

TRAINEE EXCHANGE



**GOOD TO
KNOW**



Photo: Hanseatic City of Lübeck

**IN THE INTERNATIONAL
HANSEATIC
LEAGUE**

2026



Photo: Hanseatic City of Brilon

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Organization and procedure

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Support with funding through Erasmus+

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Dear member of the International Hanseatic League

2026

Industry, skilled trades, services, commerce, and administration are increasingly confronted with the problem of a shortage of skilled workers, which is particularly evident in the competition for young talent.

Employers are challenged to make training more attractive and thus create incentives for young people to choose their company as a training provider. The opportunity to gain experience in another city, or even in another country and a local company, as part of their training can make a significant contribution to this.

This is where the “Hanseatic Trainee Exchange” project comes in.

We now have two years of project work behind us. So far, 19 young people have set off to complete a 2-3 week internship in a Hanseatic city and gain new experiences – always with very positive feedback.

In 2023, the International Hanseatic League decided on a three-year project phase.

We are now entering the third year. There are the following changes compared to previous years:

At its fall meeting in 2025, the Presidium decided to open the project to all cities, unlike in the previous two years. Specifically, this means that each Hanseatic city can individually inquire with another Hanseatic city about the possibility of an internship. This allows for greater flexibility. This information brochure sets out the “rules” for these exchange formats and internships.

We look forward to seeing many young people gain experience in 2026. Are you interested in participating?

Please contact the Hanseatic representatives of the cities. You can obtain their contact details from the Hanseatic Office in Lübeck.

We, Steffi Bischof from the Hanseatic Office and Ute Hachmann from Brilon, are also available as coordinators to answer any detailed questions you may have.

Best regards,
Steffi Bischof and Ute Hachmann

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Project description

The exchange allows trainees in the member cities of the International Hanseatic League to undertake a two to three-week internship in their respective training fields in another member city.

In the pilot phase until the end of 2026, the project is limited to trainees in municipal administrations.

The fundamental principle of the project is the willingness to both send and host.



Photo: Luzie Ebert from Brilon with colleagues from the Stade municipal depot

Opportunities for participating cities

Training at participating employers is given a boost, which can be decisive in the competition for young talent. In addition, the young people contribute ideas, experience and impulses from their training companies, which can be valuable for employers.

Opportunities for the participating trainees

For the trainees, participation not only means the opportunity to significantly broaden their horizons as part of their training and gain new impetus in their chosen profession. It is also an important step towards professional independence. In addition, a stay in another city allows new networks to be created and language skills to be improved during a stay abroad.

Opportunities for the International Hanseatic League

With this project, the International Hanseatic League is perceived by young people as futureorientated and as an institution that jointly pursues contemporary goals that benefit the citizens and businesses in the member cities.

In this way, young people can find a positive approach to the Hanseatic League of modern times at an early stage and thus be won over for later involvement in the League of Cities and Towns of the Hanseatic League.

This has a formative effect in terms of European awareness and presents the Hanseatic League as an exemplary network for a successful Europe. By taking part in the project, the participating Hanseatic cities provide their citizens with tangible arguments in favour of municipal activity in the International Hanseatic League.



Photo: Jevgenija Kalincuka from Valmiera at the tourist information office in Stade

WHO DOES WHAT?

2. Procedure/organization

Trainees from participating cities and municipalities can apply for a two- to three-week internship with another city/municipality from the pool of participating municipalities for a suitable period of time in consultation with the city providing their training.

The organizational coordination (sending a request including the trainee's application) is then carried out between the contact persons of the two participating municipalities, meaning that the trainees do not contact the host municipality directly.

The number of internships to be made available is limited to a maximum of three per year, both on the part of the sending municipalities and on the part of the receiving municipalities.

If the number of applicants in a participating municipality exceeds the number of available places, the municipality will make a selection. Each municipality is responsible for developing and applying appropriate selection criteria.



*Photo: Kimberley Tempel
from Lübeck in Valmiera*

Responsibilities of the receiving city

The receiving city arranges suitable accommodation (hotel, youth hostel, host family) for the duration of the internship. Preferably, accommodation in host families should be organized to facilitate a more intense mutual understanding. The costs for accommodation are covered by the providing city.

The stay during the internship meets the following minimum standards:

- A permanent contact person on site for the trainee
- Binding framework plan for the period of the of the internship with assignment to training-related work areas
- An interview with the local mayor
- A meeting with the local Hanseatic Commissioner
- A meeting with the local representatives of the Youth Hanseatic League (if available)
- An organised exchange with the trainees of the host city/municipality
- A half-day tourist programme at the weekend with costs covered by the host city.

Rights of the receiving city

If a city receives multiple applications, it is at the discretion of the receiving city to decide which applicant is awarded the available position.

Responsibilities of the providing city

The providing city covers the travel, as well as accommodation and meals, with individual arrangements, possibly involving the trainee.



Photo: Agnese Geduseva-Jefimova from Valmiera in Marsberg

3. Finances, funding

The travel costs, as well as accommodation and meals, are covered by the providing city, subject to individual arrangements, possibly with the involvement of the trainee. Costs for the tourist program and any expenses related to the internship on-site are covered by the receiving city.

Funding opportunities are available through the EU program Erasmus+ and, if applicable, national programs.

Every city participating in the Hanseatic trainee exchange and seeking co-financing must apply for Erasmus+ funding in their own country.

The funding application cannot be submitted by „The Hansa“.

The following countries can participate without restrictions in all actions within the framework of Erasmus+:

Member States of the European Union (EU): Belgium, Germany, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Finland, Sweden.

Associated third countries with the program can also participate, namely Iceland and Norway.

There are two different funding programs: short-term projects or long-term accreditation.

It is recommended to initially apply for a short-term mobility project to gain experience. At a later stage, long-term accreditation could be sought if the exchange project continues.

The success rate for obtaining funding varies from country to country, depending on the number of received applications.

The budget from the sending city can only be used for sending trainees to another city abroad, not for inviting trainees from abroad to the sending city.

To apply, you need at least one partner in another country.

Countries are categorized based on living costs. This means that the funding you receive depends on the category of your destination country. In the case of changing the destination country, it is easier to switch from an "expensive" to a "cheaper" country than vice versa, as the overall funding during the project cannot be increased.

It is advisable to seek detailed advice from the relevant Erasmus program national agency.

Support with funding through Erasmus+

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From right to left: Franz Riske, trainee of the Hanseatic City of Anklam, Letitia Borowska, trainee of the Hanseatic City of Emmerich am Rhein, Laura Köppe, Human Resources of the Hanseatic City of Anklam, Katharina Peters, trainee of the Hanseatic City of Emmerich am Rhein, Emily Treetz, trainee of the Hanseatic City of Anklam, Frau Agnieszka Vanhöfen, Economic Development and International Cooperation of the Hanseatic City of Anklam

SCHEDULE

4. Timetable

Dezember 2025

- Distribution of the Trainee Catalog to all interested cities
- Planning the 2026 exchanges
- Start inquiries

June 2026

- Exchange of experiences at the Hanseatic Day in Stargard, Poland

Olga Kronberga from Valmiera in der Stadtbibliothek Brilon



FIRST EXPERIENCES

5. First experiences 2024/2025

The Hanseatic trainee exchange program has got off to a successful start. 19 trainees set off for another Hanseatic city in 2024 and 2025 to gain new experience, build networks and, in the best case scenario, make Hanseatic friends. Trainees and representatives of the host cities have given positive feedback.

“To sum up, I can say that the Hanseatic exchange was a complete success. I was warmly welcomed in Wismar and well looked after during the entire time. I will take an incredibly valuable experience from this time with me for the rest of my life. Thank you very much!”

Jana Dohle, City of Brilon



Jana Dohle (center) from Brilon in Wismar

“This year, we were lucky enough to host an exchange trainee from Lübeck in a daycare center in Wipperfurth. It was a great experience for everyone involved. The trainee from Lübeck really enjoyed her time and the exchange with the colleagues and trainees from Wipperfurth was also very positive.

I hope that our trainees will also be inspired to take part in an exchange in the future.”

Alexandra Leonhardt, City of Wipperfurth



Michelle Moos (left) from Lübeck in Wipperfurth

FIRST EXPERIENCES

The contact persons in the participating cities are happy to answer any questions you may have about the exchange project.

Please contact Ute Hachmann.

*Photo: Agnese Geduseva-Jefimova
from Valmiera in Marsberg*

The following cities have already gained experience with the project: Anklam, Brilon, Emmerich, Gardelegen, Lübeck, Marsberg, Stade, Valmiera and Wismar.



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