



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 12.04.1995
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95/0094 (CNS)

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION

concerning the conclusion of an Agreement for cooperation in higher education
and vocational education and training between the European Community
and the United States of America

(presented by the Commission)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Over the last few years, developments within the European Community and on the international stage have fundamentally altered transatlantic relations and perceptions of these relationships. The Transatlantic Declarations, agreed in 1990, gave a first expression to a new sense of partnership between the European Community on the one hand and respectively, Canada and the United States of America on the other in confronting issues of common interest and concern. Since then, a number of high-level bilateral consultations have taken place with Canada and the United States, whilst the negotiations between the European Community and the United States as well as Canada played a major role in the successful conclusion of the GATT Uruguay round.
2. The United States of America recognises the importance and the considerable advantages it derives from trading with the European Community, the world's largest trade block. The European Community is the partner with which the United States records its highest trade surplus. Both partners are major sources of direct investment, both industrial and financial, undertaken in each other. Both share many common cultural traditions and the commitment to open democratic government.
3. The European Community has a clear interest in promoting a deeper knowledge and understanding within the United States of the new realities of European Union and vice versa. At the bilateral level, those Member States which have developed a tradition of transatlantic academic cooperation acknowledge that it provides a powerful means of increasing mutual knowledge and understanding.
4. In addition, the achievements of the European Community programmes concerning higher education and training have been widely acknowledged. These Community initiatives are instrumental in the development of intensified learning which includes academic, cultural and practical experience, of using the diversity of systems for better qualified and flexible manpower, of facilitating curriculum development, transfer of teaching experience and the creation of international education and training networks.
5. Stemming from the successes of these European Community programmes, there has been a rapidly growing interest on both sides of the Atlantic in developing cooperative activities along the lines of the intra-European networks. Bilateral arrangements continue to play an important role in promoting transatlantic teacher and student mobility in particular. However, the unique features of network cooperation are seen to offer particular strengths in facilitating innovative types of academic cooperation which are not provided within bilateral programmes. Structured cooperation projects involving consortia groupings on the two sides of the Atlantic can provide valuable inputs to intra-European activities whilst, at the same time, providing an genuinely European dimension for the United States partners. Innovative EC:US consortia arrangements can bring mutual gains to the quality and breadth of the study programmes offered by partner institutions and can develop models of good practice or wider use.

6. The present recommendation for a Council Decision gives concrete expression to the intentions set out in the Transatlantic Declaration regarding the strengthening of cooperative activities in education and training with the United States of America. Moreover, it strictly adheres to the guidelines prescribed for such cooperation by the Council. Finally, it responds to the wishes expressed by the European Parliament that the Community should develop educational cooperation with third countries. This background is set out in more detail in the following section.

II. BACKGROUND

1. In November 1990, a Transatlantic Declaration was adopted by the European Community and its Member States and the United States of America. A section devoted to education, scientific and cultural cooperation stated:

"The partnership between the European Community and its Member States on the one hand, and the United States on the other, will be based on continuous efforts to strengthen mutual cooperation in various (...) fields which directly affect the present and future well-being of their citizens, such as exchanges and joint projects in science and technology, including, inter alia, research in medicine, environment protection, pollution prevention, energy, space, high-energy physics, and the safety of nuclear and other installations, as well as in education and culture, including academic and youth exchanges."

2. In May 1992, the Commission presented a Communication (SEC 92 1023 final) to the Council of Ministers regarding possible avenues for the development of EC/US cooperation in the fields of education and training. In response, at the meeting in November 1992, the Council and the Ministers expressed their readiness to assist the Commission in the consideration of future action and indicated certain criteria which such action should fulfill.

Suitable cooperative activities should:

- take into account existing bilateral programmes;
 - be closely tied to Community policies and programmes;
 - bring balanced benefits to both EC and US sides;
 - make the most effective use of resources;
 - provide a specific European added value.
3. The Council invited the Commission as soon as possible to enter into this consideration with a view to preparing a draft agreement with the United States.
 4. The European Parliament has also played an active and encouraging role in this area. In 1993, it produced a report and passed a resolution calling for the establishment of cooperation with Third countries in education and culture. In addition, its decisions as a budgetary authority have enabled the Commission to explore possibilities for development of cooperative activities with third countries.

5. In 1993, the Commission initiated an exploratory phase of cooperation within which higher education institutions on both sides of the Atlantic were invited to submit proposals for joint EC/US consortia activities to be undertaken over a two-year period. The aim of this exercise was to examine the range of proposed activities in order to identify particular types of EC/US cooperation groupings and activities which could meet the criteria set out by the Council.
6. Drawing on the positive experience of this exploratory phase, in November 1994, the Commission was authorized by Council to negotiate cooperation agreements with both Canada and the United States of America establishing programmes of cooperation in higher education and vocational training (Council Decision of 21.11.94).
7. The United States negotiations resulted in the attached draft Agreement which adheres to the negotiating directives given by the Council.
8. The agreements legal bases are Articles 126, 127 and 228 of the Treaty of European Union.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

1. The Programme is specifically designed to encompass both higher education and vocational training and to encourage, where appropriate, interaction between the two. Interactions are also encouraged between higher education institutions, training organisations and the workplace.
2. The following categories of activities are provided for:
 - (1) Joint projects carried out by EC/US consortia. These can be composed of higher education institutions, vocational training establishments or a mixture of the two. The consortia are encouraged to include other relevant actors as affiliated members. In order to maximize the advantages of multi-lateral arrangements, a minimum number of three partners is required on each side, two of which must be in different Community Member States and States of the United States of America.
 - (2) Complementary measures including, notably, exchanges of experience in the area of higher education and training to enhance the dialogue between the European Community and the United States of America.

IV. COMPLEMENTARITY AND SUBSIDIARITY

1. With the growth of Community programmes, universities have begun to appreciate the advantages of networks. These form a flexible and responsive framework for the development of cooperative activities, enabling expertise and facilities to be pooled and constituting a forum for the exchange of experience, information and the resolution of problems. The main objective of the joint consortia projects is to build bridges for Transatlantic cooperation activities which can subsequently be implemented without the need for continuing Community financial support.

2. The joint consortia build on and enhance the intra-Community policies and programmes. In many subject areas, the activities of existing Community networks can be enhanced by the input of US experience which enriches the study programmes of all the students concerned.
3. Partner institutions in European networks without transatlantic contacts, particularly smaller institutions in peripheral regions of the Community can gain entrée and be introduced through their more experienced partners' transatlantic links. The spirit of cohesion and solidarity promoted within the European networks is further enhanced through their acting together in transatlantic cooperation. The promotion of linguistic diversity is pursued through the active encouragement of linguistic preparation for American teachers and students which enables them to be fully integrated into the study programmes of their European host institutions.
4. The European institutions acting together as a group in joint consortia activities is in itself a concrete expression of the 'European dimension'. Through this European network arrangement, the American students and staff, will work and study with a mixed group of Europeans, bringing together varied national perspectives into a European context. In addition, the European dimension will be promoted by the academics specialising in European Community issues who will be sponsored within the framework of the Fulbright Programme.
5. The joint consortia are a cost-effective means of developing transatlantic cooperation. Especially for smaller European higher education institutions, which could not afford to set up transatlantic activities on a bilateral basis, cooperating within a network provides economies of scale. Good relations have already been formed in the intra-European partnerships set up with Community financial support and these provide an economical springboard for transatlantic activities. For example, the trust and confidence built up by Community networks, means that partner institutions are willing to act on each-others behalf at meetings or for student monitoring purposes. Furthermore, the joint consortia projects are aimed not only at establishing links between the partners directly involved but in producing results and products which can be more widely used. There is good potential for multiplier effects, for example, in addressing such problems as transatlantic academic recognition or provision of adequate language training in the less-used Community languages. The joint consortia are encouraged to involve other establishments and organisations in their activities as associate, non-funded partners.
6. The Agreement provides for an annual report to be made available to the bilateral Ministerial meetings between the European Community and the United States of America and appropriate Ministers of each Party. In the case of the Community, the latter would be the Education Council.

V. CONCLUSIONS

1. This Explanatory Memorandum accompanies the Commission proposal for a Council Decision concerning the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement for higher education and vocational training cooperation with the United States of America in the framework of the Transatlantic Declaration and on the legal bases provided by the provisions of the Treaty of European Union and following the Mandate given by the Council Decision of 21 November 1994.
2. The Commission believes that these small-scale activities fulfill the criteria set out by the Council of Ministers and respond to the resolution of the European Parliament. The activities fully respect the bilateral activities of the Member States, whilst providing a flexible and dynamic means of enhancing transatlantic cooperation between the European Community and the United States in the area of higher education and training.
3. In the light of the above mentioned considerations the Commission proposes that the Council adopt the attached proposal for a Decision.

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION

concerning the conclusion of an Agreement for cooperation in higher education
and vocational education and training between the European Community
and the United States of America

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular
Articles 126, 127, 228(2) first sentence and 228(3) first subparagraph,

Having regard to the proposal of the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Whereas by its Decision of 21 November 1994, the Council authorized the Commission to
negotiate agreements for cooperation in higher education and vocational training between the
European Community, Canada and the United States of America;

Whereas the Community and the United States of America expect to obtain mutual benefit
from such cooperation;

Whereas the Agreement on higher education and vocational education and training
cooperation between the European Community and the United States of America should be
approved.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Agreement for cooperation in higher education and vocational training between the
European Community and the United States of America is hereby approved on behalf of the
Community. The texts of the Agreement is attached to this Decision.

Article 2

The President of the Council shall carry out the notifications provided for in Article 11.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ESTABLISHING
A COOPERATION PROGRAMME IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The European Community of the one part and the United States of America of the other part, hereinafter collectively referred to as 'the Parties',

NOTING that the Transatlantic Declaration adopted by the European Community and its Member States and the Government of the United States of America in November 1990 makes specific reference to strengthening mutual cooperation in various fields which directly affect the present and future wellbeing of their citizens, such as exchanges and joint projects in education and culture, including academic and youth exchanges;

ACKNOWLEDGING the crucial contribution of education and training to the development of human resources capable of participating in the global knowledge-based economy;

RECOGNIZING that the Parties have a common interest in cooperation in higher education and vocational education and training, as part of the wider cooperation that exists between them;

EXPECTING to obtain mutual benefit from cooperative activities in higher education and vocational education and training;

CONSIDERING the positive experience which has been gained on both sides during the exploratory phase of cooperation in higher education and vocational education and training;

DESIRING to establish a formal basis for the conduct of cooperative activities in higher education and vocational education and training

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Purpose

This Agreement establishes a cooperation programme in higher education and vocational education and training (hereinafter referred to as "the Programme") between the European Community and the United States of America.

Article 2

Objectives

The objectives of the Programme shall be to:

- I. promote mutual understanding between the peoples of the European Community and the United States of America including broader knowledge of their languages, cultures and institutions;

2. improve the quality of human resource development in both the European Community and the United States of America;
3. stimulate student-centred cooperation in higher and vocational education and training between the different regions in the European Community and in the United States of America;
4. improve the quality of transatlantic student mobility including the promotion of mutual understanding, recognition and thus portability of academic credits;
5. encourage the exchange of expertise in new developments in higher education and vocational education and training;
6. promote partnerships among higher education and vocational education and training institutions, professional associations, public authorities, business and other associations as appropriate in both the European Community and the United States of America;
7. introduce a European Community and a United States dimension to transatlantic cooperation in higher education and vocational education and training;
8. complement bilateral programmes between the Member States of the European Community and the United States of America as well as other European Community and United States programmes and initiatives in higher education and vocational education and training.

Article 3 Principles

Cooperation under this Agreement shall be guided by the following principles:

1. full respect for the responsibilities of the Member States of the European Community and the States of the United States of America and the autonomy of the higher education institutions;
2. mutual benefit from activities undertaken through the Agreement;
3. effective provision of seed-funding for a diverse range of innovative projects which build new structures and links and are sustainable over the longer term with minimal or no on-going support from the Parties;
4. representation of the full geographic, cultural and social diversity of the European Community and the United States of America;
5. selection of projects on a competitive basis, taking account of the foregoing principles.

Article 4

Scope

Activities under this Agreement, which are detailed in the Annex, an integral part of this Agreement, may include the following:

1. joint projects carried out by consortia of institutions in the European Community together with consortia of institutions in the United States of America. These consortia may consist of higher education and vocational education and training institutions and other appropriate organisations. These consortia will be responsive to the need for structural cooperation between staff and teachers as well as a broadening and enhancement of student exchanges between the Parties;
2. exchanges of information and expertise in the area of vocational education and training and higher education to enhance the dialogue between the European Community and the United States of America;
3. provision of scholarships under the Fulbright Programme to European Community and United States citizens for the study of, and research and lecturing on European Community Affairs and EC/US relations;
4. complementary measures including technical support.

Article 5

Joint Committee

1. A Joint Committee is hereby established. It shall comprise an equal number of representatives of each Party.
2. The functions of the Joint Committee shall be to:
 - (a) review the cooperative activities envisaged under this Agreement;
 - (b) provide a report annually to the Parties on the level, status and effectiveness of cooperative activities undertaken under this Agreement.
3. The Joint Committee shall endeavour to meet once per year, with such annual meetings being held alternately in the European Community and the United States of America. Other meetings may be held as mutually determined.
4. Decisions of the Joint Committee shall be reached by consensus. Minutes, comprising a record of the decisions and principal points discussed, shall be taken at each meeting. These Minutes shall be agreed by those persons selected from each side to jointly chair the meeting, and shall, together with the annual report, be made available to appropriate Minister-level officials of each Party.

Article 6

Monitoring and Evaluation

Activities under the Programme shall be monitored and evaluated as appropriate. This shall permit, as necessary, the reorientation of activities in the light of any needs or opportunities becoming apparent in the course of its operation.

Article 7

Funding

1. Cooperative activities shall be subject to the availability of funds and to the applicable laws and regulations, policies and programmes of the European Community and the United States of America. Financing will be to the extent possible on the basis of an overall matching of funds between the Parties. The Parties shall attempt to offer Programme activities of comparable benefit and scope.
2. Costs incurred by or on behalf of the Joint Committee shall be met by the Party to whom the members are responsible. Costs, other than those of travel and subsistence, which are directly associated with meetings of the Joint Committee, shall be met by the host Party.

Article 8

Entry of personnel

Each Party shall use its best efforts to facilitate entry to and exit from its territory of personnel, students, material and equipment of the other Party engaged in or used in cooperative activities under this Agreement.

Article 9

Other Agreements

This Agreement shall not replace or otherwise affect other activities undertaken in the fields covered between any Member State of the European Community and the United States of America.

Article 10

Territorial application of this Agreement

This Agreement shall apply, on the one hand, to the territories in which the Treaty establishing the European Community is applied and under the conditions laid down in that Treaty and, on the other hand, to the territory of the United States of America.

Article 11

Entry into force and termination

1. This Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the date on which the Parties shall have notified each other in writing that their legal requirements for the entry into force of this Agreement have been fulfilled.

2. The Agreement shall remain in force for five years and may be extended by mutual agreement. Amendments or extension shall be in writing and shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the date on which the Parties shall have notified each other in writing that their requirements for the entry into force of the agreement providing for the amendment or extension in question have been fulfilled.
3. This Agreement may be terminated at any time by either Party by twelve months' written notice. The expiration or termination of this Agreement shall not affect the validity or duration of any arrangements made under it.

Article 12

This Agreement is drawn up in duplicate in the Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish languages, each of these texts being equally authentic.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized, have signed the present Agreement.

Done at Brussels,

FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Action 1

Joint EC/US Consortia projects

1. The Parties will provide support to higher education institutions and vocational education and training establishments which form joint EC/US consortia for the purpose of undertaking joint projects in the area of higher education and vocational education and training. The European Community will provide support for the use of the European Community consortia partners, the United States of America will provide support for United States consortia partners.
2. Each joint consortium must have an absolute minimum of three active partners on each side; these must include at least two partner higher education or training institutions on each side in different member States of the European Community and different states of the United States of America. The third and subsequent partners may be other education and training institutions or other relevant organisations (e.g; businesses, NGOs, chambers of commerce, research institutes) in the same or other Member States or states of the United States of America. In exceptional circumstances, in the case of the United States of America, two of the institutional partners may be autonomous campuses of a large state university with a third institutional partner from another state of the United States of America. Each joint consortium must involve, with only rare exceptions, transatlantic student mobility, with a goal of parity in the flows in each direction. The Parties agree to help support the costs of this study abroad with modest mobility stipends.
3. The structural cooperative activities of a consortium will be supported by seed funding for a period not normally to exceed three years.
4. Appropriate authorities on each side will mutually agree upon the eligible subject areas for joint EC/US consortia.
5. Activities eligible for support may include:
 - development of organisational frameworks for student mobility, including work placements, which provide adequate language preparation and full academic recognition,
 - structured exchanges of students, teachers, trainers and administrators in higher education institutions and vocational education and training establishments,
 - joint development of innovative curricula including the development of teaching materials, methods and modules,
 - short intensive programmes of at least three weeks duration,
 - teaching assignments forming an integral part of the curriculum in a partner institution,

- other innovative projects, including the use of new technologies and distance learning, which aim to improve the quality of transatlantic cooperation in higher education and vocational education and training and meet at least one of the objectives specified in Article 2 of this Agreement.
6. Each Party may provide financial support to students, academic or administrative staff of higher education and vocational education and training establishments in its territory for the purpose of Transatlantic cooperation.
 7. Administration of the joint projects shall be implemented by the competent officials of each Party. These tasks will comprise:
 - deciding the rules and procedures for the presentation of proposals including the preparation of a Common set of Guidelines for applicants;
 - establishing the timetable for publication of calls for proposals, submission and selection of proposals;
 - providing information on the Programme and its implementation;
 - appointing academic advisors and experts;
 - recommending to the appropriate authorities of each Party which projects to finance;
 - financial management;
 - Programme monitoring.

Action 2

Complementary Activities

The Parties may undertake the following complementary activities:

1. Exchanges of information about vocational education and training and higher education including, where appropriate, conferences on issues of common interest;
2. Provision of Fulbright scholarships for the study of, and research and lecturing on, European Community affairs and EC/US relations;
3. Measures to facilitate the dissemination of information on the Programme, including making the results and achievements of joint consortia projects available for the use of a wider audience;
4. Provision of technical assistance to support the Programme.

COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES
"TRANSATLANTIC EDUCATION COOPERATION"

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1. TITLE

Conclusion of an Agreement for Cooperation, between the European Community and the United States, in higher education and vocational training.

2. BUDGETARY HEADING

B3-1007 - Cooperation with Third Countries.

3. LEGAL BASIS

Articles 126, 127 and 228 of the Treaty of European Union.

Transatlantic Declaration issued in the context of European Political Cooperation, agreed by the Community (Italian) Presidency and Foreign Ministers and the US Secretary of State in November 1990, following endorsement at the European Council in June 1990 in Dublin.

Mandate to negotiate Cooperation Agreements with both Canada and the US establishing Programmes of Cooperation in higher education and vocational training.
Council Decision of 21.11.94

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 General objective of the action

The objective is to promote innovative actions in the area of education and training which promote qualitative improvements by building on the different relative strengths of all participants to their mutual benefit.

The activities are carried out in the context of the political, economic, social and cultural relations between the EU and the US, now one of the two largest trading blocks in the world given the US and Canada cooperation within the NAFTA. EU and US are each others' major trading partners with trade roughly in balance and where each side have levels of direct investment many times higher than that from all other countries together. The EU and the US were major contributors to the successful conclusion of the GATT agreement of 1994.

Following the principles of trade liberalisation to which both parties subscribe, the globalisation of production patterns and the accelerating pace of technology diffusion, all partners and young people in particular, can benefit in terms of career prospects, from qualitative improvements in curricula, especially in interdisciplinary studies, participating in the same classes and learning in the same language as the students of the host country, exchanges of teaching staff and of policy-makers in the area of vocational training.

Actually living in another country, in the case of student mobility, especially when this involves another language and culture, is an ideal means of spreading understanding of other cultures and building up experience of dealing with the people of the host country which could prove of considerable value in securing employment and enhancing career prospects in the home country later. There is a recognised need for greater understanding of the European Union by American youth and opinion formers, particularly of non English-speaking and non French-speaking Member States and including those with lesser-spoken languages.

By structuring actions on a consortium basis, building on the experience of existing Community Programmes, education and training institutions in the regions which have, in the past, found such transatlantic cooperation too costly in terms of money and time, have a chance to participate.

Different relative strengths in the various stages of successfully transferring of scientific advances from laboratory to the market place provides an opportunity for the participants to regain some of their lost international competitiveness in the area of world trade in high technology.

Exchanges of information and experiences, particularly in the area of skills and qualifications, can help to ease the transition from school and university to the world of gainful employment among all partners.

4.2. Duration of the action

The Declaration does not specify an expiry date. Five year action programme (1995-99). Individual consortia projects subject to 3 year limit.

5. CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE OR REVENUE

- 5.1. Non-compulsory expenditure.
- 5.2. Differentiated appropriations.

6. NATURE OF THE EXPENDITURE

- 6.1. 100 % in the case of studies and publications.
- 6.2. Topping up grants to students and academic staff to cover part of transport and accommodation costs. Co-financing with the US Department of Education cost of joint consortia. Co-financing with USIA (funding agency for Fulbright Commission in the US) of European dimension of Fulbright programme.
- 6.3. Daily allowance for experts and members of independent academic assessment board attending relevant meetings.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1. Method of calculating total of action set out in the annex to the proposal for a Council Decision.
- 7.2. Indicative itemised breakdown of cost of action.

Breakdown of costs of actions

ECU 000 current

UNITED STATES	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	TOTAL
<i>Action 1</i>	1 000	1 000	1 100	1 200	1 250	5 550
<i>Action 2</i>	100	200	200	200	250	950
TOTAL	1 100	1 200	1 300	1 400	1 500	6 500

Action 1 : joint projects carried out by EC/US consortia

Action 2 : complementary measures

7.3. Indicative schedule of appropriations

7.3.1. Echancier des appropriations - ECU '000 current

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 +	TOTAL
<i>Crédits d'engagement</i>	1 100	1 200	1 300	1 400	1 500	6 500
<i>Crédits de paiement</i>						
1995	880					880
1996	220	960				1 180
1997		240	1 040			1 280
1998			260	1 120		1 380
1999 +				280	1 500	1 780
TOTAL	1 100	1 200	1 300	1 400	1 500	6 500

8. PREVENTION OF FRAUD

All contracts, agreements and legal undertakings by the Commission make provision for the possibility of spot checks by the Commission and by the Court of Auditors. Among other things beneficiaries of actions are obliged to provide reports and financial statements on the content and the eligibility of expenditure, in accord with the aim of Community financing.

9. ELEMENTS OF COST- EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

9.1. Specific and quantifiable objectives : target population.

The aim of the proposed programme is to add an extra dimension to existing programmes by generating value added and contributing to the enhanced quality of education and training through contact with external structures which have a different range of strength than those in Europe.

The programme is designed to create the maximum degree of synergy between systems, such as joint cooperation on both sides using the ECTS as a model, building on relative strengths of consortium members in multidisciplinary curriculum development, and providing a vehicle for transatlantic cooperation for regional institutions in Europe who could not hitherto afford such activities.

Since financial support in the case of the consortia should be for a maximum of 3 years duration the multiplier effects should be substantial as the EU will restrict itself to the provision of seed money. Their projects will be selected with a view to their viability with alternative funding subsequent years. Thus the main rôle of EU is to act as a catalyst rather than a long-term source of on-going finance.

The Programme involves 2 actions :

1. Joint projects carried out by EC/US consortia. These can be composed of higher education institutions, vocational training establishments or a mixture of the two. The consortia are encouraged to include other relevant actors as affiliated members. In order to maximize the advantages of multi-lateral arrangements, a minimum number of three participants is required on each side, two of which must be in different Community Member States or US States.
2. Complementary measures including, notably, exchanges of experience in the area of higher education and training to enhance the dialogue between the European Community and the US.

Target audience

This will include (i) policy-makers in the area of education and training, including public officials, representatives of the social partners; (ii) higher education institutions including staff and, with the framework of projects, students; (iii) training establishments, including ongoing lifelong learning establishments, staff and indirectly through projects, students; (iv) industry and R+D establishments where these are linked to projects led by an education or training partner.

9.2. Justification for the action

The Union's role in education and training is to act as a catalyst, exploiting the Community dimension, in order to promote innovation and improve quality. The decision to cooperate in education with the US derives, in the first place, from the decision of the European Community and its Member States in 1990 and the proposed action has been designed based mainly on the experience gained from the exploratory phase undertaken in 1993 following the guidelines of the Council of December 1992. It is therefore designed as a positive sum strategy between partners of a roughly equal level of development, but with complementary strengths, to ensure a net benefit for all.

The European Parliament has also played an active and encouraging role in this area. In 1993, it produced a report and passed a resolution calling for the establishment of cooperation with Third Countries in education and culture. In addition, its decisions as a budgetary authority have enabled the Commission to explore possibilities for development of cooperative activities with Third Countries.

The Commission was authorized by the Council to negotiate Cooperation Agreements with both Canada and the United States of America establishing Programmes of Cooperation in higher education and vocational training (Council Decision of 21.11.94).

The actions have been designed to respect subsidiarity, e.g., the consortia group partners in a number of member States and do not duplicate the bilateral exchange programmes. There are considerable economies of scale to be reaped using this formula based as they are on the synergies of established and newly-created networks.

The actions should build on existing actions, without diminishing them in any way, while adding an extra dimension to these programmes.

No other similar actions are undertaken at Community level. By providing seed money for 2 to 3 years projects only the programme will build bridges and infrastructure that will, in most cases, continue to be active thereafter but financed from alternative sources. Long term dependency will not be encouraged while long-term independent sustainability will be a criterion of selection. In the case of opening up the European Credit Transfer System to a grouping which includes a European nucleus active in the system, for example, other outer ring universities and faculties can later join in the system established by the central nucleus.

9.3. Monitoring and evaluation of the action

9.3.1. Performance indicators selected

The main indicators of successful performance of such diverse and individually innovative activities is based on the personal judgement and the experience of the responsible project officers with collaborative projects. But these mainly subjective criteria, are supplemented by such objective, quantitative indicators as :

- * number of faculty and students involved, numbers of participants;
- * range of achievements offered by institutions (academic recognition, curriculum development, intensive programmes, ECTS, training materials, new training technologies developed, language preparation);
- * the number of faculties in regional institutions who become involved in such cooperation for the first time; the number of links established with industry.

In regards to the relationship between impact and stated objectives these have to be considered at both the diplomatic as well as the pedagogic level indicated above.

It is logical to believe that the introduction of a formal programme which uses a low level of funding to maximum effect, including publication of results, would greatly enhance relations and demonstrate the willingness of the EU to respect the commitment given in the Transatlantic Declaration.

The Programme actions should be subject to continual review and supervision by the project officials responsible. An annual progress report should be sent to the Council.

9.4. Coherence with financial programming

- DG : yes, included in actions "Education and training"
- More general objective of the D.G. : Education and training

10. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES :

N.A.

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