

User Guide

User Guide for the CEPOL Exchange Programme: General and CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchanges	Document number:	UG.EXPR.001-15
	Approval date:	19/12/2025

UG EXPR 001-15

**USER GUIDE for the
CEPOL General Exchange Programme
and
CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange
Programme
2026
Inspired by Erasmus**

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidelines for participation in the CEPOL Exchange Programme (hereinafter CEP or Programme). It aims to assist exchangees, hosts, as well as the National Exchange Coordinators (NECs) and Single Point of Contacts (SPOC) in the context of exchanges. Participation in the programme is available for applicants of EU Member States¹, and those non-EU Member States the CEPOL Executive Director has decided to include in the Programme.

2. About CEPOL

CEPOL, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training, is tasked with organising training for law enforcement officials in the Member States of the European Union (EU). It began operating in 2001 and provided training for senior police officers and experts, and in 2016 expanded its mandate to all law enforcement officials of all ranks (EU Regulation 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and the Council).

The aim of CEPOL is to support, develop, implement and coordinate training for law enforcement officials in particular in the areas of prevention of and fight against serious and organised crime, terrorism, public order including training in law enforcement leadership and language skills.

More specifically elements of its tasks are to:

- Develop, implement and coordinate law enforcement training addressing specific criminal or policing thematic areas;
- Facilitate exchanges, study visits and secondments for law enforcement officials;
- Raise awareness on Union bodies in particular Europol, Eurojust and Frontex;
- Train the trainers and assist in improving exchanging best learning practice;
- Develop common curricula on specific subjects with a Union dimension;
- Support web-based e-learning and other innovative and advanced training activities through an electronic network;
- Support Union missions and capacity building in third countries.

The Agency cooperates with a wide range of partners, including other European Union agencies such as EUAA, EIGE, EUDA, EU-LISA, Eurojust, Europol, FRA and Frontex, other partners like EJTN and OLAF together with international organisations such as Interpol. CEPOL stipulates working arrangements with countries, in particular the candidate, potential candidate, and neighbourhood partnership countries.

In reference to CEPOL's mandate (EU Regulation 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and the Council, Article 2 (1) (a) (b)), law enforcement officials means staff of police, customs and other relevant services, as defined by individual Member States, that are responsible for, and staff of Union bodies that have tasks relating to, the following:

(a) the prevention of and fight against serious crime affecting two or more Member States, terrorism and forms of crime that affect a common interest covered by a Union policy; or

(b) crisis management and public order, in particular international policing of major events.

For further information, please visit the CEPOL website at: <http://www.cepola.europa.eu>

¹ In line with the preamble (25) (26) of the EU Regulation 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and the Council, participation of Denmark in the Exchange Programme is not funded by CEPOL.

3. About the CEPOL Exchange Programme

The CEPOL Exchange Programme was originally set up in accordance with the Hague Programme (2004), followed by the Stockholm Programme² as adopted by the Member States in 2009. The latter as well as the Council Conclusions on 26 April 2010 invited CEPOL to develop and conduct an Erasmus-style Exchange Programme for police officers.

The CEPOL Exchange Programme fulfils CEPOL's mission to contribute to European law enforcement cooperation through learning to the benefit of European citizens through the following objectives:

- apply knowledge relevant to the exchangee's field of expertise in a multicultural environment within the framework of a practice-related training programme;
- disseminate and share good practice at European level;
- contribute to the creation of a European law enforcement culture;
- obtain and promote mutual learning and networking.

The CEPOL Exchange Programme is a CEPOL flagship activity started already in 2007, at that time financed via first AGIS then ISEC. Following Council Conclusions in 2010, CEPOL took over the financial section from its own budget allocations ensuring a smoother and more efficient administration of the programme.

During the years multiple changes were introduced to better tailor the training needs of European law enforcement authorities towards the challenges they face. In 2016 the target group of the Exchange Programme was extended to all law enforcement authorities by the new mandate of CEPOL. In accordance with the new regulation not only police but customs and tax authorities, border guard agencies as well as prosecutors enforcing the law can benefit from this training tool.

The Erasmus-style method is a learning activity, which provides exchangees the opportunity to create a network of colleagues and familiarise themselves with the working methods of other countries by exchanging experiences and sharing expertise. On a longer term it contributes to build trust and to establish a more efficient cooperation amongst not only the EU Member States but all other involved countries, that fits well with the aspirations of the EU Security Union Strategy for the period of 2020 to 2025. The Strategy focuses on four priority areas: from a future-proof security environment and tackling evolving threats, via protecting Europeans from terrorism and organised crime to a strong European security ecosystem. It aims to lay out the tools and measures to be developed to ensure security in our physical and digital environment. Within the Strategy there is a particular role for enhance law enforcement capacity in digital investigation, for tackling organised crime in particular drug and firearms trafficking and migrant smuggling, and for cooperating with non-EU countries. The current and new technological threats calls for more investment in upskilling law enforcement personnel at the earliest stage and throughout their career, where the CEPOL Exchange Programme can contribute effectively and continue assisting Member States and its partner countries in this task.

In order to enhance inter-agency collaboration, as of 2020 CEPOL-EJTN joint exchanges are to be implemented in the area of judicial cooperation with interested officials. Law enforcement participants are funded by CEPOL while judiciary participants (non-law enforcement) are funded by EJTN.

² As stipulated in the Stockholm Programme, Par. 1.2.6, p. C 115/7:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:115:0001:0038:en:PDF>

CEPOL is also responsible for the implementation of various EU funded projects – coordinated by the International Cooperation Unit (ICU) - that also integrate exchanges in their learning portfolio. Such CEPOL ICU projects implemented exchanges are regulated in separate User Guide for ICU Exchange Programme and includes the CT INFLOW (Counter-Terrorism Information Exchange and Criminal Justice Responses), TOPCOP (Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime) and EU4 Security Moldova project in 2025.

3.1 Coordination and Communication

The CEPOL Exchange Programme is coordinated by a team at CEPOL. A National Exchange Coordinator (NEC) is appointed in each country. The NEC is responsible for facilitating and coordinating the sending and hosting of exchangees, as well as contacts between the exchangees and the hosts. The NEC also acts as the communication link with CEPOL.

All documents mentioned in this User Guide are subject to be reviewed and approved first by the NEC then by the CEPOL Exchange Team. Documents sent individually or not via the hereby regulated route will not be accepted.

Note: it is participants responsibility to follow the national procedure for approval before the documents are submitted to NEC.

3.2 Target Group

The programme is a bilateral exchange of law enforcement officials³ consisting of experts, leaders, trainers and researchers.

In the above Exchange Programmes the following countries are funded by CEPOL: Member States of the European Union⁴, Western Balkan Countries and Türkiye. Associated countries such as Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland can take part in the programme on their own cost.

4. Conditions for participation

CEPOL does not determine a maximum number of applications per country for the CEPOL Exchange Programme, however a fair distribution of nominations in line with budget availability will be ensured by the CEPOL Exchange Team and the respective CEPOL ICU Project Teams, giving priority to 1) thematic areas in line with the EMPACT Cycle OAPs, 2) thematic areas prioritised at European level and 3) national/regional operational priorities. CEPOL together with EJTN will select those that belong under judicial cooperation. Beyond that, countries are encouraged to nominate **pre-matched exchanges** identified on the basis of above said priorities.

NB: Please note that the eligibility - non-eligibility period of applicants for participation in an exchange in the previous 3 years is calculated independently in the two units (EUTH and ICU). Having participated in a programme of one of the unite does not penalise participation in an exchange of the other unit.

Candidates can be nominated if they:

- have a reasonable level of English (at least level B2⁵) which enables them to communicate with CEPOL (submitting all the necessary documentation) and colleagues about enforcing the law on the selected topic;

³ with reference to Article 2 of the EU Regulation 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and of the Council

⁴ with reference to the preamble (25) (26) of the EU Regulation 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and the Council, Denmark can take part in the programme on their own cost

⁵ European Language Pass: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home>

- have a minimum of three (3) years of work experience and expertise in the defined specialised thematic area;
- have not participated in the Exchange Programme during the last three years preceding the launch;
- have a need and readiness for individual learning;
- have the ability and willingness to cascade newly gained knowledge both on a European/International and on a national level.

Language

The main language is English, however, for an exchange it is possible to use other languages, including, but not limited to French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Scandinavian languages as well as Turkish or Arabic etc. This is subject to agreement between the exchange partners, who both must have an adequate level of their chosen language in order for an effective exchange to take place. Therefore, it is important to indicate in the application form which languages the exchangee can use.

However, all documentation and the feedback must be completed and communicated to CEPOL in English.

5. Use of the eLearning platform, LEEd

CEPOL's eLearning platform, LEEd (Law Enforcement Education) is an online training system aimed at enhancing the online learning experience of users. Within this platform, the CEPOL Exchange Programme provides opportunity to the exchangees and their hosts to facilitate their communication with each other and with the CEPOL Exchange Programme Team and the CEPOL ICU Project Team. The platform provides different training materials from CEPOL and other partners, such as short online sessions (Exchange-bites), online modules, e-lessons and other online training materials such as e-books and e-journals on specific topics.

The LEEd is available for EU MS and those countries with whom CEPOL has a working arrangement.

For the purposes of the implementation of the Exchange Programme a special platform is set up every year (Exchange Programme platform) on LEEd. Users can find there all the necessary templates and pre-assignment tasks of the Exchange Programme as well as useful information and instructions in relation to the different stages of the programme. Furthermore, exchangees are given the chance to exchange their experience and ask questions via various forums.

All feedbacks, narrative reports necessary for the completion of the programme are also done using the LEEd platform.

Registration on LEEd site is required to join the CEPOL Exchange Programme platform. For this the registration form has to be completed on <https://leed.cepola.europa.eu> (click "registration" on the top right corner). National LEEd manager will validate their account. The NECs can also provide the exchangees with a separate document explaining `How to register` on CEPOL website in order to facilitate registration.

From 2023 CEPOL has been using the LEEd Exchange Plugin that allows the whole process (starting from the application) to be handled on one platform for the General Exchange Programme.

Those who wish to apply to the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme as a Law Enforcement official, from an EU Member State, Western Balkan Countries and Türkiye. Or an Associated country will have to submit their application on the platform. Their application will be reviewed and approved/rejected on the platform, but approved applicants will be

matched by the CEPOL Exchange Team ‘manually’ with applicants from EJTN. Applicants for the CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme will be informed via email and will have to submit their further documents along the process via email through their NECs.

For further information on CEPOL’s eLearning platform, LEEed, please visit CEPOL website: www.cepol.europa.eu.

6. The Exchange

6.1 Definitions

The terminology used here is “**exchangee**” and “**host**”. The exchangee is the person who leaves to visit another country. The host is the person who receives the exchangee.

“**Learning**” implies the process of gaining new knowledge or insights either through studying but also through experiencing new things or being taught by others. This includes becoming aware of something by information or from observation.

“**Cascading**” of the knowledge means that exchangee shares with other colleagues the knowledge gained during the exchange, hence the period of cascading will follow after the exchange has taken place. The exchangees need to describe the activities they plan to do after implementing the programme, in order to share their newly gained knowledge with their colleagues in their home country and organisation and on a European level.

6.2 Bilateral basis, with possibility of small groups

The principle of the Exchange Programme is that the exchange should be done on a bilateral basis. Each sending country also functions as a hosting country, i.e. each exchangee goes to one country and is also expected to host the colleague from the country s/he visited. Each exchange is organised around one specific topic.

Nevertheless, small groups of 3-6 participants can also be organised in the same thematic and sub thematic areas with the condition that from both sides applicant are from the same and unit and work together. Eg.: one applicant can be matched with several (maximum 3) exchange partners from another country from the same institution and unite that s/he can host and visit at the same time, or 2-3 colleagues from a country and same unit can be matched with 2-3 other colleagues from another country from the same unit.

Moreover, as not all countries have the same amount of exchangees and the topics may not be identical, it can happen that some hosts may receive more than one exchangee. Please note that the Application form contains the possibility to indicate how many exchangees you can host, be it one at a time or as a group.

A unilateral exchange can take place to a country, who can participate in the programme at their own cost.

6.3 Sections

The CEPOL Exchange Programme in 2026 is divided into eight sections:

1. General Exchange Programme

- *wide range of thematic areas as per the CEPOL Single Programming Document (SPD) 2025;*

- available for the EU MS, Western Balkan countries, Türkiye and Associated Countries (on their own cost);
- participant is matched with a counterpart from another country with same/similar expertise, similar rank and background;
- addressing EU and/or regional level training needs.

2. General Mentoring Programme

- opportunity to law enforcement officials (mentors) to share expertise in a dedicated professional area in order to promote knowledge transfer and to enhance individual skills of law enforcement officials (mentee) working in the same domain;
- available for the EU MS, Western Balkan countries, Türkiye and Associated Countries (on their own cost);
- matching process will result in a mentor and a mentee being paired;
- addressing EU and/or regional level training needs.

3. CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme

- judicial cooperation only;
- available for the EU MS, Western Balkan countries, Türkiye and Associated Countries (on their own cost);
- law enforcement official is matched with a judge (non law enforcement) in order to gain a different perspective of mutual cooperation with legal practical aspects;
- addressing EU and/or regional level training needs.

4. Four CEPOL ICU Exchange Programmes and five CEPOL ICU Mentoring Programmes- Implemented by International Cooperation Unit

- wide range of thematic areas according to the portfolios In the Exchange Programmes of CT INFLOW, EU4 Security Moldova, EUROMED and TOPCOP projects and also in the ICU Mentoring Programmes of all five Projects: CT INFLOW, EU4 Security Moldova, EUROMED TOPCOP and WB PaCT,
- available for the EU MS, Associated Countries (on their own cost), and third countries (respective to CT INFLOW, TOPCOP and EU4 Security Moldova projects),
- EU MS (or Associate Country) participant is matched with a counterpart from a third country (respective to the project) with same expertise, similar rank and background.

NB: for these above ICU Exchange Programmes, please consult the relevant ICU Exchange Programme 2026 User Guide.

6.4 Thematic areas and sub-thematic areas

The Exchange Programme is divided into several thematic areas and sub thematic areas. Exchanges can choose the topic that aligns with CEPOL thematic areas (as indicated in the Application form). The thematic and sub thematic areas to choose from follow CEPOL priorities as determined by its Management Board through the Single Programming Document in line with the Justice and Home Affairs policies of the EU. Dedicated sub thematic areas are defined for those applying under CEPOL-EJTN joint exchanges in the judiciary cooperation thematic area.

6.5 Main stages of the exchange

The **main stages** of the exchange consist of the following:

- a) Application process**
- b) Approval of application**

- c) **Exchange request**
- d) **Evaluation of exchange request**
- e) **Submission of documents and pre-assignment**
- f) **Exchange implementation**
- g) **Feedback and narrative report**
- h) **Cascading activities**
- i) **Certificate of participation**

With the introduction of the Exchange Plugin on LEEd, the steps to follow depend on the Exchange Programme the candidate chooses to apply for. By selecting the Programme, the applicant can follow the steps detailed in that specific section, including the specification of the documents to be submitted in the different stages.

A **Call for Nomination** is sent out by CEPOL and EJTN to its partners, the National Exchange Coordinators (NECs), who then distribute the information to the national bodies. A deadline is set by which applications must be submitted via the Exchange Plugin on LEEd to CEPOL.

Applications through the Exchange Plugin will only be possible until the deadline set in the Call for Nomination.

Only fully and completely filled in Applications and forms will be accepted. Please note that in case of late submission of the documents, the Exchange Team reserves the right to reject the document(s) and/or request the exchange to be rescheduled to a later date.

6.6. General Exchange Programme

- a) **Application** must be submitted on LEEd platform via the Exchange Plugin. Applicant must have a valid LEEd account in order to reach the Exchange Plugin. Please take into account also the time that is necessary to register on LEEd, the registration must be completed prior submitting the Exchange application.
Supervisor consent is mandatory to submit – country specific requirements may apply, please enquire at your National Exchange Coordinator.
Those who have previously agreed with a counterpart to host each other shall indicate this in the Pre-match section (*applicable for the General Exchange Programme participants*).
- b) National Exchange Coordinator reviews applications (also in order to check whether the national application procedure has been followed) and ensures that the content is in accordance with the User Guide (including the supervisor consent) – then **approves** or rejects them on individual basis. Applicants will receive a notification on the decision via LEEd, as well as to their registered e-mail addresses.
In case of rejection, a note will be added as the reason for rejection.
The second leg of approval is done by the CEP team who reviews the Applications approved by the National Exchange Coordinators and then approves or rejects them on an individual basis.
- c) Approved applicants will have access to other approved applicants' profiles who match their professional background and other preferences, fully or partially.
Applicants have the opportunity to get into contact with each other by using the chat function within the Exchange Plugin. After mutually agreeing on the benefit of the exchange, they can **request an exchange** with each other by setting the travel dates the exchange partners agreed on. The dates can be selected from April, and applicants must take into consideration the time to submit the pre-assignment, latest 4 weeks prior to travel.

NB: Applicants with pre-matched counterparts still have to request an exchange on the platform.

- d) **Exchange requests** are firstly reviewed and **evaluated by** the National Exchange Coordinators. Approved exchange requests will be forwarded to CEPOL Exchange Team. NB: Only exchange requests that are approved by both countries' National Exchange Coordinators will be forwarded to CEPOL Exchange Team. In case the exchange request is rejected either by the National Exchange Coordinators or by the CEPOL Exchange Team, the applicants will be notified via LEEd platform, mentioning also the reason for rejection.

Final phase of matching and approval of exchange partners are done by CEPOL Exchange Team based on yearly set target numbers by:

- Approving submitted exchange requests AND/OR
- Matching the unmatched applications to meet target numbers if necessary.

- e) Once approved by CEPOL Exchange Team, exchangees are expected to fill in the **Travel Request Form** in the Exchange Plugin and upload the **detailed Activity Plan within 5 weeks after approval**, but not later than 6 weeks prior to the planned travel date. Travel Request Form and Activity Plan are also subject to approval of the National Exchange Coordinators and the CEPOL Exchange Team.

Additionally, submitting the **pre-assignment** on LEEd platform set by CEPOL Exchange Team at the approval of the matching is also mandatory **within 5 weeks after approval**. Failure to submitting the documents and the pre-assignment on time could result in the postponement or cancellation of the exchange (in this case exchanges will be considered as step backs).

- f) Minimum 4 weeks before the **implementation**, CEPOL arranges the travel according to the Travel Request Form. Travel tickets and accommodation vouchers will be sent to the participants by a travel agency contracted by CEPOL.

CEPOL Exchange Team must be notified immediately of any changes or cancellation **before travel** by the participant and/or the National Exchange Coordinator.

NB: Changes or cancellation of the exchange after funds are committed (tickets and vouchers are purchased), might be subject to reimbursement/recovery procedure, unless due to serious illness (medical certificate is required) or another force majeure situation. More details in [7.1 Stepping back from the Programme](#).

The travel agency shall be contacted any time in case of a difficulty **during travel** (e.g. cancellation, change of flight, missed flight, hotel issues).

- g) **Within 3 weeks after the successful completion of the exchange**, participants are required to upload their **Narrative Report** to the LEEd platform and fill in the **online feedback** under the designated Exchange 'course' page to which they will automatically have access once their exchange request is approved.

NB: The Narrative Report is subject of approval of the National Exchange Coordinators and the CEPOL Exchange Team.

- h) Exchangees are also expected to prepare and deliver a European level cascading activity **within the year of their exchange**, as part of their **cascading activities**. This activity should be completed with other exchangees completing an exchange in the same thematic area (if applicable). The CEPOL Exchange Team will facilitate the organisations of these cascading activities.

- i) Upon completion of all the above, exchangees will be able to download their CEPOL Exchange **Certificate** that attests their participation in the Programme.

6.7. CEPOL-EJTN Joint Exchange Programme

- a) **Applications** must be submitted on LEEd platform via the Exchange Plugin. Applicant must have a valid LEEd account in order to reach the Exchange Plugin. Please take into account also the time that is necessary to register on LEEd, the registration has to be completed prior submitting the Exchange application.
Supervisor consent is mandatory to submit – country specific requirements may apply, please enquire at your National Exchange Coordinator.
Those who have previously agreed with a counterpart to host each other shall indicate this in the Pre-match section.
- b) National Exchange Coordinator reviews Applications (also in order to check whether the national application procedure has been followed) and ensures that the content is in accordance with the User Guide (including the supervisor consent) – then **approves** or rejects them on individual basis. Applicants will receive a notification on the decision via LEEd, as well as to their registered e-mail address.
In case of rejection, a note will be added as the reason for rejection.
The second leg of approval is done by CEP who reviews the Applications approved by the National Exchange Coordinators and then approve or reject them on an individual basis.
- c) Approved applications will be downloaded from the platform and will be **matched manually** with Judiciary applicants (applying via EJTN) by the CEPOL Exchange Team and EJTN jointly, in order to find hosting countries/counterparts fitting the requirements.
- d) After the matching process, the Exchange Team at CEPOL will **inform** the NEC about the selected exchangees and their counterparts through the **outcome of matching**. The National Exchange Coordinator then makes sure, that selected exchangees receive the host's contact details so that they can explore if the matching is beneficial for them, and start discussing the implementation details of their exchange programme.
- e) **Within 2 weeks** after the dissemination of the matching outcome the selected participants are to contact their counterpart to **discuss the details** of their exchange programme, plan the exchange dates and prepare their activity plans.
- f) **5 weeks after the confirmation** of the successful selection, the National Exchange Coordinators must submit the **Travel Request Form and detailed Activity Plan** of the selected exchangee, completed and signed OR must inform the CEPOL Exchange Team about any communication difficulty between the counterparts.
Additionally submitting the **pre-assignments** on LEEd platform set by CEPOL Exchange Team at the approval of the matching is also mandatory **within 5 weeks after approval**.
Failure to submitting the documents and the pre-assignment on time could result in the postponement or cancellation of the exchange (in this case exchanges will be considered as step backs).
- g) Minimum 4 weeks before the **implementation**, CEPOL arranges the travel according to the Travel Request Form. Travel tickets and accommodation vouchers will be sent to the participants by a travel agency contracted by CEPOL.

CEPOL Exchange Team must be notified immediately of any changes or cancellation before travel by the participant and/or the National Exchange Coordinator.

NB: Changes or cancellation of the exchange after funds are committed (tickets and vouchers are purchased), might be subject to reimbursement/recovery procedure, unless due to serious illness (medical certificate is required) or other force majeure situation. More details in [7.1 Stepping back from the Programme](#).

The travel agency shall be contacted in case of a difficulty during travel (e.g. cancellation, change of flight, missed flight, hotel issues).

- h) **Within 3 weeks after the successful completion the exchange**, participants are required to send their **Narrative Report** via their National Exchange Coordinator and fill in the **online feedback** under the designated Exchange 'course' page to which they will automatically have access once their exchange request is approved.

NB: The Narrative Report is subject of approval of the National Exchange Coordinators and the CEPOL Exchange Team.

Exchangees are also expected to prepare and deliver a European level cascading activity **within the year of their exchange**, as part of their **cascading activities**. This activity should be completed with other exchangees completing an exchange in the same/similar thematic area (if applicable). The CEPOL Exchange Team will facilitate the organisations of these cascading activities.

- i) Upon completion of all the above, exchangees will be able to download their CEPOL Exchange **Certificate** that attests their participation in the Programme.

6.8. Documents and forms to submit

A. Application form

It is an online form to be filled in on LEEd platform, within the Exchange Plugin. Submitting an application including a Europass CV is accepted only via LEEd.

Supervisor consent (*FO EXPR 001-13b Supervisor consent for CEP*) is also a required document to be uploaded as part of the application. The requirements with regard to the Supervisor consent can vary based on country specific rules, and applicants have to make sure to comply with country specific requirements as well, those shall be consulted with the respective NEC prior to the application.

B. Travel Request Form (*FO EXPR 003-13 Travel Request Form*)

It is a Word document, and it can be downloaded from LEEd within the CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page. It has to be submitted via the NEC within 5 weeks after the approval of the exchange request.

It contains all technical details about the travel (personal data, exchange period, the date of departure and return travel, means of transportation, hotel proposals, etc.).

Hotel recommendations should be discussed with the host prior to filling in the form. While giving hotel options, priority should be given to hotels in a reasonable distance from the place of activities during the exchange, offering breakfast with a price under the hosting country's ceiling limit. It is, however not guaranteed that the suggested hotels will be booked as the CEPOL Exchange Team has to consider the financial regulations regarding costs.

NB: in case the hotels listed on the Travel Request Form are not available or are more expensive than other reasonable options, CEPOL is authorised to book an alternative, at least 3-star hotel in the vicinity of the proposed hotels.

C. Activity plan (*TE EXPR 003-13 Activity Plan*)

It is a Word document, and it can be downloaded from LEEed within the CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page. It has to be submitted via the NEC at the same time as the Travel Request Form, within 5 weeks after the approval of the exchange request.

First part of this document contains the detailed agenda of activities during the exchange abroad (in the hosting country). This **must** be prepared in close cooperation with the host, identifying also learning expectations of the exchange. The activities also have to reflect on the pre-assigned questions/tasks provided by CEPOL to each exchangees, see point D.

The next part of this document shows activities after the exchange period, called **cascading plan**.

First is the national level sharing, where the exchangee has to identify how s/he plans to share gained experiences of the Exchange Programme with colleagues in the home country's organisation. Sharing of experience can be through delivering a presentation, writing an article to a professional journal, e-learning, discussion forums, etc. Cascading of the knowledge can be done within your unit / academy, in national / international courses or conferences, on the internet, etc. If in doubt about how to identify cascading options, the NEC can provide advice.

Second part of the cascading activities must be done on a European level in order to disseminate the knowledge gained on an international level. Exchangees must prioritize the three options listed in the Activity Plan based on their preference as to which one they would primarily complete as their European knowledge cascading activity. CEP Team will group exchangees to complete the European level cascading and will facilitate the organisation of these activities.

NB: It is not guaranteed that participants will be tasked to do their primarily chosen activity.

D. Pre-assignment

To be submitted online, on LEEed platform under CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page, together with the Activity Plan and Travel Request Form, within 5 weeks after the approval of the exchange request.

All exchangees will receive a pre-assignment to prepare them for the exchange professionally to be submitted together with the Activity plan. The aim of the pre-assignment is to support exchangees in working out the activities and the mandatory reporting materials (Cascading plan, Narrative report).

The pre-assignment will consist of various tasks, evaluated by quizzes, open-ended answers. Failure to answer to all questions could result in the postponement or cancellation of the exchange.

E. Narrative Report (*RP EXPR 001-12 Narrative Report*)

It is a Word document, and it can be downloaded from LEEed within the CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page. It has to be submitted via the NEC within 3 weeks after the completion of the exchange period as an exchangee.

The Narrative Report gives detailed information on how individual exchangees experienced their stay in the hosting countries; which lessons they have learned and which best practices they have managed to exchange. The aim of the Narrative Report is to make this information available for all those taking part in the Exchange Programme and to build up an e-learning environment for the future. It is not possible to step back from submitting a Narrative Report, but for operational reasons it is possible to request not publishing and/or sharing the report.

Non-submission of the Narrative Report may result in CEPOL requesting to reimburse the exchange costs due to the failure to complete the exchange.

NB: the Narrative Report do not stands for or replace the National or International Cascading.

F. Feedback form

It is online and mandatory feedback to be filled in on LEEd platform, within the CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page, within 3 weeks after the implementation of the exchange period.

The Feedback gives a clear picture of whether and to which extent the objectives of the exchange have been achieved; furthermore, lessons to be learned from this information for future exchange programmes.

G. Post-assignment and cascading activities

Cascading activities are major and mandatory part of the CEPOL Exchange Programme. These activities must take place after the implementation of the exchange, preferably in the same year.

As mentioned above, the first part of cascading happens on national level where the exchangee has to share his/her gained experiences with colleagues in the home country's organisation. Sharing of experience can be through delivering a presentation, writing an article to a professional journal, e-learning, discussion forums, etc.

The second part happens on a European level, where the exchangee disseminates his/her gained knowledge on an international level. This task will be facilitated by CEPOL and exchangees have to indicate their preferred way of cascading activity, such as Exchange-bites (webinars), Essay of Practice (Professional article) or Research Bulletin article.

H. Certificate

Exchangees will be able to download their certificates from the CEPOL Exchange Programme 'course' page after the submission of all documents and feedback, and the completion of post-assignment and cascading activities.

6.9 Further information

6.9.1 Preparation

6.9.1.1 Visa

Exchangees might require a **visa** to travel to the country of their selected counterpart. The following issues are to be considered:

- The application and issuing procedure may take a considerable length of time. Exchangees need to ensure that any visa application has been submitted by them in line with the timeframe defined by the visa regulations valid in the country of residence/country of the application.
- There might be costs involved with obtaining a visa which cannot be covered by CEPOL. The sending country is expected to cover the costs of any required visa for their exchangees.
It is recommended to take up contact with the relevant Embassy/Consulate as soon as the exchangee receives the information which country s/he will be going to, which has to be organised by the participant/sending authority.
For hosting countries, a **model Invitation letter** is often required for a visa and it can be found under the document named *TE EXPR 006-4 Invitation Letter for Visa (European Training Unit Hub, EUTH*

only. It will be needed to be amended it to specific national requirements which must be clarified beforehand.

The hosting countries are kindly invited to liaise, as early as possible after the identification of the exchangees, with the relevant visa issuing and border/immigration authorities (of the sending and hosting countries respectively) in order to facilitate visa issuance and entry arrangements for the visiting officers. Written communications to the relevant authorities highlighting the relevance of swift visa processing to allow participation into the CEPOL Exchange Programme are highly recommended.

Timely application for a visa is the responsibility of the sending country/exchangee. In case visa does not arrive on time before travelling due to a late application from the sending country, CEPOL might recover any costs for bookings already made for the exchangee.

It is recommended to set the travelling dates for the exchange for a reasonably later date within the implementation period of the programme in case exchangee needs a visa to travel to the hosting country, and to start the visa application process as soon as the exchange is confirmed.

6.9.1.2 Insurance

Neither CEPOL nor the hosting country takes any liability in case of any incident for which insurance is required. Also, the flight booking does not include any travel insurance.

Participants must be made aware that CEPOL is not responsible for participants' travel and health insurance, neither it is possible for CEPOL or the hosting organisation to obtain an insurance, nor can accept any liability towards such costs; therefore all participants are strongly recommended to ensure that they have personal insurance for any costs related to falling ill during the exchange, including coverage for hospitalisation and repatriation.

6.9.2 Exchange Period

The length of the exchange period covers 6 days / 5 nights, min. 5 working days, weekend not included. Deviation from this rule for shorter period, study visits, or including weekend is possible and can be considered and approved by CEPOL Exchange Programme Team upon official request for a valid professional reason in case operational reasons require so.

In order to ensure the working days are fully used, bookings will be made in such a way that the exchangee will be able to start with the exchange on Monday morning 9:00hrs; this involves travelling on Sunday. The return flight/train/bus/ferry will be arranged in such a way that the exchangee leaves the law enforcement premises not before Friday lunch time; this implies departure times no earlier than 14:00hrs.

The CEPOL Exchange Programme must be finalised by **13 November 2026**, which means all exchanges should be completed by this date.

6.9.3. Incidents and complaints

- a. ***During the exchange period:*** Any complaints, in the sense of expression of dissatisfaction related to CEPOL's services, during the exchange period can be taken to the CEPOL Exchange Team, who shall take action where necessary and possible and find solutions immediately and during the exchange where possible.
- b. ***Outside of the exchange period activity plan:*** In case of any incidents concerning security or health or other that happen outside of the daily planned activities, the National Exchange Coordinator in the hosting country is to be informed. Here, the hotel staff or the Embassy of the exchangee's country may also be of use. CEPOL does not take any liability for such incidents but will provide support where possible.

- c. **At the end of the exchange period:** For any criticism complaints related to CEPOL's services that cannot be shared immediately on the spot, there is the possibility to use the open questions in the feedback form to be completed on the LMS at the end of the exchange (see 6.8.F.). Participants may also submit their complaint in a written format to the functional email box under FM.EXPRO@cepol.europa.eu. CEPOL will review and respond to the submitted complaint in a timely manner.
- d. **Response:** CEP Team will make sure that the cause for any complaint related to CEPOL's services is reviewed and removed where possible. If necessary, they will also ensure that changes are made in order to avoid repetition of the occurrence in future exchange programmes.

For any serious complaints submitted in writing, CEPOL shall review and respond within one month after the complaint has been lodged.

7. Costs

CEPOL covers the following costs for the exchange:

- **International transport**

CEPOL will pay for the return transport (flight, international train, bus or ferry) from the main international airport/train station/bus station/ferry station that is situated closest to the place of duty to the main international airport/train station/bus station/ferry station that is situated closest to the place of the main activities in the hosting country, while respecting the principle of sound financial management. If the distance in the sending country is more than 300 km to the nearest international airport/train station/bus station/ferry station CEPOL will cover this domestic transportation if requested. Please note that the closest international airport can be in a different country.

Please note that private detour or extensions of stay for private reasons are not facilitated by CEPOL. In case of business detour, CEPOL will provide only one way ticket (only outbound or only inbound). However, in duly justified cases after assessing the reasons and comparing the prices, CEPOL may agree to deviate from this rule and book a return ticket.

Travel by car can also be one of the transportation options. This has to be requested when submitting the travel request form and it is subject of prior CEPOL Management Approval.

The cost of travelling by car will be reimbursed at 0.28 €/km, to which toll fees and parking costs can be added after submitting the corresponding supporting documentation. The reimbursement shall be done based on the vehicle log sheet which has to be completed and signed. The maximum reimbursement for car travel shall not exceed €224 (800km round trip) to which toll fees and parking costs can be added.

Request for reimbursement has to be submitted to CEPOL using the appropriate **Reimbursement forms for car travel** (*FO EXPR 005-3 Individual Reimbursement Form Finance* and *FO EXPR 007-2 Participant Reimbursement Form for Car Travel*) and other relevant supporting documents, which will be checked by the CEPOL Exchange Programme Team. The originals of the documents (including originals of toll fee payment) must be scanned and sent to CEPOL Headquarters via e-mail before CEPOL can initiate the reimbursement.

Exchangees should be advised that CEPOL will not reimburse individuals by transferring money to private bank accounts. Reimbursement is only possible to law enforcement organisations (sending authorities) who are registered in CEPOL's accounting system, ABAC.

Reimbursement requests for car travel will only be processed within the year when the exchange took place. All documents, claims should therefore be submitted through the National Exchange Coordinator within 4 weeks after the completion of the exchange.

Please note: Travel bookings are made based on the offers of the travel agency, taking into consideration the best available transport option, the agenda of the activity and CEPOL's financial guidelines. Please note that CEPOL is NOT required to consult with participants on possible travel options and CEPOL is authorised to book alternative flight/train/bus/ferry option in case the preferred option does not fulfil the above criteria.

Tickets sent electronically or by surface mail by the travel agency are already purchased, and in most cases, they are not refundable and not changeable. Participants are expected to notify **directly and immediately** the travel agency, the CEPOL Exchange Team and their NEC as soon as they are aware of any circumstances and issues that can affect their travel.

Changes or cancellation of the exchange after funds are committed (tickets and vouchers are purchased), might be subject to reimbursement/recovery procedure, unless due to serious illness (medical certificate is required) or other force majeure situation. More details in [7.1 Stepping back from the Programme](#).

- ***Accommodation, including meals***

Accommodation and breakfast are paid for in advance by CEPOL; beyond these costs any extra private consumption and charges in the hotel will be the responsibility of the exchangee. Should there be a matter of discussion, the service provider (travel agency) issuing the ticket/booking confirmation and/or CEPOL Exchange Team must be contacted immediately.

- ***Other costs***

CEPOL does not provide lunches, dinners and domestic transport, it is expected that the sending country covers these expenses for its exchangees.

Equally, CEPOL does not cover any expenses to the host related to the hosting activities in the host's country, neither the costs related to insurance nor visa.

- ***Information for Dog Handlers***

In case a service dog is involved, the dog handler must make arrangements and cover the costs for this him/herself. CEPOL cannot cover any costs nor be held liable for any other requirements or incidents with regard to service dogs. Exchangees have to be aware of the following issues:

- Countries have different requirements for bringing a dog into another country including evidence of vaccinations etc.
- Most hotels do not accept animals in the rooms. Exchangees will have to clarify whether the hosting organisation has facilities where the dog can stay overnight.
- Different airlines have different provisions for transporting of animals, either on board or in the luggage compartment. Also costs for transportation vary.

Dog handlers have to make sure that they obtain all the relevant information on time and check whether the hosting country is prepared to receive and support an exchangee with a dog.

7.1 Stepping back from the Programme

Stepping back from the Exchange Programme must be **avoided as far as possible** as this not only has logistical and financial consequences but also has an impact on the counterpart.

If it becomes necessary to step back the CEPOL Exchange Team must be informed as early as possible via the NEC. In case of a step-back, the sending/hosting country is welcome to nominate a suitable replacement that fulfils the requirements of the stepped back person, pending the approval of CEPOL Exchange Team.

If this happens AFTER CEPOL has committed funds and these cannot be retrieved, the exchangee may be requested to reimburse CEPOL for the costs incurred, unless stepping back is due to a serious illness (medical certificate is required) or other force majeure situation. If the sending country covers the cost for an approved replacement's travel, and the travel is still possible, CEPOL will not request recovery of committed funds.

Please note that all replacement requests are subject to approval of the CEPOL Exchange Programme Team and National Exchange Coordinators, prior to the agreement with the counterpart.

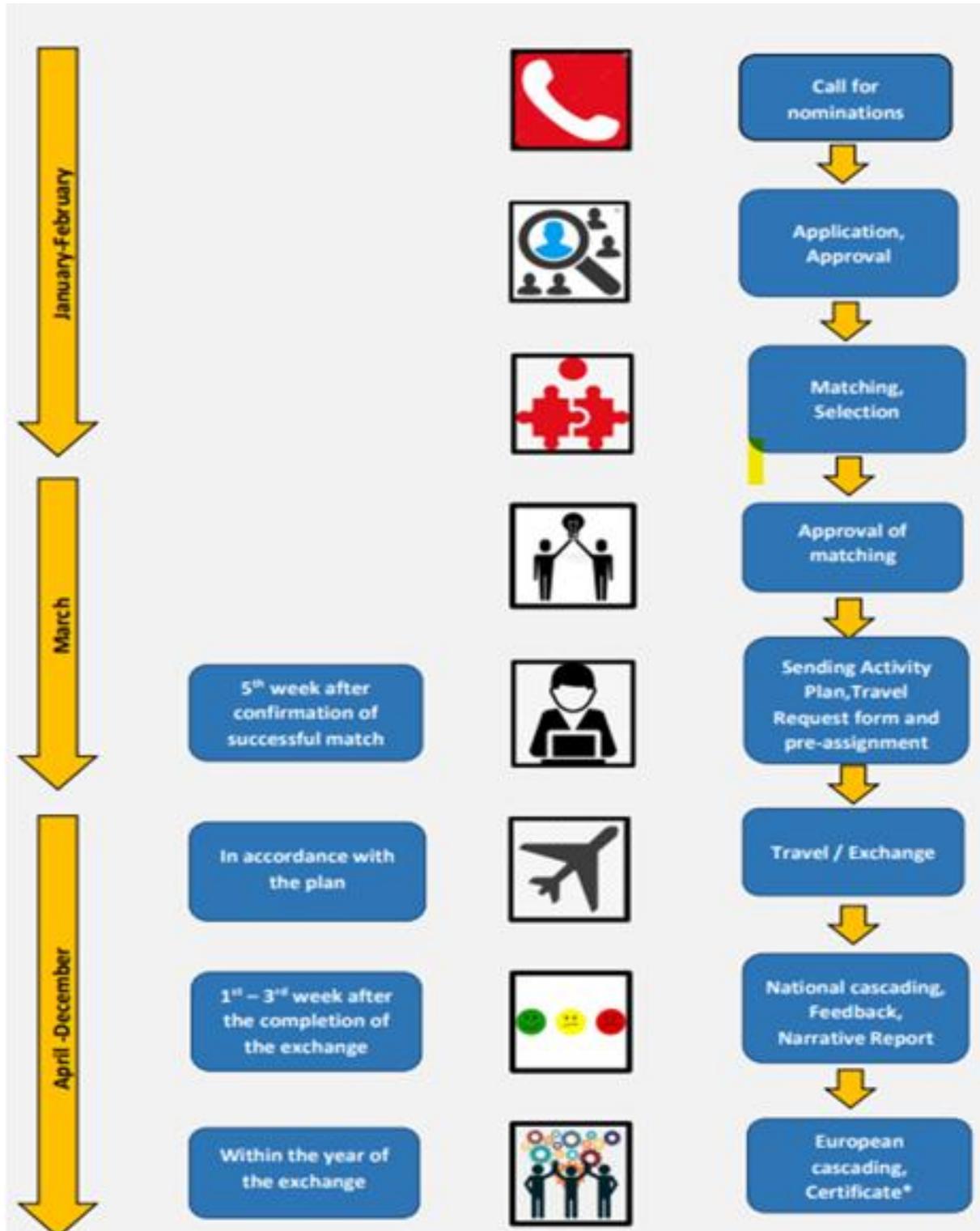
Finally, the Exchange Programme is considered fully implemented ONLY when all tasks are completed (pre-assignments, travel, submission of Narrative report, Feedback form and cascading activities, both on national and EU-level). Non-completion of the Programme might be subject to reimbursement/recovery procedure.

8. Privacy Statement

All personal data collected by the Agency are processed in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC.

A dedicated Privacy Statement for the CEPOL Exchange Programme is available on the CEPOL website www.cepola.europa.eu.

9. Timeline in 2026



* Certificate for CEPOL Exchange Programme participation can be downloaded after all requirements were fulfilled, including the European level cascading.