

Survey among the European Public Administration Network members (EUPAN)

European and international mobility of public workers

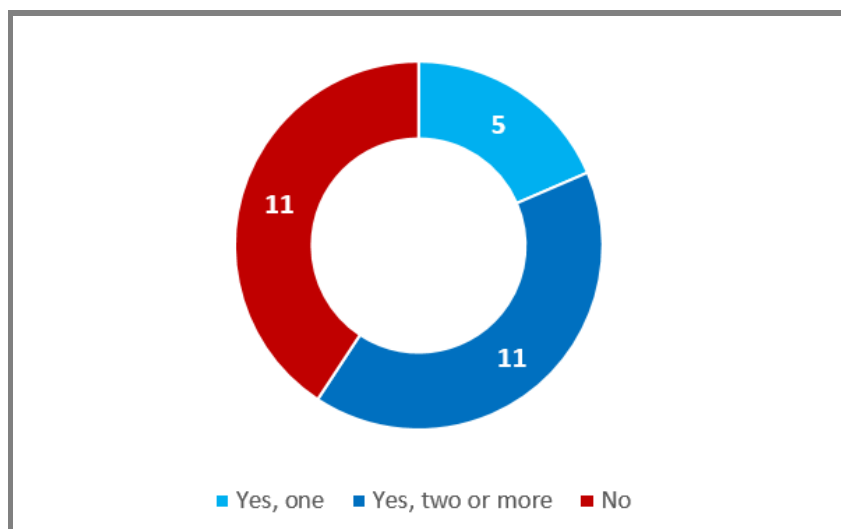
In the framework of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union and at the request of the Directorate General for Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP), Ipsos surveyed a panel of representatives of the directorates in charge of public administration and correspondents of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) about the European and international mobility of public workers.

This survey will make it possible to share best practices in order to support public workers and to capitalize on European mobility opportunities. This study will feed the elaboration of a European initiative on mobility which will be adopted at the end of the French Presidency of the European Union.

1. European and international mobility schemes are now widespread in the different EUPAN administrations

Mobility schemes dedicated to exchanges of civil servants between administrations are nowadays quite widespread within the Member States of the European Union. Out of the 27 respondents to the survey, 16 declare having used mobility schemes specifically dedicated to civil servants. **A majority of them (11 out of 16) have even used several of these schemes.**

Graph 1: In your bilateral partnerships, do you have specific mobility programmes for exchanges of public servants with other administrations in Europe and worldwide ?

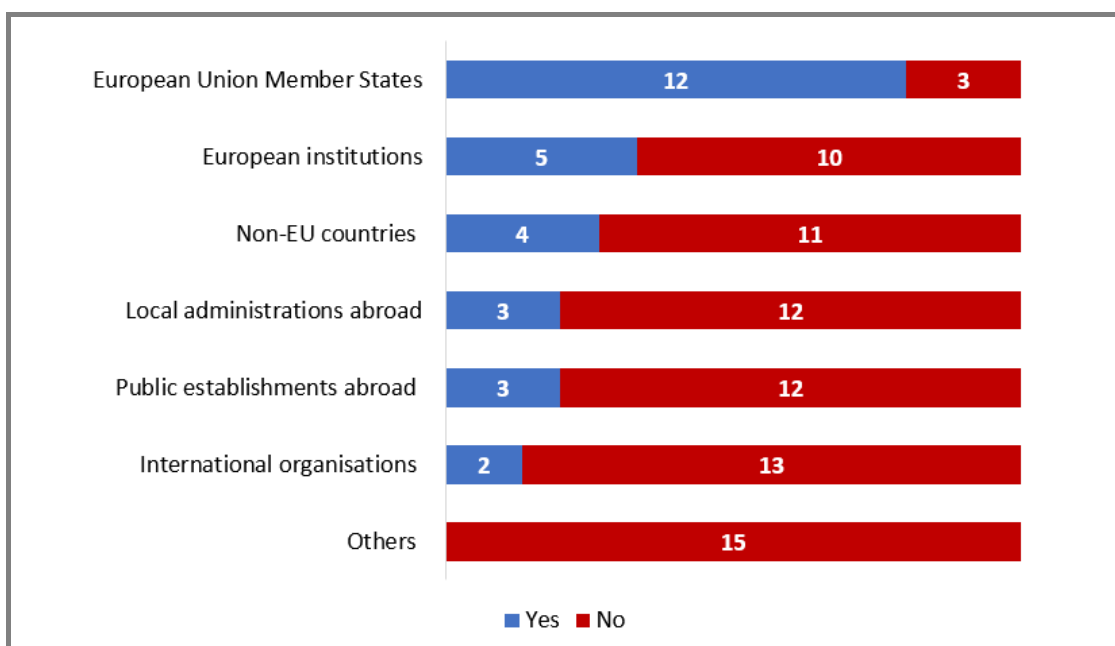


« Erasmus public administration programme, European Resiprogal training programme, Nordic exchange of employees. Temporary services at International organisations, Exchange with other EU MS-administrations, Exchange with European Commission »

The majority of these schemes were established in the last two decades: 12 of the 16 respondents who report the existence of such a scheme specify a date of establishment between 1999 and today. **Only a small minority mention older programs**, the oldest dating back to 1945.

These arrangements mainly involve **exchanges between administrations of different EU Member States** (12 out of 15 respondents state that this is the case). In some rare cases, it may involve local administrations abroad (3 out of 15) or public institutions abroad (3 out of 15).

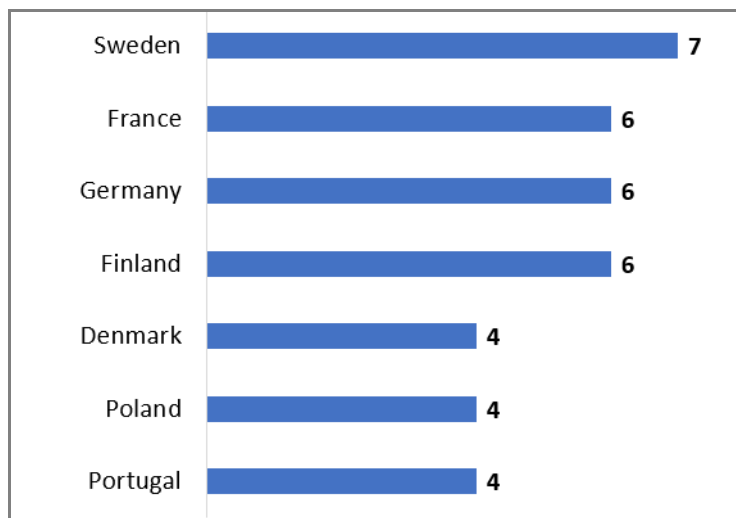
Graph 2: Which partners are involved ?



All EU Member States are mentioned as potentially involved in exchange schemes. Nevertheless, some states are more often mentioned than others:

- **France and Germany are the most mentioned** (6 times each);
- **The Scandinavian countries are also mentioned in many cases**, especially Sweden (7 times) but also Finland (6 times) and Denmark (4 times).

Graph 3: Which EU member states are involved ?



Member states quoted 4 times or more

This important presence of the Scandinavian countries is explained by **the existence of a specific program of mobilities between Nordic countries** (*Nordisk utvekslingsordning*: Nordic exchange possibilities).

« Administrations in the Nordic countries (Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the Åland Islands). The program can be used by all entities within the State Sector. Some individual ministries/administrations in the State Sector are likely to be involved in more specific European or international mobility programs. »

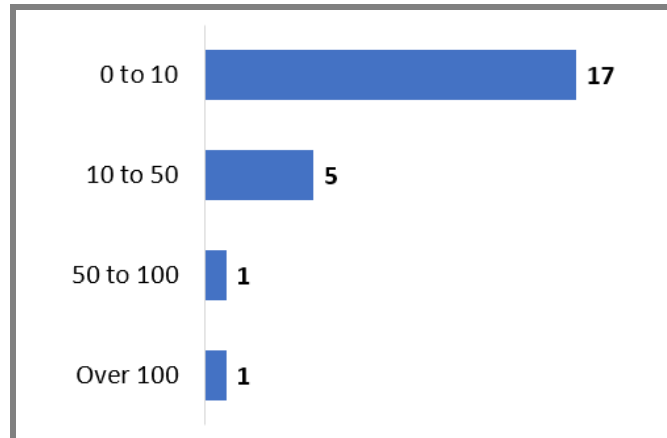
In a smaller number of cases, the administrations concerned may also be located outside the European Union. This is most often the case for States that are not members of the European Union (4 cases out of 15), generally Northern European States (Iceland, Norway), but also international organizations (2 cases out of 15):

« United Nations, World Bank, African Union Commission. »

Some respondents say that their administrations are developing a second scheme, which is often identical to the first. Most of them have been set up recently (5 out of 8 were set up after 2008) and often involve exchanges with other member states.

Mobility schemes are therefore relatively widespread. Nevertheless, in most cases, these schemes **only concern a limited number of public employees**. Thus, out of 16 respondents, 11 state that outside of the pandemic period, **10 or fewer employees benefit from this scheme**. For 4 respondents, this system concerns 11 to 50 workers and only one respondent mentions a system concerning more than 50 workers. **The situation is the same for the second scheme**: 6 out of 8 declare that during each "normal" year, outside the pandemic period, less than 10 public workers participate.

Graph 4: In non-pandemic times, how many staff on average are sent on the programme per year?



2. A large variety of mobility schemes

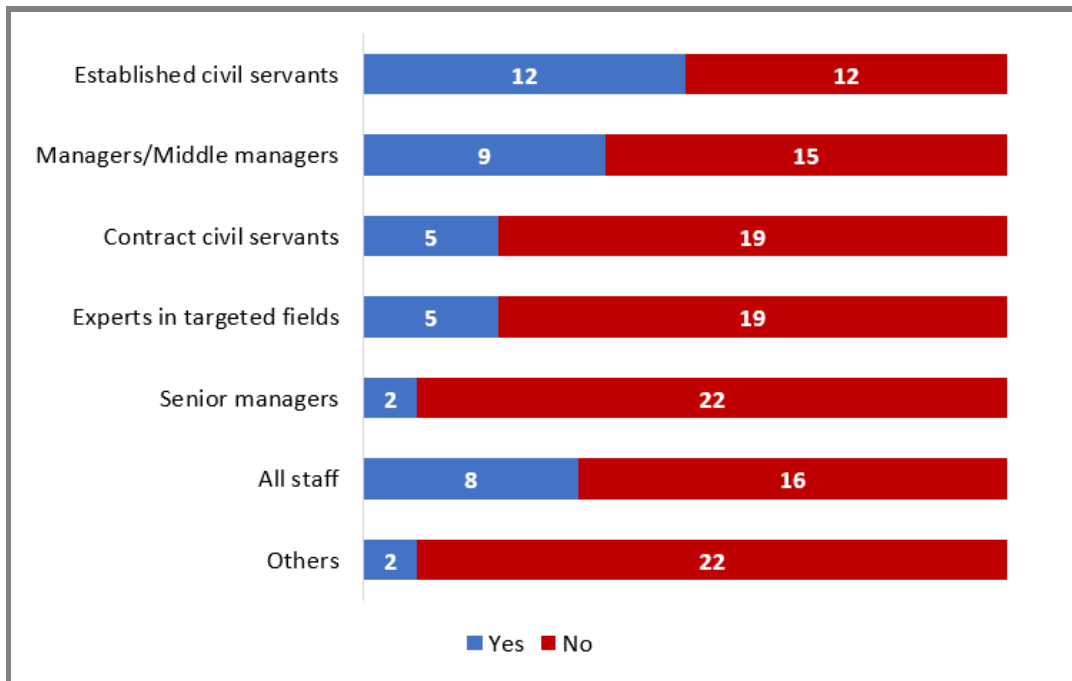
Whether in terms of duration, target audience or selection criteria, the various measures mentioned **do not concern a typical profile but rather a wide variety of situations.**

The duration of the programs varies greatly: among the 24 programs mentioned by the respondents, **3 lasted less than one month**, 7 between one and three months, 6 between three and six months, 3 between six months and one year and **5 more than one year**. Thus, **there is no "typical" duration** that emerges from these different arrangements.

This observation can also be made about **the audiences concerned by these measures**. In one third of the cases cited (8 out of 24), these programs are open to all publics and therefore do not concern specific functions. The schemes aimed at specific audiences are often accessible to the greatest number. Thus, in half of the cases (12 out of 24) they are aimed at civil servants as a whole.

In some cases, however, the proposed programs may be aimed at people with managerial functions. **Most of the time they are open to local managers or middle managers** (9 cases out of 24) and more rarely to top managers (only 2 cases are cited).

Graph 5: Who participates in the exchanges?



Finally, **no selection criteria for the choice of public workers particularly stand out. Knowledge of foreign languages is the most cited criterion** (11 out of 24 respondents), followed by **career plans** (10 respondents), and **previous experience and position held** (9 respondents in both cases). 12 respondents also cited another type of criterion. These other criteria can vary but often aim to ensure that the mobility is of interest to the worker but also to the home administration:

« To be eligible for the scholarship, the employer must grant paid leave during the period of the stay. When awarding scholarships, emphasis is placed on that the applicant has had a certain period of service in the State, that the exchange has a professional connection to the applicant's area of work, and that the stay benefits both the place of employment and the applicant. »

« Civil service activities performed by the applicant should match the activities performed at the DG, personal motivation, usefulness of the secondment for the public authority. »

Therefore, **there is no "standard" mobility scheme across the different administrations of the European Union. These schemes vary in terms of duration, the profile of the people involved and the criteria taken into account for their selection.**

3. Mobility is usually supported by the home administration, mainly from a financial and organizational point of view

Support for mobility by the workers' home administration is central to the implementation of these measures. **This support takes various forms, but mainly financing.** Out of the 24 cases mentioned, 15 are financed, at least in part, by the home administration.

In most cases, this funding **avoids the need for the employee to bear part of the costs of mobility**, although **this is the case in about one in three situations** (9 out of 24).

Beyond the financial issue, **this support can take several other forms, but most of the time it consists of help with organizational preparation** (of the 24 programs reported, 19 offer this type of support to participants), **financing** (15 out of 24) or **support from human resources departments** (8 out of 24).

Graph 6: What support is offered to participants?



These support tools **may be accessible throughout the mobility process of the public workers concerned: before, during and after mobility, but not systematically.** Indeed, 11 out of 26 respondents state that there are no tools before departure for a mobility, 12 that there are none during and 11 that there are none after.

The presence or absence of mobility support tools does not depend on the stage of the mobility process.

Respondents mentioning mobility support tools develop several types of tools, two of which are more widespread:

- First, **support from the human resources department.** 10 out of 26 respondents state that there is support throughout the entire process, before, during and after the move.

- Second, a **specific correspondent**. 10 out of 26 respondents state that this tool exists before and during mobility, 8 after mobility.

Other tools such as training, guides or needs surveys are slightly less widespread.

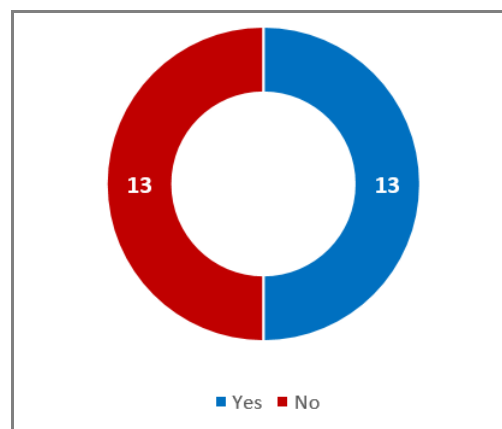
The presence of these tools is as much reported by respondents who say they have used one or more mobility schemes as by those who say they have not used these schemes.

4. Mobility is often the subject of a specific support and promotion policy

The support provided by the home administration to employees going on mobility abroad is often carried out **within the framework of a specific policy to support or promote mobility**.

Of the 26 respondents interviewed, half (13) stated that they have a specific policy to support and promote mobility abroad.

Graph 7: More generally, do you have a specific policy to support/promote mobility abroad?



This support policy can be implemented at several levels, but **most often at the cross-cutting or interdepartmental level** (7 out of 13 respondents say this is the case) **or at the departmental level** (6 out of 13 respondents). This policy is more rarely implemented at the unit level (3 out of 13 respondents).

The support and promotion policy very rarely includes a specific component for senior management (only 2 out of 13 say this is the case).

While most of the mobility schemes mentioned are carried out between EU member States, **there are no real differences in the support policy for mobility within or outside the European Union**. Out of the 13 respondents stating that a support policy is in place, only 3 treat mobility inside and outside the EU differently.

« For the EU mobility within European Institutions, we have a special Unit at the Spanish Delegation in Brussels to promote and support the presence of Spanish persons, its name is UDA - Unidad de Apoyo para la presencia de españoles en las Instituciones UE : Trabajar en las administraciones de la Unión Europea (exteriores.gob.es). Besides, the Unit for International Civil Servants (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation) »

5. Mobility is not highly valued in the career paths of public workers

Valuing European or international mobility in the context of public employees' career paths is very rare. Only 4 out of 26 respondents state that this is the case.

In the few cases where measures are mentioned, **the valorisation of the mobility is really followed up. The skills acquired during the mobility are systematically evaluated and documented** upon return.

« A report has to be submitted by the employee »

« The skills acquired during mobility are documented in the staff member's personal files »

Some typical skills are then documented upon return:

« Langues étrangères, adaptabilité, autonomie et prise de recul, compétences humaines, comportementales et relationnelles (communication interculturelle, intelligence émotionnelle, résolution de problème, négociation, travail en équipe, négociation et organisation »

The valuing of this type of mobility does not mean that it becomes a necessary condition for obtaining certain positions. Of the six respondents who have a policy of valuing mobility, none of them report that mobility is a necessary condition for obtaining certain positions.

Furthermore, the valorisation of these mobility in the career path of the workers remains relatively rare: only 3 respondents out of the 5 who mention the existence of a policy of valorisation of mobility declare that this is the case.

« Promotion dans le parcours de l'agent / prise en compte dans les nominations au grade supérieur. »

European or international mobility is not highly valued in career paths and is **not specifically linked to other policies, such as those promoting professional equality.** Thus, only 3 out of 26 respondents state that there are specific mechanisms to link European and international mobility with a "professional equality policy":

« *Equal access to all the training measures, female participants are in specific cases invited to take part in the training measures* »

Indeed, **almost no respondent (2 out of 26) reports the existence of specific actions to promote European and international mobility for women.** These are the exceptions:

« *Participation in the program “Women in Diplomacy” run by FCDO, aimed at support for female Diplomats’ careers* »

Conclusion :

- **A majority of respondents have already used specific mobility schemes for exchanges of public workers with other administrations.** Most of the time, these exchanges take place **between administrations of different European Union member States.**
- However, these schemes **only concern a rather limited number of public workers** each year.
- There is **no standard profile for these mobility schemes.** They vary in terms of duration, public concerned and selection criteria.
- This type of mobility is **supported by the administration mainly through funding and organizational assistance.** The tools proposed are generally **used during the different stages of the mobility:** before, during and after.
- In one out of two cases, mobility abroad is **subject to a specific promotion and support policy.** This policy is generally implemented at a global, interdepartmental or ministerial level.
- On the other hand, administrations rarely **implement a specific policy to enhance the value of European mobility upon the worker's return** and in the longer term in career paths.