

promote lifelong learning and the building up of the knowledge, skills and abilities likely to foster active citizenship and employability.

TEMPUS III PROGRAMME

Pending delivery of the European Parliament's Opinion, the Council agreed in principle to a Decision adopting the third phase of the trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education TEMPUS III: 2000-2006. After finalisation in the official languages of the Communities, the Decision will be adopted, in the light of the European Parliament's Opinion, at a Council meeting in the near future.

At the conclusion of the European Council in Strasbourg in December 1989, the Council of Ministers asked the Commission to submit detailed proposals on the measures to be taken in the area of higher education and training in order to support the reform process in the central and eastern European countries (CEEC). The TEMPUS programme was adopted by the Council in May 1990 within the budgetary framework of PHARE, the Community's programme of economic assistance to the CEEC.

The aim of this programme is to promote, in keeping with the guidelines and general objectives of the PHARE and TACIS programmes for economic and social reform, the development of the higher education systems in the eligible countries through the most balanced cooperation possible with partners from all Member States of the Community. More specifically, TEMPUS III is intended to help the higher education systems in the eligible countries to address issues relating to the development and re-shaping of curricula in the priority areas:

- reform of higher education structures and establishments and their management;
- development of training leading to qualifications, with a view to making good the shortage of high-level skills needed in the context of economic reform, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry.