ACI EUROPE
LEADERSHIP & HR FORUM

BRINGING AIRPORT PEOPLE TOGETHER:

# GUIDELINES FOR STAFF EXCHANGES

**ACI EUROPE**
Leadership & HR Forum
Working Group Staff Exchanges



*A special thanks to Munich Airport for the support and input provided to these Guidelines.*

# FOREWORD



## Olivier Jankovec
Director General ACI EUROPE

We are living in a time when the importance of good leadership is in the spotlight - in politics, in business, in civil society, in how we choose to live our lives - leading by example.

In parallel to the business transformation of Europe's airports in the past two decades, we have seen a shift in the aptitudes, skillsets and company cultures in place at airport operating companies across the region. Consider the number of airport CEOs and COOs who come from outside of the air transport industry now – and the cross-pollination that has come with that, not just at the top level, but across the various departments within an airport.

So, it's only natural that Human Resources (HR) management has evolved to accommodate this change, developing into a strategic activity, increasingly contributing to the business and organisational performance of airports. HR has gained relevance in creating a successful and sustainable company brand, culture and ethos, in an ever-changing and multi-cultural world.

It is therefore timely that the ACI EUROPE Leadership & HR Forum publishes these *Guidelines for Staff Exchanges*, disseminating the knowledge gained by its members to the ACI community, in order to foster further cooperation, facilitating greater knowledge exchange between airports.

I hope you find it useful and that it inspires staff exchanges between your airports and others.



## Dr Michael Kerkloh

President of ACI EUROPE
President & CEO of Munich Airport

In my opinion, one of the best ways to bring airports closer together is to exchange staff. Surveys have proved that there is a big demand for staff exchanges, aiming at exchanging experiences and knowledge. In this way, employees can learn from each other and get inspired or even work on common solutions for similar challenges. Furthermore, staff exchanges provide the opportunity to develop our airport people with regards to professional, cultural, personal and language skills.

Therefore, I highly appreciate that the ACI EUROPE Leadership & HR Forum has developed these Guidelines for Staff Exchanges. They are surely beneficial for all ACI EUROPE's member airports as they will intensify or even start staff exchange activities within the ACI EUROPE partner network.

Overall, these Guidelines contribute to the strategy of ACI EUROPE and one of its main objectives, which is to promote cooperation and mutual assistance among airports.

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# INTRODUCTION

## What are our objectives?

The airport industry is increasing its focus on Human Resources. Previous meetings of the ACI EUROPE Leadership & HR Forum and surveys among airports have identified a large demand for bringing airport people together to exchange experience and knowledge, to learn from each other and to be inspired.

From an HR perspective this would also serve to:

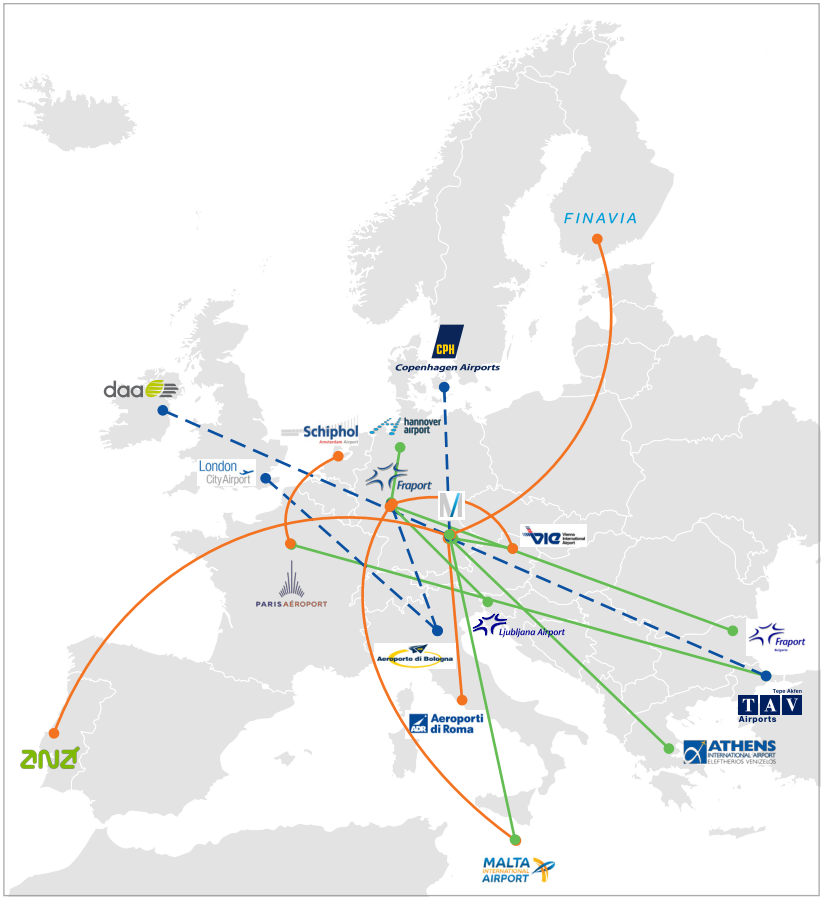
- Develop employees' professional, personal, cultural and language skills.
- Enhance intrinsic motivation by offering an incentive to committed employees.
- Increase the airport's attractiveness as an employer of choice for external candidates.

These objectives are in line with the ACI EUROPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and were also approved by the ACI EUROPE Board:

*'ACI EUROPE expands the body of knowledge in airport management and promotes professional excellence through the exchange of know-how and best practices between European airports and their business partners.'*

Therefore, the ACI EUROPE Leadership & HR Forum has developed Guidelines for Staff Exchanges to support or even to enable ACI EUROPE's member airports to start staff exchange activities within the ACI EUROPE partner network.

## Staff Exchange Network of ACI EUROPE's Member Airports in 2019




unique cooperation

irregular cooperation

regular cooperation

1

# HOW TO CONVINCE YOUR CEO

## What are the benefits as a host/sending airport?

- Exchange of knowledge and industry best practices
- Satisfy short-term needs: specific expertise required, fill in knowledge gaps
- Possibility to incorporate external knowledge
- Joint problem solving/working on projects
- Drive innovation
- Integrate international staff exchanges in personnel development programmes
- Increase in employer attractiveness
- Reciprocal exchange of staff for a period of time

## What are the benefits for your employees?

There are four different perspectives of how your staff can benefit:

- **Professional**
  *Broaden their knowledge, collect new ideas, find tools to simplify workflows*
- **Personal**
  *Develop soft skills, make new contacts with experts in the same field/with colleagues from other departments, make new friends, token of appreciation*
- **Cultural**
  *Increase their intercultural competences & global awareness*
- **Language skills**
  *Improve their language skills in aviation terminology*

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# HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT PARTNER AIRPORTS

A shared platform within the ACI EUROPE Members' area on the ACI EUROPE website will be created, where airports can search and identify other airports which also would like to participate in staff exchange programmes.

The following information will be provided on the platform:

- A short airport profile
  (overall traffic figures, organisational structure, awards, ongoing important projects, previous experiences regarding staff exchanges, contact details, etc.)
- Areas of expertise and what they can offer
- Areas for interest
- Time frame/availability (e.g. up to three weeks and during winter period)

Are you interested in finding new partner airports? Then you should consider the following steps:

- Create your own airport profile according to a given structure
- Show your interest in exchanging staff by publishing an offer
- Directly approach other airports via e-mail or telephone

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# HOW TO DEVELOP A CONCEPT FOR STAFF EXCHANGES

## 3.1. SELECTION PROCESS

### Create a staff exchange function within your company

Host and sending airports need to determine one person responsible for staff exchange coordination. It is recommended that the person is from the HR department. All information from the partner airports and participants will be sent to him/her as a central point of contact.

### Announce a Call for Participants

Provided that you would like your staff to apply for the exchange programme, a call has to be published within your organisation. It can be distributed via e-mail and/or the intranet. Some important information should be included, such as:

- purpose of the exchange programme
- destination country and name of partner airport
- time period
- duration
- draft programme
- assignment topics
- expected number of participants
- information on how employees can apply and required application documents
- application deadline

## Application Process

Employees can either apply by themselves with a motivation letter or be selected by HR according to certain criteria. The following information should be covered by a motivation letter, ideally written in English:

- job position
- department
- seniority
- responsibilities
- expertise
- assignment topics
- a description of their motivations to participate in the exchange programme

## Selection Process

The needs of both the host and the sending airport should be covered with the final selection of staff.

For the host airport it is important to have a delegation whose skills and background fit the jointly agreed assignment topics.

The sending airport should develop specified criteria for selecting their participants. Prioritisation of the respective criteria depends on whether your organisation wants to focus on assigned topics or rather individual career development. Thus, each airport should define its own individual criteria.

Here is an example list of four criteria for selecting your staff:

1. **Relation to assignment topics:**
   Nomination on the basis of the topics of the assignment

2. **Incentive:**
   Appreciation for outstanding employee engagement

3. **Personnel development and talent management:**
   Individual career development

4. **Other:**
   Nomination for other business reasons

## 3.2. PROGRAMME DESIGN

The general structure of each exchange programme is the same. Once you have developed a framework with your partner airport, you can make use of the same structure for all following staff exchanges.

First of all, your airport should determine the type of exchange programme and also the duration. Would you like your staff to have several 3-hour meetings with their respective counterparts where they exchange knowledge on specific issues (see example programme on Page 14)? In this case, 1-2 weeks should be sufficient. However, if your aim is to set up a programme which is more an in-depth on-the-job training, you should plan for a longer period of at least 3 weeks. Once you have agreed on a time period, you can book your flights and accommodation.

In general, an exchange programme consists of:

- a general programme (eg. welcome, airport tour, group meetings, evaluation session)
- a counterpart programme (individual programme)
- a cultural programme (leisure activities)
- travel time

It is important that you find a good mix between content-related and cultural aspects. A cultural and general programme is necessary as your staff benefits from an insight into your host's culture and also from a general overview of the host airport. This will help participants to acclimatise and to be perfectly prepared for their individual counterpart meetings.

## Example Programme of a Staff Exchange

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arrival & Cultural Programme** | **General Programme** | **Counterpart Programme** | **Counterpart Programme** | **Counterpart Programme** | **Counterpart & General Programme** | **Cultural Programme & Departure** |
| Morning: Arrival | 09:00-10:00<br>• Welcome & Introduc-tion by host airport<br>• Airport overview & programme overview by host airport<br>• Airport overview by sending airport | 09:00-12:00<br>Workshop 1 | 09:00-12:00<br>Workshop 3 | 09:00-12:00<br>Workshop 5 | 09:00-12:00<br>Workshop 7 | Time at own disposal |
| 12:30-13:30<br>Lunch | 12:30-13:30<br>Lunch | 12:30-13:00<br>Lunch | 12:30-13:00<br>Lunch | 12:30-13:00<br>Lunch | 12:30-13:00<br>Lunch | |
| City Tour | Airport Tour (terminals & airfield) | 13:00-16:00<br>Workshop 2 | 13:00-16:00<br>Workshop 4 | 13:00-16:00<br>Workshop 6 | 13:00-15:00<br>Evaluation / Round table Discussion | |
| | Optional: Joint welcome dinner | Time at own disposal | Time at own disposal | Time at own disposal | Time at own disposal | Evening: Departure |

Travel Time | Cultural Programme | General Programme | Counterpart Programme

## 3.3. PREPARATION OF PARTICIPANTS

At least 2 weeks prior to the exchange, invite your staff to a preparatory workshop regarding organisational, professional and cultural elements of the staff exchange programme. This is very important, because your employees will want to feel well informed and prepared about their host airport/country and the programme prior to the exchange. Such a workshop should last no more than 2 hours.

Furthermore, you should focus on what has to be done during and after the exchange programme. A good way is to determine responsibilities within the group, such as somebody taking care of media promotion, organisation of group meetings or the delivery of a final presentation back at the sending airport. Moreover, each delegate could be encouraged to bring back a certain number of new ideas/innovations.

For an idea of what such a preparatory workshop could look like, please see the following example agenda:

| |
|---|
| **1. Introduction round** |
| **2. Purpose and objectives/benefits of staff exchanges** |
| **3. Overview of the host airport** |
| • Business model, organisational chart |
| • Traffic figures |
| • Current projects |
| **4. Country-specific information** |
| • Political system/situation |
| • Currency |
| **5. Cultural characteristics** |
| • Do's and Don't's at work and during leisure time |
| • Dress code |
| **6. Organisational information** |
| • Travel data |
| • Accommodation |
| • Public transport from accommodation to the airport |
| • Travel expense accounting |
| **7. General overview of exchange programme** |
| **8. Responsibilities of each group member** |

## 3.4. EVALUATION & DISSEMINATION

### Evaluation at partner airport

In order that both the host and sending airport can evaluate their staff exchange, an evaluation round should be organised on the last day of the programme. For this purpose, the delegation of the sending airport could prepare a presentation for their counterparts. This presentation should contain a summary of the differences and similarities of both airports, the participants' key learnings and new ideas for their own work and other areas of their airport. Following the presentation, both airports can discuss their findings as well as open questions.

### Back home – inspire your colleagues

Back at the sending airport, the delegation can start disseminating their key findings and outcomes of the programme within the company. This can be done through reports/presentations to colleagues and direct leaders.

Furthermore, the delegation should get the chance to evaluate their exchange programme internally. Within a workshop 1-2 weeks after the exchange, the general organisation of the programme could be analysed as well as the distribution of responsibilities within the team. In addition, participants could work on a final presentation to the airport top management to emphasise the importance of staff exchanges and to spread the new knowledge. The agenda of such a presentation could look like the following:

- Overview of the partner airport & benchmarks
- Overview of current projects
- Key learnings
- Prioritised ideas/innovations
- Media promotion (internal publications, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)

2-3 employees should work on this presentation subsequent to the workshop.

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# FUNDING

- Determine your budget: calculate all costs (flights, accommodation, per diem, presents to the host, etc.)
- Sources of funding: airport budget, sponsors, Erasmus+ funds

## How to apply for Erasmus+ Key Action 1

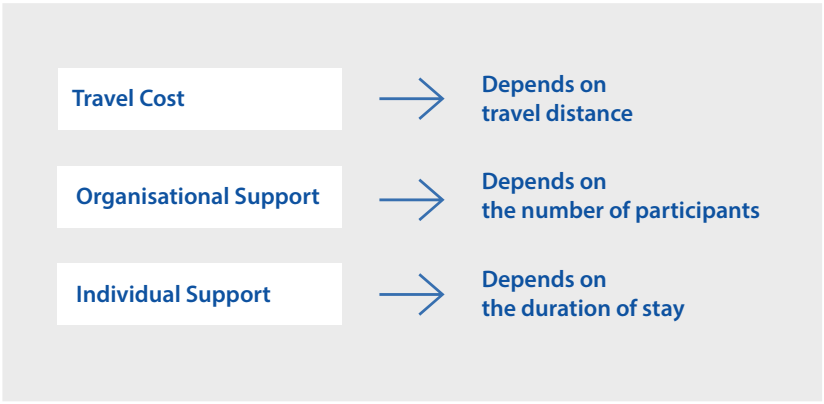
Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport. With a budget of €14.7 billion for 2014-2020 it provides opportunities for over 4 million participants to study, train, gain experience, and volunteer abroad. Erasmus+ Key Action 1 supports staff exchange projects. Airports will be eligible to apply for Erasmus+ Key Action 1 for organisations. However, both host and sending airports must consult their national agencies to check their eligibility as Vocational Educational Training providers (VET). When the eligibility is confirmed, applications should be submitted to the National Agency in the Programme Country where the applicant organisation is established. Partner countries can not apply for funding (Only the 28 EU countries + The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey).

For more information please visit:

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/three-key-actions/key-action-1/mobility-vet-staff_en

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about/who-can-take-part_en

## Funding consists of 3 parts:




Apply to the National Agency of your country at https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact/national-agencies_en

Applicants have to submit their grant application by **1 February at 12:00** (midday Brussels time) for projects starting between 1 June and 31 December of the same year. National Agencies may organise a second round of applications if funds remain unused. National Agencies will inform of this possibility via their website. If a second round is organised, applicants have to submit their grant application by **4 October at 12:00** (midday Brussels time) for projects starting between 1 January and 31 May of the following year.

## Travel Costs

Contribution to travel costs of participants will be done based on the travel distance per participant. Travel distance must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/distance-calculator_en

## Organisational Support

Organisational support will be done based on the number of participants.

## Individual Support

Individual support will be done based on the duration of the stay per participant (if necessary, including also one travel day before the activity and one travel day after the activity).

Individual support depends on the country where the activity takes place. Each National Agency will define the amounts applicable to projects submitted in their country. The exact amounts will be published on the website of each National Agency.







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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. What are the benefits of Staff Exchange?

Exchanges provide many benefits for participants and hosts. Participants can gain new skills, motivation, new perspectives and an expanded network; plus it might be a reward for outstanding achievement. The host airport gains a temporary staff person with different skills and new perspectives; the staff involved gain additional motivation as they participate in the exchange. Staff exchange also prompts lifelong cross-cultural relationships.

## 2. Who can participate?

Any staff person from any department is eligible for this programme. If you want to apply for Erasmus+ fundings you have to make sure that your employees contribute to staff education and/or training within your organisation.

## 3. How long is the exchange period?

An exchange may be arranged for any time period that is acceptable to the host and sending airports.

## 4. What costs are involved?

There are no fees associated with this programme. The employer is responsible for the employee's travel expenses such as flight cost and accommodation and must continue to pay the employee's salary during the exchange. The host airport is free to offer lunch meals during the exchange.

## 5. Where can we send a staff member?

You can send staff members to any other country in which ACI EUROPE has a member. Domestic exchanges are also possible but they will not be funded by Erasmus+ programme.

## 6. Do exchanges need to be reciprocal?

It depends on the agreement between partner airports.

## 7. What if I'd like to host one or more staff members from other countries?

ACI EUROPE has a list of registered 'Hosts' who are willing to host staff from other countries. To see the list of airports which have confirmed their participation to the programme as a host or sending airport, please visit the Member's area on the ACI EUROPE website (www.aci-europe.org). The list will be periodically updated as new arrangements are finalised. To register as a host/sending airport, please download the application form from the ACI EUROPE website. For more information, please contact danielle.michel@aci-europe.org.








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# TESTIMONIALS



"By sending staff to another airport, Munich Airport aims to inspire and motivate its employees. Basically, staff exchanges enable people to receive an in-depth insight into another airport's organisation. In this way, employees can develop new ideas and implement innovations at their home airport. By exchanging staff, airports have the opportunity to insource creative ideas and to develop one of their most important assets: Human Resources."

*Theresa Fleidl, Vice President Professional Training Policy and HR Cooperations*

ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ELEFTHERIOS VENIZELOS

"Employee exchange is part of Athens International Airport's training and development plan through which we intend to support our employees' development by giving them a chance to work in different environments. This allows our employees to share and gain experience from colleagues from other airports. We believe that learning from each other benefits our organisations and the airport industry collectively."

*Katerina Stefani, HR Development Specialist*

"For TAV Group, the increased awareness of the partnership with ADP and the creation of a platform through which both companies (TAV and ADP) can share their experiences, know-how and achievements made this project very valuable. Cultural differences inevitably affect how we work and this is best appreciated from outside one's organisation.

The Staff Exchange Programme contributed to better problem-solving by bringing in a different perspective, creating new ways of thinking and opening up potential job opportunities.

The programme enabled us to foster a more collaborative workplace culture, thanks to the seamless information flow between our airport companies. From the employee's point of view, this programme has opened the door for us to discover our potential talents. We also use it as a tool for talent management and we provide our potential candidates with the opportunity to experience living and working abroad for a period of time. On the other hand, our new incoming employees provide insightful input that improves our operational process and knowledge exchange among relevant departments."

*Ms. Senel Turel, Human Resources Process Leader*

"I met very capable people, passionate about their job, who welcomed me as if I were "part of the family". We had the opportunity to work together on various aspects of both security and operational activities, despite the fact that regulations are different in some cases (e.g. video surveillance). Furthermore, this experience was a linguistic challenge, which I was very satisfied with."

*Fai Eugenio, Passenger Security Manager*




ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over **500 airports** in 45 European countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe: **2 billion passengers**,**20 million tonnes of freight** and **23.7 million aircraft movements** in 2016. These airports contribute to the employment of **12.3 million people**, generating **€675 billion** each year **(4.1%) of GDP** in Europe.

Based in Brussels, we lead and serve the European airport industry and maintain strong links with other ACI regions throughout the world.

**EVERY FLIGHT BEGINS AT THE AIRPORT.**

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