Procedural principles of cross-agency staff exchange

A modern and efficient administration needs staff members who are able to fulfill in an efficient manner and on their own responsibility the complex and frequently changing tasks at the ministry and at the agencies within the ministry's sphere of competence.

That goal can be achieved only if the work potential of the staff is further developed in a future-oriented manner. The close interrelation of tasks between the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the agencies within its sphere of competence requires human resources development planning aimed at enhancing the range of potential employments of a staff member, including the cross-agency aspect. A relevant tool is the implementation of staff exchange based on transparent procedural principles.

The target group is newly recruited staff. For members of the höherer Dienst (higher service), participation in staff exchange from the reference day¹ [date of adoption] is a compulsory career element for a future management position. Any other staff of the höherer Dienst as well as staff of the gehobener Dienst (higher intermediate service) and the mittlerer Dienst (intermediate service) are included in the exchange programme on a voluntary basis.

In addition to staff exchange between the Federal Ministry of the Interior and agencies within its sphere of competence, other external employments (e.g. in another agency within the Ministry's sphere of competence, in international bodies, in a Land authority or in businesses) might be recognised as an equivalent element of agency-specific human resources development concepts. Experts (IT staff, executive service personnel, specialised statisticians, university lecturers) may be exempted from participation in staff exchange if the principal subject-related further qualification can be achieved only within the agency of actual employment. For staff with family care duties, external employments near their place of residence should be envisaged.

¹ For the Federal Ministry of the Interior, retroactive arrangements can be made.
Staff exchange shall be implemented under the following framework conditions:

1. New staff shall be recruited mainly for the agencies within the Ministry's sphere of competence.

2. Within a period of three years after recruitment, it is generally not possible for a staff member to take over a function at the Ministry or at another agency within its sphere of competence (external employment). For public officials with a particular specialisation, and in individual, objectively justified cases, exceptions to this rule may be made.

3. With a view to sustained human resources development, external missions should be fixed for a two-year period. External stays of less than a total of one year will not be recognised as a special qualification characteristic in an agency's internal human resources development concept.

4. If an external employment involves taking over managerial responsibility, and if for that purpose the agency's internal staff placement rules require passing a prior assessment procedure, such requirements must also be met in the context of staff exchange.

5. A successful external employment is a selection criterion for advancement decisions and for assigning management functions at the Federal Ministry of the Interior (appointment as a head of section) and equivalent functions within the Ministry's sphere of competence. For such decision-making, the special qualification acquired through an external employment should have particular importance. Deviations from such practice must be restricted to compelling objective considerations (for example, to avoid disadvantages for groups of persons who, for personal and/or legal grounds, cannot be expected to participate in staff exchange).

6. An external employment is arranged through secondment. The costs involved in such a personnel measure (travel expenses, moving expenses, separation allowance) shall be covered by the host agency. For an external employment, an appraisal has to be given. This is a task of the exchanging agency.

7. External employments should be co-ordinated as early as possible between the sending agency and the host agency. The contact persons are the staff members in charge of career management in the personnel sections.

8. If an external employment cannot be arranged as a mutual exchange, the occurring vacancy is to be covered by the sending agency for the duration of the secondment. Recruiting new staff for a fixed term to cover the vacancy shall be possible only if efforts for replacement from within the same agency or by staff exchange have demonstrably been without success.