

Second Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework with Member States

**“Capacity Building and Training in Coast Guard Functions: Sectoral Qualification
Framework and Exchange Programme”**

28th of November 2024

(HYBRID meeting)

Meeting Report

Project: “Implementation of the results of the Coast Guard qualifications Network and
the Practical Handbook on European cooperation on coast guard functions”

(Coast Guard Cooperation Handbook and Capacity Building Project)

1. Background information

Within the European Union many different authorities are responsible for carrying out coast guard functions and it is therefore fundamental to encourage cooperation and coordination at European Union level to avoid overlapping and to ensure efficient and effective coast guard function activities. Also, considering the current geopolitical situation with important new and hybrid threats affecting the maritime domain, it is critical to foster cooperation, exchange of experience and best practices between coast guard authorities, including civil and military authorities. This is also underlined by the revised European Union Maritime Security Strategy adopted in 2023.

Against this background, the Coast Guard Cooperation Handbook and Capacity Building Project¹ (project) started on 1 February 2022 with a duration of 60 months. The aim of the project is to support the cooperation with and between the competent European coast guard function authorities, through:

- The practical handbook on European Cooperation on Coast Guard Functions (Commission Recommendation of 20.7.2021 establishing a ‘Practical Handbook’ on European cooperation on coast guard functions, C(2021) 5310 final).
- Capacity building and training network, exchange programme and Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions.
- Online platform to host the handbook and the Capacity Building and Training material (<https://coastguard.europa.eu/>).

The project is funded by the European Commission and managed by EFCA and is implemented in close cooperation with EMSA and Frontex.

The Capacity Building and Training activity part of the project covers and includes:

- setting up and maintaining the Capacity Building and Training activity network;
- a Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme;

¹ Project “Implementation of the results of the Coast Guard qualifications Network and the Practical Handbook on European cooperation on coast guard Functions”.

- promotion of Sectoral Qualification Framework for Coast Guard Functions.

During the last 1,5 years, the implemented activities under the Capacity Building and Training activity have covered creating and maintaining the Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme and the Sectoral Qualification Framework for Coast Guard Functions. Both of those activities you can consult at the Coast Guard Online Platform (<https://coastguard.europa.eu/>).

The first Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework Hybrid meeting was held on 07 March 2023 in Vigo, Spain and focused on introducing to the Member States designated Points of Contact the Coast Guard Project and informing them about the tasks planned.

2. Objectives of the meeting

In order to take stock of the implemented activities up to now and to plan the future activities more efficiently, as well to thank the 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme Hosts, a second Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework meeting was held Hybrid on 28 November 2024 in Brugge, Belgium. The meeting had following main objectives:

- to inform Member States about the state of play of the Capacity Building and Training activities (i.e. Exchange Programme and Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions) and to collect your feedback;
- to introduce and discuss the 2nd period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme (incl. the new call for Hosts launched in October 2024);
- to sum up the 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme and to thank officially the 1st period exchange Hosts.

3. Participants

Overall, the meeting had 61 participants, with 29 in person and 32 participating online.

Presential	Online (registered participants)
Belgium–3, Croatia–2, Estonia–3, Finland–1, Italy–4, Poland–3, Portugal–1, Romania–1, Spain–2, EC–1, EFCA–6, EMSA–1, Frontex–1	Estonia–2, Croatia–3, Spain–4, Italy–3, Cyprus–1, Lithuania–2, Malta–1, Poland–5, Portugal–1, Romania–4, Finland–1, Iceland–2, EC–1, EFCA–2
Total Presential: 29	Total Online: 32
TOTAL: 61	

4. Overview of presentations

“State of play of Coast Guard project”

EFCA provided an overview about the state of play of Coast Guard project, mainly focusing on the Handbook and European Coast Guard Online Platform part.

The general and specific objectives of the project were outlined and the activities undertaken so far were presented, having respectively 54 Member States designated Points of Contact for the Handbook part and 72 Point of Contacts for the Capacity Building and Training activity part. The Handbook is composed of Agencies and Member States authorities’ information and can be consulted here: <https://coastguard.europa.eu/index.php/country-factsheets>.

Regarding the activities up to now, the information from Member States and Agencies available through the platform has been maintained updated and there is an ongoing process of Harmonization of the Member States information.

In terms of the main future goals of the project, the following was outlined:

- a) To have a clear overview of the Member States authorities involved in Coast Guard Functions.
- b) To have a permanent Exchange Programme and network of authorities.
- c) To have the online platform as a reference and central point of information (<https://coastguard.europa.eu/>).

“State of play of Capacity Building and Training activities and summary of the 1st period CBTEPr exchanges”

EFCA provided a detailed and an in-depth overview of the Capacity Building and Training activities – Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions and Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme.

The general and specific objectives of the Capacity Building and Training activity were outlined and the tasks undertaken so far were presented as follows:

- Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework with Member States:
 - There are in total there 70 (+2 back up) designated points of contacts nominated from Member States.
 - Designated Point of Contacts are from 20 different countries (19 MS + 1 EFTA state) representing 60 different institutions.
- Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions
 - In 2024 four Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions online sessions were held (09APR2024, 22MAY2024, 25SEP2024, 06NOV2024). These sessions were supported by a Sectoral Qualifications Framework external expert.
 - The sessions were successful and had a high registration interest (between 36–53 registration). Each session had approximately 30 participants. Registrations came from 17–21 Member States (depending on the session) and even from two Member States without a sea border or coastline (Hungary and Luxembourg).
- Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme
 - The call for the 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme Hosts was launched on the 2 June 2023 and was open until 11 September 2023 (twice prolonged). Offers for Hosts were voluntary. The programme does not cover the Hosts' costs.
 - The outcome of the call for Hosts was the following: 21 coast guard authorities and entities from nine (9) Member States & Iceland made in total 31 exchange offers (28 different ones) for 128 participants places. The offered exchanges covered all Coast Guard Functions, sea and air activities.
 - The call for 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme exchange participants was launched on the 23 October 2023 and the due date was prolonged until 18 December 2023. The eligible costs of the CBTEPr exchange participant include travel, accommodation and daily allowance.

- Outcome of the call for exchange participants was the following: 12 MS and Iceland nominated exchange participant candidates. In total more than 200 nominations were made by 120 candidates (some candidates applied to several different exchanges) to 26 exchanges. Five exchanges did not get any nominations were not opened. Candidates covered all Coast Guard Functions. In the end 86 candidates were approved as exchange participants and 34 candidates were added to the reserve lists. Reserve lists were activated in most of the exchanges where it was created as several approved exchange participants gave up their places (different reasons, incl. work accidents/injuries).
- First exchange was held in February 2024 offered by Italian Coast Guard – 2024/IT/2 “Rescue Swimmer Course (observer)” and the last exchange was held in December 2024 offered by Icelandic Coast Guard – 2024/IS/1 “Coast Guard Vessel Staff Exchange”. One exchange was at first postponed from Spring to Autumn and then cancelled due to the Host unavailability. Few exchanges with filled places had in the end only for 1 or 2 participants, as other selected participants didn’t go to the exchange (they withdraw their participation in the last minute, but Hosts still did the exchanges).

5. Overview of case studies

Case studies speakers were from different Member States and authorities representing different roles under the 1st period Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme (exchange participant, Host and/or sending organisation Point of Contact or it’s representative).

Speaker	Role	Additional information
Custom Officer level C Tim Van Loo (Belgian Customs) Ms. Eefje Deweer (Belgian Coast Guard)	Sharing the experience as an exchange participant (2024/PL/5). Sharing the experience as Host and sending organisation.	Custom Officer level C Tim Van Loo described his experience as an exchange participant of the 2024/PL/5 “ Training in the ship search and container inspection” exchange – what they saw and what they did. He also pointed out his key insights (for example practising together, creating contacts and network). His main recommendation was that please continue and prolong the time (of exchanges) as it was only “scratching the surface”. Ms. Eefje Deweer showed the summary video of their exchange 2024/BE/1 “Maritime safety and environment” which just ended one day prior of the meeting and was a success for the Host, but also well appreciated and valued by the exchange participants.
Ms. Branka Tarandek (Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Directorate of Fisheries)	Sharing the experience as Host and sending organisation.	Ms. Branka Tarandek shared the experience as a Host and sending organisation representative. Her main highlights were that exchange programme is good opportunity for exchange of experiences, learning and travelling. As well that participating in the exchanges is useful and educating even if it is covering other CGF areas where the exchange

		participants are working. She also highlighted that the participants, who participated in the first period exchanges, would love to participate again. Ms. Branka Tarandek noted that her authority is planning to continue to be a Host and will be motivating their people to apply as participants.
Mr. Toomas Kasemaa (Estonian State Fleet)	Sharing the experience as an exchange participant (2024/PT/1) and sending organisation.	Mr. Toomas Kasemaa shared his experience as a sending organisation, but also as an exchange participant of the exchange 2024/PT/1 "ATLANTIC POLEX.PT". During his case study intervention, he gave a short overview of the authority where he works. As an exchange participant he noted that ATLANTIX POLEX.PT was well organised exercise and seminar, it had realistic scenarios and variety of participating stakeholders. From the sending organisation side Mr. Toomas Kasemaa noted that his colleague participated in the 2024/FI/2 "On-scene Co-ordinator (OSC) Course" exchange which was also well organised and had good scenarios with lively resources in use. That kind of exchanges are needed to build up common understanding which are needed during responding to real accidents.
Lieutenant Senior Grade Samu Hiljanen (Finnish Border Guard)	Sharing the experience as an exchange participant (2024/ES/4), Host and sending organisation.	Lieutenant Senior Grade Samu Hiljanen gave a short overview of the three exchanges that Finnish Border Guard was hosting. Concerning the exchange participant experience Lieutenant Senior Grade Samu Hiljanen participated in the exchange 2024/ES/3 "Knowledge sharing and hands-on experience for CGF Training Personnel". He noted that exchange was very fruitful and valuable, it gave good insight what are their capabilities, what they are doing and what equipment they are using.
Lieutenant Colonel, instructor pilot, Francesca Testaguzza (Italian Guardia di Finanza, Air-Naval training department in Pratica di Mare) Captain Melania Polini (Italian Guardia di Finanza, Nautical School Guardia di Finanza)	Sharing the experience as Host.	Lieutenant Colonel, instructor pilot, Francesca Testaguzza shared the experience of being a Host of the exchange 2024/IT/1 "Centro Simulazione Operazioni Aeronavali". It was the onliest aviation field exchange. During her case study intervention, she gave a short overview of the authority (tasks and activities). Concerning the exchange provided Lieutenant Colonel, instructor pilot, Francesca Testaguzza noted that unfortunately only one selected participant participated eventually on the

		exchange which for them was sad feedback/throwback. Still the authority went on to Host the only one participant. In the end of the case study intervention Lieutenant Colonel, instructor pilot, Francesca Testaguzza informed that they will make an exchange offer also for the second period. Captain Melania Polini shared the experience of being a Host of the exchanges 2024/IT/3.1 and 2024/IT/3.2 “Maritime Capacity Building Exchange at the Scuola Nautica 2024”. During her case study intervention, she gave a short overview of the authority (tasks and activities). Concerning the exchanges provided Captain Melania Polini noted that they offered 15 participant places for both of the exchanges, but in the end on first exchange two people and second exchange four people participated. They did not cancel the exchanges. Exchanges were fruitful and practical. In the end of the case study intervention Captain Melania Polini informed that they would make an exchange offers also for the second period (for October 2025 and April 2026).
Ms. Covadonga Suarez (Spanish Maritime Safety and Rescue Agency – SASEMAR)	Sharing the experience as Host and sending organisation.	Ms. Covadonga Suarez describer her authorities (SASEMAR) experience as a Host for four different exchanges in different parts of Spain and the sending organisation experience. Concerning the sending organisation experience, Ms. Covadonga Suarez pointed out that as SASEMAR is big authority it was for them challenging experience as at first, they had built up internal steps (for example: analyze exchanges offered and those matching with professional categories of SASEMAR, as well they had to establish internal selection criteria's for selecting candidates and priority criteria's) and then support exchange participants afterwards with reimbursements and cascading. There were challenges and lessons learned moments. From the Host experience side Ms. Covadonga Suarez noted that it was an easy, grateful, satisfying and enriching experience, more than at first waited.

6. Overview of panel discussion

Panel discussion about the experience with the 1st period Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme was moderated by Marit Mätik, Coast Guard project officer (Capacity Building and Training activities) in EFCA. Panellists were from different Member States and authorities representing different roles under the 1st period Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme (exchange participant, Host and/or sending organisation Point of Contact or it's representative).

Panellist	Role	Topics discussed
Ms. Eefje Deweer (Belgian Coast Guard)	Host and sending organisation Point of Contact representative	The panellist was asked to describe how went their exchange 2024/BE/1 "Maritime safety and environment", which was held just few days before the meeting. As Belgian Coast Guard had made already the offers for the 2nd period the panellist was asked to share her feeling will there be more applicants now for their next period same exchange. In addition, for the exchange 2024/BE/1 Belgium offered for the 1st period also one very good exchange (2024/BE/2 "Security – Belgium"), but unfortunately that didn't get any nominations, and this exchange was not opened. As that exchange offer was made again for the 2nd period, the panellist was asked to describe that exchange (what it is, what CGF it covers, to whom it is and who should apply for this exchange) so it would raise interest and meeting participants could promote that among their authorities and entities.
Ms. Branka Tarandek (Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Directorate of Fisheries)	Host Point of Contact representative and sending organisation Point of Contact	To complement her presentation done earlier under the case studies topic, the panellist was asked to describe a bit deeper her authority experience as a Host and as a sending organisation (incl. why did they apply and what were the benefits). As the panellist is from authority, which is representing the fisheries community, the panellist was asked to share suggestions for the fisheries community people – to be more active and be part of the Exchange Programme, either as a Host or sending organisation.
Captain Massimiliano Mezzani (Italian Coast Guard)	Host and sending organisation Point of Contact representative	Italian Coast Guard opened the 1st period of Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme in February with the exchange 2024/IT/2 "Rescue Swimmer Course (observers)" and will also be closing it as Italian Coast Guard participant is going to go to the last exchange 2024/IS/1 "Coast Guard Vessel Staff Exchange" in Iceland. In the period Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme Terms of Reference we have said that "Applications to participate in exchanges outside one's own

		geographical area are prioritized at all times". Considering that, the panellist was asked to explain what motivated his colleague to apply to the exchange in Iceland? The panellist was also asked to explain his opinion participating in the exchanges outside of its own region and geographical area and would he suggest that for the second period candidates. To be not scared to apply outside their own region. To finalise the discussion the panellist was asked to describe the Italian Coast Guard overall experience being part of the Capacity Building and Trainings Exchange Programme as a Host and as a sending organisation, as well as this kind of activity needed for the EU Coast Guard community.
Ms. Maria Łach (Polish Maritime Office in Szczecin)	Exchange participant (2024/BE/1), Host and sending organisation Point of Contact representative	As the panelist was participating as an exchange participant in the 2024/BE/1 "Maritime safety and environment" exchanges, which ended just one day prior of the meeting, she was asked to describe her experience, what were her expectations at first and the real experience, outcome in the end. The panelist was also asked to describe, would she suggest participating in the Exchange Programme for others as a Host or the exchange participant? As the panelist was representing also her authority as a Host and sending organisation, she also highlighted the overall experience of her authority being a host, but also the sending organisation.

7. Way forward with Capacity Building and Training activities and 2nd period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme. Open discussion, questions and answers

Marit Mätik, Coast Guard project officer (Capacity Building and Training activities) in EFCA together with Alberto Adamo from EMSA and Marta Biernath from Frontex provided a detailed and depth overview of the way forward with Capacity Building and Training activities and 2nd period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme.

- Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework with Member States
 - In the first semester of 2025 the update for Capacity Building and Training activity Point of Contacts is planned.
- Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions
 - During 2025 there is a plan to renew and update the Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions on Coast Guard Online Platform in open and restricted part (<https://coastguard.europa.eu/interagency-cooperation/sqfcgf>).

- Offer at least one online Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Coast Guard Functions session and create information nuggets to be available on Coast Guard Online Platform.
- Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme
 - The second exchange programme period is foreseen from September 2025 to September 2026.
 - The call for the 2nd period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme Hosts was launched on the 09 October 2024 with a due date 15 January 2025. Offers for Hosts are voluntary, the programme does not cover the Hosts' costs.
 - The eligible costs of the CBTEPr exchange participant include travel, accommodation and daily allowance. Exchange participant candidates' applications to participate in exchanges outside one's own geographical area are prioritized at all times.
 - The preliminary second exchange programme activities calendar is following:

ACTIVITY	DEADLINE
Call for exchange hosts (EFCA-EMSA-Frontex)	October 2024
Exchanges (hosts) nomination	October – November – December 2024
Selection of exchanges (hosts)	January – February 2025
Approving of the exchanges (hosts)	January – February 2025
Approved calendar of exchanges (hosts)	February 2025
Information to selected exchange hosts	February 2025
Call for exchange participant candidates (EFCA-EMSA-Frontex)	March 2025
Exchange participant candidates' nomination	March – April – May 2025
Matching exchange participant candidates	June – July – August 2025
Information to selected exchange participants and hosts	August 2025
Exchange period starts	01 September 2025
Maintaining the CBTEPr 2 nd period exchanges	September 2025 – September 2026
Exchange period ends	30 September 2026
Exchanges previous period conclusions	Two months after the end of exchange period

The overview was complemented with open discussion, question and answers session.

8. Conclusion

- The Second Capacity Building and Training Network Consultation Framework with Member States had active in person and online participation with a total of 61 participants. The meeting showed that Member States are interested in the Capacity Building and Training activities and in the continuation of Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme.
- The meeting was very useful and valuable providing summary and highlights of the activities done and planned, ahead. As well a lot direct experience description from the 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme exchange participants, Hosts and/or sending organisation Point of Contacts and their representatives.
- In addition, giving the certificates and plaques to 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme Hosts, a certificate of the participation to exchange participants from three Agencies (EFCA, EMSA, Frontex) side was seen as important.
- The meeting ended with 1st period Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme Hosts Point of Contacts and their representatives thank you event. It was covered by the press release: [Taking stock of the 1st period of the Coast Guard Project Capacity Building and Training Exchange Programme | European Fisheries Control Agency](#)



- The meeting presentations were sent by EFCA ServiceDesk to all the participants emails on 18DEC2024.

Note: for any question or request of meeting presentation, please contact Ms. Marit Mätik via email marit.matik@efca.europa.eu and/or efca.coastguard@efca.europa.eu.