

**FRA INTERNAL
GUIDELINES**

**STRATEGIC LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
2012**



FRA

EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS



European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Human Resources & Planning

Strategic learning and Development Framework 2012

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1. Introduction

The following document bases itself on the FRA Staff Learning & Development Policy and Guidelines, which are both in force since 1 January 2012.

It summarises the FRA learning and development priority areas identified for 2012, which shall help the FRA staff develop the skills and knowledge, as well as attitudes and behaviour that will contribute most to achieving FRA goals and organisational development priorities in 2012, and which can be supported through learning and development activities.

2. FRA staff learning and development priorities in 2012

In the course of November 2011, the training coordinator in HRP had meetings with the FRA Director and all FRA Heads of Department in order to

- (1) inform of developments and achievements in the area of training such as the development on evaluation and impact assessment in the course of 2011, and forthcoming introduction of an online training application tool (TrainMa);
- (2) learn about the priority training needs for the Agency overall, but also for the different departments.

Further to these meetings and discussions, the following priority areas were identified.

2.1. Coaching for senior managers

Given the FRA's continued high ambitions to further develop its key role in the protection of fundamental rights in the EU, senior managers need to develop their skills related to the external as well as internal environment. Individual and team coaching sessions for FRA senior managers will be continued in 2012. They will

cover a broad spectrum of management topics (working as a team, leadership, appraisal of staff, conflict management, mediation skills, etc). They will provide the management team with opportunities to optimise personal strengths, apply good practice in daily management, and to build teams.

The existing framework contract with LinKS will be used for this purpose. Other possibilities/contract could be used in addition.

2.2. Management training for junior managers

Management training for junior managers (inter alia for team leaders) was provided in 2010. This training shall be continued and followed-up in 2012. In this respect, the Management Team will take care of the harmonisation of target groups.

Existing framework contracts will serve to make this training available.

2.3. Stakeholder engagement and consultancy capacity

With a view to further develop the FRA's advice function, FRA staff in the operational departments (i.e. ECR, FJ, and CAR) continues to need training and other learning exercises, such as workshops, conferences, and communities of practice, to further develop its capacities in this field.

To this end, the Art of Participatory Leadership and Art of Consulting training shall be repeated in 2012. Furthermore and with a view to certain FRA projects for which the political environment proves to be tensed, Research will develop together with external experts/consultants a workshop to learn about how to deal with different barriers and diversity.

2.4. Administrative procedures, budget, procurement, recruitment

The FRA and its staff are obliged to follow EU finance and procurement procedures as well as other obligatory administrative procedures, e.g. for the recruitment of staff. Therefore, training on these procedures (e.g. finance and procurement and selection interviewing) is a priority and compulsory for all staff involved.

Several times in the past, EC DG BUDG has provided finance and procurement training to FRA staff at the FRA premises. This proved to be excellent quality training and received very positive evaluation results. However, whenever possible and in order to save financial resources but also with a view to FRA specificities, it is considered good practice to have in-house expert staff deliver these courses when possible.

2.5. Various communication training

In the context of communication training, especially writing for the web, speechwriting, as well as presentation, and public speaking training have to be developed further. Main target groups here are staff in the operational departments (ECR, FJ, and CAR) who have to contribute to FRA speeches, produce presentations, and hold public speeches at conferences and events in their field of expertise.

Existing framework contracts will be used for this purpose as well as recommended external experts, who could be contracted directly.

2.6. Media training

While in the past the FRA provided media skills training to staff in the communication department, in 2012 and with regards to the re-organisation taking place in July 2011, research staff continues to need to be trained in interviewee

skills and techniques. The standard media trainings offered through the existing framework contracts will not support the need sufficiently, and therefore, recommended experts have to be contracted directly.

2.7. Planning and monitoring skills for project managers

Due to the project-oriented nature of the FRA's work, project management has a high priority as a training need. Special emphasis in 2012 will be given to planning and monitoring skills as well as the definition of performance indicators.

Whenever possible and useful – and with regards to the FRA's own approach to project management – such training will be provided by internal experts (e.g. Matrix training). When new and more innovative skills are required, recommended external experts shall be sought and contracted directly.

2.8. Academic Research

Given the highly qualified FRA workforce in general and the Research expertise in particular, FRA experts are often invited to speak at international conferences. At the same time, there is a need for FRA experts to keep up with development in research areas that would require these experts to participate in conference without being invited as a speaker.

Such learning shall be supported by HRP. Therefore, HRP will seek to establish a memorandum of understanding with academic institutions, e.g. the European Law Academy (ERA), with a view to obtaining reduced fees for FRA participants in return for making available FRA speakers free of charge.

2.9. Prevention of harassment, mediation and counselling skills

As part of FRA policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing psychological and sexual harassment at work, awareness raising sessions of compulsory nature will be offered to all staff. In addition, the confidential counsellors as well as the Agency's staff involved in staff welfare issues will receive further specialised training.

Existing framework contracts will serve to make this training available.

2.10. Equal opportunities and diversity

FRA is fully committed to provide equal opportunities and promote diversity. Especially, staff in the HRP department will require further expert coaching in this area (equal and flexible workplace-managing team diversity, ethics, tools and mechanisms for recruitment, employment and retaining of diversity). Training on working in a multi-cultural environment shall be organised for all staff.

Existing framework contracts will serve to make this training available.

2.11. Induction training

The aim of the induction training is to familiarise new entrants with FRA's work, departments and specific issues, especially safety and health at work. Therefore, the induction training is compulsory for newcomers. However, for refreshment purpose, it will be open to all FRA staff.

The induction training will be organised by HRP in cooperation with all other departments, who will make available their in-house experts as presenters.

2.12. Informal in-house learning possibilities

The following informal in-house learning activities will continue in 2012:

- a) INFORM ME session (organised by CAR);
- b) ResT & Test sessions (organised by ECR and FJ);
- c) Fundamental Rights crash courses (developed by ECR and FJ);
- d) Communities of Practice (organised by all interest FRA staff).

Staff in all FRA departments is encouraged to create further internal informal learning activities for all staff and/or specific target groups.

2.13. Away days and team building events

Away days and team building events will continue to be organised in 2012. The purpose of this type of activity is to commonly discuss issues of strategic concern to the Agency overall, exchange knowledge, find solutions, improve coordination and working methods, strategic planning of activities, get to know each other better, and to enhance team work. These events have been found highly useful in the past.

HRP is available to support the organisation of away days and teambuilding events where requested and necessary; however, the responsible person in the requesting department (e.g. Head of Department, project manager, etc.) will be the main organiser (e.g. drafting the proposal and event programme).

3. Implementation and available resources

Learning and development activities will be implemented according to the priorities set by management taking into account staff development needs, as well as human and financial resources.

An indicative number of 10 training days is targeted per staff member in 2012. The budgetary resources for professional training of staff in 2012 will be of 290,000 EUR. With a staff (TAs, CAs, and SNEs) number of 95 at the beginning of 2012, ca. 3,000 EUR will be available per staff member on average. The human resources made available for the organisation of FRA training activities in 2012 will be one AD (training coordinator) and one trainee (assisting the training coordinator).

4. Impact assessment

The impact assessment of learning/training activities is key to account for the investment of resources in staff training. To this end, the following elements of impact assessment of learning/training activities at the FRA were developed: Since 2011, the Career Development Plans include a training review section. Furthermore, the ex-post evaluation process was upgraded to 4 levels, i.e. level 1 and 2 immediate reactions and learning evaluation, level 3 behaviour evaluation, level 4 results evaluation. Level 1 asks the application if the learning/training objectives have been met. Level 3 and 4 evaluations will be automatically forwarded to the Head of Department for her/his review. The achievement of the training objective(s) is considered to be the most important performance indicator. For this reason, it is compulsory for the applicant to define learning/training objectives when applying for a learning/training activity. The evaluation of her/his learning/training activities by a staff member is also compulsory. The obligation also includes being on time and evaluating training in which they take part. Our general goal is to meet the objectives of the training and to put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired. HRP will report regularly (at least twice a year) to the Director and the Heads of Department. They will be asked for their feedback and evaluation of the impact the different training sessions had on their staff's performance.

5. HRP priorities in the area of staff learning and development in 2012

- Adoption and implementation of the FRA Strategic Learning & Development Framework 2012;
- Adoption and implementation of the revised FRA Staff Learning & Development Policy and Guidelines;
- Launch and optimisation of the online training application tool TrainMa;
- Further development of impact assessment of training activities;
- Further promotion of the use of e-learning and informal in-house learning activities;
- Further developing the learning culture inside the FRA.

