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ERASMUS HITS TOP GEAR

The Programme in 1987-88: a First-Year Overview

ERASMUS — the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University students — has got off to a flying start. Following the long-awaited adoption of the Programme by the Council of the European Communities in June 1987, a period of intense activity has taken the Scheme off the drawing board and on to the road for its first year of operation from July 1987 to June 1988. With the selection of grant recipients for the 1987-88 academic year completed last November, the money provided under ERASMUS is finally flowing. In this opening article, we review the trends already emerging to reveal who has been picking up the grants from the first-year ECU 11.2 million budget for ERASMUS to do what, where and in which subjects. We also seek to clarify in more detail some key aspects of the administration of ERASMUS. Of course, administrative plans for the 1988-89 academic year are well under way too. When the period for applications for that year closed on January 31st, a grand total of over 2000 requests for support for inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs) involving some 19,400 students had been received, while around 7000 higher education staff members were hoping for 'Visit' grants of various kinds from the trebled second-year ECU 30 million budget. But we are already jumping the gun. Our focus on 1987-88 comes first.

MASSIVE INITIAL RESPONSE IN ALL PROGRAMME SECTORS

Even if the original Commission budget proposal of around ECU 25 million for the first year of ERASMUS had been accepted instead of being cut by over half to some ECU 10 million when the Programme was adopted last June, it would have failed by far to soak up the overall sum of ECU 34 million actually requested under the Programme in its initial year of operation. This single fact alone points to the scale of the expectation and demand which the mere existence of ERASMUS is already generating. Not surprisingly, a major share of this demand is attributable to applications for financial support under ERASMUS from larger EC Member States, like the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom and, most encouragingly given its recent accession to the Community, Spain. Yet the representation of these countries has been most solidly supported by the promising participation of some of the smaller Member States, like Ireland, in which tremendous interest in the Programme is being shown. Meanwhile, three subject areas, namely business/management studies, engineering and languages/literature are currently emerging as the initial ERASMUS front runners. So much for the barest general outline. Some of the more pertinent details now merit closer review.

LAUNCHING THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK

Though a programme with many components, ERASMUS flows above all from the central idea that EC students already working for a higher education qualification at a university or college in the European Community should be able to study for up to one year at an institution in another Member State in such a way that the study abroad will *count* towards the qualification they are ultimately awarded by their home university.

A major part of financial support under ERASMUS goes to universities intending to organise this kind of academic recognition of foreign study in the form of student mobility programmes ideally involving the reciprocal exchange of whole groups of students on certain specific courses. Together with similar mobility arrangements for staff teaching abroad, such programmes constitute the so-called European University Network, and are known collectively as inter-university cooperation programmes, abbreviated to ICPs. (Note that, in information about ERASMUS, the word 'university' is used as a convenient shorthand label to describe all types of higher education institutions, regardless of their designation in the individual Member States, the subjects they

offer, and the level of study, up to and including the doctorate.)

ICPs may also involve the joint development of programmes, courses and curricula, or (from 1988-89) short intensive programmes involving students and staff from several Member States.

In 1987-88, higher education institutions seeking support for ICPs requested no less than a total ECU 12 million as compared with the ECU 3.85 million actually earmarked and awarded. The money went to 398 ICPs selected from a total 868 applications (each made by a single university acting on behalf of the others involved in the proposed programme).

Member State participation in ICPs in 1987-88

Because applications for ICPs are made by only one university acting on behalf of two or more, involvement of Member States can be viewed either in terms of a percentage breakdown of programmes (proposed or supported) with respect to the relative participation in them of each country's institutions, or the country of origin of the applications (submitted or accepted). As discussed on p. 9, Luxembourg constitutes a special case.

Thus, for example, the relative participation of universities in three of the largest EC Member States (France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom) both in overall applications for support and those actually funded this year was substantial, as might be expected given these countries' 'weight' within the Community, their considerable long-standing experience in the former EC Joint Study Programmes, and their strong tradition of inter-university cooperation (see Table I). Between these countries, however, participation varied in inverse relation to their total student populations, rising from participation by German universities (largest student population) in just under 40% of programmes seeking support, to 60% in the case of U.K. institutions, with France standing mid-way at just over 50%. However it may be a cause for concern that in another of the biggest Member States, Italy, institutional participation in applications was strikingly less pronounced, standing at around only 20%.

When involvement is considered with respect to the country of origin of applications submitted (Table II), the situation in these same four Member States varies widely, though according to a somewhat similar pattern to that noted above for institutional participation. U.K. institutions were responsible for 207 of the total 868 applications submitted, French ones for 190, German ones for 120, and then again a big drop to Italy at 79. Yet for each of these countries, the proportion of accepted applications to those they submitted

Table I. Inter-university Cooperation Programmes:
applications received and programmes supported, by Member State participation*

EC Member State	Applications received		Programmes supported	
	No.	%	No.	%
Belgium	131	15.1	43	10.8
Denmark	54	6.2	26	6.5
Federal Republic of Germany	342	39.4	172	43.2
Greece	50	5.8	31	7.8
Spain	160	18.4	91	22.9
France	446	51.4	214	53.8
Ireland	69	7.9	29	7.3
Italy	167	19.2	85	21.4
Luxembourg	2	<1	1	0.3
Netherlands	199	22.9	66	16.6
Portugal	36	4.0	20	5.0
United Kingdom	512	59.0	238	59.8

* By way of example, the figures in the first line mean that Belgian universities were involved in 131 (15.1%) of all programmes for which ERASMUS support was sought in 1987, and 43 (10.8%) of those actually supported.

was far more even, rising from an Italian success rate of about 47% to a German one of 54%, France and the U.K. lying in between at just under and over 50% respectively.

The involvement of Spain in ICPs, already hinted at in the first issue of the *ERASMUS Newsletter* ('Spain in Strong Early Contribution to Joint Business Studies', *ERASMUS Newsletter*, 2/87), has been most encouraging. Although one of the larger EC Member States, it is still a young member of the Community. Despite this, Spanish universities featured as participants in over 18% of the programmes seeking financial support, and increased this presence perceptibly to approximately 23% in ICPs actually funded, just overtaking here the Italian figure of 21.4%. Spanish institutions also took the initiative in actually submitting applications on behalf of 44 programmes, 21 of which were accepted — a proportion (47.7%) similar to the success rate in the four largest Member States discussed above.

Among the smaller EC countries, institutions from the Netherlands were remarkably well represented in this first year, being present in nearly 23% of programmes requesting support, but this proportion dropped quite noticeably to only 16.6% in those actually receiving it. For Belgian institutions, there was a similar fall-off from 15.1% in programmes asking for money to just under 11% in ICPs now operational. A surprise, perhaps, was that while Belgian universities submitted over 20 fewer applications for ICP support than the Netherlands (65 as compared to 88), a greater number were

successful in absolute terms (23 against 21), and more so still therefore in proportional terms (around 35.4% contrasted with under 24%). Among the Belgian applicants, French-speaking universities were much more in evidence than those from the Dutch-speaking part of the country. In this same matter of applications accepted as a proportion of those submitted by any given Member State, the above percentages for Belgium and the Netherlands were lower than those for both Denmark (42%) and Ireland (36.7%). This achievement of the two latter countries was noteworthy, even though their substantially smaller size (populations) expectedly kept their institutional participation to around 6% and 7.5% respectively of both programmes seeking support and ICPs granted it.

The percentage of programmes requesting support which involved participation of Greek or Portuguese institutions was slightly lower than in the case of Denmark and Ireland. But among those granted support, nearly 8% involved Greek university participation — higher than that of either Danish or Irish universities — and 5% Portuguese participation. However, while Greece had exactly one in two of the programmes for which it submitted applications accepted (seven out of 14), Portugal secured support for no less than seven out of ten of its programme proposals, the highest acceptance rate of any Member State. It is to be hoped that this will be a spur to the future extended participation in the ERASMUS Programme of one of the Community's two newest members.

Table II. Inter-university Cooperation Programmes:
applications received and programmes supported, by Member State of coordinating institution.

EC Member State	Applications received		Programmes supported	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total
Belgium	65	7.49	23	5.78
Denmark	19	2.18	8	2.01
Federal Republic of Germany	120	13.82	65	16.33
Greece	14	1.61	7	1.76
Spain	44	5.07	21	5.28
France	190	21.89	92	23.12
Ireland	30	3.46	11	2.76
Italy	79	9.1	37	9.3
Luxembourg	2	0.23	0	0.0
Netherlands	88	10.14	21	5.28
Portugal	10	1.15	7	1.76
United Kingdom	207	23.85	106	26.63
Total	868	100.00	398	100.00

Languages and literature, business and engineering the front runners in wide spread of disciplines

The field of study with the strongest participation, at almost 20%, in supported ICPs was languages/literature/linguistics (see Table III). The interest and quality of applications received in this subject area may be partly attributed to the fact that a period of study abroad in the appropriate foreign country is usually regarded as indispensable to mastery of its language and adequate understanding of its literature. The same conviction indeed has been reflected for many years in the organised student teaching or similar placements abroad which have long been an integral part of foreign language degree courses in some Member States.



Photograph by courtesy of the Marie Haps Institute

Languages and literature is the best represented field of study in the initial ERASMUS ICPs. The students pictured here are at the Brussels Marie Haps Institute, which has established an ICP in translation and interpretation with the University of Granada, Spain.

Business management, the most popular subject area in ICP applications (16% of all requests for ICP financial support) came second in terms of ICPs supported, accounting for 17% of the programmes now operational. Third came engineering as regards both applications (12.7%) and supported programmes (12.8%). Fields of study like natural sciences (8.5%) and law (7.3%) came further down the list of accepted ICPs.

It is an ironic reflection that, in contrast to the central place occupied by agricultural issues on the EC stage, ERASMUS has yet to reap the possible benefits of setting its hand to the plough! In a breakdown of supported ICPs by subject area, agriculture shared joint bottom place with geography/regional studies at 2.3%, a proportion only fractionally greater (2.5%) in ICP applications submitted. As a crucially important area of applied expertise, it was thus overtaken by the humanities and social sciences (7.5%). However, the observation must be set in context since agriculture is a subject with a relatively small 'academic population' anyway, which is almost certainly the main reason for its low position.

It is to be hoped that several other subjects associated largely, if not entirely, with subsequent professional activity, will be better represented in future ICPs. They include architecture/urban planning (4.0% of programmes supported), medicine/paramedical subjects/dentistry (3.5%), mathematics/informatics (3.0%), and education/teacher training (2.8%), the modest participation of which remains a special cause for concern.

The Student Grants Budget and Distribution

A second major share of financial support under ERASMUS is for ERASMUS student mobility grants intended to cover the extra costs liable to be incurred during a period of study abroad recognized by a student's home institution (see 'More about ERASMUS Student Grants' on p. 8). In 1987-88, students had to be participants in (student mobility) ICPs to be eligible for such grants, for which no less than ECU 15 million were requested for this first year of the Programme. In the event, the ECU 3.1 million actually earmarked in the budget went to some 3000 students in 357 ICPs.

Table IV provides a breakdown, by EC Member State, of the number of student grants requested in applications, as compared to the number of grants available. (Both figures are expressed as the equivalent number of full-year grants of a notional average of ECU 2000, though many students in receipt of grants spend less than an entire academic year in another Member State.)

Table III. Inter-university Cooperation Programmes: applications received and programmes supported, by subject area.

Field of study	Applications received		Programmes supported	
	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture	22	2.5	9	2.3
Architecture/Urban planning	34	3.9	16	4.0
Fine arts	38	4.4	12	3.0
Business/Management	139	16.0	67	16.8
Education/Teacher training	41	4.7	11	2.8
Engineering	110	12.7	51	12.8
Geography/Geology	21	2.4	9	2.3
Humanities	37	4.3	20	5.0
Languages/Lit./Linguistics	131	15.1	79	19.8
Law	51	5.9	29	7.3
Mathematics/Informatics	32	3.7	12	3.0
Medicine/Paramed./Dentistry	57	6.6	14	3.5
Natural Sciences	70	8.1	34	8.5
Social Sciences	65	7.5	30	7.5
Others	20	2.3	5	1.3
Total	868	100.0	398	100.0

Table IV. Distribution of ERASMUS Student Grants requested and available within supported ICPs, 1987-88.

EC Member State	Demand for grants (full-year equivalents)		Grants available (full-year equivalents)*	
	No.	%	No.	%
Belgium	72	1.6	43	2.8
Denmark	18	0.4	15	0.9
Federal Republic of Germany	1042	23.8	300	19.4
Greece	39	0.9	45	2.9
Spain	289	6.6	245	15.8
France	1165	26.6	275	17.8
Ireland	105	2.4	20	1.3
Italy	221	5.1	217	14.0
Luxembourg	—	—	—	—
Netherlands	151	3.5	69	4.4
Portugal	21	0.5	34	2.2
United Kingdom	1189	27.0	264	17.0
European Community	4300	100	1500	100
	approx.		approx.	
	ECU 15 million		ECU 3.1 million	

* The figures for grants in these two columns presuppose an average full-year equivalent grant of ECU 2000.

This notion of the number of full-year equivalent grants provides a rough and ready pointer to at least two trends. Considered, first of all, together with data from successful ICP applications regarding the proposed *destination* of student participants, it may be used to obtain an approximate idea of the 'balance' of student flows within the ERASMUS Programme, or how the number of ERASMUS student 'arrivals' within a given country compares with the number of student 'departures' from the same country. In the first year of the Programme, these data reflect a reassuringly well balanced participation, in terms of this specific criterion, in the great majority of the twelve EC Member States. In nine of them (Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom), the difference in 1987-88 between the figures for incoming and outgoing full-year equivalent student grantholders was less than 30%, while in five out of those nine (France, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom) it was less than 20%. This trend towards relatively balanced participation was particularly encouraging in the case of France and Italy where 'departures' were greater than 'arrivals' by no more than an estimated 4.8% and 5.2% respectively. Noteworthy, however, was the overall estimate for time spent in Spain by foreign students, which was 12.1% more than that spent by students going abroad from Spanish institutions. This strongly suggests that the surge towards greater Spanish participation in ERASMUS already referred to is resulting in fully reciprocal student exchange in the true spirit of the Programme, rather than simply reflecting a quest by Spanish institutions for increased opportunities to send their own students and staff abroad.

A second interest of Table IV is that it provides a rough guide to how the number of students actually receiving grants as a proportion of those eligible currently varies from one Member State to the next.

In Greece, Italy and Portugal, the equivalent of one full-year grant has been comfortably available for every student applicant. In Denmark and Spain, around three out of every four eligible students have been able to receive a grant, and in Belgium and the Netherlands approximately one in every two. It is in the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Ireland and the U.K. that there have been relatively the least number of grants to go round, with just one grantholder to about every four or five students eligible. The European Community average thus stands at roughly one student grantholder for

every three eligible student applicants. (There are no corresponding first-year figures for Luxembourg students, although any applications submitted on their behalf by institutions in other Member States are 'hidden' in the above data, as may be inferred from the explanation on p. 9).

The Commission is conscious of the disappointment felt in some Member States in which the share of the first-year student grants handout was relatively modest, despite their immediately enthusiastic participation in the Programme. In 1988-89, however, getting on for ECU 13 million will be available for the ERASMUS student grants, a figure approaching one-half of the second-year ERASMUS budget of ECU 30 million. It is keenly hoped that this near quadrupling of the 1987-88 student grants allocation will do much to lessen the effect of such anomalies as have been arguably evident in the first year.

The big stepping up in resources for ERASMUS student grants at still four years from 1992 is also a strikingly concrete indication of the Commission's determination to lay the soundest possible practical foundations for achieving the Internal Market planned for that date. By the time it is reached, ERASMUS will have enabled many thousands of students to undergo a fully recognized period of high-level training in a Member State other than their own, together with substantial — and hopefully stimulating — exposure to the unfamiliar social and cultural environment they can expect to encounter there. Whether in terms of tangible benefits linked to the development of a competitive Internal Market, or the less tangible more idealistic notion of 'The People's Europe', the consequences of this opportunity will, in all likelihood, be momentous.

VISITS TO STIMULATE NETWORK GROWTH

If ERASMUS is with us at last, this does not of course mean that ICPs and other forms of cooperation can simply proliferate overnight. Recognizing that most universities have to establish initial exploratory contacts with prospective partner institutions to examine whether and how cooperation might be feasible, the Programme has provided for a significant category of travel and subsistence grants for short visits to other Member States (up to four weeks), whereby higher education staff can discuss first proposals for future student and staff exchanges with foreign counterparts working in similar fields. The same kind of visit grant can also be used

How the First-Year Budget Cake was Cut

ERASMUS has a budget of some ECU 85 million for its initial phase (1987-90)

From this sum, the ECU 11.2 million allocation for 1987-88 went to:

Over 850 UNIVERSITIES for

398 Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICPs)

Student Mobility Programmes ECU 3.9 million
 Staff Mobility Programmes
 Joint Course Development



Some 3000 STUDENTS in 357 ICPs for the extra costs of study abroad:

Return travel ECU 3.1 million
 Foreign language learning
 Higher cost of living



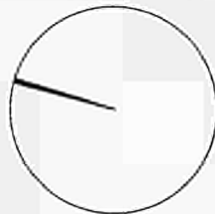
Some 2000 UNIVERSITY STAFF for 1138 Study Visits

Planning or extending ICPs ECU 2.0 million
 Improving course content
 Fact-finding about higher education



12 UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATIONS for boosting higher education cooperation in line with ERASMUS

ECU 0.1 million



INFORMATION ACTIVITIES, PUBLICATIONS AND PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATION

ECU 2.1 million



to extend ICPs already established, to improve the content of courses, and to find out more about aspects of higher education in the country visited (administrators in higher education are eligible for awards as well as lecturers). In 1987-88, a total of no less than ECU 6.36 million was requested in 2366 applications for visits. Of these, 1138 were successful and shared out the ECU 2.03 million on offer (in the original ERASMUS proposals, the Commission had budgeted for ECU 2.83 million). Moreover, as numerous projects accepted

involved several people, the total number entailed the participation of well over 2000 academic and administrative staff members. A further 11 study visit awards went to staff of the EC Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) to enable them to acquaint each other more fully with their work and its progress.

Visits by Member State and Field of Study

What can be said about the breakdown of Study Visit applications, as well as Study Visit grants actually awarded, by Member State participation and field of study? Bearing in mind that today's visits may lay the foundations for tomorrow's ICPs, visit grants were awarded, in certain instances, partly with a view to redressing, where appropriate, imbalances in country and subject area representation in the ICPs supported. Differences in the distribution of ICP and Study Visit Grants by Member State and subject area are therefore partly explained by this consideration. However, there were also interesting differences in the distribution of the applications. Admittedly, France and the U.K. both had the highest proportion of grant applications for visits, as they had in the case of ICP applications by coordinating institution. But little less noteworthy were visit applications from Spain and Italy (296 and 245 corresponding to 12.5% and 10.4% respectively) both exceeding those from the Federal Republic of Germany (234 or 9.9%) which had ranked third in ICP applications. In the same way, Greece also shot forward to account for 148 or 6.3% of Study Visit applications (just one application less than Belgium), as opposed to only 1.6% in the case of ICPs: a similar advance was observed for Portugal with 4.6% of visit applications compared to 1.2% of ICPs. The Netherlands, Ireland and Denmark, on the other hand, all applied for proportionately slightly fewer visit grants than ICP awards.

While the U.K. still had the highest percentage participation (15.8%) in Study Visit grants awarded, that of Spain and, most encouragingly Italy, surged forward to 13.6% and 12.8% respectively, thereby now overtaking France at 11.2%, as well as the Federal Republic of Germany at 10.1% (see Table V). The proportional participation of the remaining Member States changed noticeably in one or two instances by comparison with the level at the applications stage, but not enough to alter radically their ranking.

The subject area attracting the biggest demand in Study Visit grant requests was engineering (14.6% of applications) which had ranked third (at 12.7%) in ICP applications.

Just the reverse occurred in the case of business and management studies, the third most popular field for visits (10.5%), but the favourite subject among the would-be ICPs (16.0%). In both categories of application, languages and literature was the second preferred area of specialization (15.1% of ICP applications and 11.6% of candidates for study visits). The area attracting the least number of Study Visit grant requests (2.2%) was higher education administration, the preserve essentially of university staff *other than teachers* seeking grants.

Law was the field in which there was the biggest contrast in popularity ranking at the level of ICP and study visit applications, with 5.9% of applications for ICPs (7th highest), but only 2.8% for visits (14th highest). Happily, the demand for visits did grow noticeably in certain areas which had been appreciably less forthcoming with ICP applications, notably agriculture which accounted for 5.1% of visit applications, education/teacher training (7.1%) and medical sciences (7.9%).

Table V. Study Visits: applications received and grants awarded, by Member State

EC Member State	Applications received		Programmes supported	
	No.	%	No.	%
Belgium	149	6.29	85	7.5
Denmark	80	3.38	58	5.1
Federal Republic of Germany	234	9.9	115	10.1
Greece	148	6.3	79	6.9
Spain	296	12.51	155	13.6
France	349	14.75	124	11.2
Ireland	93	3.93	48	4.2
Italy	245	10.35	146	12.8
Luxembourg	1	0.04	1	0.1
Netherlands	138	5.83	74	6.5
Portugal	108	4.56	73	6.4
United Kingdom	525	22.19	180	15.8
Total	2366	100.0	1138	100.0



The subject area most in evidence in the applications for ERASMUS Study Visit grants was engineering. Several grant holders will be aiming to establish ICPs not unlike the one between the Institut Universitaire de Technologie (IUT) in Béthune, France, and the Middlesex Polytechnic, U.K. French IUT students, Eric Orywal and Christopher Devigne, are here seen at work in the Polytechnic's micro-electronics centre.

As an exceptional transitional measure to facilitate the launching of ERASMUS, there were two rounds of applications for financial support under the Programme in 1987-88. In the second of these, an attempt to redress imbalances in subject representation in selected ICPs was deliberately adopted as an additional criterion in selecting successful applicants for study visits. The significantly higher proportion of *visit grants*, as compared to ICPs, concerned with the above three subject areas, as also with mathematics and social sciences, was thus partly attributable to this special effort.

ASSOCIATIONS IN IMPORTANT SUPPORTING ROLE

ICPs, grants to students taking part in them, and visits to fuel cooperation still further — these have been the three major targets of ERASMUS funding in the first year. But they should not mask the back-up contribution that university associations and consortia can make in reinforcing the main thrust of ERASMUS. Thus a modest, but significant, share of the first-year budget was earmarked as financial support to

such bodies for initiatives geared to this end. In 1987-88, ECU 134,000 went to 12 associations (from 30 applicants), and support under the same heading is to be regularly available in the future.

While all ventures supported in the first year were concerned with furtherance of higher education cooperation, their emphasis interestingly varied. Several were concerned with the production or streamlining of information and publicity geared to enhancing awareness of possibilities for cooperation in certain specific countries, regions, or areas of specialisation, or problems to be overcome in achieving it.

Such was the case, for example, of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) involved in a new project to prepare and publish a directory of EC urban/regional planning education programmes to help link the Association's member institutions and promote mobility. The European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI) was awarded a grant to help it set up an information network to attract greater involvement on the part of southern Europe in its activities. NOOPOLIS (Centro Internazionale di Sviluppo e Cooperazione Culturale) was successful in obtaining support for the purpose of extending to other countries its data bank on grants available in Italy for study abroad.

A different group of initiatives focused more on creating, exchanging or harmonising course material in certain fields. They included the business case studies project of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), the harmonisation of psychology curricula within the EC proposed by a consortium coordinated by the University of Liège, or the idea of the European Centre for Community Education (a consortium of higher education institutions based in Koblenz) to initiate a novel European qualification in social work.

THE ERASMUS THINK TANK

When ERASMUS was designed it was realized that the Programme was of a potential and on a scale requiring constant expert guidance. In accordance with the Council decision, the first move by the Commission was therefore to set up the high-level advisory body known as the ERASMUS Advisory Committee with the task of providing regular recommendations on the implementation of the Programme. Each Member State was accordingly invited to nominate two official representatives to this Committee, both of whom were to have in-depth knowledge of higher education systems and inter-university cooperation, and at least one of whom was to be from the academic community. (The names of those appointed to the Committee are indicated in the accompanying box.)

The Committee met for the first time at the end of July 1987, a second meeting was held on November 24-25th 1987, and a third on May 18th 1988.

On these occasions the discussions took place in a most constructive and cooperative spirit all the more welcome given the complexity of some of the questions involved. The topic of most central concern to the Committee has been the allocation and management of the money earmarked for ERASMUS student grants, given the need to ensure balanced Member State participation, fairness to individual students and the academic quality which the Programme must strive to achieve. This whole issue is certain to be kept under constant review both throughout the initial phase of the Programme (up to June 30th 1990) and beyond.

However the Committee has been no less instrumental in helping the Commission to finalize, within a very tight timetable, the transitional procedure necessary to launch ERASMUS smoothly in the 1987-88 academic year, and then to devise arrangements for applications for financial support in the 1988-89 academic year which would enable the Programme to adopt thenceforth a more normal administrative schedule. Other topics on which the Committee has provided the Commission with expert advice have included the development of an appropriate information policy for ERASMUS, the measures planned to facilitate academic recognition of qualifications and courses, and the relationship between ERASMUS and COMETT, the other major EC programme involving universities in the education and training sector. The ERASMUS Advisory Committee will normally meet twice a year.

The ERASMUS Advisory Committee

As its name suggests, this Committee is a consultative body to which each Member State of the European Community has nominated two representatives as follows:

Belgium (French-speaking)

Professor Y. VAN HAVERBEKE
Rector
State University of Mons

Belgium (Dutch-speaking)

Mr. R. TOTTE
Director-General
Ministry of Education

Denmark

Professor A. TROMMER
University of Odense
Mr. K. LARSEN
Director, Directorate of Higher Education
Ministry of Education

Federal Republic of Germany

Professor T. BERCHEM
President
University of Würzburg
Dr. L. GIESEKE
Federal Ministry of Education and Science

Greece

Professor G. KRIMPAS
Vice-Rector
University of Athens
Mrs. M. EGINITOU-PANAYOTIDOU
Ministry of Education

Spain

Professor J.M. BRICALL
Rector
University of Barcelona
Mr. F. DE ASIS DE BLAS ARITIO
Director-General
Higher Education
Ministry of Education and Science

France

Professor G. DRUESNE
President
University of Nancy II
Mr. G. LEOUTRE
Director-General
International and Cooperation Affairs
Ministry of Education

Ireland

Professor H.M. RIDLEY
University College Dublin
Mr. D.F. O'CEALLACHAIN
Assistant Secretary
Department of Education

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More about ERASMUS Student Grants

What the Grants Cover

A major plank of the ERASMUS Programme is its financial support to universities for organising ICPs in which EC students already working for a qualification at a university in the Community receive full academic recognition from that university for several months' study at an institution in another Member State. The period abroad is thus regarded as an integral part of the course leading to the qualification of the home institution. The latter also has to certify that its students will not be required by the foreign institution to pay tuition fees while abroad and, further, that any national grants or loans to which they are normally entitled for study at home will be fully maintained over the same period.

However, to study abroad, nearly all students need financial resources over and above those necessary for a comparable period of study at home. One or more return trips to the foreign country, possible increases in the cost of living, and the need for foreign language tuition usually account for most of such extra expenditure. So it would have been totally unrealistic for ERASMUS to give money to universities for ICPs without simultaneously earmarking a big slice of the budget to help students meet these additional expenses. This is the purpose of the ERASMUS student grants which are therefore 'mobility' grants and not a substitute for any support available from national or other sources for study at home. Indeed, with over a quarter (28%) of the budget for 1987-88, and well over a third (40%) of that for 1988-89, they are arguably the most vital and centrally important component of the whole ERASMUS Programme. From 1989-90, some two-thirds of the operational budget for ERASMUS will go directly to the students.

Grants Eligibility of Students not in ICPs

In 1987-88, students had to be participating in the ICPs in order to be eligible for a grant, and this category of students will continue to be given priority in the years to come. In 1988-89, however, the total sum available for ERASMUS student grants is to be more than quadrupled from ECU 3.1 million to ECU 13 million, and it is expected that some of this amount will go to EC students who, while getting their universities to satisfy the necessary requirements referred to above, will be applying for the grants essentially on their own initiative, rather than as ICP participants. The opinion is widespread that, while money to universities for student mobility ICPs and the ERASMUS student grant support they entail may be the indispensable bricks and mortar of ERASMUS, students enrolled in departments of universities not currently involved in ICPs should not be deprived of all opportunity to benefit from the ERASMUS Programme. It is also felt by many people that students applying for ERASMUS grants on an individual basis may well generate interest in the Programme among their own teachers and lecturers, thereby catalysing the development of further ICPs in the longer term.

Be that as it may, individual students interested in applying for an ERASMUS grant in this way always have to approach first the university where they are already studying, and this university must sign the application form together with the student. Clearly, this is because only the university can guarantee that all the essential requirements for an award have been satisfied. Applications are handled by the national grant-awarding authority for the country in which the student's present university at the time of departure is situated (see opposite and insets).

ERASMUS Student Grants are for:

- Helping to meet **mobility expenses** — the supplementary expenses entailed by a study period abroad in another Member State, including:
 - travel;
 - linguistic preparation;
 - higher cost of living in the host country.
- **A fully recognized period of study.** Students must receive:
 - **total academic recognition** from their **home university** for a period of study (minimum three months) in another Member State;
 - full exemption from tuition fees at the host university;
 - any grant or loan from their national authorities to which they would be entitled for the purpose of study at their home university.
- **Students in ICPs in the European University Network** (see p. 1), who **receive priority** in the award of the grants;
- **Other students**, within the limits of the funds available and provided they satisfy all the conditions for eligibility.

Applications for grants

Although the administration of ERASMUS student grants may vary significantly between Member States, 11 of the 12 Member States have designated a National Grant Awarding Authority (NGAA) responsible for the award of grants to **students currently studying in that country** and who are intending to spend a period of study in another Member State. In all countries, students wishing to receive an ERASMUS grant must always first approach their **home university** which in turn has to certify that all the above conditions for a grant are satisfied.

The National Grant Awarding Authorities (NGAAs)

In line with the Council decision of June 15th 1987, the allocation of the sum available for ERASMUS student grants in each Member State is currently calculated with respect to two factors. These are the number of 18-25-year-olds in each Member State as a proportion of the total EC population of the same age group, and the number of students in each Member State as a proportion of the total EC student population (all data from EUROSTAT). The Council decision also stipulates that the ERASMUS student grants are to be administered through 'the competent authorities in Member States'. Accordingly, virtually all have designated agencies known as National Grant Awarding Authorities (NGAA) with the responsibility for managing the sum allocated to each.

The addresses and telephone numbers of these authorities are shown in the accompanying inset. Their prime task is to award grants to *outgoing* students, either directly or via the sending universities in their country (NGAAs are never responsible for allocation support to *incoming* students from other Member States). Any money not handed out to priority students (i.e. students of an approved ICP) may then, as appropriate, be allocated to other student applicants who fulfil all the conditions and who have taken the initiative to seek ERASMUS student grant support as 'free movers'.

The establishment of the NGAAs reflects the conviction, on the part of the Commission, that such a crucial and potentially sensitive matter as the administration of the ERASMUS student grants was best handled via the EC Member States. In particular, the individual Member State is

erasmus

newsletter



SUPPLEMENT

to

1/88

ERASMUS Grants for 1988/9 announced

The Commission of the European Communities has now announced the selection of ERASMUS projects for support during the academic year 1988/9. Publication of the present issue of the ERASMUS Newsletter has been postponed in order to take account of this announcement. In the following article we present a statistical overview of the main features of the 1988/9 ERASMUS projects, indicating some of the interesting trends and developments compared with the previous year. The next issue of the Newsletter will be partly devoted to more detailed reports on some of the projects being funded.

'The considerable success of the ERASMUS Programme in its second year of operation demonstrates the ever-increasing interest of the academic world and of students, in better and broader inter-university cooperation and greater mobility for staff and students'.

This was the way Commission Vice-President Manuel Marin summed up the situation when presenting the results of the 1988/9 selection process to the plenary session of the Commission in June this year. And indeed, with regard to each of the many types of cooperation for which funding is available within ERASMUS, both the number of applications for support and the total amount of money requested have increased dramatically by comparison with 1987/8. In all, applicants requested over three times as much support as in 1987/8 (almost MECU 103 as against MECU 34). Given that the total budget available was only MECU 30, compared with MECU 10 in 1987/8, the ratio of supply to demand remained unchanged at approximately 1:3.4. This highly selective situation is clearly a cause for concern.

In overall terms, the ERASMUS Programme will be providing support in the 1988/9 academic year to:

- 1091 Inter-University Cooperation Programmes, of which 948 will involve mobility of students and 214 an integrated exchange of university staff members;
- an estimated 13,000 students, spending periods of 3 months to a full year in another Member State;
- 1267 visit projects which will enable some 2611 higher education staff members to prepare cooperation programmes, to study aspects of higher education systems or give guest lectures;
- 23 European projects launched by university associations and consortia;
- 12 publications on aspects of university cooperation and mobility in Europe, together with other major publications prepared at Community level such as the EC student handbook, *Higher Education in the European Community*.

Additionally, grants and organizational support will be provided to ensure the smooth functioning and further development of the EC network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) and to universities participating in the pilot phase of the European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS) (cf. call for expressions of interest elsewhere in this supplement). 1988/9 will also witness the award of the first 'ERASMUS Prizes of the European Community' in a few months' time.

Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICP)

The total number of applications for support of ICPs in 1988/9 was 2041 compared with 898 in 1987/8 (+127%). The MECU 52 requested represent almost 6 times the amount available (MECU 9). These bare figures demonstrate the enormous interest among universities Community-wide in becoming involved in the ERASMUS Programme, and in

particular the European University Network. Of the 2,041 applications received, 1,579 (77%) involve a student mobility programme, 745 a teaching staff mobility programme, 575 a programme for the joint development of curricula and 521 an intensive programme (the last of these being a new element in ERASMUS introduced for the first time in 1988/9). It is interesting to cast a closer glance at these figures in terms of their distribution by the Member State of their 'coordinating institution', i.e. in most cases the university which took the main initiative to submit the application. This analysis reveals that Portuguese universities submitted 5 times more applications than in 1987/8, the corresponding ratios for the other Member States being as follows: Belgium, 2.7; Denmark, 2.3; the Federal Republic of Germany, 2.4; Greece, 3.6; Spain, 4.1; France, 2.3; Ireland, 1.9; Italy, 2.7; Netherlands, 1.9; U.K., 1.8. In terms of the *involvement* of each Member State in all applications, Spain increased its participation rate by 7.6%, while Italy (+4.7%) and Portugal (+3.7%) also recorded considerable increases. Conversely, the British universities' participation rate fell by 8.6%, the other Member States remaining relatively stable.

From these figures, it may be seen that the most significant *percentage* increases in applications came from those countries which had been less in evidence in 1987/8. The continuing low number of applications from Denmark is an exception in this regard.

Viewed in terms of the academic disciplines involved, a very similar pattern emerged to that recorded in 1987/8, the main differences being substantial increases in the proportion of applications in the fields of agriculture, engineering and languages, and a very substantial fall in the percentage of applications in business studies. The low number of applications in teacher education and, to a lesser extent, medical sciences, remains a cause for concern.

The Commission decided to distribute the support available among 1,091 Inter-University Cooperation Programmes. Of these, 948 include a student mobility programme (87%), 214 a teaching staff mobility programme, 79 a programme for the joint development of curricula and 72 an intensive programme. (It should be noted that each ICP can contain various different types of cooperative activity). This corresponds to a success rate of 53% overall, although the success rates for the individual components of the programme differ considerably (60% for student mobility programmes, 29% for teaching staff mobility programmes, 14% for programmes for the joint development of curricula and intensive programmes).

In financial terms, the supply/demand situation was even more dramatic in the case of curriculum development and intensive programmes, for which 15 times and 17 times as much money was requested respectively than was available. This was due to the fact these types of programme form part of Actions 3 and 4 of ERASMUS, on which the Council Decision places a total ceiling of 10% of the overall ERASMUS budget.

Table 1 provides a survey of the participation of universities from the various Member States in all 2,041 applications and in the 1,091 projects accepted for Inter-University Cooperation Programmes.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the applications and programmes over the various subject areas. In this context, attention should be drawn to the problem that the number and quality of the applications in the various subject areas differed considerably. In certain subject areas, good quality applications accumulate, so that care must be taken to ensure that the ERASMUS Programme is not flooded by individual subjects (in particular languages and business studies could be mentioned here). Within closely drawn limits, the selection must set stricter standards for some subjects than for others.

Student Grants in great Demand

As indicated above, 948 of the ICPs to be supported in 1988/9 will involve an exchange of students for integrated periods of study in another Member State. Table 3 demonstrates certain features of these programmes as regards the involvement of each member State.

Students participating in these programmes are given priority treatment by the National Grant-Awarding Authorities (NGAA), which are responsible for the distribution of ERASMUS student grants. In addition to these students, most of the NGAAs will also be awarding a number of grants to so-called 'free-movers', i.e. students who fulfil the normal eligibility requirements but who are going to another member State outside the framework of EC-supported ICPs. The number of such students (estimated at around 2,000) will be severely limited in 1988/9 due to the lack of available funds.

In all, student grant requests amounted to approximately MECU 39, three times the available budget of MECU 13. This budget has been divided up among the 12 Member States on the basis of the criteria provided for by the Council Decision on the ERASMUS Programme: the number of young people aged between 18 and 25 (inclusive) and the number of students enrolled in the higher education institutions. This gives the following distribution (in % of the student grants budget within ERASMUS):

Belgium	: 3.02	France	: 17.13	Luxembourg	: 0.7
Germany	: 20.79	Greece	: 2.58	Netherlands	: 5.13
Denmark	: 1.64	Italy	: 17.07	Portugal	: 2.43
Spain	: 12.64	Ireland	: 0.94	United Kingdom	: 15.88

A close analysis of the flows, between Member States, of students for whom a grant has been requested within the framework of accepted ICPs throws up some very interesting data. In most cases, a very real balance is to be observed in terms of 'export' and 'import' of students for each Member State (see next Table). From this standpoint, only the United Kingdom can really be considered as a 'net importer' and Greece a 'net exporter'.

Member State	'Exports'	'Imports'
Belgium	320	330
Denmark	120	113
Federal Republic of Germany	2056	1830
Greece	164	97
Spain	1056	970
France	2543	2587
Ireland	266	357
Italy	700	592
Luxembourg	Figures too low to be significant	
Netherlands	530	489
Portugal	136	128
United Kingdom	2348	2851

Study and Teaching Visits

For the 1988-89 academic year, teachers and administrators in higher education institutions submitted to the Commission 3510 applications for visit grants (as compared to 2377 in 1987-88), in order to visit universities in other Member States of the Community.

Table 4 gives the number of visit grants requested for the 1988-89 academic year, broken down by Member State of origin of application, as well as by rate of growth with respect to the 1987-88 academic year. What is clear, and this is both encouraging and promising for the future, is that the biggest increase in applications for visit grants comes from Member States still experiencing some difficulty in promoting inter-university cooperation programmes. The comparatively small number of applicants from Denmark remains a cause for concern.

Roughly two in every three applications are concerned with a visit for the purpose of preparing new cooperation agreements, thereby clearly demonstrating the part that visit grants can play in the development of new ICPs. As Table 5 indicates, the Commission accepted 1267 applications, or 36% of the total (as compared with 48% in 1987-88). A sum of MECU 2.1 was available for this purpose although applicants requested a total MECU 8.5. Over half the 1267 grants awarded are for group visits, and no less than 2611 persons altogether will be able to carry out visits thanks to this form of Commission support.

As in 1987/8, but to an even greater extent, particular attention has been paid to applications concerning the Member States which are not yet fully involved in the ICP network.

Table 5 documents this clearly. Thus in total the four countries of the south of the Community (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece) will receive 647 visit grants, that is 51% of the total — which represents exactly twice their current participation in the ICPs, which amounts to 25.4%. 2.5% of the visits originate in Denmark (2.3% of the ICPs).

As for the Member States, the visits concern in particular those fields of study which are less represented in the ICPs (cf. also Table 6):

Agriculture	3.6 % of the ICPs	5.3% of the visits
Fine Arts	2.08%	4.7%
Teacher education	2.1 %	6.1%
Humanities	5.5 %	7.5%
Mathematics	3.6 %	5.7%
Medical sciences	5.8 %	8.6%

On the other hand, fields already closely involved in the ICPs are proportionally less well represented in the visits:

Languages	18.9% of the ICPs	11.3% of the visits
Engineering	14.5%	9.9%
Business	9.4%	4.7%

Threefold Increase in Grants for Associations and Publications

Action 4 of the ERASMUS Programme groups together a series of complementary measures designed to encourage the mobility of university students. Action 4.2 includes two main components:

— support to associations or consortia of universities working on a European basis, in particular with a view to making innovative initiatives in specific fields better known throughout the European Community.

— support for certain publications designed to enhance awareness of study and teaching opportunities in other Member States or to draw attention to important developments and innovative models for university cooperation throughout the European Community.

Support for associations/consortia of universities was introduced in academic year 1987/88, when 30 applications were received. 102 requests for support were received for academic year 1988/89 which represents an increase of 72 or 340%. 27% of applications came from student organisations. Additionally 23 requests for support for publications were received for the academic year 1988/89, the first year in which funds were made available to external applicants under this heading. (1)

From this total of 125 applications, 35 projects (23 for university associations and 12 for publications) varying widely in nature and scope were selected for support. ECU 270,000 have been awarded to university associations; the 12 publications will be sharing a total of ECU 252,900. These amounts represent 11.5% and 19.5% respectively of the total amount requested. The projects approved cover a wide spread of subject areas. All Member States are involved in 10 of the 23 projects from university associations (43,5 %) and 10 of the 12 publications (83,3 %) being funded.

Conclusions

In his concluding remarks to the Commission, Commissioner Marín expressed his satisfaction with the way in which the ERASMUS Programme was developing, while at the same time expressing some concern at the inadequacy of the available budget in relation to the enormous demand for ERASMUS grants.

(1) In academic year 1987/88 work was also carried out on a number of publications issued by the Commission itself (e.g. European Community Student Handbook, Directory of Higher Education Institutions, Diploma Handbook, ERASMUS Newsletter).

'Overall, we can be very satisfied with the operation of the ERASMUS Programme and with the interest which it has aroused both among potential users and in the Community at large. In addition, I am pleased at the way that Member States are cooperating with the Commission in order to best achieve the objectives of the ERASMUS Programme.

From information currently to hand, and following the large number of study visits undertaken to prepare future inter-university cooperation programmes, a doubling of applications can be expected for the 1989-90 academic year. This will make selection more difficult, given the paucity of available funds (45 MECU).

The Commission's financial estimates which accompanied the proposal for a Council decision were fully justified. Unfortunately, the Council saw fit to reduce them by half. I trust that next year, the Commission will take budgetary measures adequate to respond in a realistic manner to the growing requests for cooperation by the universities and for the mobility of students and staff. If it does not, the ERASMUS Programme itself could be at risk'.

ERASMUS GRANTS 1989-90

Applications are now invited in respect of financial support under the terms of the ERASMUS Programme in the academic year 1989-90.

Detailed *Guidelines for Applicants* and application forms are available on request from: ERASMUS Bureau, 15 rue d'Arlon, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium. Tel.: (32)2-233.01.11. Fax: (32)2-233.01.50. Telex: 63528.

Applications for the Inter-university Cooperation Programmes and grants for students within these programmes should be mailed to the Bureau before 31 December 1988, those for other grants before 28 February 1989.

Students wishing to obtain a grant outside the framework of Inter-University Cooperation Programmes can obtain all information concerning the application procedures to follow from the competent National Grant Awarding Authority in each Member State.

Table 1: Inter-university Cooperation Programmes 1988/9: General Overview by Member State.

Member State	Coordinating Institution (1)					Total Number of Involvements (2)			
	All Applications		Accepted ICP		Success Rate	All Applications		Accepted ICP	
	Number	%	Number	%	%	Number	%	Number	%
B	173	8.5	89	8.2	51	347	17.0	191	17.5
D	293	14.5	144	13.2	49	830	40.7	449	41.1
DK	44	2.2	25	2.3	57	120	5.9	73	6.7
E	180	8.8	103	9.4	57	532	26.1	314	28.8
F	444	21.8	225	20.6	51	1,044	51.1	578	53.0
G	51	2.5	20	1.8	39	137	6.7	74	6.8
I	211	10.3	124	11.4	59	489	24.0	291	26.7
IRL	57	2.8	26	2.4	46	160	7.8	95	8.8
L	2	0.1	0	0	—	8	0.4	4	0.4
NL	169	8.3	96	8.8	57	418	20.5	260	23.8
P	50	2.5	29	2.7	58	160	7.8	101	9.0
UK	367	18.0	210	19.2	57	1,030	50.5	571	52.3
Total	2,041	100	1,091	100					

(1) Each ICP has one coordinating institution. This institution is in many cases the main driving force behind the ICP.

(2) The figures mean that, for example, Belgian universities are involved in 191 (17.5%) of the 1091 accepted ICPs. Each country is counted only once in each accepted ICP in which it is involved, even if several universities from that country are participating in the ICP concerned.

**Table 2: Inter-University Cooperation Programmes:
General Overview by Subject Area**

Subject Area	All applications		Accepted ICPs	
	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture	65	3.2	39	3.6
Architecture	71	3.5	39	3.6
Fine Arts/Music	61	3.0	31	2.8
Business	222	10.9	102	9.3
Education	63	3.1	23	2.1
Engineering	281	13.8	158	14.5
Geography/Geology	62	3.0	26	2.3
Humanities	108	5.3	61	5.5
Languages	371	18.2	208	18.9
Law	119	5.8	72	6.9
Mathematics/Informatics	68	3.3	39	3.6
Medical Sciences/Psychology	139	6.8	63	5.8
Natural Sciences	172	8.4	103	9.4
Social Sciences	184	9.2	100	9.2
Miscellaneous	52	2.5	28	2.6
Total	2,041	100	1,091	100

Table 3: Student Mobility Programmes by Member State

Member State	Success rate in relation to application	Rate of participation in student mobility programmes	
		1987/88	1988/89
Belgium	62.5%	10.8%	15.3%
Germany	59.8%	43.2%	41.4%
Denmark	70.4%	6.5%	6.0%
Spain	67.4%	22.9%	28.4%
France	60.6%	53.8%	53.3%
Greece	64.5%	7.8%	6.3%
Italy	70.5%	21.4%	26.5%
Ireland	57.1%	7.3%	7.1%
Luxembourg	—	0.3%	0.1%
Netherlands	68.0%	16.6%	21.7%
Portugal	76.5%	5.0%	7.9%
United Kingdom	60.8%	59.8%	51.1%

Table 4: Study Visit Grants: Applications by Member State.

Member State	1987/88	1988/89	Increasing level
Belgium	151	240	+ 58.9%
Germany	235	294	+ 25.1%
Denmark	81	87	+ 7.4%
Spain	297	488	+ 64.3%
France	350	546	+ 56.0%
Greece	149	289	+ 93.9%
Italy	246	454	+ 84.5%
Ireland	94	112	+ 19.1%
Luxembourg	1	3	—
Netherlands	139	173	+ 24.5%
Portugal	108	275	+ 154.6%
United Kingdom	526	549	+ 4.4%
Total	2,377	3,510	+ 47.7%

Table 5: Visit Grants: grants awarded by Member State.

Member State	Accepted Applications	No. of participants	Success Rate (Applications/grants)
Belgium	82	194	34%
Germany	101	193	34%
Denmark	32	71	37%
Spain	202	386	44%
France	117	299	21%
Greece	128	225	44%
Italy	198	394	44%
Ireland	52	95	46%
Luxembourg	2	4	67%
Netherlands	69	187	40%
Portugal	119	231	43%
United Kingdom	165	332	30%
Total	1267	2611	36%

Table 6: Visit Grants: grants awarded by Member State and subject area

Subject Area	Member State from which application originated												Tot.
	B	D	DK	E	F	G	I	IRL	L	NL	P	UK	
Agriculture	2	4	2	2	12	13	14	2	0	4	8	4	67
Architecture	2	2	3	4	3	8	12	0	0	1	2	9	46
Fine Arts	0	1	1	15	5	2	4	2	0	7	13	10	60
Business	0	9	0	3	12	7	1	5	0	5	6	12	60
Education	4	12	1	16	4	5	3	0	0	3	22	7	77
Engineering	10	15	3	19	11	9	12	13	0	7	7	20	126
Geography	1	1	0	5	5	3	5	0	0	3	3	11	37
Humanities	5	4	2	16	10	4	35	1	0	3	4	11	95
Languages	10	16	3	22	13	12	31	3	1	9	5	18	143
Law	6	6	0	17	8	5	11	1	0	2	2	6	64
Mathematics	8	4	2	6	1	10	20	6	0	3	3	9	72
Medical Sciences	12	6	2	33	8	16	7	3	0	9	3	10	109
Natural Sciences	3	7	1	18	4	9	8	5	0	2	12	19	88
Social Sciences	13	7	4	13	10	14	12	3	1	6	18	11	112
Others	2	3	5	10	5	8	9	5	0	4	8	6	65
Higher Education	4	4	3	3	6	3	14	3	0	1	3	2	46
Total	82	101	32	202	117	128	198	52	2	69	119	165	1267

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY COURSE CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM (ECTS)

Call for expressions of interest from universities

The following call for expressions of interest from universities wishing to participate in the pilot phase of ECTS was issued in the Official Journal of the European Communities on 27.7.88 (Ref. 88/C 197/08)

The principal objective of the ERASMUS Programme ⁽¹⁾ is to boost significantly the mobility of university ⁽²⁾ students in the Community. This mobility will be a central element in the creation of the People's Europe and an indispensable corollary to the completion of the internal market by 1992.

One of the main obstacles to student mobility in the Community is the difficulty in giving credit for study periods carried out in other Member States or in providing academic recognition for diplomas delivered by other Member States. The European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS), provided for within Action 3 of ERASMUS, is designed to fill this gap. Universities wishing to participate in the pilot phase of the system are hereby invited to indicate their interest. The pilot phase will span a maximum of six academic years (1989/90 to 1994/95). Preparatory work for the launch of ECTS will be finalized during the academic year 1988/89 with a view to beginning the pilot phase in 1989/90.

ECTS constitutes an innovative approach to the academic recognition and credit transfer problem in Europe. On the basis of cooperation founded on the principle of mutual confidence between all participating universities, students will receive academic credit for course units, intermediate examinations and final academic qualifications for the purpose of continuing their studies at another university within the ECTS system. Universities participating in ECTS will do so on a voluntary basis, once selected by the Commission on the basis of their application.

The pilot phase for ECTS will involve a total of some 80 universities which will be selected to participate on a voluntary basis and will cover five subject areas:

- Business Administration,
- Chemistry,
- History,
- Mechanical Engineering,
- Medicine.

Each participating university will be involved in ECTS for only one of the abovementioned subject areas.

The universities selected will normally receive a grant from the Commission to help implement the system. Their experiences during the pilot phase of ECTS will be carefully monitored, and arrangements will be made for a number of students participating in ECTS to receive ERASMUS student grants. Universities not selected for formal participation in the ECTS pilot phase will nonetheless be encouraged to adopt similar guidelines for credit transfer, thereby greatly extending the provision for such transfer between universities in European Community Member States.

Full documentation on the pilot phase of the ECTS system is available on request from the ERASMUS Bureau.

Universities are called to consult this documentation before submitting their expression of interest in participating. Such expressions of interest must reach the ERASMUS Bureau **by 31 October 1988**. The Commission expects to select the participating universities by **30 November 1988**.

(1) ERASMUS, the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, was adopted by the Council on 15 June 1987 (cf. OJ N 166/220, 25.6.1987, p. 20).

(2) The term 'university' in the present document is used in its general sense to indicate all types of postsecondary education and training establishments which offer, where appropriate within the framework of advanced training, qualifications or diplomas of that level, whatever such establishments may be called in the Member States.

ERASMUS National Grant Awarding Authorities 1988-89

Belgium (French-speaking)

Agence Francophone ERASMUS,
rue d'Egmont, 5
B-1050 Bruxelles.

Tel: (32)(2) 512.58.15

Belgium (Dutch-speaking)

Vlaamse ERASMUS-Comité
Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap
en Permanente Vorming,
Bestuur voor Onderwijszaken,
Internationale Samenwerking,
Kunstlaan 43,
B-1040 Brussel.

Tel: (32)(2) 513.74.64

Denmark

NGAA,
Ministry of Education,
Frederiksholms Kanal 26,
DK-1220 København K.

Tel: (45)(1) 92.53.87

Federal Republic of Germany

ERASMUS Arbeitsstelle,
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst,
Postfach 20 08 04,
D-5300 Bonn 2.

Tel: (49)(228) 88.22.77

Greece

IKY,
Service ERASMUS,
14 Lysicratous,
GR-10558 Athinai.

Tel: (30)(1) 32.54.385

Spain

Agencia Nacional Española para becas ERASMUS,
Secretaria General,
Consejo de Universidades,
Ciudad Universitaria,
E-28071 Madrid.

Tel: (34)(1) 449.74.37

France

CNOUS — ERASMUS,
6-8, rue Jean Calvin,
F-75005 Paris.

Tel: (33)(1) 47.07.61.70.

Ireland

Irish NGAA,
Higher Education Authority,
21, Fitzwilliam Square,
IRL-Dublin 2.

Tel: (353)(1) 61.27.48.

Italy

Direzione,
Istruzione Universitaria (ERASMUS),
Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione,
Viale Trastevere, 76,
I-00153 Roma.

Tel: (39)(6) 58491.

Luxembourg

Agence ERASMUS,
Ministère de l'Education Nationale,
6, Boulevard Royale,
L-Luxembourg.

Tel: (352)(46) 80.25.55.

Netherlands

NUFFIC (ERASMUS),
Badhuisweg 251,
NL-2509 LS Den Haag.

Tel: (31)(70) 51.05.38.

Portugal

No NGAA designated for 1988-89, during which the national grant allocation for ERASMUS student grants is being administered, on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities, by the:

ERASMUS Bureau,
rue d'Arlon 15,
1040 Bruxelles.

Tel: (32)(2) 233.01.11.

United Kingdom

U.K. ERASMUS Student Grants Council,
The University,
UK-Canterbury CT2 7PD.

Tel: (44)(227) 76.27.12.

probably best placed to ensure that management of the grants takes appropriate account of financial support in the form of grants or loans which may be available for similar purposes from national or other sources. At the same time, to help Member States administer the grants, the Commission has issued NGAA's with a set of guidelines, respect for which is considered to be in the best interests of the ERASMUS Programme. It has been emphasized, for example, that the 'image' of the grants should not be compromised as a result of their being spread too thinly, that not all students satisfying the essential conditions for eligibility will necessarily receive an ERASMUS grant and that, on the contrary, a measure of selectivity or competition for the grants may sometimes be inevitable.

Luxembourg — a Special Case

Luxembourg is the only Member State of the EC that lacks a full higher education infrastructure. As a result, special arrangements have been introduced under ERASMUS to

ensure that Luxembourg students, in view of their small numbers, are not edged out of the Programme altogether.

Because of their special situation, most students from Luxembourg seeking a full university education have to go abroad at some stage to obtain it. The Luxembourg NGAA is therefore responsible for distributing ERASMUS student grants to Luxembourg applicants as appropriate, *irrespective of the Member State in which they are already studying or intending to move for their ERASMUS study 'abroad'*. This marks the only departure from the principle that it is the NGAA of the country in which the 'home' institution is situated which is responsible for awarding ERASMUS student grants to successful applicants in this category.

Getting the ERASMUS Message Across

The ERASMUS Programme has a potential audience of some seven million students, not to mention several hundred thousand teachers and administrators, in 3500 universities and colleges within the Twelve Member State European Community using the nine official working languages (Danish, German, Greek, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, and English). If the new and complex Programme was to be launched successfully, therefore, this audience had to be reliably informed as to the details of ERASMUS as a matter of the utmost urgency. In terms of information and communication, this was a formidable challenge, many of the difficulties inherent in which have yet to be fully resolved.

Immense enthusiasm

One particular factor has facilitated, yet also complicated the task. Well before the academic world was familiar with the precise administrative details of ERASMUS, it had already heard much in general about the scheme. The long drawn-out negotiations which preceded its adoption attracted attention to the novelty value of the eagerly-awaited Programme, with many universities granting it their agreement in principle as soon as the first proposals were presented to the Council by the Commission.

The enthusiasm and sense of expectation combined to create for ERASMUS an image which was attractive, yet imprecise and general ('ERASMUS gives Community grants to universities and students'). Moreover, it was clear that the Programme had raised hopes out of all proportion to the proposed funds which, when the Programme was finally adopted, were cut by half.

From the outset, therefore, the already daunting task of formulating an information policy had to contend with one special factor in particular. It had to be explained that the terms of ERASMUS did not cover all aspects of university mobility and cooperation; and that the limits imposed on its budget were far more stringent than originally planned (ECU 85 million instead of the ECU 175 million first requested by the Commission for the initial three-year phase).

Tempering High Hopes with Realism

Given this specific situation, the most urgent tasks had to be tackled in order of priority. In many Member States, first of all, no further effort was required to convince the academic world of the necessity for the ERASMUS Programme. Because such interest was already self-evident, it had to be channelled towards a sense of what was realistically attainable.

The most urgent priority, therefore, was considered to be that of preparing the documents which prospective applicants for ERASMUS financial support would need. They consisted essentially in explanatory brochures setting out in detail those activities eligible for such support and the accompanying application forms in all the nine languages listed above. Besides being mailed as a matter of course to all the universities in the Member States, this material was also sent to thousands of other interested persons, including students, parents, administrators, and study counsellors, as well as senior national civil servants, members of parliament, associations and firms.

Information and Advice

It was felt, however, that campaigns specifically geared to arousing further interest in ERASMUS were necessary in those countries in which full-scale participation in the

Programme from the outset could be less easily taken for granted. The countries whose national languages were less widely spoken in the Community were to be included in this group. So too were those Member States with the least experience of inter-university cooperation as acquired in the course of the eleven years of the pilot programmes which preceded ERASMUS (the Joint Study Programmes and Short Study Visits). Member States in which special administrative or financial barriers hindered higher education exchanges also required attention.

Numerous information seminars and similar meetings on the subject of ERASMUS were accordingly organised, as a rule on the basis of collaboration between national authorities and the Commission. While held mainly in the 'southern' Member States (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece), such meetings also took place in Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium.



Speakers from the table at the well-attended conference held in Athens on December 9th 1987, primarily for the purpose of presenting selected aspects of the ERASMUS Programme to the Greek academic community. The Conference was organized by Greek Minister of Education, Mr. A. Tritsis (fourth from left).

Attended in general by a large number of participants, these meetings enabled the all-important role of the universities themselves in the ERASMUS Programme to be emphasized. As we make clear elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, ERASMUS mobility grants can only be awarded to students who receive from the institution at which they are already enrolled, a formal go-ahead to undertake a period of study in another EC Member State with the further guarantee that this will be explicitly recognized on their return as counting towards the award of their qualification. And the Programme is rooted no less in the conviction that this form of academic recognition can only become really widespread if such student mobility is organized mainly in the form of regular closely monitored programmes established between partner universities.

More often than not, therefore, discussions in the information meetings centred on the practical and linguistic aspects of ERASMUS, or the difficulties encountered in organising such Programmes. Frequently too, the questions put by the academics present were more probing and inclined

towards the central issue, namely 'who wishes to cooperate with my faculty, my department or myself?'; and 'how am I first to identify prospective university partners and then convince them that such cooperation is worthwhile?'

In addition to the official conferences held at the initiative of the Commission, the ERASMUS Bureau or national authorities, a large number of workshops, seminars or meetings have been held throughout the Community, mainly organised by individual universities and colleges, or regional bodies of various kinds. In all, members of the Commission or ERASMUS Bureau staff have participated in well over 100 information events since the Programme's adoption.

Even ERASMUS has Limits

The remit concerning information has another side to it, less gratifying but no less necessary, and which we have not attempted to shirk. At the risk of creating disillusionment, we have also had to clarify the limits to the scope of ERASMUS, in response to a substantial number of enquiries concerning projected schemes which were *a priori* ineligible for financial support. The task was made no easier by the fact that these schemes in themselves were often interesting, or that the would-be ERASMUS beneficiary was sometimes genuinely astonished to find out that ERASMUS does not support all inter-university cooperation activities, or all forms of mobility. A limited sample of four such 'non-eligible' forms of cooperation are shown in the accompanying box.

Four common misconceptions about ERASMUS

Among the quite common situations which ERASMUS cannot take aboard, but which have given rise to numerous questions are those involving the following:

- students residing in a Member State other than their own and carrying out an entire university course there.
- students already holding a first university qualification from their own Member State, who want to embark on an entire further period of study in another Member State.
- cooperation agreements in the field of research.
- conferences, symposia, seminars, congresses and similar meetings, irrespective of the organising body.

Bigger Grants or More Grantholders?

Probably the most difficult issue from the standpoint of information about ERASMUS has been that of explaining the precise way in which ERASMUS student grants are distributed to their beneficiaries.

During the first year of the Programme, the budget available for grants could only cover about one third of the needs demonstrated by applicants (and in certain Member States this proportion was less still). Ideally, therefore, it would have been best to award them to the students who needed them most. Instead, the money available was sometimes simply handed out to all the students in ICPs, resulting in a proliferation of tiny grants of little use to their holders. Because insufficient information may be to blame here, a special effort is being made to ensure that in 1988-89 the real value and consequent image of ERASMUS student grants are preserved. Sums of more than just pocket money will clearly have to be awarded to the students whose need is greatest, even if this results in a reduction in the number of grant holders and a certain measure of selection to identify them.

Apologies to

.... the great many deserving individuals and institutions whose invitations to attend their meetings on ERASMUS we had to decline. Replying affirmatively to each would have meant us dropping all other activities. In virtually all cases, our refusal was linked to the impossibility of being in two places at once.

Contact Corner

Our content under this heading is a novel feature of the *ERASMUS Newsletter* intended to facilitate contact for different purposes among all those interested in the ERASMUS Programme. We expect most likely users of this space to be university or college staff wanting a first idea of other European Community institutions (departments, faculties, etc.) with which they might profitably collaborate as partners in a future ICP, or where they might usefully meet staff in the course of an ERASMUS study visit. Indeed, it is in its role as a pre-visit call for worthwhile avenues of exploration that we feel the greatest potential of such a feature to lie.

As the ERASMUS Bureau may take advantage of the space from time to time too, we launch 'Contact Corner' with our own initial request, as well as others we have already received. Its success in the future depends on your initiative in contacting us. We look forward to hearing from you. Write to: Contact Corner, ERASMUS Newsletter, ERASMUS Bureau, rue d'Arlon 15, B-1040 Brussels.

- THE ERASMUS BUREAU is always prepared to consider for publication in the *ERASMUS Newsletter* articles and back-up material (photographs, diagrams, maps, tables, etc.) about ICPs from their programme coordinators. Articles should be of some 1000 words in length, and priority consideration will go to contributions with plenty of accurate descriptive and quantitative detail (subjects studied, students and periods of study, precise forms of academic recognition, etc.). But we shall also be on the look-out for the unusual. For example, lively enterprising initiatives from which other ICPs might learn, perhaps as regards foreign language tuition, or fresh approaches to administrative difficulties encountered in establishing successful ICPs. Photographs too will be especially welcome when they show something different from a conventional class or lecture situation — what about some close-up shots of those degrees, diplomas and certificates incorporating the all-important written academic recognition? Or interesting outdoor work in agriculture or geology? The opportunity is yours.

The ERASMUS Bureau would also be glad to receive copies of any video cassettes including sound commentary about ICPs. They are likely to be particularly useful in future exhibitions or talks about the ERASMUS Programme.

Write to: The Editor, ERASMUS Newsletter, ERASMUS Bureau, rue d'Arlon, 15, B-1040 Brussels.

- THE UNIVERSITY OF EVORA, Portugal, is interested in making contact with ICPs working on agricultural plant protection, with a view to a possible programme link-up.

Write to: Maria-Ivone E. CLARA HENRIQUES, Dept. Sanidade animal e vegetal, Universidade de Evora, 7000 Evora, Portugal.

- THE ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE DES TELECOMMUNICATIONS in Paris would be glad to hear from those interested in its computerized index of current and appropriate kinds of relations between the French Grandes Ecoles and British institutions, as a model for other data banks.

Write to: J.C. MERLIN, Directeur de l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Telecommunications, 46, rue Barrault, 75634 Paris Cedex 13: or telephone (33)(1) 45.81.75.30

New Developments in Higher Education in EC Member States

Most information serving as the basis for this feature was collected by the European Unit of EURYDICE, the education information network of the European Community. Other information was collected by the ERASMUS Bureau, which was also responsible for the selection of information for the feature.

Belgium

Higher education in the non-university sector: recent statistics

The number of first-year students entering long-term higher education outside university (HOBUS) underwent a massive increase of 65% between the academic years 1979-80 and 1985-86. Long-term HOBUS is classified as being of university standard, but is more practically oriented; it covers such study areas as industrial engineering, commerce, architecture and translating. A nautical science degree was also introduced in 1985.

In 1986, 1740 industrial engineering diplomas were awarded, an increase of 56% on 1980. Furthermore, the number of girls following this course increased from 5% in 1979-80 to 14% in 1985-86.

In 1986 also, 227 diplomas in architecture were awarded, but the number of new first years had increased by 60% from 1980. Meanwhile, the number of girls following this course rose from 21% in 1980 to 33% in 1986.

Of the diplomas awarded by the economics colleges in the same year, 27% were in commercial or business administration. However, first-year students have increased in number by 124% in six years, 46% of them in the business and economic science fields. Girls make up 32% of the first years in economic colleges.

In the translating/interpreting colleges both the numbers of new first-year students and graduates have doubled since 1980, while numbers at traditional universities have fallen considerably.

(Source: *De Standaard*).

Denmark

NORDPLUS student exchange programme

An action plan for the cooperation of the Nordic countries in the fields of education, research and cultural activities is in the course of preparation and was submitted to the Nordic Council at its meeting in March 1988. Part of the plan is the student exchange programme, NORDPLUS, intended to provide students from the Nordic countries with 'top-up grants', when they spend a part of their study period in another Nordic country. These mobility grants (equivalent to some 1000 Danish crowns a month) will supplement the grants of the home country.

Planned to begin in the autumn of 1989, the NORDPLUS Programme has strong similarities with ERASMUS. It will extend over five years, and is aiming to provide 1200 student grants annually.

Greece

New higher education entrance system

A series of measures have been announced which will modify the system of entrance to higher education, university (AEI), and non-university technological (TEI) institutions. To be implemented from the present school year, the measures

aim to reduce the number of applicants to higher education and improve upper secondary education.

The grade obtained in upper secondary education will no longer count towards the overall grade obtained in the general entrance examinations for higher education, which means that these entrance examinations will have to be completely reorganized. The upper secondary grade had previously counted as 25% of the overall grade. Final examinations will continue to take place at the end of upper secondary education, but separately from the higher education entrance examinations.

Only those pupils having at least ten subjects in the option stream of secondary education corresponding to their chosen AEI or TEI department will be eligible for entrance.

The grades of those who participated in the general university entrance examinations up to and including 1986 are valid for higher education entrance for one more year, while the grades of those who participated for the first time in 1987 and those who will participate in 1988 are valid for two more years.

After 1988, grades will only be valid for higher education admission for one extra year. The contribution of a foreign language for the overall result of the entrance examination will increase from 20% to 40%. There will, however, be no separate branch for entrance to the universities' education departments.

(Source: *Kathimerini*).

France

France avoids cuts in 1988 higher education and research budget

The French higher education and research budget for 1988 generally maintains current expenditure and avoids the staff cuts made in every other public sector in France. The research budget goes up 2% to the equivalent of £2.2 million while higher education spending will increase by 5.3% to the equivalent of £2.38 million.

French universities will also see a net gain in staff numbers, but it is predicted this will do little more than maintain the current student/teacher ratio in the face of the greater influx of students.

(Source: *The Times Higher Education Supplement*).

Ireland

Half of regional technical college students on European Social Fund grants

About half of all students attending the nine regional technical colleges (RTC) are now receiving European Social Fund (ESF) grants. If the scheme was to be withdrawn, as has been threatened on various occasions over the past ten years, some alternative but similar system would have to be substituted for it, Mr. Ray Griffin of Waterford RTC said recently.

Addressing a seminar in University College Dublin on higher education options for school leavers, attended by some 2000 students, teachers and parents, Mr. Griffin said that, despite fears that the ESF scheme might be curtailed, the scheme had in fact been expanding in recent years. It was now the major grants source for RTC students, and furthermore it was not means-tested, he added.

(Source: *The Irish Times*).

Italy

Ministry of scientific research will take over universities

In a bill presented to the Italian Council of Ministers, it is proposed that responsibility for the universities be transferred from the ministry of public education to the ministry of scientific research which, until now, has mainly supervised Italian research institutes and agencies.

Luxembourg

Agreement with universities in the Federal Republic of Germany

The Centre Universitaire in Luxembourg, which offers first-year studies in several subjects, has good relations with many universities of neighbouring countries, in which Luxembourg students continue and finish their university courses. In this context, a formal agreement has recently been signed with the universities in the German Land Northrhine-Westphalia. The ceremony, held in Luxembourg, was attended by high-ranking political, diplomatic and university officials.

The agreement includes formal regulations regarding university admission and academic recognition, as well as providing for cooperation in university research.

(Source: *Le Républicain Lorrain*).

Netherlands

International cooperation in education and research

Minister Deetman, keen to promote cooperation in education and research, has allocated a sum of 15.5 million guilders in the 1988 budget for this purpose, a sum which will rise to 36 million guilders in 1992. The minister also wants to encourage higher education institutes to gear their courses more to foreign curricula in order to make student mobility easier (see also the article 'Internationalizing Higher Education in the Netherlands' in this issue).

(Source: *Overzicht*).

United Kingdom

Fall in graduates follows grant cuts

Fewer first-degree students graduated from universities in 1985, the most recent year for which full figures exist, than in 1984, according to recently published official statistics.

The drop of 3.3% was a direct result of government cuts in grants to colleges after more than 20 years of expansion. The University Grants Committee's latest yearly figures recall that reductions in undergraduate intake began in 1981-82, after the grants cuts.

Figures for recent years are as follows: 55,835 in 1980; 57,044 in 1981; 58,574 in 1982; 60,270 in 1983; 59,626 in 1984; and 57,697 in 1985.

However, the total of full-time undergraduates rose in 1985 for the first time since the cuts. It was 0.5% higher than the previous year, though still lower than at the start of the 1980s.

The number of part-time undergraduates has risen by a striking 44% to 6500 since 1980. Women have increased from about 40% to 42% of the student population.

(Source: *The Guardian*).

Diary

The following meetings are likely to be of interest to many of our readers:

International Association of Universities (IAU) Second Mid-Term Conference

Rio de Janeiro, August 1st — 5th, 1988.

Theme: *International University Cooperation — A Critical Analysis: Failures, Successes, Perspectives.*

Further information: IAU, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex, France. Tel: (33)(1) 45.68.25.45.

European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI) Sixteenth Annual Conference

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, August 30th-September 2nd, 1988.

Theme: *Engineering Education in Europe*

Further information: SEFI, Office for Cooperation in Education, rue d'Arlon, 15, B-1040 Brussels. Tel: (32)(2) 233.01.11.

Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) Thirteenth Annual Conference

University of Barcelona, September 4-9th 1988.

Theme: *The Professional Development of Teachers in a Changing Society.* (Note: one of the working groups is devoted to ERASMUS opportunities for teacher educators.)

Further information: ATEE, Office for Cooperation in Education, rue d'Arlon, 15, B-1040 Brussels. Tel: (32)(2) 233.01.11.

Institution of Civil Engineers Conference

University of Southampton, September 6-7th, 1988

Theme: *The Formation of Engineers in an integrated European Framework*

Further information: The Institution of Civil Engineers, Great George Street, Westminster SW1P 3AA, U.K. Tel: (44)(1) 222 7722.

Standing Conference of Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors of the European Universities (CRE)

Thirty-Third Six-monthly Conference (organised as part of the 900th anniversary celebrations of the University of Bologna, Italy), Bologna, September 15-17th, 1988.

Theme: *The University as a European Institution.*

Further information: CRE, 10 Conseil-Général, CH-1211 Geneva. Tel: (41)(22) 29.22.51.

The International Society for the Study of European Ideas — First Conference: *The Turning Points of History*

Amsterdam, September 26-30th, 1988.

Further information: European Cultural Foundation, Jan van Goyenkade 5, 1075 HN Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: (31)(20) 76.02.22.

Fondazione Rui — Third European Conference on University Guidance

Athens/Delphos, October 1st-6th, 1988

Theme: *University Guidance in Europe and Student Mobility.*

Further information: Fondazione Rui, V.le XXI Aprile 36, 00162 Roma, Italy.

Internationalizing Higher Education in the Netherlands

Jon HAGEN

Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC)

The Netherlands has long had the reputation of being an open and outward-looking society absorbed into a network of international economic and political relations. It is thus all the more surprising that the international dimension of higher education there should have been developed to a far lesser degree than in the case of other sectors of Dutch society.

However, there are now conspicuous welcome signs of a sudden upsurge of interest likely to correct this anomalous state of affairs. First, numerous advisory bodies are currently being set up to deal with future developments in the sphere of both education and research generally. Secondly, encouraged by other initiatives like the EC ERASMUS and COMETT programmes, the Minister for Education and Science has recently placed the spotlight for the first time on a new package of incentives geared to giving higher education in the Netherlands a far fuller international flavour.

On March 7th 1988, the Minister sent a letter to the legislative Second Chamber in which he indicated how international cooperation needs to be strengthened. While noting that primary responsibility for this lies with the establishments themselves, he is prepared to help in the process by introducing new framework conditions. They include extending sabbatical leave regulations, enlarging the scope of the Aliens Act, active implementation of ERASMUS and COMETT, analysis of the housing problem facing foreign students and teaching staff, and the creation of new scholarship grant and fellowship programmes for Dutch students, teaching staff and research workers.

NUFFIC is the designated intermediary for coordinating and facilitating this new package of measures between the government and universities and colleges, while the NWO (Dutch Scientific Research Organisation) and the KNAW (Royal Dutch Academy of Science) will undertake the task of further internationalizing scientific research. In addition, the government is also giving a fresh boost to the broader strengthening of development cooperation, agricultural training, the accessibility of international trade literature, and the possible extension of the system of technical scientific attachés in the foreign service.

One of the most interesting features, in line with the spirit of the ERASMUS Programme, are the new grant programmes referred to above, involving amounts ranging from an initial two million guilders in 1988 to 10 million in 1991. Approximately one-third of these sums will go towards research worker exchange programmes and the strengthening of cooperation between science academies. The bulk is intended to fund grants for Dutch students completing part of their studies abroad, provided that the arrangement is one recognized by the home establishment. Part of these funds may also be used for foreign study trips and short visits by university staff and teachers preparing student mobility programmes. In particular, a number of opportunities will be created for the higher vocational training sector in the Netherlands — even more behind than the university sector in terms of developing an international dimension — with a view to making up the leeway which exists. The ideas propounded include the encouragement of internationally-oriented curricula, the strengthening of infrastructural facilities for handling matters like equivalence, and support for creative projects in the field of internationalization.

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Photograph by courtesy of the University of Odense

Four ERASMUS students from the State University of Groningen pictured here at the University of Odense, Denmark. Opportunities for other students from the Netherlands to study abroad will be further increased by the new package of measures formally announced by the Dutch Ministry of Education and Science earlier this year.

NUFFIC is publishing and disseminating details of these new student grant and support programmes among establishments in the Netherlands. The conviction that the programmes would not 'compete', as it were, with existing national and international opportunities was a major starting point in the formulation of the programme details and conditions, and particular care was taken to ensure that the new grant programmes do not clash with either the ERASMUS or COMETT programmes. The former are also seen by NUFFIC as being complementary to existing subsidy and grant programmes.

In simple terms, this means that activities which can be financed under ERASMUS and COMETT are not considered for the purpose of national programme subsidies.

Although, therefore, the new Netherlands initiative will not overlap with existing EC Programmes, it will be clear to all that it closely resembles the structure of the ERASMUS Programme in many respects. The Dutch Programme also involves preparatory visits, support for the achievement of cooperation with foreign universities, study visits for staff and students and above all — and it is here that the focus of the whole initiative lies — a large number of student grants. An important difference in relation to the ERASMUS Programme is, of course, that less emphasis is placed on the need for reciprocity, given the permanently strict national structure of the initiative. NUFFIC will be taking a close look at procedures already in operation under the ERASMUS Programme in connection with both the content and the implementation provisions of this programme.

As has already been said, the full range of new programmes in the Netherlands is already getting well under way. This initial phase is seen as an experimental period liable to lead, after careful evaluation, to adaptation and adjustment. When that moment comes, the *ERASMUS Newsletter* will be pleased to keep its readers abreast of further developments.

European Student Mobility through Placements in Industry

Volker GEHMLICH
COMETT Technical Assistance Unit

The COMETT Programme entered its first operational year in 1987. In terms of the promotion of mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions in the European Community, it is in all senses the twin of the ERASMUS Programme. Both Programmes support, amongst other actions, the exchange of students across Community frontiers as part of their higher education. The following article gives a brief account of how COMETT has developed during 1987 in regard to both the support for students undertaking industrial placements in another Member State and the selection criteria for such support.

First results 1987

The two rounds of applications in 1987 (March 31st and July 1st) attracted over 400 applications, representing a demand for more than 6000 students. Of the latter, 1067 from within 109 applications were selected for a financial grant within the COMETT Programme in the 1987-88 academic year. While the quantity of the applications was not disappointing, the quality of the proposals was. As a result, the grants awarded within the Strand B1 did not reach the ceiling of a 50% share in the whole COMETT budget for 1987-88 envisaged in the Council decision.

Criteria for Applications

The detailed criteria for a potentially successful application are laid down in the *Guide for Applicants*. For assessment purposes, three aspects were particularly important, as follows: project management; general background to the project; and specific implications.

Project management

The objectives, time and work schedule, financial plan and the means of monitoring and evaluation should be clearly stated. The information given must be accurate and reliable, and the future potential of the proposed project should be made clear.

General background to the project

The proposal should state the nature of cooperation between the university and firm; special importance is attached to the involvement of small and medium-size firms (up to 500 employees). Regarding technology, the specific field, the training level, and the relationship with other disciplines and other EC Programmes, in particular ERASMUS, should be apparent.

Specific implications for the project

It is important to note whether and in which form the placement is recognized academically, whether the student's progress is monitored, and how this is arranged. It should be made quite clear in which way the placement is integrated in the study programme as a whole. Does it form an obligatory or optional part? At which level does it take place (under-/postgraduate)? Is there an organised form of language preparation at the sending or receiving end? In cases in which the proposed placement lasts less than six months, it should be explained why this is so. It is also very interesting to see whether there are any links with projects proposed within other strands of COMETT (like Strand A, University/Enterprise Training Partnerships) or with operations within other EC programmes (in particular, ERASMUS).

After examination by other directorates, the COMETT experts and the COMETT Committee, projects proposed for acceptance are cross-checked with those being considered for a grant within the ERASMUS programme to avoid any double funding before the Commission draws up the final list of selected proposals.

A Few Perspectives

For 1988 there will be one significant change in the way placements may be organised.

Successful University/Enterprise Training Partnerships (UETP/Strand A of COMETT) of the first year are invited to apply for a 'pool' of placement grants. Although the final selection procedure remains the same, the UETP will receive much more flexibility to mount placements according to the COMETT guidelines.

As regards the longer-term future, the discussions on COMETT II have already been launched with a view to paving the way for an early Council decision on the continuation of the Programme beyond 1989. The provision for student placements within COMETT is already the subject of detailed discussion which includes consideration of the following points:

- (i) What are the types of student placements which should receive priority attention? Short awareness-building placements of the type associated particularly with ERASMUS ICPs? Longer placements (up to two years) as part of a larger integrated industrial training programme? Indeed, if the types of placements to be supported are exclusively of the type which ERASMUS could support within its objectives, should the support for student placements be organised more directly within the framework of ERASMUS?
- (ii) How can the Community assist in developing student placements in industry in Member States where there is as yet no tradition or provision for such placements as part of higher education courses?
- (iii) What can be done to improve the supply of placements at a time when industry is under severe pressure at all levels of training to provide student placement opportunities? Indeed, what is the cost-benefit ratio of student placements for the parties concerned?

These are all challenging questions which are being addressed in the course of the discussions on COMETT II. As part of those discussions, the Commission organised in Nancy, on February 22-23rd 1988, a first meeting of promoters of COMETT student placement projects, the results of which are now being processed for the development of future policy.

Academic Mobility Main Theme at CRE Ghent Conference

Andris BARBLAN

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Standing Conference of Rectors, Presidents and Vice-chancellors of the European Universities (CRE)

Academic Mobility was the central subject of discussion at the 32nd CRE Conference in Ghent on October 22nd and 23rd, 1987. The meeting attempted to examine how universities could face up to the challenge posed by internationalisation, in particular by taking initiatives for international cooperation, especially in Europe, in the course of their daily activities. Specific possibilities discussed included a much closer focus on course content and student progress, with a view to an international comparative study of results, and the development of exchange procedures and facilities for welcoming and integrating students and staff into the 'host' institution.

Bearing in mind the pioneering role of ERASMUS, the CRE invited two participants closely associated with the implementation of the Programme, Professor J.M. Bricall, Rector of the University of Barcelona and Member of the ERASMUS Advisory Committee, and Mr. Alan Smith, Director of the ERASMUS Bureau, to speak about it at some length. While Professor Bricall attempted to place the current internationalisation of the university in its historical context, stressing how this might contain important lessons for the present, Alan Smith reviewed the implications of the ERASMUS Programme for the development of higher education cooperation in Europe, and drew attention to some of the main challenges which the Programme would present for the universities, and not least for the rectors themselves. Both contributions were particularly welcomed by the university rectors from countries other than the Twelve, in which fears had occasionally been expressed that their will to cooperate would be upstaged by the success of ERASMUS involving the EC alone.



Professor J.M. Bricall, Rector of the University of Barcelona and Member of the ERASMUS Advisory Committee, addressing the CRE Conference on inter-university cooperation held in Ghent in October 1987.

Other eminent participants invited by the CRE to speak at the meeting were Mrs. Caren Berg (Unesco), Professor Eugen Seibold, President of the European Science Foundation, and Professor Arantes e Oliveira (Portuguese Secretary of State for Science and Research). Besides the CRE representatives, six Chinese rectors also attended the conference, as well as an English and Belgian delegate from the European Bureau for Student Information.

University News in a European Perspective

Such was the title of a three-day seminar in Viterbo recently organised jointly by the Italian quarterly, *Universitas*, and the University of Tuscany under the auspices of the CRE (Standing Conference of Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors of the European Universities) and the CEPES (the Unesco European Centre for Higher Education). The meeting brought together representatives from an extensive range of higher education periodicals throughout Europe to discuss their similarities and differences of purpose with a view to exploring the prospects for a collaborative network.

The ambitiousness of the theme was second only to the generous hospitality of Professor G. Palla (Editor of *Universitas*) and his team of organisers. However, participants at the meeting were able to reach firm agreement on several points in a set of recommendations skilfully formulated by the Rapporteur, Professor Sperna-Weiland, of the Erasmus University, Rotterdam. In essence, these were as follows:

- (i) to establish an informal voluntary network of cooperating journals which might take the form of bilateral or multilateral arrangements for mutual benefit;
- (ii) to include in each of these publications a note on the Viterbo meeting itself;

- (iii) to make the contents of each journal available to all the others, in summary form where appropriate;
- (iv) to provide accompanying free publicity by inserting items like tables of contents and short summaries in each of their issues (though it was recognized that non-commercial journals could provide this service more easily than others).
- (v) to inform each other (via the editors) of the content of their forthcoming issues in advance, with a view to providing mutual assistance in identifying appropriate authors and reference sources for the topics concerned;
- (vi) to explore further the potential for joint research;
- (vii) to publish a reference work akin to a year-book (though not so called) containing some 20 of the best articles from a variety of journals on higher education in Europe.
- (viii) to establish a small administrative centre to monitor and coordinate progress in carrying out the preceding recommendations and to prepare for a future evaluative meeting at a date to be agreed.

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