

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(92) 512 final

Brussels, 7 December 1992

Third report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament

on the Third Joint Programme for the Exchange of Young Workers
1985-1991

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The "Third Joint Programme to Encourage the Exchange of Young Workers within the Community" was the last phase of the oldest youth exchange programme, launched by the EC Commission in 1964. It was adopted by the Council in its decision of 13 December 1984¹ covering the period 1985-1990. The Council Decision of 29 May 1990² prolonged the Third Joint Programme for another year until the end of 1991, and as from 1 January 1992 young workers' exchange activities are supported within the PETRA II Programme as per the Council Decision of 22 July 1991³.
- 1.2 The Commission has presented two earlier reports on the programme, in 1987 and 1989. The present report covers not only the last two years of the programme but the whole of the third phase and it presents the framework for future Community support for the exchange of young workers within the PETRA II Programme.
- 1.3 The programme of exchanges for young workers aimed to provide an opportunity for participation in a Community scheme offering experience of living and working conditions in other Member States and fostering the skills necessary for adult and working life including the development of vocational knowledge and practical skills as well as the skills of interpersonal communication between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. It also enabled participants to find interests in common with young people from other Member States and, above all, to develop an awareness of a shared European identity.
- 1.4 The Third Joint Programme was not intended to offer the young people concerned basic vocational training and experience in another Member State, but rather to complement the training and experience already acquired in his/her own country.
- 1.5 The programme was open to citizens of the Member States, aged between 18 and 28 years, who were either employed or available for employment and who had completed basic vocational training or had similar work experience.
- 1.6 The exchanges ranged from the short-term, lasting 3 weeks to 3 months including study visits, work placements and a brief experience of the working environment, to the longer term, lasting 4 to 16 months, mainly work placements preceded by preparatory language and orientation courses.

¹ 84/636/EEC OJL 331, 19.12.84

² 90/268/EEC OJL 156, 21.06.90

³ 91/387/EEC OJL 214, 02.08.91

- 1.7 The Commission provided funding for a weekly flat-rate contribution to each participant, including an additional contribution to the cost of language training, and up to 75% reimbursement of international travel costs.

2. ADMINISTRATION

- 2.1 The Council Decision set out the broad lines of the programme including the basic aims, eligibility criteria and the nature of the exchanges to be organised, and the Commission specified the rules and guidelines for its implementation. From 1988 the European Community Youth Exchange Bureau (ECYEB) provided technical assistance to the Commission for the implementation of the programme. In each Member State, a government representative acted as national coordinator for the programme.

3. EXCHANGE ORGANISERS

- 3.1 The exchange organisers have been responsible for organising and implementing the exchanges and so, have been the most important element in the structural framework supported by the Commission. The relationship between the Commission and each organiser was governed by contracts covering the individual exchange projects. These contracts defined the conditions for implementing the exchanges, the obligations of the body or group involved and the financial responsibilities.
- 3.2 The majority of exchange organisers fell into two categories : those operating at European level - and which in later years accounted for some 25% of the the overall participation - and those operating primarily at national level but which had acquired a Community dimension. The organisers were principally involved in exchange programmes, vocational training programmes or a variety of social, cultural and educational projects aimed at target groups from particular professional or industrial sectors, which had created a network for the purpose of developing exchanges of young people. This wide range of organisations is reflected in the variety of sectors in which exchanges have been run, within the programme.
- 3.3 Meetings with the main exchange organisers were held on a regular basis throughout the Third Joint Programme to discuss administrative and financial aspects of the programme, to consider the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the activities, and to exchange points of view on the context and scope of the further development of young workers' exchanges.
- 3.4 During the period 1985-1988 the number of exchange organisers ranged between 18 and 22, but as from 1989, when there were some 29 exchange organisers, the number increased dramatically to 45 in 1990 and, finally, 59 in 1991. This increase is, in part, a reflexion of

the impact of the information materials on the Young Workers' Exchange Programme distributed widely since 1988 and also the very high and ever-increasing number of young workers wishing to participate in the programme.

See Annex 1.

4. NATIONAL COORDINATORS

- 4.1 The Commission has been particularly anxious that exchange organisers liaised with the national coordinators to discuss exchange plans and organisers were required to send a copy of each project proposal submitted to the Commission to the national coordinators concerned.
- 4.2 Several meetings were held with national coordinators during the Third Joint Programme to inform them of developments and to discuss with them the operation of the programme.

5. PRACTICAL RESULTS

5.1 Funding of the Programme

- 5.1.1 The Third Joint Programme was introduced in a climate of economic recession and high unemployment and the repercussions of these factors on the mobility of the work force in general, and young workers in particular, coupled with an extremely small budget of 2 MECU in 1985, hampered the development of the programme in its initial phase. This situation was reflected in the relatively low number of participants, estimated at 1309, that year.
- 5.1.2 From 1986 to 1988, the annual budget for the programme remained at 4.5 MECU allowing for only a limited increase in participation during that same period to a total of 2676 participants in 1988.
- 5.1.3 In 1989 the budget was increased to 5 MECU, in 1990 to 5.5 MECU and in 1991 to approximately 6 MECU. During these three years, the number of participants decreased from a total of 2768 in 1989 to 2644 in 1990 and 2567 in 1991. This drop was, in part, due to an increase of the flat-rate contributions per participant per week by 10 ECUs allowing for an increase in the grant amount per participant per week. It was also due, in part, to an increase in the so-called medium-term project of 3 months' duration (11-13 weeks) as a result of the Commission's policy of favouring these over shorter projects, in view of the findings of the 1989 survey which showed that medium-term projects combine the objectives of short- and long-term exchanges while many of the difficulties involved in long-term exchanges are eliminated.

- 5.1.4 During the Third Joint Programme, the Commission refused funding for a large number of exchange projects for budgetary reasons. This situation became especially notable in the later years of the programme following the Community-wide distribution of information materials in 1988, which resulted in an increased awareness of the programme throughout the Community and a consequent increase in demand. This situation should, however, be seen in the light of the development of other Community programmes which provide opportunities for youth exchange.

See Annex 2.

5.2 Funding of Projects

- 5.2.1 The financial support provided under the Third Joint Programme was always intended as an incentive to the development of young workers' exchanges in the Community, and it was never intended to cover the entire costs of each exchange project, although this was very much the case in the early years of the programme.
- 5.2.2 However, since 1988, the EC contribution, calculated as a percentage of the total cost of exchanges, decreased from 83% to 71% in 1991. This decrease confirms that, particularly in the later years of the programme exchange organisers became increasingly successful in securing other sources of income than the European Community.
- 5.2.3 Information on the cost of exchanges shows that the average cost, calculated on the basis of a weekly flat-rate per participant, more than doubled during the period 1985-1991: amounting to 122 ECU in 1985 and 261 ECU in 1991. Long-term exchanges registered the most significant increase, from an average of 95 ECU per participant per week in 1985 to 204 ECU in 1991.
- 5.2.4 This steep increase can be explained by the deterioration of the general economic climate, which made it more difficult for exchange organisers to secure paid long-term work placements, and consequently increased the need to provide participants with allowances, wage indemnities, etc.

See Annex 3.

5.3 Short-term and Long-term Projects

- 5.3.1 As stipulated in the Council Decision, the exchanges were divided into short-term (3 weeks - 3 months) and long-term (4 -16 months) projects, each category having its own particular objectives within the overall guidelines.
- 5.3.2 From the beginning of the Third joint Programme, short-term projects dominated, representing 69% of the exchanges in 1985. This trend was reinforced over the years and long-term projects represented only 15% of the total in 1991.

5.3.3 This development was the result of several factors:

- increasing difficulty in finding work placements in general, and particularly for citizens of other Member States;
- reluctance of young people in employment to leave their jobs, albeit temporarily, to participate in the Programme;
- an increase in medium-term exchanges, usually of 11-13 weeks' duration which fall within the category of short-term projects.

See Annex 4.

5.4 Geographical Distribution

5.4.1 Participation in Young Workers' Exchanges was, for the duration of the Third Joint Programme, concentrated at the centre of the Community, specifically in the three major language areas (British Isles, Germany and France), though participation from other areas of the Community did increase steadily, due to the fact that the Commission gave a certain priority to projects involving young people from peripheral or disadvantaged regions.

5.4.2 In this context, it should be noted that multilateral projects (projects involving more than 3 Member States), normally carried out by European level organisers, have been the ones which usually involved the most young people from peripheral regions of the Community, thus playing an important role in redressing this imbalance.

5.4.3 The Commission also endeavoured to ensure an overall balance between the number of young workers received and those sent abroad on exchanges from each Member State. This principle of balance operated for the majority of exchanges.

See Annex 5.

5.5 Sectoral Distribution

5.5.1 Although in the first four years of the Third Joint Programme, exchanges in the primary and secondary sectors accounted for approximately 50% of all exchanges, the sustained increase in projects in the tertiary sector over the last three years up to 80% was a reflexion of the development of the tertiary sector of the Community's economy in general.

5.5.2 Hotel, catering and tourism remained dominant sectors throughout the programme, possibly due to the tradition of transnational professional mobility in these sectors, followed by health & social services and cultural & recreational services. Other fields in the

tertiary sector also emerged such as the media (including broadcasting), banking, marketing, import/export and administrative & secretarial services.

See Annex 6.

5.6 Participant Profile

- 5.6.1 With the adoption of the Third Joint Programme unemployed young people were made eligible to participate in the exchanges. The steady increase in the participation of this group over the duration of the programme, from an estimated 20% in 1985 to almost 65% in 1991, confirms the fact that with ever-rising youth unemployment there was a real need to provide unemployed young people with an opportunity to gain professional experience through participation in young workers' exchanges.
- 5.6.2 Often exchange projects were directly targeted at the unemployed, with the specific objective of offering them the (first) practical work experience so crucial to their further employment prospects.
- 5.6.3 Another of the priorities of the programme was to offer equal opportunities to men and women. In 1985 women were estimated to represent 40% of all participants in the exchanges. However, as soon as 1987 the aim of equality was achieved and women represented some 51%. This trend of increased participation of women continued throughout the programme and in 1991 women were in the majority, representing 59% of all participants.
- 5.6.4 This reversal in the participation of men and women may be explained by the parallel increase in exchange projects in the tertiary sector, particularly in hotel/catering and secretarial/administrative services - sectors which traditionally employ more women than men.
- 5.6.5 Also, throughout the programme, the Commission has encouraged the participation of women in exchanges in new technology areas and in non-traditional sectors and on a number of occasions has funded projects for women in the so-called male-dominated sectors.
- 5.6.6 Over the years, an increasing number of projects have been concerned with either disability in general, or have directly involved young workers with physical disabilities or learning difficulties. The Commission has welcomed this development and has made an effort to provide special funding whenever needed. In addition, disabled young workers have taken part in other projects alongside able-bodied participants.

See Annex 7.

6. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

6.1 In 1988, a qualitative analysis of the contents of the reports submitted by the participants during the period 1985-1987 was carried out. This analysis was a first pilot study which allowed certain tendencies regarding the effects of the exchanges on the participants to be identified.

6.2 An assessment of the impact of the programme upon the participants was made in the 1989 "Survey on Long-Term Effects of Exchanges" carried out amongst a random sample of 18% of the participants in projects in 1987. It examined four different levels of effect closely following the objectives of the programme:

1. Impact on the work situation/development of the individual in professional terms;
2. Changes in the level of socio-economic environment;
3. Development of awareness of problems in terms of European policy;
4. Effects on personal future plans, and on personal development.

6.3 The main findings of the survey can be summarised as follows:

6.3.1 · A quarter of the participants took part in the exchange immediately after having finished vocational training, whereas approximately half had already worked for a few years. For one third of the participants, the exchange was their first stay abroad.

6.3.2 · A third of the participants stated the desire to develop their professional knowledge as their primary motivation for taking part. A surprising finding in this respect was that only 15% of participants in long-term projects (longer than 3 months' duration) gave professional reasons as their primary motivation, saying that getting to know another European country and perfection of foreign language skills were the decisive factors, whereas almost half of the participants in three-week projects gave professional reasons as their principal ones.

6.3.3 · "The degree of satisfaction of expectations goes in tandem with the length of the exchange".

Overall, 87% of the participants were largely satisfied but the negative comments were concentrated on the three-week projects. The conclusion is that it is a perfectly good model if used as a "first introduction" to various aspects, including professional ones, of another country, whereas longer project models are better suited for training and improvement of professional skills.

- 6.3.4 · In general, the participants felt that the practical professional experience had a positive impact on-the-job, at home and this increased according to the duration of the project: a third of participants for three week projects, and approximately half for 1-3 months' and long-term projects.
 - 6.3.5 · As far as, the awareness of the European dimension and interest in European policies was concerned, 68,8% of all participants declared that their interest had increased. Again, participants in long-term projects differed significantly from the others, 80,7% of them having declared that their interest had increased.
 - 6.3.6 · Finally, 96% of the participants would, "today, some time after their experience", advise others to participate in such an exchange which shows the high value attributed to the Young Workers' Exchange Programme by former participants.
- 6.4 In response to the 1990 European Parliament Resolution which "called on the Commission to draw up a report ... showing for each Member State and region the age, sex, educational level and social category of those with access to Community programmes", a survey was carried out amongst those who had participated in a Young Workers' Exchange during the period 1 January 1989 - 30 September 1990.
- 6.5 The results of this survey gave the following indications:
- 6.5.1 · The average age of participants was 23.7 but with some variances between Member States, the oldest participants coming from Germany (average age 24.8) and the youngest from the UK (average age 22.3).
 - 6.5.2 · The male/female participation ratio differed from the one registered in the survey relating to 1987 in that now 56% of the participants were women compared with 49% in 1987.
 - 6.5.3 · Almost all regions of the Community were represented with the greatest participation centred in the regions of Piemonte/Val d'Aosta, Italy (5.8%); Grande Lisboa, Portugal (4.7%); Nordrhein/ Westphalen, Germany (4%); Ireland-East (3.1%); and Levant, Spain (3%).
 - 6.5.4 · The household situation of participants varied greatly between Member States, but generally participants had not started their own families. The majority still lived with their parents (52%) but women more frequently lived away, alone or with a partner, than men of whom 60% lived with their parents.

- 6.5.5 · The employment status figures showed that only 73% of the participants considered themselves as either full-time employed (55%), part-time employed (9%) or unemployed (9%). The remaining group indicated that they in one way or another were involved in activities aimed at developing their professional skills, e.g. further training.
- 6.5.6 · The occupational/professional background of the participants covered all areas of work and with different levels of qualifications and it showed that the lower work categories were relatively poorly represented. The overall best represented category was that of well-qualified craftsmen and skilled workers with 17%.

7. **YOUNG WORKERS' EXCHANGES UNDER PETRA II**

- 7.1 In the Memorandum on the "Rationalisation and Coordination of Vocational Training Programmes at Community Level" of 21 August 1990⁴, the Commission presented its proposal to amalgamate the PETRA and Young Workers' Exchange programmes. The aim of the proposal was to give greater emphasis to the value of training and exchange experiences for both young people in initial vocational training and young workers by providing a single framework for Community action in support of the vocational training of young people.
- 7.2 The Council Decision of 22 July 1991⁵ adopting the PETRA II Programme for the period 1 January 1992 - 31 December 1994, sets out the context for the organisation of young workers' exchanges under Action Ib of the programme:
 - 7.2.1 The programme is open to young workers up to and including the age of 27, permanently residing in the European Community, who are in employment or are available on the labour market and who have received initial vocational training or practical work experience.
 - 7.2.2 Placements in another Member State are intended to provide a new vocational or training experience, to promote awareness of the working world of the Community by providing a different work environment and the experience of living in another Member State, thus adding a European dimension to the initial vocational training.

⁴ DOC.COM 90/334/EEC

⁵ 91/387/EEC OJL 214, 02.08.91

7.2.3 The placements must

- be organised on the basis of written agreements between participants and/or their employers and the host organisation; the agreement must include a precise description of the objectives, content and methods of each placement;
- be duly certified by the host organisation or other competent body in the host country;
- be targeted at specific vocational fields relating to vocational training or new vocational skills;
- be preceded by appropriate curricular, linguistic and practical preparation.

7.2.4 The duration of placements is normally three months, but these may be of a shorter or longer duration, up to a year, if the nature of the work experience or the training objectives require it.

7.2.5 In the Member States National Coordination Units are responsible for the operation of the programme. The level of financial support available will vary according to the Member State of the applicant and the nature of the placement. Grants will be allocated by the National Coordination Unit in the Member State in which the young people concerned are residents.

7.3 The inclusion of the Young Workers' Exchange Programme in the PETRA II Programme places these activities in the immediate context of the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life, thus enhancing the wider recognition of the value of such experiences and, at the same time, ensuring their continued development.

7.4 In quantitative terms, the PETRA II Programme aims to support 100.000 placements for young people in the three-year period 1992-1994, of which 20.000 will be provided for young workers - more than the total number of participants in young workers' exchanges under the Third Joint Programme.

8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

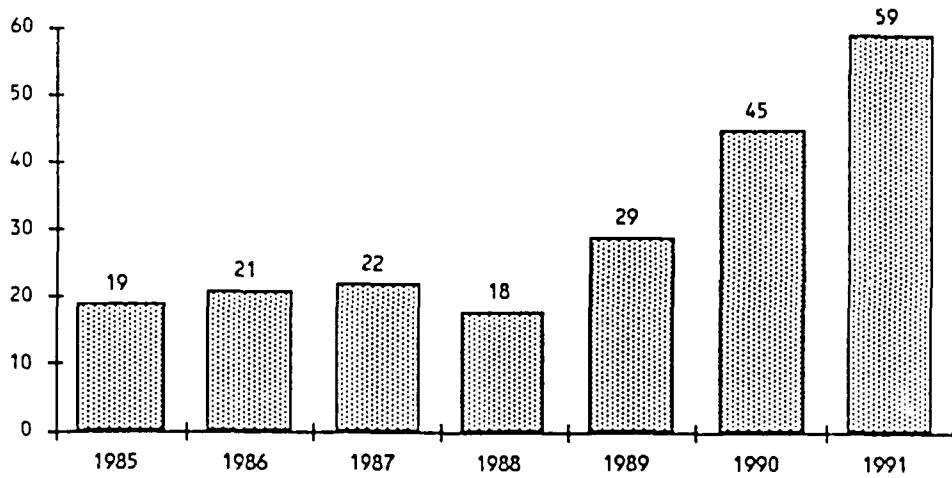
8.1 After almost three decades, the oldest of the Community's youth mobility programmes has come to an end with the termination of the Third Joint Programme and its amalgamation with the PETRA II Programme.

- 8.2 Although the direct impact of the programme in absolute terms can only be qualified as extremely limited considering that the Community's youth population numbers some 52 million, its impact on the methodology and content of young workers' exchanges has been exemplary and it has, undoubtedly, contributed an added value to this field. Furthermore, the programme did indirectly help pave the way for the introduction of other, much more significant Community youth mobility schemes such as the COMETT, ERASMUS and Youth For Europe programmes.
- 8.3 Finally, the Young Workers' Exchange Programme must be considered as having made a contribution towards facilitating the free movement of the labour force and establishing the notion of Community citizens, both important instruments for the successful achievement of the future European Union.
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ANNEX 1

Table 1

N° of exchange organisers per year



ANNEX 2

Table 1

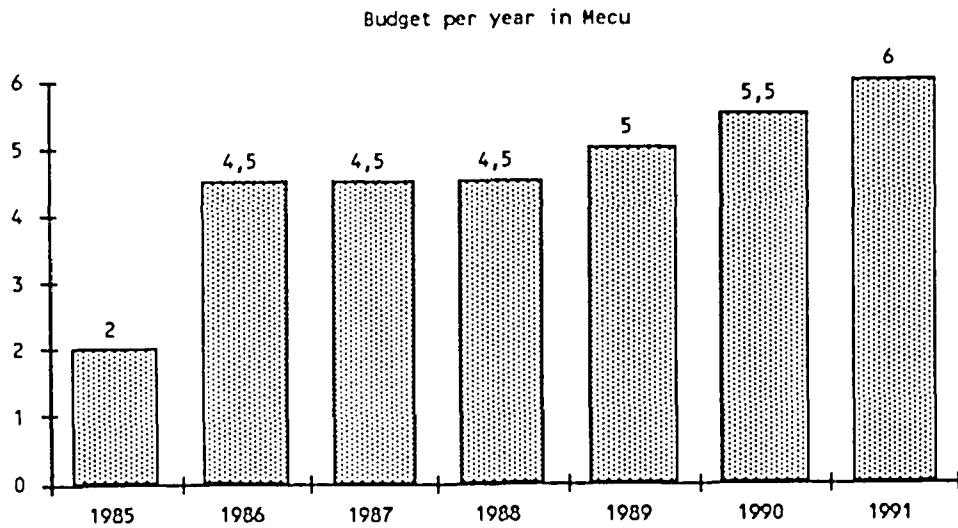
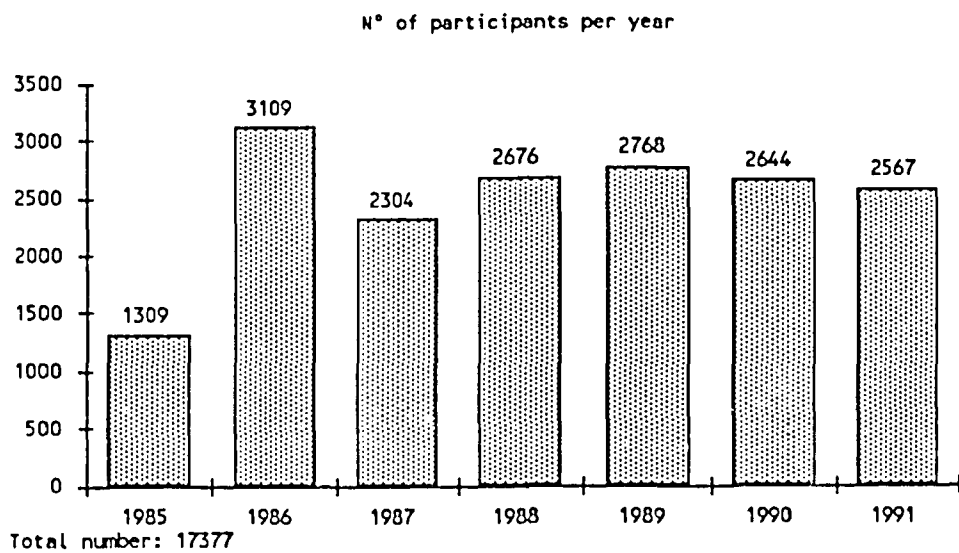


Table 2



Note: The figures for 1985 and 1986 are based on indications provided by exchange organisers.

ANNEX 3

Table 1

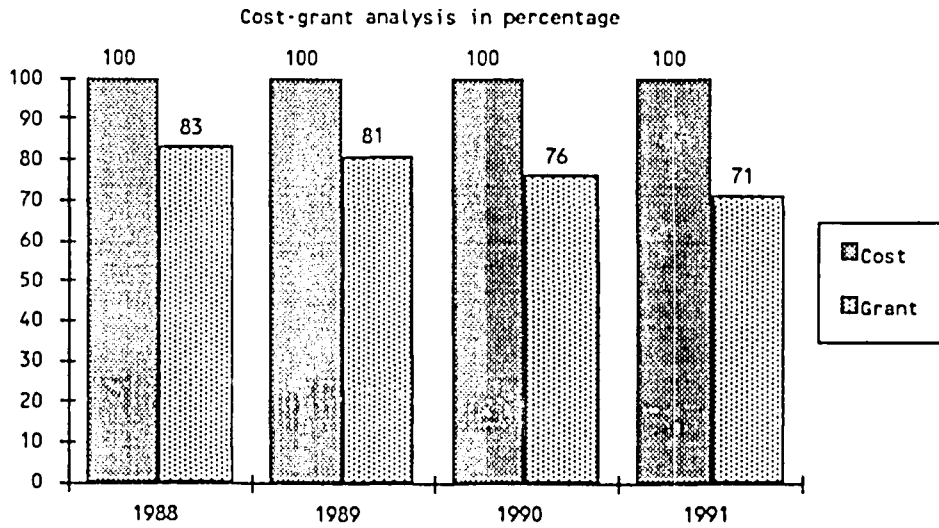


Table 2

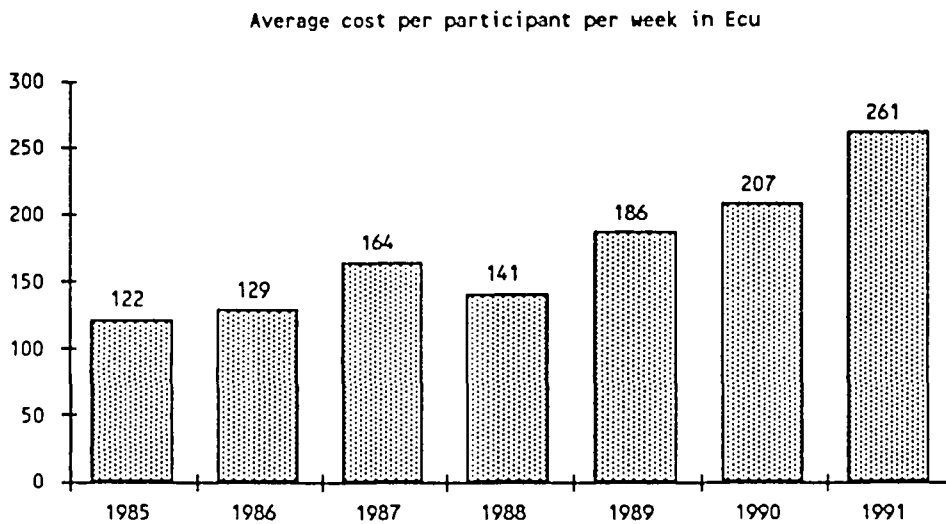


Table 3

Average cost per participant per short/long-term project in Ecu

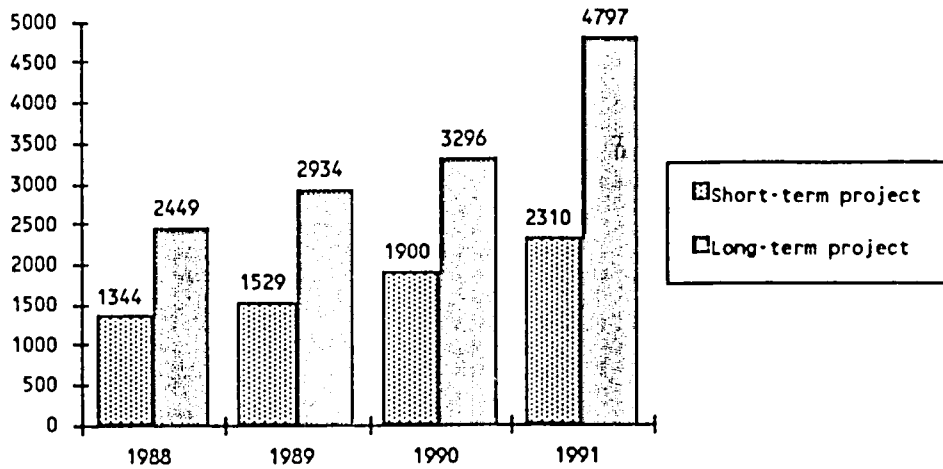
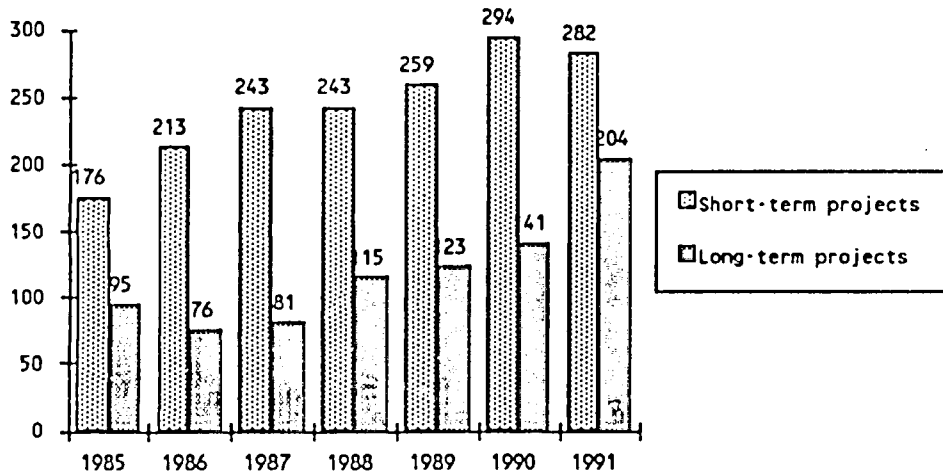


Table 4

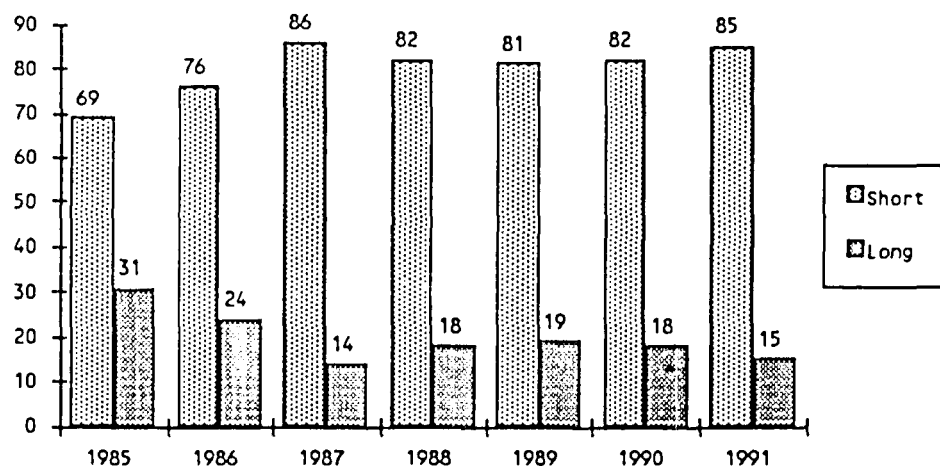
Average cost per part. per week per short/long-term project in Ecu



ANNEX 4

Table 1

Short/long-term projects in percentage



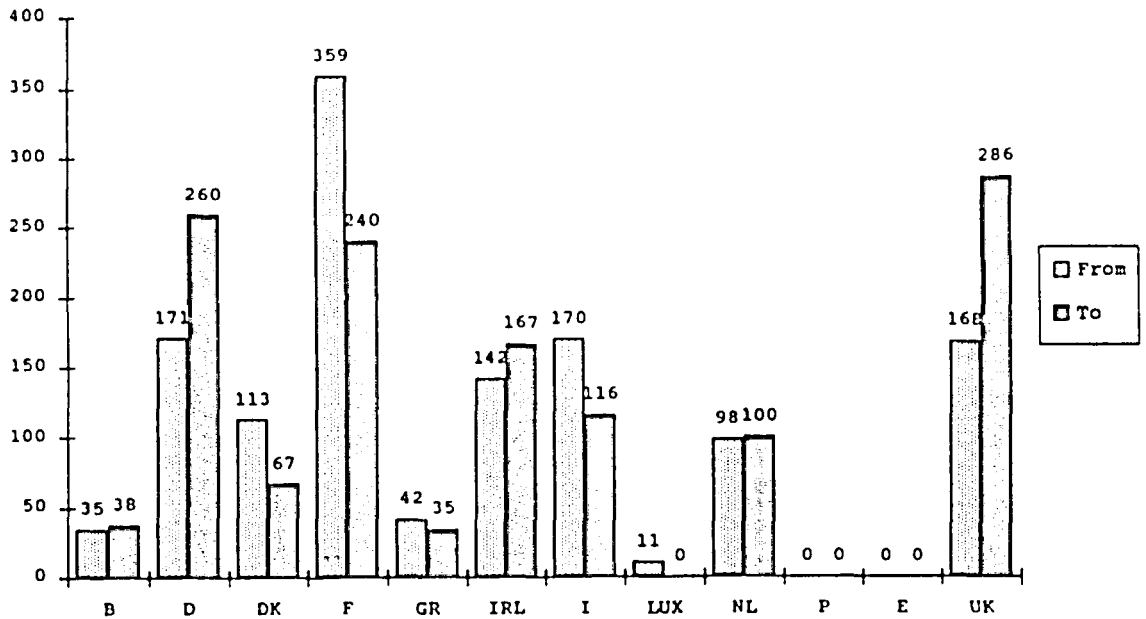
Notes: Percentages for 1985 are estimations.

The distribution for 1985-1987 is based on the number of participant/weeks; the distribution for 1988-1991 on the number of projects.

ANNEX 5

Table 1

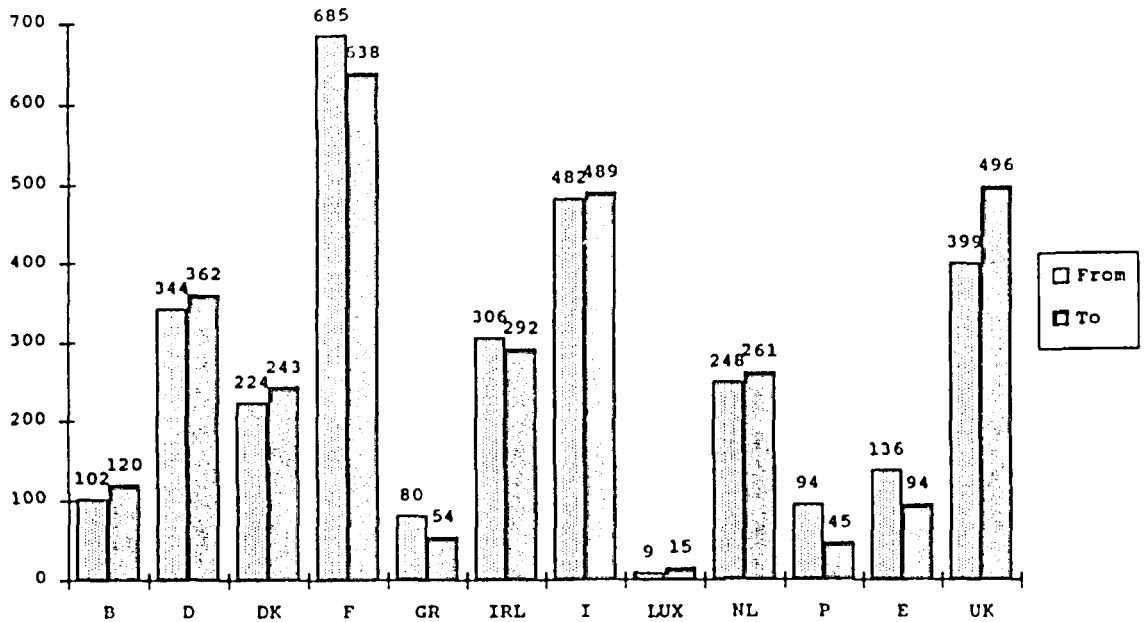
Flow of participants in 1985



Note: The figures are based on indications provided by exchange organisers.

Table 2

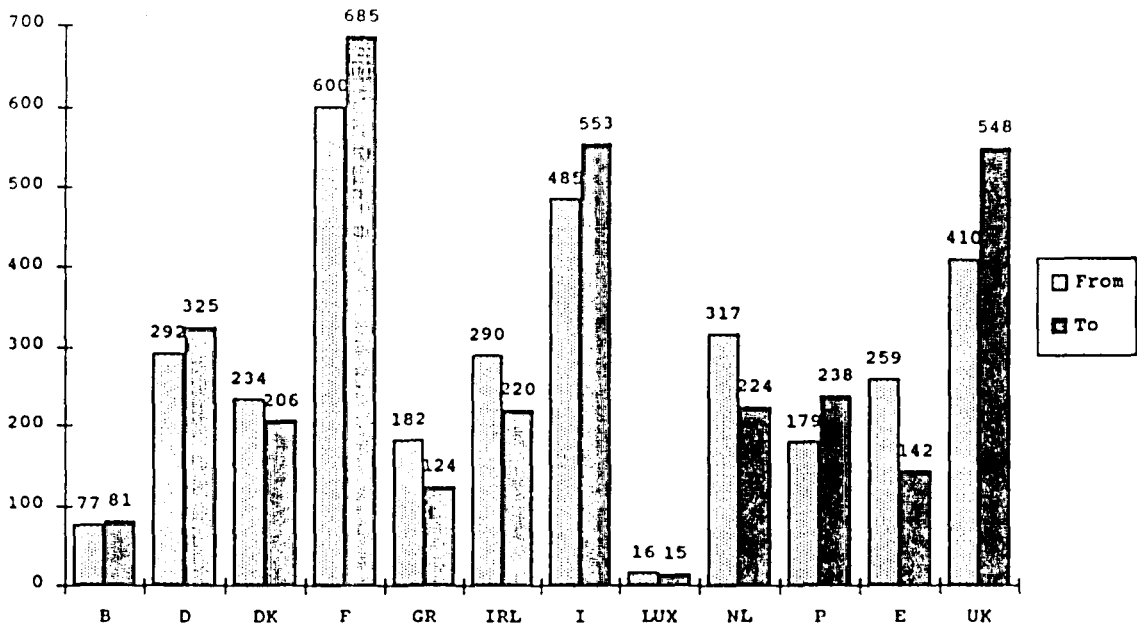
Flow of participants in 1986



Note: The figures are based on indications provided by exchange organisers.

Table 3

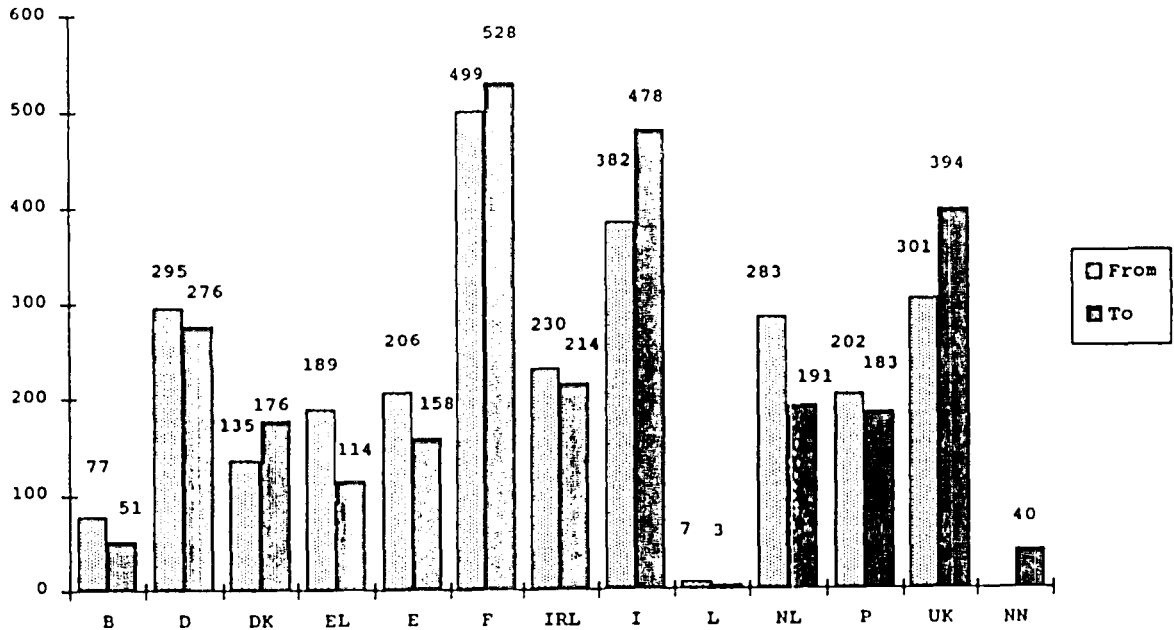
Flow of participants in 1987



Note: The figures are based on indications provided by exchange organisers.

Table 4

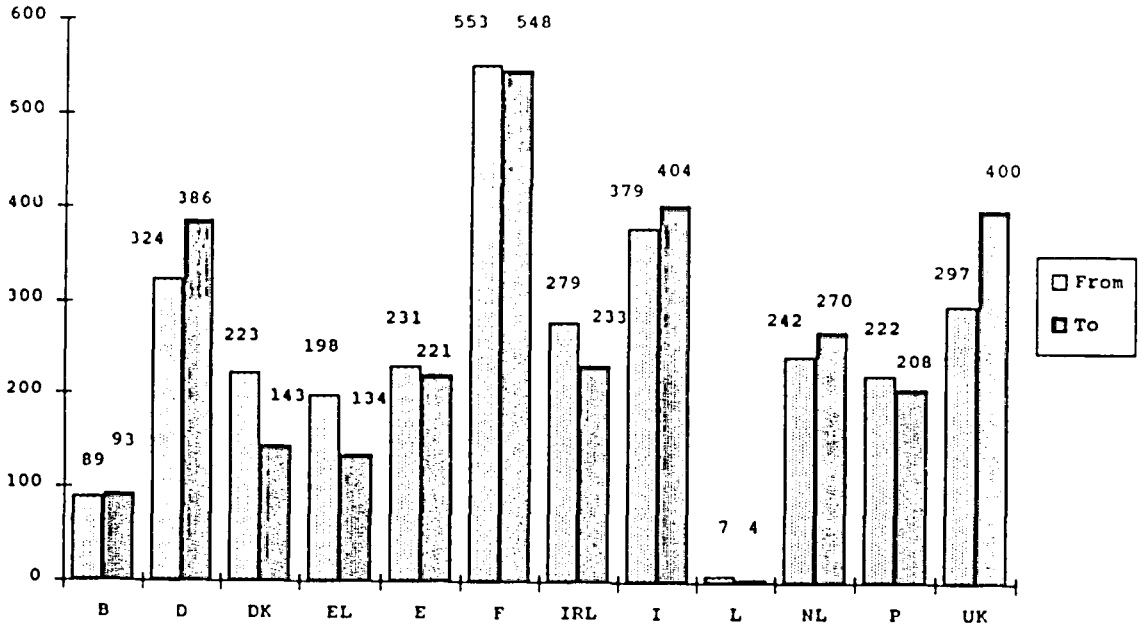
Flow of participants in 1988



Note: The figures are based on planned participant numbers and thus are higher than the actual final number of participants.

Table 5

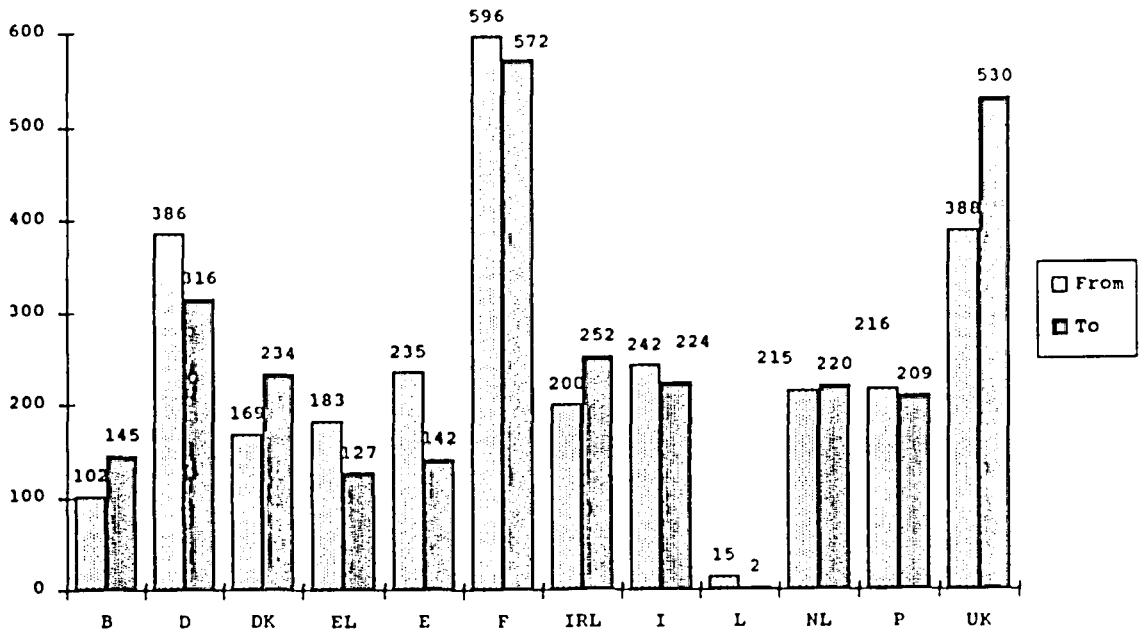
Flow of participants in 1989



Note: The figures are based on planned participant numbers and thus are higher than the actual final number of participants.

Table 6

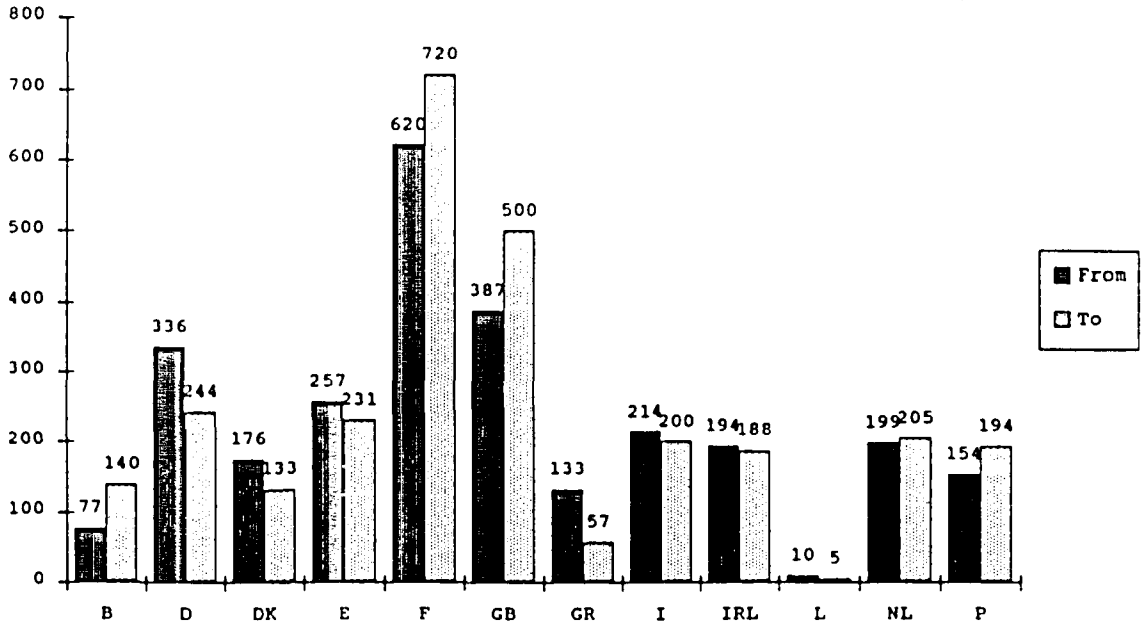
Flow of participants in 1990



Note: The figures are based on planned participant numbers and thus are higher than the actual final number of participants.

Table 7

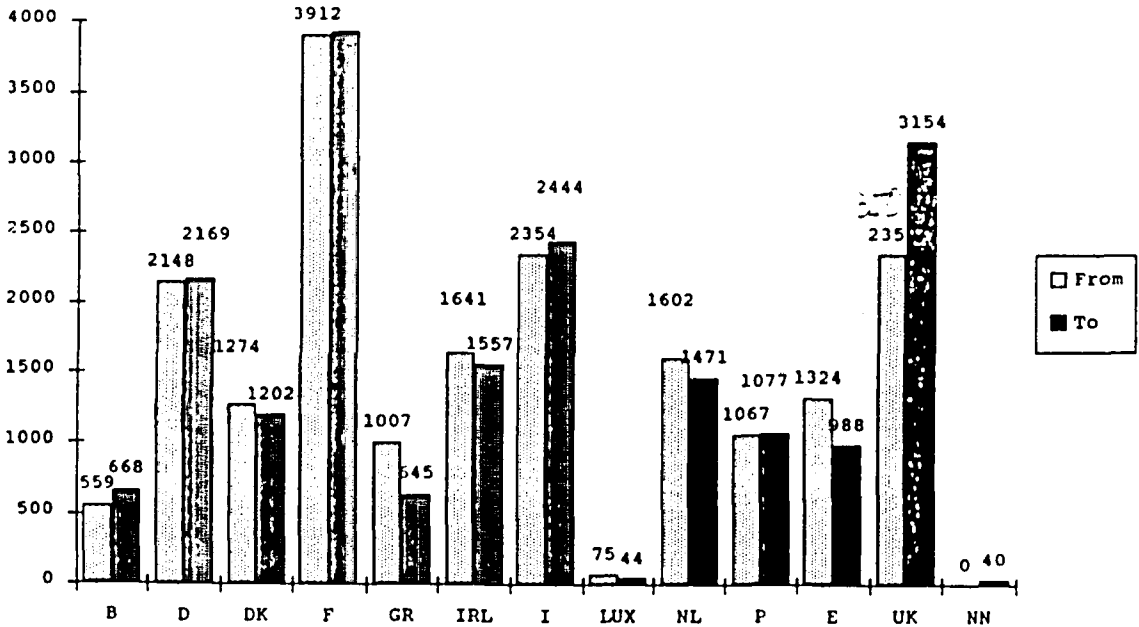
Flow of participants in 1991



Note: The figures are based on planned participant numbers and thus are higher than the actual final number of participants.

Table 8

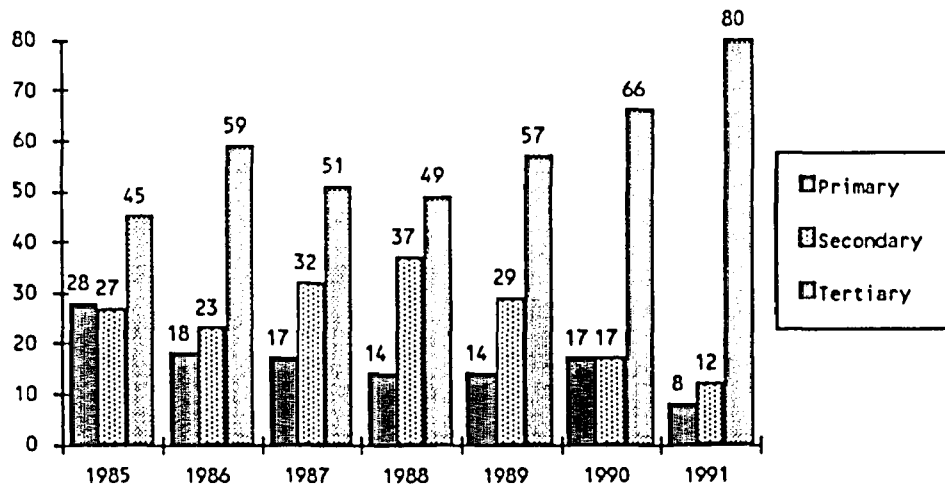
Flow of participants during 1985-1991
3931



ANNEX 6

Table 1

Sectoral distribution of projects in percentage



Note: The distribution for 1985-1987 is based on the number of participant/weeks; the distribution for 1988-1991 on the number of projects.

List of sectors of exchanges under the Third Joint Programme:

Agriculture	Hospitals
Agroindustry	Hotel/catering
Archaeology	Hunting
Architectural restoration	Import/export
Arts	Insurance
Art restoration	Landscape gardening
Audiovisual Production	Local employment initiatives
Banking	Manufacturing industry
Boat building	Marketing
Ceramics	Media
Chemical industry	Metal working industry
Cinema	Mosaic work
Circus	Music
Commerce & trade	Nature conservation
Computers	Nursing
Construction	Processing industry
Cooperatives	Public administration
Crafts	Recycling
Cultural amateurs	Renewable energies
Disabled workers	Secretariat & administration
Distribution	Sports
Engineering	Technical assistance to agriculture
Environmental protection	Telematics
Fisheries	Textiles
Food, drink & tobacco industry	Theatre
Food processing industry	Tourism
Forestry	Transport
Health & social services	Viticulture
Horticulture	Vocational training

ANNEX 7

Table 1

Employed/unemployed Young Workers in percentage

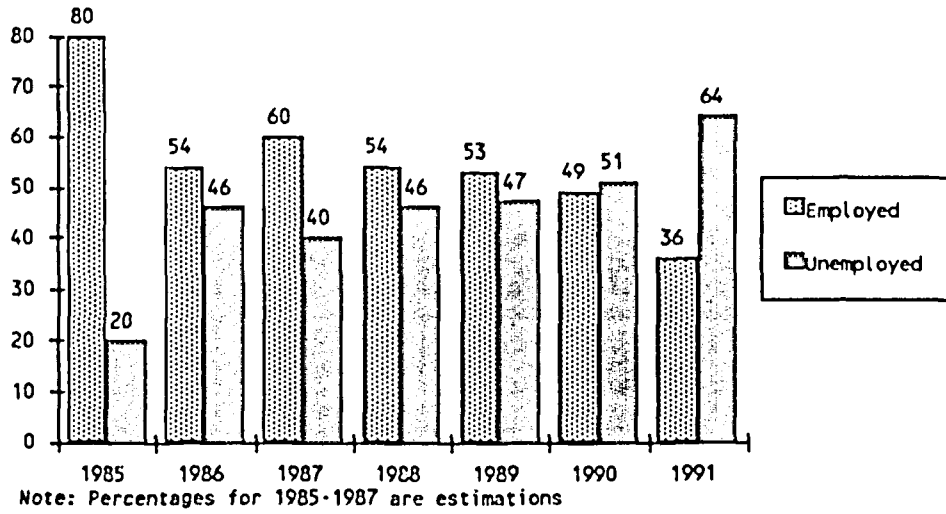


Table 2

Male/female Young Workers in percentage

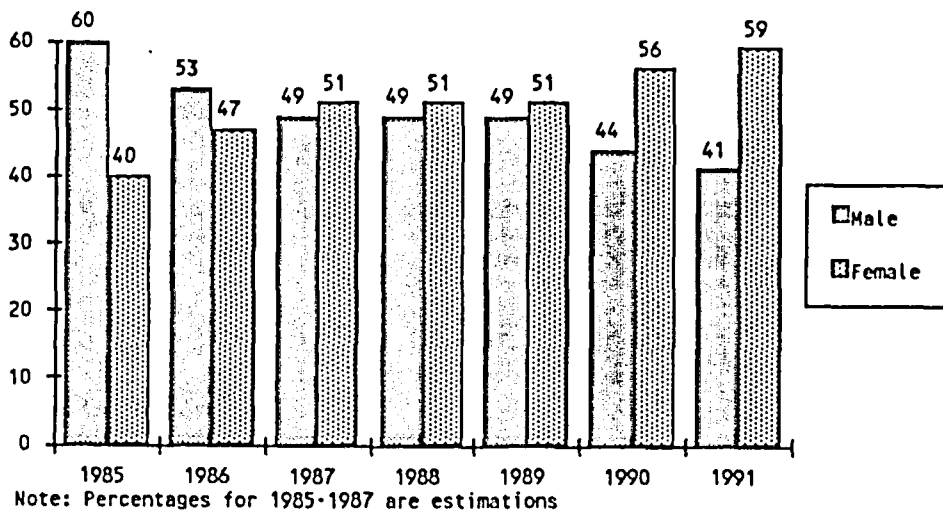


Table 3

Male/female employed/unemployed in percentage

