the (sort of) competences the employee should be able to develop (behavioural, expertise, language, ...) and the (kind of) tasks in which the employee should ideally be involved at the host programme.
- the 'depth' of the exchange (full exchange, long-term and long distance, or nearby, part-time, see *Chapter 3 'Choose your model'*)
- reciprocity or 'one-way' exchange (is it sufficient that the employee learns, or do we seek an actual interaction between programmes, through the exchange?)

## 2.3. The no-go area

This in-depth talk should not only deal with what we *wish*, of course. It is just as important to discuss what is *possible*, and what isn't. At an early stage, the employer and staff member should be straightforward about what is feasible. How long, for approximately how many days or during what kind of period could the programme miss its employee? What kind of travelling/commuting would the employee be willing to do (depending on the distance between "old" and "new" office)? What kind of information exchange would be needed? Would the employer need formal or informal guarantees, that the employee does not leave her or his programme before a certain time after this skill development? In other words, what would be the obstacles to finalise a match between the staff member and the management's needs and wishes?

## 2.4. Where to go?

If the employer and the staff member are on the same page, it is time to look out for a host programme. Together, you think of how to choose the right programme(s), with which an exchange would be fruitful. In this process, the possible benefits that the exchange could have for the host programme should not be forgotten.

Depending on the outcome of the above considerations, the answers to the following questions will be found:

- Should we approach programmes that are similar or (very) different to our own programme? Is there a minimum of required overlap? Are we seeking for similarities (or differences) in maturity, thematic focus (e.g. innovation, transport, environment, etc.), strategic issues (e.g. private partners as target beneficiaries, etc.), level of expertise, working languages, ...?
- At which stage in the programming period would an exchange be beneficial to us? Which programmes are approaching this stage?
- Should we focus on one topic (e.g. quality assessments, progress monitoring, state aid management, etc.), or on a range of topics? Which topics/tasks are interesting to us, realistic and suitable for the envisaged exchange?
- Which programmes could benefit from what we have to offer? What experiences or expertise does our staff member have? Could reciprocal information exchange meetings be beneficial to both programmes, already during the exchange?

#### An idea to consider

At this stage, contacting Interact or participating in an Interact event can be useful, as Interact has an overview of all Interreg programmes and can help searching for relevant “matchmaking information” such as programme priorities, strategic issues (e.g. private partner involvement), programme/working language, contact information, and so on.

Jesica and Sus, what were your first steps and what did you do (in practical terms) to make it happen?



**Jesica:** *"I was very lucky in this step, everybody supported me. In Romania, the employee organisation helped me to suspend the labour contract during the traineeship and the Managing Authority of the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013 found the most suitable arrangement for the traineeship. The support of the MA was valuable, they helped me in every aspects including finding a place to stay in Salzburg. After all these preparations, starting with January 2012 until the end of March 2012, I was involved in the activity of the MA/JTS."*



**Sus:** *"The first step was to explore the preparedness of the host programme Interreg North West Europe. I contacted the director of this programme to explain my plan. He was open for it, but said he should consult his team. This was a very wise reaction because without the cooperation of the whole staff it is very difficult to make an exchange successful. After the positive reaction from their side I discussed with my boss and started to make concrete arrangements about the content of the exchange, periodicity of visits and method of participation. To conclude, a formal agreement was signed by both host and employers organisations about commitments, assurance, expenses, confidentiality and so on."*

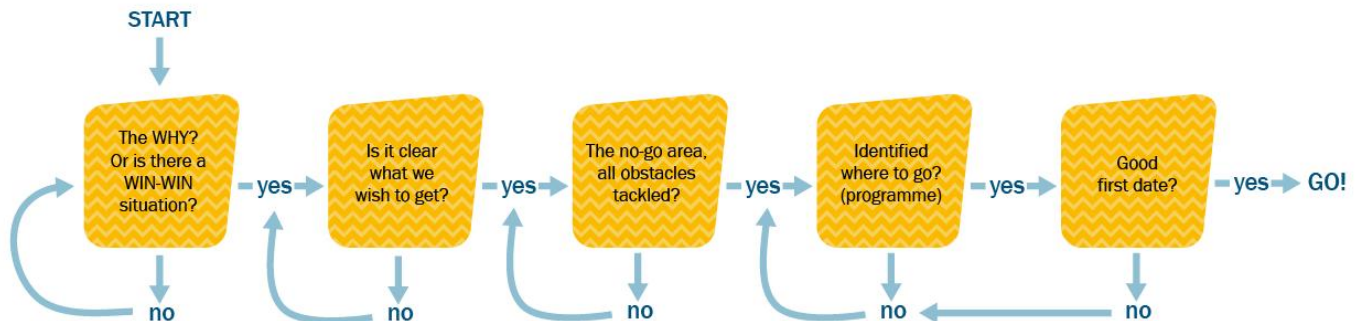
## 2.5. The first date

As a result from the above steps, your programme could contact a few programmes in order to find out whether a match is possible. At this moment, some of the earlier steps need to be repeated with the colleagues from the potential host programme:

- What kind of 'win' can be in it for them?
- What purpose is there for them, what scope and depth results from that?
- Which obstacles exist for the potential host programme? Is the host programme enthusiastic to invest time in the exchange, or not?

If your as well as the host programme are most interested in a reciprocal exchange (e.g. in both directions), then of course both programmes as well as both involved staff members need to consider the strategic choices, described here above.

To summarise:



### The generic approach

In this section we have sketched the route to follow in case one or several staff members are actually actively expressing enthusiasm about exchange with another programme. It is, however, possible that the management is enthusiastic about exchange, although no one in the workforce already actively expressed his or her ambitions. In that case, it can be helpful to first make some strategic considerations on the management level, before you ask your staff about their interests. Not all positions can be vacant for too long, and you possibly don't want to open staff exchange possibilities to every position. So, if staff exchange is something you wish to encourage as a generic HR instrument, ask yourself all of the above strategic questions, as well as, for example:

- To whom should it be open, both structure (only Joint Secretariat, or also Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority) and position wise?
- What do I want people to learn from this experience, and how should their experience benefit the rest of the programme?
- What motivation should staff members have to be eligible for exchange?
- How to encourage my staff?

Only if these first contacts with the possible host programme prove there's enthusiasm amongst all parties concerned, is it worthwhile to work on a model for the exchange and all the practicalities, covered in the following sections.



### 3. Choose your model

Jesica and Sus, what did you concretely do, worked on during your exchange?



**Jesica:** "At that moment, the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013 was in an interesting phase: a strategic project had been launched to develop an Alpine Space Strategy, also a new call for proposals and several projects were on-going, monitored by the programme bodies. In this context, my activity was integrated in the daily work of the programme management. Therefore, the main task was to support the Managing Authority, namely: support in the management of the strategic project "Strategy development for the Alpine Space", especially as regards the collection and evaluation of strategic documents relevant for the co-operation area, internal and external communication, preparation and post-processing of meetings of the "task force" and the "stakeholder dialogues" and co-ordination of activities of the project members, support in the general administrative tasks of the Managing Authority related to the management of the programme and assistance to the Joint Technical Secretariat of the programme."



**Sus:** "I was involved in a variety of processes. On project level I participated in an information meeting on communication rules for new lead partners, but I was also involved in the assessment of proposals. Very exciting and instructive. I studied reporting rules and templates and the way the programme realises the monitoring of projects. I also had the opportunity to be part of processes on programme level as the planning group preparing the cooperation programme for the next Interreg period."

There are different models for a staff exchange – different in many ways and with growing complexity. It is totally up to you to choose the model that fits you best or to create your own model. When choosing the model, we strongly recommend to take into consideration your individual goals set by yourself under *Chapter 2 'Strategic consideration'*.

In particular, the following issues should be taken into consideration when choosing/designing the exchange model:

1. My objectives (what do I want to receive)
2. The time frame for exchange – short/long duration
3. The possibilities/resources of the host programme to host, assist and supervise/guide the employee



4. The source of the financial resources (the technical assistance budget of your or of the host programme)
5. Legal issues related to the staff exchange
6. Travel and accommodation arrangements

When creating your own model, you may use/mix features of the below predefined models, according to your needs, or you can design a new model from the beginning, totally different from the predefined ones.

### 3.1. Possible models

#### Model 1:

##### **Job shadowing**

- Job-shadowing experiences are between one and three weeks in length. The length of the experience depends on the participant's time availability (agreed upon between the participant and their manager and/or supervisor) and on the host programme's availability.
- Also, depending on both parties involved, it can be decided to fragment the duration: e.g. 1 week/month. Hereby, the absence of the person will not have a significant impact on his/her programme.
- The person involved has the opportunity to observe the activity of one person within the host programme or an entire process (e.g. evaluation process, monitoring process etc.).

#### Model 2:

##### **Full exchange, day-to-day work**

- The person shall be involved in day to day work within a unit that fits his/her competences and/or corresponds to his/her area of interest: The right person in the right place.
- The activities of the person shall be coordinated by the person responsible for the respective unit of the host programme (see Chapter 4 *Legal requirements and practical management arrangements*).
- The participants can decide the length of the exchange. Also, depending on both parties involved, it can be decided to fragment the duration: e.g. 1 week/month. Hereby, the absence of the person will not have a significant impact on his/her programme.
- This model can involve a long period of time up to 6 months (preferably 4-6 months).

### Model 3:

#### **Direct job swaps**

- Joint Secretariat, Managing Authority and National Authority staff can swap places, within the same programme, or between programmes. The objective of the job-swapping can enhance respect and build trust between staff of the structures of the same programme.
- This model is recommended for structures of the same programme (it is quite difficult to implement this model between two programmes, unless they are close to each other/they have a common element – e.g. they have a common partner, or the same head of Managing Authority, same National Authority, their Joint Secretariats are connected etc.).
- The swap can also be made between different positions (top level manager can work as a middle manager within other structure).

### Model 4:

#### **Targeted based exchanges**

- A programme wants to acquire/transfer know how/improve competences in a certain field.
- Similar positions/job descriptions - e.g. evaluator to evaluator, financial officer to financial officer etc.
- The duration of such target based exchange very much depends on the concrete target set, e.g. how long it would take to acquire/transfer the respective know how in a certain field.



#### Model 5:

##### **Back filling staff positions**

- In this case, the host programme is the initiator of this model. In emergency situations, the programme can search for a person to fill in a short term position. For example: for assessing the applications submitted within a call.
- The programme does not have enough staff for a certain task limited in time, or a temporary vacancy appeared.
- Timewise, this model is limited to the duration of the vacancy. Also 'teleworking' (full time exchange, though not full time in the host programme's offices, but using email, video-conferencing...) can be used by the programmes (=working for the host, but avoiding (too much) practical problems and costs).
- The host programme shall cover all the costs related to this process (salaries, insurance, accommodation, travel etc.) as it is the one using the exchange to cover a gap.

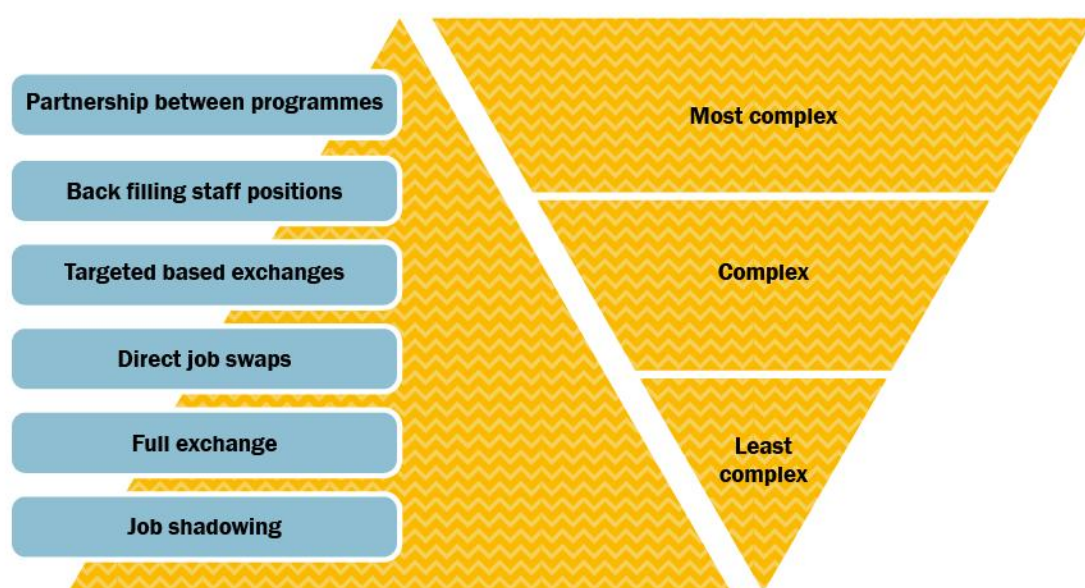
#### Model 6:

##### **Partnership between programmes**

- This model is the paramount of staff exchange and it is developed by two or more programmes. It is a two-steps model and includes a mix of models. For example:
  - The first step may include a simple model like a job shadowing. Within this step the programmes get to know each other, discover each other and identify further details for designing the next step.
  - The second step involves a more complex model like full exchange/-day-to-day work or job swap.
- A partnership between the programmes can be set up, including clear references to steps involved. Also, this model can take into consideration model 5 *Back filling staff positions* as a method to ensure the human resources needed (a programme may provide staff for a certain position/activity to another programme in need).
- The partnership/the model can be continuous or limited in time.
- This model involves reciprocity, thus the staff of each programme may be exchanged at the same time or in different periods of time, depending on the availability of human resources.
- It involves more than one person and thus the impact on the programmes is higher than when using a simple model.
- This model involves a high volume of resources (human, time and money).

## The pyramid of models and complexity

The above models somewhat present an evolution from a simple job shadowing to a more permanent and formalised partnership between programmes. This also translates into a growing level of complexity and is up to you to choose the model and its level of complexity that suits you best and that can be implemented with the available resources. Depending on their complexity, the models can be arranged as follows:



### 3.2. General considerations regarding the models

The time frames presented is only indicative. The length of the exchange shall be decided by all parties involved in the process, depending on their needs and possibilities. When deciding on the length of the model, you may consider the possibility of fragmenting the dedicated timeframe (e.g. 1 week per month, 1 day per week, 1 day per month.). This feature is recommended especially for above models 1 and 3 as they imply a longer period of time. E.g. a staff member can work at the host programme for a small amount of his/her time (for example one day a month), mostly observing the activities of one person or a process or being involved in the day to day work. Thus, the staff member continues to fulfil his/her tasks at home, at some moments working from the host programme's office. However, this feature seems possible between neighbouring programmes, to avoid frequent long distance travelling or commuting. The exchanged staff member can continuously give feedback to his/her own programme, as well as vice versa. When deciding on using this feature, we strongly recommend to consider your objectives.

All models have advantages and disadvantages which should be taken into consideration when deciding on a model. For example, the fragmentation of the timeframe of a model can be useful in terms of legal requirements for supporting the costs required. Thus, for a short traveling period (from 1 day to a week) the costs can be financed under the *travel and accommodation* budget line, without other further legal implications of a longer stay.

**General advantages:**

- Possibility to be involved in the day-to-day work (get in touch with the real working culture of other programme).
- Meeting new people, identifying new solutions to common problems.
- Both programmes/persons involved get the benefit of new ideas and fresh insight.
- Building inter-programme capacity and competence for cooperation and coordination with other funding sources.

**General disadvantages:**

- Depending on the length of the process, the absence of the person may be hard to cover by his/her programme. If the fragmentation feature is considered, the impact of the absence may be diminished.
- Depending on the length of the process, the best solutions for covering the costs need to be identified (please see *Chapter 4 'Legal requirements and practical management arrangements'*), according to the programme/national rules applicable.



## 4. Legal requirements and practical arrangements

The objectives have been set, the model has been chosen. But how to get started? Independent from your preferred model, the following general recommendations may help you to turn theory into practice. To keep language and structure simple, the recommendations have been formulated from the perspective of an employee ready to embark on a staff exchange. Of course, as explained in *Chapter 2*, the HR department, a programme manager or a team coordinator may also take the lead for an exchange initiative. In these cases, the perspective of the recommendations should be switched accordingly.

As the first and foremost principle, all practical management arrangements should follow the mantra “the more concrete, the better”. Reaching from the participating employee and her/his supervisor(s) to the responsible staff at the host programme, all relevant parties should actively participate in the preparatory works, thus ensuring common understanding on the necessary arrangements, tasks and expectations.

Of course, following the principle of “situational leadership”, the flexibility required to organise and implement an exchange should not be “killed” through overregulation. At the same time, looking at the other extreme, the employee participating in an exchange should not be “left alone” when standing in the door of the host programme.

Undoubtedly, different approaches can be pursued to agree on the practical management arrangements for the planned exchange (communication via email and phone, pre-meetings, etc.). In any case, however, it is recommended to fix the main provisions in writing, for instance in a jointly developed and agreed implementation plan which may, inter alia, cover the aspects of responsibilities, expectations, rules and team involvement.

Before turning towards the practical management arrangements for the envisaged staff exchange, however, the participating programmes and employees should check the legal preconditions to be fulfilled in order to get the planned exchange off the ground.<sup>3</sup>

### 4.1. Check the legal requirements – which rules and conditions apply?

After you have designed and agreed on the model that suits you best, legal arrangements must be taken into consideration. Among others, depending on your status in the European Union (EU member, non-EU member) and the chosen model, the participating employee needs to reflect upon the following aspects:

- Do I need a visa for entering /for staying a certain period of time in the EU or Schengen area (non-EU member)?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> To help you get started, have a look at the checklist (legal requirements and practical management arrangements) in *Annex 1*.

<sup>4</sup> Check the conditions of entering/staying on EU territories and the Schengen Area for instance at <http://www.schengenvisa.info.com/who-needs-schengen-visa/>.

- Do I need a working permit (depending on the chosen model)?<sup>5</sup>
- Who is supporting the costs generated by the staff exchange? Depending on the chosen model, the costs can be supported either by your programme or by the hosting one. If deemed necessary, the parties may decide to determine the legal and financial modalities for the exchange in a written agreement.
- Depending on the chosen model, the costs related to the following aspects should be considered: health insurance, social charges, salary, accommodation, travel, etc. As a starting point for her/his investigations, the employee interested to participate in an exchange may analyse the modalities for an internship at her/his own programme and check them against the requirements set by the host programme.

For example Jesica had concluded a free service contract with the Land Salzburg as the hosting organisation of the Alpine Space Programme's Joint Secretariat for her internship in Salzburg. This contract consisted of seven paragraphs and covered the following topics:

**§1 Object of the contract**, covering i.a.

- Tasks/activities to be carried out
- Providing insight into the working principles of the programme bodies
- Participation in trainings organised by the programme for the staff members
- Providing a short written report about the experiences gained

**§2 Duration of the contract**, including notice

**§3 Remuneration**, covering i.a.

- Remuneration (amount)
- Travel costs to/from Salzburg at beginning/end of internship
- Travel costs during internship

**§4 Social insurance/tax**, covering i.a.

- Insurance coverage
- Tax duty

**§5 Secondary employment**

**§6 Obligation to confidentiality and other liabilities of the contractor**, covering i.a.

- Confidentiality during internship
- Confidentiality after internship including duty to return all documents

**§7 Written form/Rules of interpretation/Court of jurisdiction**

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<sup>5</sup> [http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/work-abroad/work-permits/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/work-abroad/work-permits/index_en.htm)



#### 4.2. Agree on responsibilities – who is doing what?

As the first practical step to get started, the names, contact details, roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, i.e. the participating employee, her/his supervisor(s) “at home” and her/his supervisor/mentor at the host programme, should be clearly defined and communicated.

In this context, clear arrangements concerning the supervision of the employee at the host programme should be made between the cooperating parties (regular supervision or rather mentoring/coaching?, scope of participation in team meetings?, special briefings/training sessions for the new temporary employee?, etc.).

Consequently, such agreement can ensure the allocation of sufficient staff resources at the host programme, thus making sure that the employee participating in the exchange will be welcomed and supported at his/her new temporary work place.

Depending on the chosen model, the agreement on responsibilities may also include the establishment of direct communication and cooperation channels between the employee’s supervisors/mentors at his/her and the host programme, hence allowing for direct exchanges on the employee’s tasks and performance, her/his role in the new team, etc.

Depending on the official languages applied by his/her and the host programme, the agreement may furthermore include provisions on the language(s) to be used by the parties directly/indirectly involved in the exchange.

#### 4.3. Define an implementation schedule – how to bring your expectations to life?

Based on the strategic objectives, overall purpose and responsibilities set for the exchange, all parties should define, share and openly discuss their expectations prior to the start of the exchange. In fact, besides contributing to the “win-win-win” character of the exchange, the joint definition of expectations and their operationalisation through an implementation schedule can help all parties to set the priorities and main work fields for the exchange, specify the employee’s scope of tasks and define possible follow-up activities within and between the cooperating programmes.

In particular, the implementation schedule should specify the day-to-day support to be given by the host programme (regular meetings? training/introductory sessions?, etc.), the programme activities in which the employee should participate (programme events?, consultations for applicants?, etc.) as well as the employee’s involvement in the host team and her/his integration in the programme structure (official replacement of another colleague or rather internal role?, own email address?, appointment as official contact for stakeholders/beneficiaries?, etc.).

Alltogether, the implementation schedule can thus serve as an overall guidance for the participating employee as well as her/his supervisors. Of course, the document should allow for flexibility, leaving the possibility for the employee to take over ad-hoc tasks, participate in new activities and/or get insights into work fields which had not been agreed initially.

#### 4.4. Set the rules – how to keep the exchange on track?

Working “abroad” requires clear rules and close communication. Among others, the employee participating in an exchange should thus agree with her/his supervisors on the following aspects before embarking on the envisaged exchange:

- clear rules for the substitution of her/his regular tasks “at home”;
- clear agreement concerning the employee’s work time and other work obligations at the host programme;
- her/his reporting duties during the exchange.

#### 4.5. Involve your teams – how to get the most out of an exchange for both programmes?

Beyond organising the substitution of the employee’s regular tasks during her/his time “abroad”, the employee participating in an exchange is highly encouraged to closely involve her/his team in the exchange exercise. To be agreed with her/his supervisor beforehand, regular feedback rounds and/or training sessions during and after the exchange can help to share the gained experience with all members of the team, thus ensuring broad dissemination and the involvement of all colleagues in the exercise. Such activities may also help to strengthen the support and “backing” for a staff exchange internally, avoiding the impression that the participating employee “will have some nice time abroad while others are doing the work for her/him”.

Similarly, the participating employee may provide the host team with insights into her/his programme, e.g. through presentations and/or lectures at dedicated meetings.

In this context, it is recommended to already agree on potential team involvement activities during the preparatory phase and to fix them in the proposed implementation schedule (see above *point 4.3.*).

#### 4.6. Follow up – take your exchange to the next level!

Beyond the organisation of exchanges for individual staff members, the staff exchanges may also lead to more strategic cooperation between both programmes in the future. Indeed, staff exchanges may prepare the ground for long-term partnerships between two (or more) programmes, thus ensuring the sustainability of and the capitalisation on the invested resources.

Among others, such partnerships could set the frame for regular cross-programme meetings between both teams, the establishment of thematic partnerships, the implementation of joint communication/dissemination activities and/or joint HR management tools such as regular back filling of staff, job shadowing and/or job swaps (see model 6 above at *Chapter 3 ‘Choose your model’*).

In order to identify, specify and validate the common denominators for future cross-programme cooperation, the staff exchange should thus be followed-up by a thorough reflection and evaluation process.

## 5. Evaluation



Jesica and Sus, were your expectations fulfilled? Did something unexpected happen?



**Jesica:** *"All my expectations were met; my experience in the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 helped me to understand the mechanism of the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013 and to be actively involved in its management. Nevertheless, there were also aspects that needed clarifications but everything was fluent due to the excellent and experienced team from which I have learnt many new things: colleagues taught me about the management of the programme and shared their knowledge with me."*



**Sus:** *"I appreciated a lot the hospitality of the North West Europe staff and their preparedness to share insights and experiences. The exchange taught me a lot about my own practice in my programme Interreg Flanders – The Netherlands. It was as if a mirror was held up, it helped me to reflect. In the same time I collected many practical materials (procedures, templates, monitoring schemes ...) which were useful materials to look critically at own programme rules and auxiliaries in the preparation of Interreg V."*

### Introduction and general remarks

The aim of this chapter is to describe ways and tools<sup>6</sup> how to ensure that the exchange of an individual staff member in another programme does not only benefit this single person. But that the benefit actually goes beyond the concrete person and creates an added-value, a win-win-win situation for the individual staff member as well as for his/her and the host programme.

It should be made clear that follow-up and evaluation in the meaning of this chapter is not about assessing the work performance of the individual staff member having done the staff exchange. Rather the focus should be on analysing what the exchange has brought to his/her and the host programme and the individual staff member in terms of skills development (from an organisational and an individual point of view) – and which impact it has on the personal and organisational work (processes). It is about lessons learnt, spreading these among the whole team/structure to make this individual exchange of one person beneficial for the whole programme (team).

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<sup>6</sup> To help you evaluating the conducted staff exchange, please have a look at the various evaluation templates in *Annexes 2 to 4*.



At the same time, it has to be noted that in the moment of publishing these recommendations and considerations, there were only a few concrete cases where a staff exchange had been conducted (you have met Jesica and Sus by now already several times), hence this publication at the moment too large extent being theory. Follow-up and evaluation of conducted staff exchanges therefore will be used to further improve and complement this publication with real life experiences. You will find below more about how Interact intends to use your evaluations and feedback for this purpose (*'Overall quality assurance of this publication'*).

### Evaluation approaches and levels of evaluation

It is important to approach evaluation from different perspectives. It is not only the individual staff member who did an exchange who should say if he/she liked it or not. But at the same time the staff exchange should also be evaluated by his/her and also the host programme. As each of the three in the best case benefits from the staff exchange, but each in a totally different way, it is important to tailormake the evaluation process and questions for each of the three to satisfy their different needs. It is though most probably the management level of both involved programmes which is in charge to ensure that a proper evaluation and follow-up of its findings is undertaken. At the same time, more or less everyone will be involved in the evaluation itself as the below tables will show. This way, an individual staff exchange becomes an overall learning process:

- For the **individual staff member** to find out if he/she is personally satisfied with his/her stay in the other programme, if he/she gained new competences and benefitted from the exchange personally;
- For the **his/her own programme** to find out if it was worth temporarily 'loosing' a staff member (=human resources) and what the programme gained from sending a staff member to another programme;
- For the **host programme** to find out if the advantage of having (to integrate) temporarily an 'outsider' overweighs the disadvantages/disruptions to 'normal life' and what concretely the host programme learnt, benefitted from the exchange/stay.
- For **both programmes** together addressing the question whether the implemented staff exchange has prepared the ground for closer cooperation and synergies between the two programmes (e.g. thematic partnerships, mirror projects, joint communication/dissemination activities, etc.).

These three questions however will only measure the individual satisfaction of the staff member and both involved programmes. To put these three perspectives into relation and to see their interdependance, there need to be included five other perspectives respectively levels of evaluation – showing the development from personal satisfaction to insitutional/organisational 'return on investment':



The combination of the perspectives of a) the involved person/programmes and b) the five levels of evaluation, developing from personal satisfaction to 'return on investment', results in the below table and possible questions to be answered when assessing the conducted staff exchange. It should be underlined that these questions are neither mandatory nor exhaustive. Please take these (and the additional evaluation questions in *Annexes 2-4*) – like all the other models, formulations etc. – as suggestions and inspiration to create your own 'evaluation questionnaire' fitting to your needs.

### Satisfaction with staff exchange

(Are you happy with having done such exchange, having sent your staff member resp. having received a staff member?)

Individual staff member	Own programme	Host programme
Did you enjoy the training?	What is the overall feeling on the management level and on the staff (colleagues) level about the staff exchange done by your colleague?	What is the overall feeling on the management level and on the staff (colleagues) level about an external person temporarily having joined the team?
Was it an appropriate use of your time?	Did you feel that one colleague was missing temporarily (time resources, work load)?	Did you feel the temporary colleague providing additional time resources (working time) or did it actually take time away from you?
Was it worth it for you personally?	Was this time loss/gain worth it for you as programme?	Was this time loss/gain for you as hosting programme worth it?
Would you do it again?	Would you send someone again?	Would you host someone again?
When it comes to arrangements, practicalities, what would you do resp. suggest to do differently next time?	When it comes to arrangements, practicalities, what would you do differently next time?	When it comes to arrangements, practicalities, what would you do differently next time?

### Practical steps & tools:

- All three to draft and share beforehand their expectations towards the staff exchange to have a common understanding of each other's expectations.
- Provide the staff member with a mentor in the host programme to prepare, guide and follow up throughout the stay.

**Learning / Knowledge acquisition**

(What specifically have you learned from the staff exchange, either personally or as a programme?)

Individual staff member	Own programme	Host programme
What concretely have you learned through the exchange for yourself?	What are the concrete lessons learnt for your programme from the exchange?	What concretely has your programme learnt from having temporarily an external person in the team?
Did the exchange/stay help to identify areas/topics in which further training/learning for me as individual staff member would be necessary/useful?	Did the exchange/stay help to identify areas/topics in which further training/learning for the other staff would be useful/necessary?	

**Practical steps & tools:**

- Compile an evaluation report with lessons learnt for you personally, your programme, the host programme and share it with others.
- Organise soon after return a training session for the whole team with the staff member who did exchange reporting on lessons learnt (his/her own findings from the evaluation report).
- Management level to consider and discuss findings of the staff member's evaluation report (with staff member).

**Application of new knowledge**

(Are you applying what you have learned either personally or as programme? Which behaviour resp. processes have you or will you change?)

Individual staff member	Own programme	Host programme
What will I do differently in my work from now on?	What could/should we do differently on the programme level (processes, approaches, concrete documents etc.)?	
If I will not change anything, why?	If we will not change anything, why?	

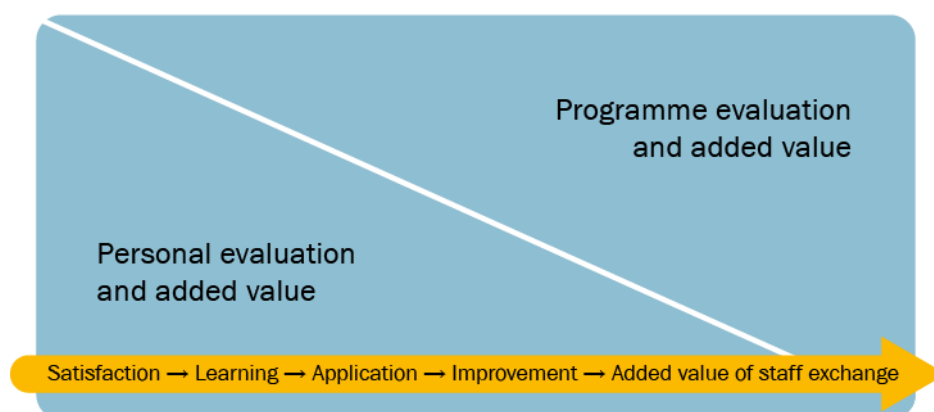
**Practical steps & tools:**

Both own and host programmes, consider and discuss findings in staff member's evaluation report on the management level / within team / between programme authorities/bodies in view of possible future exchanges and next steps.

Measurable improvement of programme implementation (processes) (What has concretely changed to the better in programme implementation, processes etc.?)		
Individual staff member	Own programme	Host programme
N/A for personal level	What has concretely changed to the better in programme implementation, processes etc.?	
<b>Practical steps &amp; tools:</b> Assessment on management level (could be part of operational/ performance evaluation)		

Added value of staff exchange ("return on investment") (How would you describe the concrete benefit/added value of the staff exchange of a single staff member for your programme?)		
Individual staff member	Own programme	Host programme
N/A for personal level	Has it paid off to loose human resources temporarily and having had possibly additional costs?	Has it paid off to have additional human resources temporarily vs. the resources required for hosting an external staff member?

As said, the above reflects how the personal and the institutional (programme) level are interconnected, or respectively the development of the five levels of evaluation from the personal to the institutional aspects/added value – illustrated by the following graph:



## Tools and practical support

To practically facilitate the evaluation of the staff exchange both by the individual staff member as well as the participating programmes, this publication provides different evaluation templates (Annexes 2-4). These templates are just a suggestion covering all possible questions and you can of course adapt them to your needs. So the final question would be: Was it worth it? Let's see what Jesica and Sus say about it....

### Jesica and Sus, what were the main challenges and main lessons learnt?

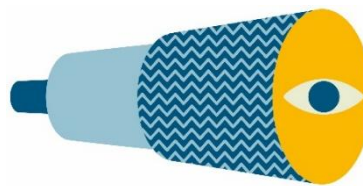
**Jesica:** *"Through this traineeship I had the awesome privilege to work with a great team and the opportunity to work with them has been invaluable. The official language of the programme was English, therefore, no difficulties in communication were noticed during the traineeship. Moreover, with their help I was introduced to German language; when I arrived in Austria I was capable only to salute in German and I left with a graduate diploma for beginners in German language. Their financial support was also valuable; the MA found a way to exceptionally reimburse my travel costs (the journey to Salzburg at the beginning of the internship and the travel back to Romania after the end of the internship) and the one related to the participation at the German language course.*

*What I have learnt is that the experience of the participating states in accessing EU funds leads to a continuous improvement of the programmes, an effective and reliable informational system will facilitate the access to all the relevant information regarding the programme and the funded projects and most important, the fact that bureaucracy may threaten the programme implementation."*

**Sus:** *"Some of the basics for a successful exchange are language and openness of the host team to accept an outsider in their work. For me personal my rather limited knowledge of English was a small barrier to put in more profoundly my own experience and to make the experiment still more valuable for both sides. Important too is the support of your employer. In my case both the Province Flemish Brabant (my employer) and the Interreg Flanders-The Netherlands Secretariat (to this JS I'm seconded) were open to my experience, even more they encouraged me and gave me all support also after the exchange period to make my insights useful for the home teams.*

*In my opinion inter-programme exchange is advisable for every member of a JS because it offers so many opportunities to learn, to establish new relationships, to think about more effective use of European funds and similarly important: to enjoy your job more."*

## 6. Follow-up and vision



These recommendations and considerations are not to present the one and only solution for a staff exchange. Rather they provide you with food for inspiration and a toolbox for you to design your own, suitable staff exchange. But behind it all there is a vision, an idea which goes beyond the pure one-time staff exchange. To spend some time in another programme is not an aim in itself. But rather it should enable the involved individuals but also involved programmes (structures) to be better equipped for a closer cooperation and coordination with other funding sources (within and beyond Interreg).

Hence there is the vision of a more structured cooperation between programmes. If one wants to go very far, one could even consider and talk about a permanent, institutionalised programme partnership respectively a formalised continuous exchange on programme level. This vision has already been reflected in the previous chapters, but should be taken up on its own here at the end of this publication.

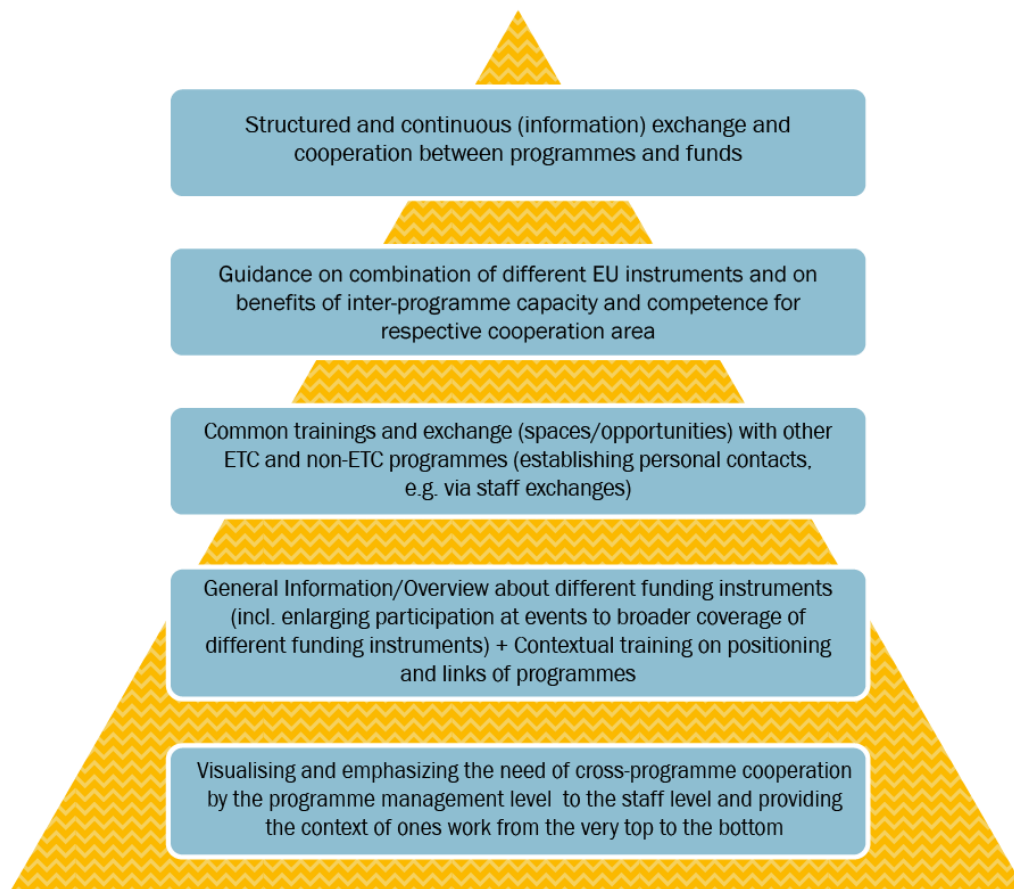
This vision implies various questions and aspects such as:

- What about setting up a routine for every new employee to do an exchange/internship?
- Will you and if, how will you encourage your staff members to do such staff exchange?
- How to incorporate it into your HR and overall office planning and management?
- To which extent can this lead to new cross-programme activities and spin-off effects?

Putting this vision into the bigger context of inter-programme capacity and competence, a reference to the below pyramid could be helpful. This pyramid is a summary of the Interact study (2014)<sup>7</sup> depicting the different levels of inter-programme capacity and competence (development) – where such structured exchange/cooperation has been depicted at the highest level. Having said this, this should not discourage you, not make you feel the way from the lowest to the uppermost level being too hard. Start slowly, with small steps... but start and 'just do it' – to quote once again Sus Bergmans when presenting his experience with his staff exchange at an Interact event in April 2015.

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<sup>7</sup> Interact study "Inter-programme Capacity and Competence in ETC/Interreg" (2014), page 97, [http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field\\_fields\\_of\\_expertise\\_tid=32#400](http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field_fields_of_expertise_tid=32#400).



#### Overall quality assurance of this publication:

It is very important for Interact to keep track on programmes taking this guide as an inspiration and doing a staff exchange in one way or another. It is important to get your feedback (using *Annex 5*) both when it comes to the staff exchange as such, but also and especially with this publication. This testing against reality can provide valuable feedback of which models, practices, tools described here do work out in reality and which need improvement. Practical experiences with staff exchange also can serve as best practices and real case examples which can be included as personal stories and experiences in the future.

Interact will therefore closely follow further developments and concrete examples and experiences in this field. But at the same time, it is also very important that those programmes doing a staff exchange provide information and feedback to Interact. For this purpose, Interact has developed a feedback template (*Annex 5*). We would very much appreciate if you could fill in and return this template to [philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net](mailto:philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net) – thank you very much in advance!

*NB! All annexes are available online in Interact's online library  
(for direct access from the pdf-version of this publication [please click here](#)).*

## Annex 1 – Checklist for getting started

A. Legal requirements – which rules and conditions apply?		
	Yes	No
Do I need a visa for entering /for staying a certain period of time in the EU or Schengen area <sup>8</sup> ?		
Do I need a working permit <sup>9</sup> ?		
Have arrangements been found for:		
Health and social insurance?		
Remuneration?		
Travel and accommodation costs?		
Others?		
Should a legal agreement on the legal and financial modalities be signed between the sending and receiving programmes?		

B. Responsibilities – who is doing what?		
	Yes	No
Have the relevant decision-makers at the own and the host programme confirmed their support for the planned exchange?		
Have appointments been made by the own and the host programme to ensure the administration, monitoring and supervision of the envisaged exchange? (involvement of office managers, appointment of a supervisor/mentor at the receiving programme, involvement of programme managers, etc.)?		
Have the respective names and contact details been shared among all parties?		
Have the roles and responsibilities – including arrangements for the day-to-day supervision/ mentoring of the employee at the receiving programme – been agreed and confirmed?		
Have arrangements for direct communication between the employee's direct supervisors at the own and the host programme been made (if deemed appropriate)?		
Have provisions for the working language during the exchange been found (if applicable)?		

<sup>8</sup> Check the conditions of entering/staying on EU territories and the Schengen Area for instance at <http://www.schengenvisainfo.com/http://www.schengenvisainfo.com/who-needs-schengen-visa/>.

<sup>9</sup> [http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/work-abroad/work-permits/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/work-abroad/work-permits/index_en.htm)



C. Implementation schedule – how to bring your expectations to life?		
	Yes	No
Has an open exchange prior to the internship allowed all parties to share their expectations?		
Has an implementation schedule for the exchange been prepared and agreed between the employee, his own programme and the host programme?		
Does the implementation schedule cover the following aspects of the exchange (if deemed relevant)?		
Priorities and main fields of work (e.g. project assessments, event organisation, etc.);		
Scope and portfolio of the employee's tasks at the receiving programme		
Activities in which the employee will be involved (e.g. project consultations, programme events, etc.);		
Support to be provided by the host programme (supervision/mentoring, regular meetings, training sessions, etc.);		
Integration in the structure of the host programme (official substitute for another colleague or rather internal role?, own email address?, official contact for stakeholders/beneficiaries?, etc.);		
First list of possible follow-up activities (e.g. feedback process at the own programme, meetings between the teams, etc.).		

D. The rules – how to keep the exchange on track?		
	Yes	No
Have arrangements and solutions been found for – inter alia – the following considerations?		
Substitute for the participating employee during her/his absence from her/his own programme;		
Arrangements concerning the employee's work time and other work obligations at the host programme;		
Reporting duties within the receiving programme as well as her/his own programme during the period of the exchange.		

### E. Team involvement – how to get the most out of an exchange for both programmes?

	Yes	No
Have measures for team involvement been agreed with the employee's supervisor to ensure the transfer of the gained experience and "lessons learnt" to the own team of the employee (e.g. feedback rounds and/or training sessions after the exchange, follow-up meetings between the teams of the sending and the receiving programme, etc.)?		
Have activities been agreed with the supervisor/mentor of the host programme which would allow the team of the host programme to get insights into the management of the other programme (e.g. dedicated meetings, presentations, etc.)?		

### F. Follow-up – take your exchange to the next level!

	Yes	No
Are follow-up activities foreseen to deepen the cooperation between the own and the host programme (continuation of staff exchanges, regular cross-programme meetings, thematic partnerships, joint communication activities, etc.)?		
Does the implementation schedule already include (possible) follow-up activities within or between the cooperating programmes (if deemed appropriate)?		
Will the staff exchange be followed-up by an evaluation process?		

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## Annex 2 – Evaluation template for the individual staff member

This template is to be filled in by the **individual staff member** after completing his/her stay with/in another programme. The aim is to both assess his/her personal satisfaction and learning effect, but at the same time also to collect valuable feedback for both his/her own and the host programme.

<b>A. Satisfaction - Personal satisfaction</b>		
	Yes	No
a. Did you enjoy the training?		
b. Was it an appropriate use of your time?		
c. Was it worth it for you personally?		
d. Did the exchange/stay help to identify areas/topics in which further training/learning for me as individual staff member would be necessary/useful?		
<b>B. Learning – Knowledge acquirement &amp; application of new knowledge</b>		
<b>a. Lessons learnt for yourself</b>		
i. What was the main added value?		
ii. What was the biggest challenge, problem, disappointment?		
iii. What will I do differently in my work from now on? If nothing, why?		

## **b. Lessons learnt for your own programme**

i. Where do you see the direct benefit for your own programme from your staff exchange?

ii. Is there anything you have seen/learned in the host programme which your own programme could/should consider (could be both regarding programme implementation processes, but also internal administrative/organisational aspects)?

iii. Would you recommend any colleague to do it? For whom of your colleagues/which positions do you think such staff exchange could be useful?

## **c. Lessons learnt for the host programme**

i. Were you well received in the host programme? Was the host programme well prepared to receive you?

ii. What made your stay easy and which challenges did you face? What could/should the host programme have done differently to make your start and stay smoother?

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### Annex 3 – Evaluation template for the own programme

This template is to be filled in by the **supervisor of the staff member** after the latter having completed his/her staff exchange. In case other programme representatives than the direct supervisor were involved in arranging the staff exchange (e.g. HR department etc.), they could be involved in this evaluation.

#### A. Satisfaction

a. What is the overall feeling on the management level and on the staff (colleagues) level of the exchange done by your colleague?

b. Would you send someone again?

c. Would you recommend such exchange to another staff member? Which position?

d. When it comes to arrangements, practicalities, what would you do differently next time?

#### B. Learning and knowledge acquirement

a. What are the concrete lessons learnt for your own programme from the exchange/stay?

b. Did the exchange/stay help to identify areas/topics in which further training/learning for the (other) staff would be useful/necessary?

### **C. Application of new knowledge**

- a. What could/should you do differently on the programme level (processes, approaches, concrete documents, etc.)?

- b. If you will not change anything, why?

### **D. Measureable improvement of programme implementation (processes)**

- a. What has concretely changed to the better in your own programme implementation, processes etc. thanks to the exchange experience?

### **E. Added value of staff exchange ("return on investment")**

- a. Has it paid off to lose temporarily human resources and to have possibly additional costs and other administrative burden?

- b. Are follow-up activities with the host programme foreseen to continue/deepen the established cooperation?

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#### Annex 4 – Evaluation template for the host programme

This template is to be filled in by the **person responsible in the host programme** for the temporary new staff member. This could be e.g. the Head of Secretariat or, if assigned, the mentor of the exchange staff member. Or even both together to get the full picture. In case other programme representatives than the direct supervisor were involved in arranging the staff exchange (e.g. HR department etc.), they could be involved in filling in this evaluation template.

##### A. Satisfaction

- a. What is the overall feeling on the management level and on the staff (colleagues) level of an external person having temporarily joined the team?

- b. Would you host someone again?

- c. Would you recommend such exchange to one of your staff members? Which position?

##### B. Learning and knowledge acquirement

- a. What are the concrete lessons learnt for your programme from having an external person temporarily in the team?

- b. Did the exchange/stay help to identify areas/topics in which further training/learning for the other staff would be useful/necessary?

### **C. Application of new knowledge**

- a. What could/should you do differently on the programme level (processes, approaches, concrete documents, etc.)?

- b. If you will not change anything, why?

### **D. Measurable improvement of programme implementation (process)**

- a. What has concretely changed to the better in your programme implementation, processes etc. thanks to the exchange experience?

### **E. Added value of staff exchange ("return on investment")**

- a. Has it paid off to have additional human resources temporarily vs. the resources required for hosting an external staff member?

- b. Are follow-up activities with the other programme foreseen to continue/deepen the established cooperation?



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## Annex 5 – Feedback template to be send back to Interact

This template is to be **sent back to Interact** and includes valuable information for Interact to further develop and improve our recommendations. It is therefore important to collect in this template the feedback from the different perspectives to be sent in together or separately. Please send it back to [philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net](mailto:philipp.schwartz@interact-eu.net)

### A. Practical aspects of the staff exchange (Basic information)

- a. Own programme and position in the programme
- b. Host programme and where placed (organisation, organisational unit)
- c. Date and duration of staff exchange (incl. frequency, e.g. 6 months, 1 day per week)
- d. What was the distance between your normal office and the "new" office (km/travel time)?
- e. Who initiated the staff exchange?
- f. Which model, if any, have you chosen (*Chapter 3 'Choose your model'*)?
- g. Who (position) was taking care/coordinating/supervising the staff member in the host programme?

## **B. Feedback from the individual staff member**

a. Was this Interact publication helpful for yourself to plan and prepare for the staff exchange?

b. Which part/information was most useful?

c. Where do you see gaps, which information and aspects are missing?

d. How did you prepare for the staff exchange?

e. What was the success factor in the preparation of the staff exchange?

f. What was the main added value for yourself?

g. What was the main challenge for yourself?

### C. Feedback from the own programme

a. Was this Interact publication helpful for yourself to plan and prepare for the staff exchange?

b. Which part/information was most useful?

c. Where do you see gaps, which information and aspects are missing?

d. How did you prepare for the staff exchange?

e. What was the success factor in the preparation of the staff exchange?

f. How did you cope with temporarily losing a staff member?

g. Would you send again another staff member to a staff exchange?

h. Which position would benefit most from such staff exchange? Why?

i. What was the main added value for your programme?

j. What was the main challenge for your programme?

k. Do you think the staff exchange provided added value to the whole team?

l. What, if any, are the next steps you will take with regard to cooperation, coordination and exchange with other programmes?

m. Have you received any feedback from your team? What kind of?

#### **D. Feedback from the host programme**

a. Was this Interact publication helpful for as programme to plan and prepare for the staff exchange?

b. Which part/information was most useful?

c. Where do you see gaps, which information and aspects are missing?

d. How did you prepare for the staff exchange?

e. What was the success factor in the preparation of the staff exchange?

f. Would you receive again a(nother) external staff member temporarily to your team?

g. What was the main added value for your programme?

h. What was the main challenge for your programme?

i. Do you think the staff exchange provided added value to your own team?

j. What, if any, are the next steps you will take with regard to cooperation, coordination and exchange with other programmes?

k. Have you received any feedback from your team? What kind of?

## E. Information and Follow-up

- a. Can we use and integrate your experiences as 'best practices' (with or without your name) in later versions of this publication or otherwise?

- b. Your contact details for further questions