



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION

Mutual Learning Programme
Summary Guidance on the Learning Exchanges

Aim of the Learning Exchanges

The Learning Exchanges are a new feature of the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) aimed at enhancing and embedding the learning between Member States in the context of working towards the goals of the European Employment Strategy. The main objectives of the Learning Exchanges are to:

- Provide a focused and dynamic opportunity for a small group of Member State government representatives to exchange information, experience and good practice in relation to a specific policy issue, thematic priority or country-specific recommendation of European Employment Strategy, with the view to coming closer to policy influence;
- Offer rapid, targeted support to Member States in addressing specific policy challenges and issues; and
- Extend the opportunities for networking, mutual learning and policy influence to a wider group of government representatives and associated stakeholders.

Approach

The Learning Exchange approach is based on a facilitated dialogue between two Member States who have a common interest in examining and sharing experiences in relation to a particular area of employment policy. This dialogue focuses on the key conditions and challenges for the effective design and implementation of employment policies and measures. It often builds on discussions that have taken place in a Peer Review on a related topic.

Participation¹

The Learning Exchange is hosted by one of the two Member States and involves:

- Representatives from the host Member State (which can include government officials, as well as regional/local authorities and social partners)²;
- Two representatives from the visiting Member State (which can include government officials, as well as regional/local authorities and social partners)³; and
- One member of the MLP support team⁴.

¹ Participation in the Learning Exchanges is open to the Member States, as well as EEA, accession, candidate and pre-candidate countries.

² The representatives are chosen by the host country, depending on the thematic focus on the Learning Exchange. All logistical support (travel and accommodation) has to be provided by the host country.

³ The representatives are chosen by the visiting country, depending on the thematic focus on the Learning Exchange.

⁴ The MLP support team is provided by ICF GHK who has been appointed by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to provide support services for mutual learning within the European Employment Strategy.

The resources for several Learning Exchanges can be combined in order to arrange a larger Learning Exchange, involving more than one visiting Member States. However, it is recommended to limit the participation to three visiting Member States (six representatives in total) in order to keep the exchange pragmatic and focused.

Format

The Learning Exchange takes place over one day. The detailed programme is tailored to the needs and interests of the participating Member States, however, it generally involves a mix of presentations, open discussions and visits to facilitate the mutual exchange and learning. Overall, the activity is highly focused and interactive, often leading to contacts that continue well after the day.

Key tasks of the host country

The main tasks of the host country are:

- Contributing to the development of the thematic content and agenda of the Learning Exchange, in collaboration with the Commission and the MLP support team;
- Summarising the policy area that is the subject of the Learning Exchange in a one-to-two-page document. This document is then circulated to all participants;
- Providing a venue, catering and supporting the practical arrangements on site; and
- Giving presentations and chairing the proceedings, where appropriate, on the day.

Key tasks of the MLP support team

The MLP support team can provide significant assistance to the host country in organising every aspect of the Learning Exchange. This support covers:

- Assisting the host country in developing the thematic content and agenda of the Learning Exchange;
- Liaising and coordinating with the participating Member States, including the collection of relevant background materials;
- Providing logistical support, which includes financing the travel and accommodation of two representatives for each participating Member State;
- Assisting all the contributors in preparing their inputs and presentations;
- Chairing and/or facilitating the discussions on the day, if needed; and
- Preparing and circulating a final report of the discussions and findings.

Examples of Learning Exchanges

Several Learning Exchanges have already been organised and the feedback from the participating Member States has been very positive. The results of these Learning Exchanges are available on the [MLP website](#).

Further information

Should you be interested in organising a Learning Exchange and would like further information and support, please contact the MLP support team: mlp@icfi.com.