

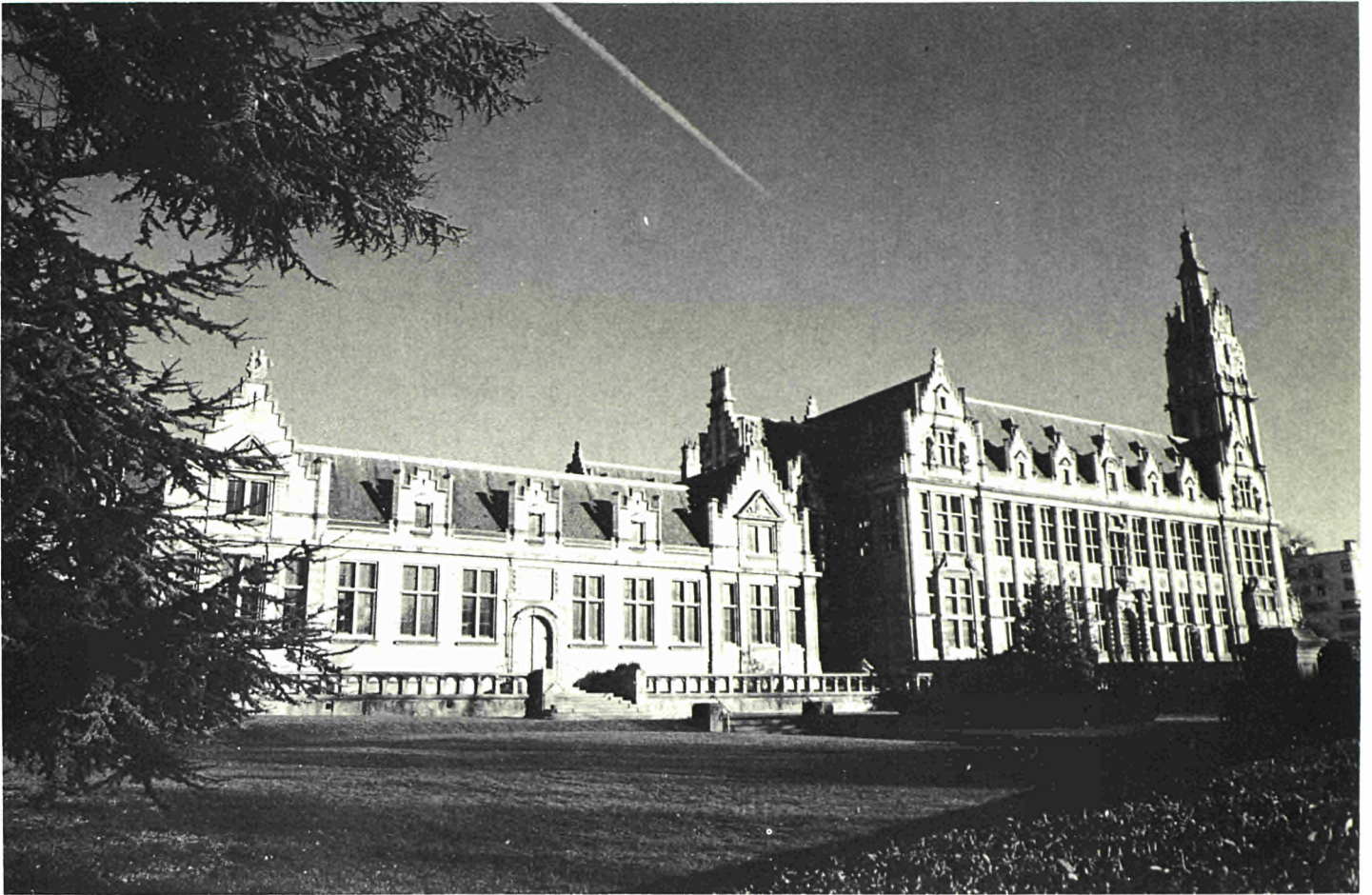
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newsletter 2/1988



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Directorate-General for Employment,
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by
ERASMUS Bureau



The buildings of the faculties of law (left) and of philosophy and letters at the Université libre de Bruxelles which is hosting the first ECTS plenary meeting on January 26-27th, 1989 (see, inside, our article 'The European Community Course Credit Transfer System').

The text was prepared by the ERASMUS Bureau on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities. The ERASMUS Bureau, an autonomous body of the European Cultural Foundation, assists the Commission of the European Communities in the administration of the ERASMUS Programme.

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EDITORIAL

As this issue of the *ERASMUS Newsletter* goes to press, the ERASMUS Bureau letter box is creaking daily under the mass of mail from universities making applications to fund ERASMUS inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs) in the 1989-90 academic year. Bureau staff will be working flat out in early 1989 processing them for expert academic evaluation in the Spring and final selection by the Commission of the European Communities.

At the same time, ERASMUS stands on the threshold of a major new initiative provided for in the Council decision adopting the Programme, namely the European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS). In a special article, we outline this pioneering project due for take-off as a six-year pilot scheme in 1989-90, and disclose the 80 or so universities selected by the Commission to take part in it.

In September 1988, the ERASMUS Advisory Committee held an informal meeting in Nancy, at the invitation of the University of Nancy II. Its discussions were of considerable importance in regard to the initial evaluation and future direction of ERASMUS and we report on them in more detail here in our new 'Upstage' section.

The extensive initial section of this issue of the *Newsletter*, however, moves in on ERASMUS at its grass roots. Rather than discussing the overall representation of the different Member States and fields of study, we turn our attention instead to the Programme as it is coming to life in the lecture halls, on the campuses — and sometimes even in laboratories, streets and on musical instruments! — across the Twelve. The content is mainly the result of our invitation to coordinators of ERASMUS inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs), to tell us more about their activities, and the progress they felt they had achieved to date. In some instances, the central focus of the information submitted was that of a personal assessment of ICP work, in others an illustration of a single institution (such as the University of the Saar) involved in several enterprising cooperative ventures covering a number of subject areas with little less than whole 'constellations' of partners. In yet others, we received accounts in which the main focal point of interest seemed to be a single subject area. The ensuing presentation of these ICPs reflects, to varying degrees, one or more of these different perspectives.

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Launching a Multi-purpose ICP

In the first year of ERASMUS, financial support was available to ICPs for student mobility, staff mobility and joint course development. Student mobility has naturally been dominant among these components in the vast majority of ICPs to date. But an ambitious initiative involving the Hogeschool Zeeland, the Netherlands, and the Spanish Universities of Barcelona and Palma de Mallorca is successfully combining all three. The partnership covers seven distinct subject divisions under the broader headings of business studies (including management sciences) and informatics. In the following article, Dr. A. Vermunt, Deputy Director and ICP coordinator at the Hogeschool, gives a personal view of the exchange.

In 1987-88, the nub of the staff exchange was an arrangement whereby 22 lecturers (10 Dutch and 12 Spanish) simultaneously taught predetermined themes in the partner institutions to 200 Spanish students and 80 Dutch students. As to the student exchange, 17 Spanish students studied in Vlissingen and 14 Dutch students in Barcelona. In 1988-89, the venture is being expanded to include a British and French institution.

What is the clue to getting such an extensive ICP off the ground from its very first year? First, a conviction that studying and lecturing will soon have to occur within an obviously European setting, and that these exchanges are of inestimable value to the students' education: that their ability to operate in society is improved and their future business contacts more valuable. For the lecturers, I am certain that the experience results in a better curriculum and a different approach to those they have to teach.

Secondly, enormous enthusiasm is required of all those involved, as is a strong will to succeed — even where this means a lot of extra work and the sacrifice of much free time. Thirdly, the programme requires perfect planning, with due regard for its year-long 'cycle' and the specific activities of the partner schools. Fourthly the course material must be well planned with an eye to the curriculum of the partners, the load on lecturers and students, the students' prior knowledge, the timing of tests, and the weighting of results in overall assess-

ment and the norms applied.

Finally, among the many practical problems to be solved are differences in the normal size of class groups and the time classes last.

Choosing the Right Lecturers and Students

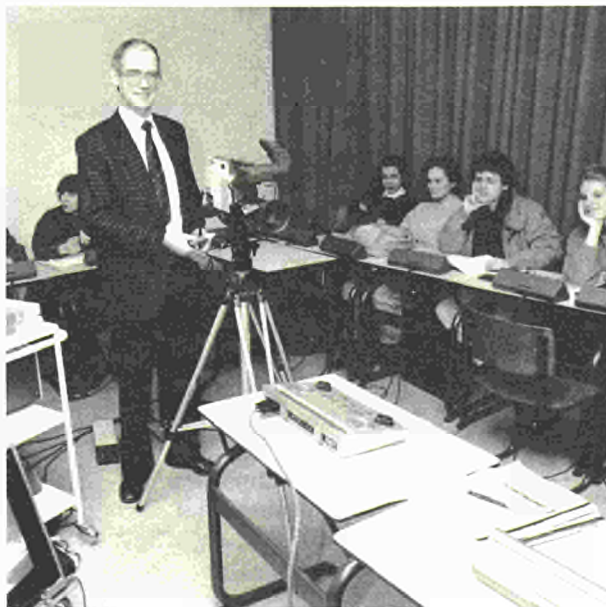
A special premium is placed, in the Hogeschool, on selecting ICP lecturers who can communicate well, are open to new ideas, believe in fruitful cooperation and have a good command of at least English or, preferably, two foreign languages. Yet reaching an understanding with a foreign colleague on a common course programme is no easy task. However good the preparation and

the programme, considerable confidence is often called for on the part of the individual lecturer for whom the agreement required may be an uncertain leap in the dark.

In choosing students for exchanges also, special importance is again attached to communications skills, as well as to the ability to study effectively, to be adaptable and to operate independently. All-important is the attitude of students towards their presence in the society of a foreign country — an attitude to which we have found the informal interview to be a generally good guide.

Lecturer and Student Experience

Our own lecturers have thoroughly enjoyed the exchanges, thanks largely to the cooperation of colleagues and the support of staff in the partner



ICP coordinator, Dr. A. Vermunt, with a class of Spanish students at the Hogeschool Zeeland.

universities. While the Spanish staff have seemed very flexible and inventive, and their classes relaxed and interesting, they also mollycoddle their students far less, thereby encouraging them from the start to study independently. At the same time, our Dutch lecturers are struck by the strongly theoretical approach to the teaching of their Spanish colleagues. A concrete case study gets an initially hesitant reception, rapidly giving way to great enthusiasm.

For their part, the Spanish lecturers feel bound to respect the strict organisation of the Hogeschool when organising courses and classes which cannot be overrun by 15 minutes simply to finish off the point under consideration.

Just as working with large groups of some 200 students is a novel experience for Dutch lecturers, so too is teaching 15 students in work-groups in Vlissingen for the Spanish. Despite the widely varying approaches to teaching or — perhaps precisely because of them — the lecturers succeed in establishing good contacts with the students, not only in the classroom, but also, most benefi-

cially, in subsequent supervision on extensive projects.

As to the students, their attitude is, quite simply, that of responding to a unique opportunity which they seize with both hands. Studying in another country where the culture and approach to the academic subjects concerned are so different, is considered entirely worth the effort. Meanwhile, the stimulus of all the new possibilities offered them in the host university positively influences their attitude to work so that subsequently they achieve more.

Checklist

From the experience of our cooperation to date, I should like to conclude by detailing some modest but important practical points of possible interest to other institutions considering the launching of similar ICPs. They are as follows:

- 1) make proper agreements with colleagues at the partner institutions about subjects to be studied;
- 2) get to know how things are organised at this institution (administrative infrastructure, class tests, examinations, and other norms and requirements);
- 3) carefully check the compatibility of your own computer programmes with those at the partner institution;
- 4) see to it that all tasks and requirements are clearly defined;
- 5) provide individual supervision if the students request it.

For the rest, I am absolutely convinced that, as time goes by, many people throughout the European Community will work hard to create far more opportunities of the kind we believe to be already offered by our own ICP. It is very intensive but incredibly rewarding work. Yet studying and teaching on a European scale is also, I believe, the most natural thing in the world.

Just Visiting

A central purpose of the ERASMUS grants for visits is to help university staff establish the first personal contacts needed prior to planning a future ICP in earnest. Here we see informal discussions during an ERASMUS-financed visit in 1987-88 to the University of Cologne, by two professors (right) from the University of Lisbon. The talks led successfully to the subsequent launching of an ERASMUS ICP in modern languages, literature and area studies between the universities in 1988-89. We intend to report in more depth on projects relating to visit grants in future issues of the *ERASMUS Newsletter*.



Science and Europe at Sussex: the First Ten Years

If sheer size is the measure of an ICP, then an impressive specimen is the Science and Europe student exchange programme coordinated from the University of Sussex, U.K., in partnership with 19 other institutions in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. And among the many ICPs which began their cooperation prior to ERASMUS as one of the former EC Joint Study Programmes (JSPs), this one is a ten-year veteran. But big can be beautiful too, as ICP coordinator Dr. J.D. Smith explains here.

When the wealth of potential data available from a decade of graduates recently made some sort of evaluation of our 'Science with European Studies' ICP irresistible, the results were most inspiring. Questioned as to the usefulness of the course to their careers, 59 respondents out of the 79 Sussex graduates in physics, mathematics and chemistry (75%) were virtually unanimous in recommending it.

The following breakdown indicating the current employment of these graduates shows the wide range of possibilities for which the course provides. Replies to the questionnaire showed that 63% of the science graduates used their science major in their present jobs, while 39% directly used their second language.

Others added that though their language was not used at work it was valuable socially. A number of graduates worked for companies in positions where liaison across national boundaries was important: technical writing and information science seemed to provide particular opportunities. Several graduates had gone abroad again for employment or post-graduate work. The reactions of employers as perceived by students in interviews varied widely. Most seemed to be enthusiastic. Some, however, appeared unable to grasp why someone with a science degree should need a second language, and it was necessary for interviewees to stress that the total time spent on their major subject in their four-year degree was more than that in a normal three-year single honours degree. About half the students reply-

ing to the 1400 questionnaire wrote that the experience of the year abroad had given them confidence and self-assurance which were valuable selling points in seeking employment.

Reactions of students coming to Sussex have not been so thoroughly researched. However, in recent years, students from other European countries have been asked to make assessments of their study in the U.K. Again these have been highly enthusiastic. Among the features most frequently welcomed have been the chance to become fluent in English, the opportunity to work in research laboratories (seen as a valuable preparation for graduate work), the chance to take courses not available in home universities, and the wide social contacts which a university such as Sussex provides.

Employment of Sussex Graduates

<i>Industry: research, production management, information science</i>	12
<i>Publishing, technical writing</i>	7
<i>Banking, accountancy</i>	9
<i>Public service, teaching</i>	12
<i>Further training, postgraduate work</i>	13
<i>Other</i>	9
<i>Not known</i>	17
<i>Total</i>	79

In all, the Sussex course lasts four years. In the first two, students develop their major subject, and bring their second language to a standard sufficient for full participation in a university in another European country. They also take courses specifically designed to place the study of science in the context of the European economy and of European culture and society. In the third year, students study their major subject abroad, returning to Sussex in the fourth to join students in the final year of the normal three-year degree course. The ICP course has attracted good applicants and a higher propor-

tion of women (56% in 1986-87) than in science as a whole (30%). The year abroad for Sussex students counts towards their degree classification. Assessment is either by examinations taken in their host universities or by a substantial 'year abroad report' written in the appropriate foreign language.

Similarly, students from European partner institutions have been welcomed at the University of Sussex. Most have studied for at least two, but more usually three, years in their home universities, and have come to the U.K. for periods of one year, though sometimes periods of 3-4 months have been arranged. They have normally returned to complete their studies in their home universities but a few have remained for a further year at Sussex to obtain Sussex degrees with, for example, a French DEUG (or Diplôme d'études universitaires générales) replacing the first part of the Sussex course. Students returning to the other universities take examinations or write reports on work done at Sussex; these are counted towards the qualifications obtained in their home institutions.

The success of the ICP would not have been possible without the cooperation and commitment of colleagues in partner institutions. They

have solved administrative problems and given a good deal of time to helping students with their work. The next important logical step is the development of joint or dual degrees

so that students may study partly in one institution and partly in another, with full recognition of the qualification obtained. This is the task for the next ten years.

Top Score?

Not quite. On a participation strength rating alone, the twenty partner institutions (below) in Science and Europe (accompanying article) form only the third largest of the present ICPs. Just ahead is the University College of Swansea programme in business studies with technology, with 21 partners, while pride of place belongs to the Strasbourg Institut d'Etudes Commerciales Supérieures whose ICP, also in business studies, boasts no less than 30!

The Science and Europe Network

University of Sussex
 Université de Paris VII
 Université de Paris-Sud
 Ecole nationale supérieure d'ingénieurs et d'électriciens de Grenoble
 Ecole nationale de l'aéronautique et de l'espace de Toulouse
 Université de Nantes
 Université Scientifique et Médicale de Grenoble
 Université d'Aix-Marseille II
 Université de Caen
 Ecole nationale supérieure des télécommunications de Bretagne
 Technische Universität Braunschweig
 Ruhruniversität Bochum
 Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
 Universität Tübingen
 Universität Hanover
 Università degli Studi di Firenze
 Université Libre de Bruxelles
 Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
 Universidad de La Laguna
 Universidad Alcalá de Henares

Full House for NGAAs

Portugal names its ERASMUS Student Grants Authority

The announcement by Portugal that it had designated its national grant-awarding authority (NGAA) for administration of the ERASMUS student grants means all the EC Member States now have such an agency (see the *ERASMUS Newsletter*, 1/1988, p. 8).

The Portuguese NGAA is to be based at the following address: Ministério da Educação, Avenida 5 de Outubro 107 — 9, P-1051 Lisboa Codex, Portugal, (tel: ERASMUS Newsletter 2/88

(351) (1) 766942). Its Director is to be Professor Rogério Rocha. It will assume its new functions in the 1989-90 academic year, until when administration of the grants for Portugal is being handled by the ERASMUS Bureau.

As we reported in the last issue of the *Newsletter*, the NGAAs have the task of managing the Action 2 national allocation for grants to students in their respective countries, who are intending to spend a recognized period of study in

another EC Member State. But, in all countries, students wishing to receive a grant must always first approach their home university which alone can certify that the conditions for its award are satisfied.

The designation of the Portuguese agency brings the number of NGAAs to a — hopefully lucky — thirteen! There are two NGAAs in Belgium, one for each of the two cultural communities, Flemish and French.

At the heart of Europe and with Europe at heart!

At the University of the Saar in Saarbrücken, the paths to all centres of the European Community are short — 45 minutes by car to Luxembourg, one hour to Strasbourg, and two to Brussels. And, as befits its central location, the University has been fast off the mark as an ERASMUS pacesetter with an impressive menu of ICP partnerships spread over several disciplines. No less than six in languages and literature alone reflected the early popularity of this field of study in the first year of the Programme. But others are not far behind.

Established jointly by the French and the Germans 40 years ago, the University of the Saar has a tradition of world-wide cooperation in higher education stretching back many years. A significant foundation for its ERASMUS initiatives was cemented in October 1984 when the University joined with others in the same region to form the so-called 'Charte de Coopération Universitaire'. The first institutions party to the Charter were the Universities of the Saar (Germany), Metz, Nancy I and Nancy II, the Institut National Polytechnique de Lorraine, and the Ecole Nationale d'Ingénieurs de Metz (all in France), and the Centre Universitaire, Luxembourg. A year later, they were joined by the Universities of Kaiserslautern and Trier, the Fachhochschule des Saarlandes, the Deutsch-französisches Hochschulinstitut für Technik und Wirtschaft (a structure linking the Fachhochschule and the University of Metz), and the Fondation Universitaire Luxembourgeoise in Arlon, Belgium. This regional constellation of European universities has done much to provide the University of the Saar with both the infrastructure and the thrust of impressive participation in ERASMUS from the outset.

Of the ICPs coordinated by the University, a typical example has been the one linking it to the University of Metz in the field of modern languages and literature. Inspired by the Charter, the programme is working towards intermediate first-degree level courses leading to a Maîtrise or Franco-German doctorate recognized in both France and the Federal Republic. The aim is to develop courses with a strong linguistic element — ideally the students involved

should speak three languages — in the civilisation, law and culture of the two countries.

Another ICP coordinated by the University and with its roots in the Charter builds on its long-standing cooperation with the medical faculty of the University of Nancy I. At present, this centres on the practical clinical training of medical students in the last phase of their studies, in which they become familiar with techniques of diagnosis, hospital organization and various national health care systems. Courses at the partner institution, which involve the exchange of students for a full academic year, get full mutual recognition and the final examinations are taken at the home university.

However, the participation of the University in ERASMUS has taken it much further afield than its geographical base in the centre of the EC. Its other language-related programmes are a vivid illustration of this. An ICP with the University of Valladolid is fostering the exchange of students and teaching staff working on Spanish philology. The former travel both ways for recognized periods of study lasting up to six months, while staff are exchanged for meetings and guest lectures. Another programme brings Dutch students from Tilburg to the University for three months to increase their knowledge of German through courses subsequently accredited to their final degree. Yet another originating in bilateral agreements reached in 1980 involves as partners the University of Barcelona and the Dublin National Institute for

The spirit of Erasmus is rejuvenated on the green campus of the University of the Saar in the Saarbrücken city forest, where students take a break between lectures ... and ERASMUS, the Programme, is thriving!



Higher Education. Finally, there is to be full recognition of the study year abroad in a newly launched (1988-89) ICP in Germanic and Romance languages and literature, with the Italian Universities of Pisa, Bari and Lecce. Some half-dozen students of Germanic languages and literature from Bari and Pisa are coming to Saarbrücken for one year while, in exchange, students from Saarbrücken go to Bari, Pisa and Lecce. There is to be complete integration of both the courses and of the recognition of the study and examination performances. A precondition of this recognition is to be full-time study for at least 16 hours a week.

Similarly broad geographical horizons well beyond the international border region of the University are in evidence in an ICP in medicine it coordinates, with the University of Leicester as partner. The initiative, for which ERASMUS support was announced in June, centres on the development of a new curriculum which combines theoretical (pre-clinical) with practical (clinical) training. In the course of the programme, up to five students in the second year of pre-clinical training are studying at the partner university for a year. During this period, they will attend lectures and courses in macroscopic anatomy, physiological chemistry and physiology. The examinations are to be set by the host country and the certificates awarded will be recognized as fully equivalent.

Finally, in yet another partnership, this time with the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce in Lyon, students on the exchange have the opportunity to get a double diploma. Offering both theory- and practice-orientated courses, the ESC Lyon receives German students of business economics following the award of their intermediate diploma. After one-and-a-half years of study in Lyon, the students obtain the French diploma and then, subsequently, the highly coveted double diploma on successful completion of their studies in Saarbrücken.

Combined Languages and Engineering at Coventry and Osnabrück

An enterprising attempt to beat the linguistic barriers often faced by international student exchange in non-language fields of study, like engineering, is in operation in the ICP set up by the Coventry Polytechnic, U.K., and the Fachhochschule Osnabrück in the Federal Republic of Germany. One of its driving principles is a structured language teaching programme for a compulsory year abroad.

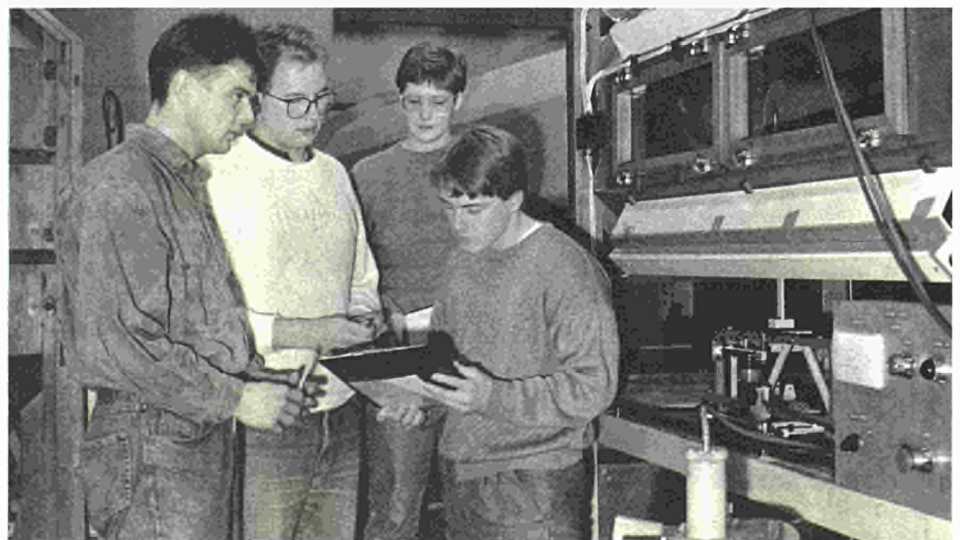
The arrangement is based above all on language learning packages offered by each institution prior to the period abroad, during which students then study in the foreign language engineering course elements which they would otherwise have followed at home.

These arrangements for boosting the language skills of the British and German students have sought to raise the status and effectiveness of language teaching within the ICP and to heighten awareness of the significance of an engineering course with a language element. They are just one spin-off in a successful partnership which has grown from efforts to find common ground between two institutions whose courses, while differently structured, cover many of the same basic concepts and principles. The organisers say that the money from ERASMUS has been crucial in giving their initiatives special status and revitalizing the ongoing contacts needed to keep these efforts alive.

However, the ICP is not rooted in a joint course, which was felt to present too many difficulties. Instead, the language packages and other course components have been built into a 'double award' programme based on a credit transfer system, in turn related to the hours of study, subject requirements and credit systems of the courses at the two institutions.

Another development has been the introduction of two new courses specifically designed to exploit the exchange to the maximum. The first, in European Mechanical Engineering Studies (EMS) in Osnabrück, lasts seven semesters, leads specifically to the double diploma, and requires from student participants good foreign language skills as well as technical ability. The second, in European Engineering Studies (EES) in Coventry, leads to the Bachelor of Science degree, aims to turn out graduates for work in international engineering, marketing and management, and includes more substantial language and management components.

Four students in the Coventry/Osnabrück exchange carry out project work on the low speed wind tunnel in Coventry. From left to right, Ralph Ludwig, Bernd Laake, Georgina Isaac and David Walsh.





In the Lecture Room...

German and Dutch students together during a discussion involving participants in an ICP between the Institute for Higher Economic Studies, Groningen and the Hochschule Bremen. Although the Programme is essentially for student mobility and joint course development in business studies/management science, teaching exchanges are also organised for short seminars and preparatory classes. With the students in the photograph are Dr. Peter Boon (third from left, standing) and Professor Dieter Leuthold (third from right, seated).

company economics, with participants from Amsterdam, Groningen, Harlem and several German institutions, has also been organised in Bremen and Amsterdam. Its main theme has been the academic recognition of diplomas and study periods, along the lines planned by Bremen and Groningen.

As part of the cooperation, groups of around half-a-dozen Dutch students have taken economics courses and gone on placements to several firms in Bremen. A conference for extending German/Dutch higher education cooperation in

ERASMUS...



...In the Street...

As a fitting climax to the successful initial year of an ICP for student and staff exchange between the Universities of Lancaster and Copenhagen, their student drama groups took part in what was the first street reconstruction since the Middle Ages of the so-called *York cycle* of mystery plays, at the York Festival, U.K., in July. The photograph shows the Copenhagen group, the Unicorns, enacting *The Death of the Virgin*, one of a trilogy of plays in the cycle which dates from about 1470 and was performed across the city on pageant waggons.

Prior to the summer festivity, Danish students of English literature spent an entire year in Lancaster joining the university course in medieval studies, with a focus on the practical aspects of modern productions of medieval drama. Lancaster students went to Copenhagen for a shorter period to work on European drama and the influence of drama on Medieval Scandinavian society and art, including Danish church wall paintings. There was full recognition by both universities of the study abroad, and ERASMUS-financed staff exchange also occurred during the year.

...In the Lab...

Dutch students Patrick Vasseur and Cor van Vlimmeren (left) research the splitting of lightweight concrete in Mechelen, Belgium, where they studied civil engineering for three months at the Katholiek Industriële Hogeschool 'De Nayer'. Their stay in Belgium was part of a student exchange ICP which the Hogeschool has with the Hogere Technische School at Dordrecht in the Netherlands, and a particularly good example of cross-frontier regional cooperation in ERASMUS.



Both schools host four students in hydraulic and civil engineering from the partner for an integrated study period which counts towards the final qualification of the home institution. The work of the two students pictured here is being supervised by Professor De Vijlder (Mechelen) and Professor Duyster (Dordrecht).

...ON THE MOVE

...And for a Song...?

Well, it depends! In the British Isles the demand for the organ to accompany choral music influenced the development of the instrument as used in church. Yet in the Netherlands and Spain it has been very little used for choir accompaniment. Because of such big variations in instrumental applications and their history, organists have to be aware of more than their own tradition, to be in tune with the musical function for which their instrument was meant. The ICP between the University of Glasgow, U.K., the Stedelijk Muziek Pedagogische Academie Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, and the Academy of Music at Zaragoza, Spain, has been alive to this principle, with undergraduates each spending a term learning about the instruments and their repertory in another EC Member State.

In the picture, Dutch students William Janssen (foreground) and Wiebe Dijkstra prepare for a practice session on the Unitarian Organ in the concert hall, University of Glasgow. Both have a playing technique good enough for them to benefit from performance on instruments unlike those of their native tradition. The practical emphasis of the instrumental work in the Netherlands has also contrasted refreshingly with the greater emphasis, in Glasgow, on historical aspects of instrumental development.



International Management Exchange Programme gets ICP support

A student exchange programme in international management which began 15 years ago at a school near Paris for business studies high flyers now involves many similar institutions in other parts of the world and close on 1000 students. Participating universities and schools within the EC get ICP financial backing under ERASMUS.



HEC Study Director, Michel Lebas. 'Business tomorrow will be conducted in the same way in Paris, Cologne, Milan ...'

True to the ERASMUS ideal, the International Management Programme (in French abbreviated to PIM) is above all about academically recognized study abroad. The University of Cologne currently coordinates the ICP part of PIM whose prime mover, however, was the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales — or HEC for short — now operating from a picturesque campus in the countryside at Jouy-en-Josas, a short distance to the south of the French capital. In the early days, HEC enjoyed a set of bilateral relations with partner institutions which themselves remained unlinked. Today, however, students like those from the University of Cologne may also visit the Milan 'Luigi Bocconi' University or the Barcelona Escuela Superior de Administración Dirección de Empresas (ESADE). Their study performance while there is rewarded with credits which count towards the award of the highly marketable diplomas of their home institutions at the end of their courses. At the same time, they receive 'specialisation certificates' common to all the schools in the network.

Other institutions in the ERASMUS-funded part of the PIM network have included the London Business School, Trinity College

Dublin, the ERASMUS University, Rotterdam, and the Université Catholique de Louvain at Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium.

A year before any exchange gets under way, each institution decides how many students it will send into the PIM and how many from abroad it wants to host. It also opts for either annual or six-monthly exchanges, the latter being more frequent. Apart from giving their students the chance to stay in one or two different countries, the universities and schools select their partner institutions on the basis of curricular structure compatibility and their capacity to host the student numbers likely to be involved. Although the numbers don't have to be the same both ways in a given year, they are expected to balance out roughly over a longer period of three or four.

In the case of HEC itself, some 60 students apply annually to spend their last year in two foreign institutions. Of these students, little more than half clear the highly competitive selection hurdles of academic record, language skills and personal motivation. Meanwhile, the school arranges to welcome around 50 foreign students who, at the end of their stay there, are registered as 'PIM' on the HEC alumni list. They also become automatic members of an exclusive PIM Club, an association founded in 1985, from which major multinationals and 'head hunting' firms frequently recruit fresh blood.

Students abroad on the PIM are given exactly the same options as those in the 'home' country as regards both choice of courses and extramural activities. The credit ratings they obtain there are based on equivalence tables relating the different systems of assessment and evaluation at each institution. These tables are drawn up, agreed and

validated in advance by all the partners in the PIM network.

At HEC, financial support for ICP development under Action 1 of ERASMUS has gone in part to meet the travelling and living expenses of staff in charge of the PIM. In 1987-88, the School earmarked no less than a total FF 200,000 from its own budget for both the regular annual meeting with its partners and visits abroad to encourage bilateral relations between other foreign institutions. Meanwhile, ERASMUS grants to students (Action 2) are helping to offset their financial burden in having to meet the frequently higher costs of board and lodging at normal 'host' country rates. A total outlay of FF 750,000 from the HEC budget in 1987-88 to cover this kind of expenditure for 42 students pointed to an average increase of about 40% in the cost of a student year abroad as compared to one in France.

Not surprisingly, the demands on staff time and human resourcefulness in keeping a programme of the scale and ambition of PIM in full flight are considerable. Yet so too can be the reward in terms of challenge and variety in the professional experience of those involved. For one thing, firms have to know how PIM works, what its qualifications mean and why they are attractive. The public relations activity required for this at HEC can often fire the flair of the staff who, besides simply running a programme, have to promote the product it represents. Such a role is likely to be increasingly essential in the future.

The European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Action 3 of ERASMUS described in the Annex to the Council decision adopting the Programme in June 1987 details measures to improve the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study. One of them is the creation of the European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS), intended to enable students to receive full credit for a study period spent at universities in other Member States. The system is to be introduced on a six-year experimental and entirely voluntary pilot basis in 1989-90. As arrangements for launching ECTS now hit the home straight, we review the run-up so far.

The central purpose of ECTS is to provide universities admitting students from another Community country with a quick and objective means of assessing incoming students' previous academic performance. In this way, they may be inserted at appropriate levels into host institution courses, even where there is no specific programme for integrated student exchange with the foreign universities concerned. The scheme is also intended to offer a basis for the academic recognition of intermediate and final qualifications, as well as individual courses, with automatic recognition envisaged in many cases.

It is hoped that, at the outset, ECTS will mobilise the mainstream participation, in an inner circle, of 81 faculty or departmental units from universities in all 12 EC Member States, as well as three consortia, in the five subjects, business administration, chemistry, history, mechanical engineering and medicine.

After examining 464 applications from 254 higher education institutions, the Commission selected 10 faculties or departments from within each of the large Member States (Federal Republic of Germany, Spain, France, Italy and the U.K.), and five faculties or departments from within each of the smaller Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands and Portugal) except Luxembourg (one department). In addition, three university consortia with experience in the field of credit transfer were selected, with the aim of generating a multiplier effect. Between 16 and 19 departments and consortia will participate in each of the five subject areas mentioned above.

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The distribution of applications by subject area and the relation between successful and presented applications shows that most were received in business administration and not many in medicine. This trend closely resembles the participation rate of the same two subject areas in the ERASMUS ICPs.

As to the participation of Member States, the U.K. submitted by far the most applications (128), followed by Spain (57), France (56), the Federal Republic of Germany (50), and Italy (43). Countries which had relatively more difficulty in developing ICPs had similar difficulty regarding ECTS participation (Denmark, 19 applications, Greece, 17, and Portugal, 18).

Drawing to some extent on U.S. experience, ECTS will operate as a decentralised system, depending on a clear description of the length and content of the courses offered by the faculties concerned but, above all, on the principle of complete mutual trust and confidence in the academic judgements made by the staff at students' previous institutions. There will thus be no EC-wide inter-departmental or inter-institutional negotiation on content and acceptability of courses or credits, although existing bilateral and multilateral agreements at government and institutional level will be taken into consideration. So too will experience gained by universities active in the ERASMUS ICPs, even if ECTS will obviously be open to non-ICP students as well.

Inner Circle Participants

The final list of selected institutions was officially announced on December 16th 1988 (see box).

During the first half of 1989, representatives of all selected institutions will meet three times to finalise the arrangements for their collaboration. Details on courses offered by ECTS faculties will be available to students interested, in May 1989.

The Outer Circle

Although only the universities named here will get ERASMUS ECTS financial support, it has been decided that others which have expressed interest in the scheme should not be barred from peripheral involvement in it. Furthermore, universities wanting to apply the ECTS principles in other subject areas than the five named above will be encouraged to do so. In such cases, no ERASMUS funding will be provided, and the departments concerned will not be in the part of ECTS to be systematically evaluated. However, their experience will be taken into account where this seems appropriate, and every effort will be made to keep them informed on the development of the scheme.

Further Information

The ECTS proposals are presented comprehensively in a small brochure obtainable free of charge on request from the ERASMUS Bureau, 15, rue d'Arlon, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium, (Tel: (32)(2) 233.01.11).

Institutions selected for Inner Circle participation in the ECTS pilot scheme

Business Administration

Belgium:

Université catholique de Louvain

Denmark:

Handelshøjskolen I København

Federal Republic of Germany:

Fachhochschule Osnabrück

Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

Greece:

A.S.O.E.E. (Athens)

Spain:

Universidad de Barcelona

Universidad de Granada

France:

Université des Sciences et Techniques de Lille (Lille I)

Université de Nancy II

Ireland:

National Institute for Higher Education, Limerick

Italy:

Università degli Studi di Siena

Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali, Rome

Netherlands:

Hogeschool Zeeland

Portugal:

Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã

United Kingdom:

The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton

University of Lancaster

CONSORTIA:

European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU)

European partnership of Business School (EPES)

Chemistry

Belgium:

Université de l'Etat à Liège

Denmark:

Aarhus Universitet

Republic Federal of Germany:

Ruprecht-Karl-Universität Heidelberg

Technische Universität Berlin

Greece:

To be designated later

Spain:

Universidad Complutense Madrid

Universidad del País Vasco

France:

Institut National Polytechnique de Toulouse, and Ecole nationale supérieure de chimie, Montpellier

Université de Paris-Sud (Paris XI)

Ireland:

National Institute for Higher Education, Dublin

Italy:

Università degli Studi di Pavia

Università degli Studi della Calabria

Netherlands:

Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht

Portugal:

Universidade de Aveiro

United Kingdom:

University of Kent at Canterbury, and Thames Polytechnic London

University of Strathclyde

Mechanical Engineering

Belgium:

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Denmark:

Aalborg Universitetscenter

Federal Republic of Germany:

Fachhochschule für Technik Esslingen

Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina zu Braunschweig

Greece:
T.E.I. Patron

Spain:
Universidad de Navarra
Universidad de Zaragoza

France:
Université de Bordeaux I
Université de Technologie de Compiègne

Ireland:
Regional Technical College, Galway

Italy:
Politecnico di Milano
Università degli Studi di Genova

Luxembourg:
Institut Supérieur de Technologie

Netherlands:
Technische Hogeschool Delft

Portugal:
IST, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa

United Kingdom:
University of Glasgow
Lancashire Polytechnic, Preston

CONSORTIA:
Council for National Academic Awards,
Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CNAA,
CATS)

Medicine

Belgium:
Université Libre de Bruxelles

Denmark:
Københavns Universitet

Federal Republic of Germany:
Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn
Universität des Saarlandes

Greece:
Aristoteleion Panepistimion Thessalonikis

Spain:
Universidad de Oviedo
Universidad de Valencia

France:
Université de Rennes I
Université Louis Pasteur (Strasbourg I)

Ireland:
To be designated later

Italy:
Università degli Studi di Bari
Università degli Studi di Napoli

Netherlands:
Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden

Portugal:
Universidade de Coimbra

United Kingdom:
University of Bristol
2nd participant to be designated

History

Brussels:
Rijksuniversiteit Gent

Denmark:
Roskilde Universitetscenter

Federal Republic of Germany:
Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen
Universität Bielefeld

Greece:
To be designated later

Spain:
Universidad de Salamanca
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

France:
Université de Paris VII
Université des Sciences Sociales (Grenoble II)

Ireland:
University College Cork

Italy:
Università degli Studi di Bologna
Università degli Studi di Pisa

Netherlands:
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

Portugal:
Universidade do Minho

United Kingdom:
University of Edinburgh
University of Sussex

Commission announces Major New Languages Programme

On December 21st 1988, the Commission of the European Communities announced its plans for a new programme, LINGUA, to boost the knowledge of foreign languages vital for achieving the EC 'Internal Market'. The measures proposed aim to reinforce the efforts of individual Member States in this area, and are a significant step forward in the transnational cooperation necessary to support their action. The first phase of LINGUA is planned for a five-year period from 1990 to 1994 with an estimated budget of ECU 250 million. The Commission proposals will be submitted to the Council of the European Communities in the course of 1989.

The plans for LINGUA have been inspired by growing awareness, on the part of the Commission, that if the right to free circulation, and the establishment of a truly European Community citizenry are to become a reality, foreign language barriers must be dismantled. Sound linguistic qualifications are also crucial for firms in the EC to benefit fully from the 'Internal Market'.

Poor knowledge of foreign languages has hitherto frustrated the free movement of persons and ideas, not to mention the growth of firms and trade in the Community. And good linguistic preparation is essential for participants in ERASMUS and COMETT to gain maximum benefit from these Programmes. In announcing the LINGUA Programme, the preparation of which will be given priority under the Spanish presidency, the Commission intends to give a major impulse to the promotion of foreign language teaching and learning.

According to the Commission, LINGUA will have two main aims: first, to develop the ability of citizens in the Community to communicate more effectively, as a result of a qualitative and quantitative improvement in the teaching and learning of foreign languages (above all the nine EC official languages); secondly, to develop effective measures to ensure that the Community workforce has the level of foreign language skills required for firms to benefit fully from the 'Internal Market'.

Special importance is attached in the Commission's plans to the need for constructive articulation between LINGUA and ERASMUS which, as the summary explains, will serve as a vehicle for implementation of LINGUA in universities.

The Commission has also deliberately gone for a strategy implying the diversification of supply in foreign languages in education and training curricula, rather than according priority to just one or two languages. While the Commission considers that all its official working languages should be more widely taught given the rich range of linguistic and cultural tradition within the EC, it will also attempt, under the Programme, to promote the teaching and learning of non-Community languages.

The Member States will thus be asked to apply a number of common principles. Among these are that young people should be encouraged to acquire an adequate knowledge of two Community languages during the period of schooling and professional training. The Commission also believes that pupils and students should be given incentives to take part in school or university exchanges, and that one of the criteria for admission to university should be an adequate knowledge of at least one Community language, other than the mother tongue. Moreover, all university students, says the Commission, should be able to combine the study of foreign languages with that of their main chosen subjects, while future foreign language teachers should be given the opportunity to spend at least six months during initial training in the country whose

languages they intend to teach, as well as subsequent periods there in order to perfect or enrich their knowledge. Finally it is advocated that employers be encouraged to adopt measures for the language training of their staff, as part of their overall in-house company training.

The Content of LINGUA

The newly announced LINGUA Programme comprises a wide range of proposed measures, including the following:

Continuing education of foreign language teachers

Financial support to boost the continuing education of foreign language schoolteachers, as well as those who help to train them or to organise the teaching of foreign languages within the Community. In particular, the money is meant to offset the expenses of language teachers taking part in in-service training activities for improving their teaching and the opportunities they can offer their students. Moreover, teachers should be given a chance to improve their communication skills in the language concerned, and their knowledge of the culture of the 'host' Member State. They should also be encouraged to develop formal arrangements for project exchanges, and school-to-school cooperation for the improvement of foreign language teaching.

Strengthening the European University Network

Partial implementation of LINGUA as an integral part of the administration of ERASMUS, in

order to avoid duplicated effort and to revitalize the specific area of foreign language teaching, including the initial training of foreign language teachers, in universities. Financial support is thus envisaged for institutions in the European University Network planning to set up ICPs in the field of foreign languages, and for the provision of mobility grants to students and teachers in this field in higher education.

Exchanges of young people at school or in training

Grants are intended to help support exchanges of pupils and young people undergoing training, as well as visits to set up such exchanges. Financial support will be awarded as a priority to exchanges which contribute specifically to improving foreign languages communications skills, or which offer opportunities to get acquainted with working life in the host Member State. Special consideration will also be given to exchanges for young people who have difficulty in learning languages or feel less motivated to do so, as well as to

exchanges for the teaching of lesser spoken or less widely taught Community languages.

Support for innovation in teaching methods

Financial assistance for the development of systems and teaching material, for associations and consortia working to make innovative initiatives in the methodology of foreign language teaching and the promotion of the teaching of the lesser-spoken Community languages more widely known, and for publications designed both to heighten awareness of opportunities for the study and teaching of foreign languages in other Member States, and to highlight important developments and models for innovative cooperation in this field throughout the Community.

Promotion of language teaching in working life

Support for the development of techniques to help firms to identify accurately their needs in foreign

languages and foreign language teaching. The development of specific language teaching equipment or facilities for different sectors of working life (like the legal profession) will also receive support. Priority will go to those sectors in which the demand for foreign language training may be expected to increase considerably, in which small and medium-sized firms are strongly represented, or in which there is intensive use of the new or advanced technologies. Support, too, for the establishment of an exchange and mobility system to encourage foreign language learning in firms, as well as for projects involving at least two Member States, which confirm the potential of self-teaching methods for foreign languages (including new methods based on multi-media communications techniques).

EC Education Ministers hear Commission brief on ERASMUS

On November 23rd 1988, a communication to the Council of EC Education Ministers by the Commission of the European Communities, concerning the ERASMUS Programme, was delivered by Commission Vice-President Manuel Marín.

Introducing the communication, Commissioner Marín emphasized how the completion of the Internal Market in 1992 and the adoption of the Single European Act heralded a new phase in European construction and outlined new objectives for a People's Europe. 'The world of education,' he said, 'cannot afford to remain apart from this movement. On the contrary, inter-university cooperation within the Community, already promoted by the Commission within the framework of the action programme in the field of education from 1976, is called upon to make a significant contribution' to its development. Commissioner Marín added that, 'by stimulating the free movement of

students and teaching staff within the Community,' the ERASMUS Programme foreshadowed the completion of the Single European Market, 'while representing at the same time a practical instrument for the preparation of those men and women who will constitute its future operators'.

Turning to the future perspectives of the ERASMUS Programme, the Commission Vice-President said that proposals for the second phase of ERASMUS (from 1990-91) would refer in particular to the inclusion in the Programme of certain groups of students so far excluded, as well as to the improvement of their cultural and linguistic preparation. But he added

that 'it is not just a question of increasing the Volume of the Programme at Community level. If the declared objective of the Commission of enabling a minimum of 10% of all students as from 1992 to spend an integrated period of study in another Member State, an objective which also has the support of the European Parliament, is to be achieved, a considerable effort is also required within each Member State, not only on the part of the universities (including those responsible for student services) but also from national administrations'.

First Major Appraisal of ERASMUS hosted by Nancy II

The ERASMUS Advisory Committee held an informal meeting in Nancy on September 28-30th at the invitation of the University of Nancy II whose President, Professor Gérard Druesne, is a Member of the Committee. The meeting sought to discuss key questions arising from the first two years of ERASMUS and their possible lessons for the future design, implementation and evaluation of the Programme.

It did so with the overriding conviction that ERASMUS represents a major breakthrough in promoting inter-university cooperation within Europe as a crucial component in university development strategy. There was also broad agreement on the need to implement appropriate evaluation measures considered to be particularly important for the development and adaptation of the Programme in the years to come.

Above all, the meeting aimed to get to grips with the more sensitive areas of ERASMUS policy and administration. First came a call for a bigger budget, given that the level to date had meant acceptance of no more than one in three projects, and refusal of many highly commendable ones. Yet, whatever their share of financial support, institutions also needed the financial security incentive to longer-term planning for cooperation, so the Committee firmly recommended that most earnest consideration be given by the Commission to a pluriannual system of budgeting.

Student grants inevitably figured prominently on the agenda too, both as regards criteria for deciding the lump sum allocation to each Member State and the level of grants actually distributed to each individual student. The former issue prompted the recommendation that every Member State should get a minimum level allocation linked to its ICP student participation numbers; the latter that grants to individual students from NGAs had to be stepped up to avoid the grants acquiring an undesirable peanuts or pocket money image.

Much was made of the need to ensure satisfactory cultural and linguistic preparation of ERASMUS students, especially the non-linguists and those due to visit countries with less widely-taught languages and lesser known cultures. However, it was felt that arrangements for reception of students should leave room for them to exercise personal initiative both in making their way socially and in practical terms.

Yet another concern was that of ensuring still better balance in Member State and subject representation in ERASMUS, despite the progress achieved so far.

Hywel Ceri Jones (left), Director of Vocational Training, Education and Youth Affairs of the Commission of the European Communities, with Professor Gérard Druesne.

One working session was devoted to a meeting with the Presidents of the French universities, whose massive participation (52 out of 70 were represented) and many working contributions, confirmed the considerable interest of those universities in the Programme.

Finally, the Committee turned to the practical arrangements for the evaluation of ERASMUS, considering both the short-term, more operational aspects, and long-term perspectives related to its educational impact. The immediate targets are the monitoring and evaluation required for the report on the Programme to be submitted to the European Parliament in accordance with the June 1987 Council Decision, and the draft of any adaptations considered necessary in the Decision text itself. The Commission announced its intention of submitting its proposals for amendments to the Decision Text to the Council in the spring of 1989, with a view to achieving a Council decision by December.



ERASMUS at Bologna

There was pride of place for the ERASMUS Programme in the 900th anniversary celebrations of the University of Bologna in mid-September. The festivities included five intensive days of conferences and seminars on various aspects of university affairs and inter-university cooperation.

In these debates ERASMUS figured prominently. Several hundred university heads from throughout the world heard Italian Minister for European Community Affairs, Mr. Antonio La Pergola make an impassioned call for universities to rediscover their international mission as part of the move towards a more 'authentic Europeanism'. Here, ERASMUS was very much in the cockpit, particularly as regards the run-up to the completion of the EC internal market in 1992. The Italian government, said the Minister, was pledged to doing the utmost to ensure the Programme's full success.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Hywel C. Jones, Director for Vocational Training, Education and Youth Affairs of the Commission of the European Communities, who drew attention to the crucial role of the Programme in the Community's

'Medium Term Perspectives' in the field of education. He especially stressed the comprehensive nature of ERASMUS as a Programme open to all types of higher education institutions and academic disciplines.

Several speakers, notably, Mr. Nunez Encabo from the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, emphasized the need to ensure that the existence of ERASMUS did not dissuade universities from collaborating with partner institutions outside the EC. Fortunately, the signs so far were that ERASMUS was more likely to help stimulate exchanges and cooperation world-wide, as the emergence of new programmes, like NORDPLUS in Scandinavia, had already testified.

From the academic world, Hamburg University President Peter Fischer-Appelt, stressed the need for higher education institutions to make inter-university cooperation a key element in their overall development strategies, while Professor Proimos, former Rector of the University of Patras highlighted the special needs and assets of the smaller EC countries

in the implementation of ERASMUS.

Fittingly, however, the final word went to the many student representatives present at the invitation of the Bologna students. One of their leading concerns was to step up opportunities for integrated study periods in other European countries, as part of the 'fundamental right' to mobility, 'which broadens cultural horizons and unites people from different cultures'. Granted that ERASMUS was central to this aim, the students felt that special attention had to be devoted to the equitable selection of student participants, and to the provision of a much bigger student grants budget. Improved information geared specifically to students needs, on the opportunities offered by the Programme was also thought to be most desirable.

A pre-eminent seat of Renaissance learning when Erasmus the man personified what academic mobility at its best might mean, Bologna maintains unwavering commitment to the same ideal some 500 years on, with participation in over 40 ICPs in 1988-89 already off the mark.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Study Abroad Evaluation Project

Study abroad is worthwhile — this is the main outcome of an international research project on study abroad programmes, and their impact on students and graduates. Coordinated over the past five years by the European Institute of Education and Social Policy, the project has focused on study abroad programmes offered by higher education institutions in four European countries (France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and the USA.

The results of the project with particular reference to the structures and impacts of programmes offered by institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany have already been published by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science (BMBW) in the series 'Studien zu Bildung und Wissenschaft', as *Auslandsstudienprogramme im Vergleich* (by

Ulrich Teichler, Alan Smith and Wolfgang Steube, BMBW, Bonn, 1988), and *Erträge des Auslandsstudiums für Studierende und Absolventen* (by Ulrich Teichler and Susan Opper, BMBW, Bonn, 1988). The full findings of the project are due to appear shortly, in English, in the form of a two-volume final report.

The German study already published shows that, in spite of existing obstacles to mobility, there has been a rapid expansion in and growth of interest in study abroad programmes in recent years, and that experience is overwhelmingly optimistic. Study abroad is considered worthwhile in many different ways by both students and staff. Students, above all, confirm the widening of horizons it brings, not to mention career advantages.

Legal Studies Abroad

It is often suggested that study abroad for students in such an apparently 'national' discipline as legal studies, is particularly difficult to arrange. This fallacy is comprehensively disproven by the recent publication, *Jurastudium und Wahlstation im Ausland* (Münster, Regensburg & Biermann, 1988), edited by Bernhard Grossfeld and Klaus Wieweg. In nearly 200 pages, the book offers information on a multiplicity of study abroad opportunities for law students in 13 different countries, including most EC Member States.

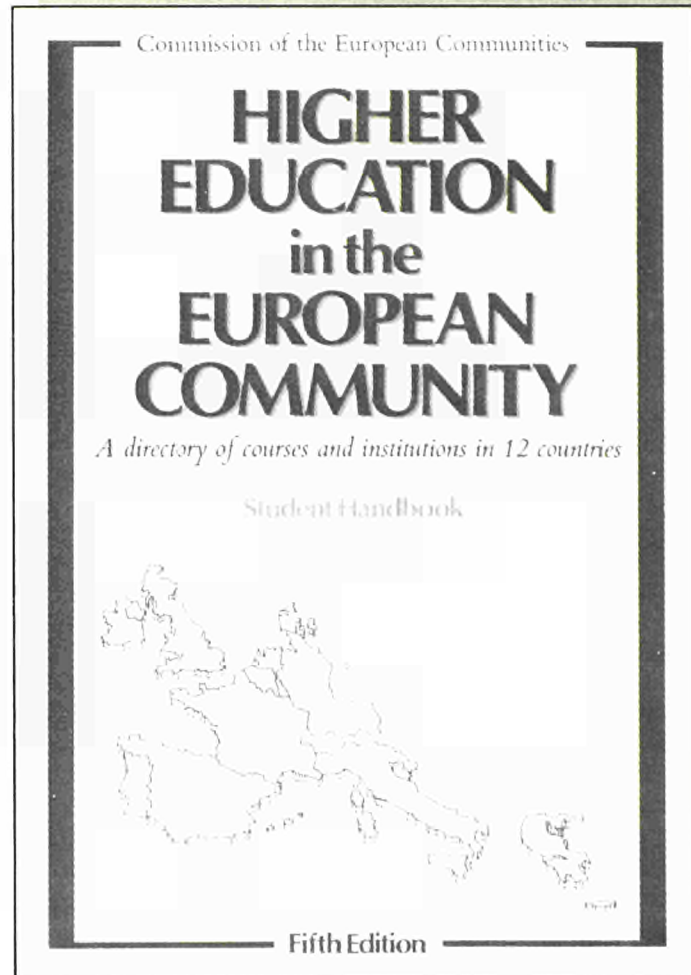
NORDPLUS

According to first unofficial estimates, over 300 higher education institutions and 5000 students may benefit from the initial phase of a Nordic Action Scheme for Teachers and Students in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers on March 10th 1988. Known as NORDPLUS, the scheme is to take off in earnest over a five-year pilot phase from 1989-1993, in which it is estimated that some 5100 grants will be awarded.

Although not a precise replica of ERASMUS, NORDPLUS deliberately bears more than a superficial resemblance to its EC neighbour, on most major provisions. This is not surprising in that the Nordic Cultural Action Programme of which it is a part is aimed at creating an 'educational community' where the removal of financial and legal restrictions will enable students to study at any educational institution in the Nordic countries.

Thus, as in ERASMUS, the official text of NORDPLUS refers to financial support for the development of a university network and student mobility grants. The aim of the former is to encourage long-lasting cooperation between Nordic universities in the form of inter-university cooperation agreements incorporating student or teaching staff mobility and the joint realisation of certain teaching activities. And the mobility grants to students awarded within the agreements enable the students of one university to undertake a substantial study period at another, which is fully recognized in the award of their final diploma or qualification. It is expected that the grants will amount to an average DK 12,000.

As in ERASMUS too, teaching staff mobility grants may also be awarded as part of an inter-university agreement for the reciprocal exchange of staff. The grants are intended to facilitate specialized lecture series easily integrated into the teaching programme of the host university. The financial support entailed is expected to amount to a monthly average of DK 5400, with variations depending on travel and other possible expenditure.



This latest edition of the *Student Handbook* on higher education in the European Communities makes a timely appearance as ERASMUS gets well and truly under way. The up-to-date information it provides will be invaluable to an increasing number of students (and their college advisers and lecturers) wishing to study in another EC country than their own.

The major novel feature is the material included for the first time on Spain and Portugal, the newest members of the EC. In sections devoted to these and the other Member States, information is provided, as in the past, on the structure of the higher education system, the institutions and their qualifications, admissions, applications and fees, scholarships and grants, entry and residence regulations, and social aspects like health insurance and accommodation.

The *Handbook* is published in all nine official EC working languages on sale at the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, or its Sales and Subscriptions Offices in the Member States (see inside back cover of this Newsletter), as well as at booksellers.

European Community

ROUND-UP

Most of the information serving as the basis for this feature was collected by EURYDICE, the education information network of the European Community.

Belgium

New legislation a spur to ERASMUS

On August 1st 1988 a law came into force removing obstacles to academic recognition for students at Belgian universities spending a study period abroad. However, the law has been backdated to take effect from October 1987 clearing any potential problems in this area for university students who were participants in the first year of ERASMUS (1987-88). Under the new law, exchange programmes have to be approved by the appropriate academic authority of the university, and there is also provision for the exchange of teaching staff.

A Royal Decree which took effect on September 1st 1988 has introduced similar provisions for students in non-university higher education, for which exchange programmes have to be approved by the Ministers of Education (or their delegated representatives).

The executive government of the Flemish Community has also introduced an amendment to the Royal Decree of 1987, in order to ensure that the payment of grants or loans by national or regional authorities cannot be cut off while students are abroad.

Denmark

Copenhagen University offers Danish language course

In summer 1988, the University of Copenhagen offered a first experimental Danish language course for students from overseas. Previously, Danish language instruction for future students had been offered only by language schools or similar institutions.

The course is in the spirit of the drive by Danish universities and the Ministry of ERASMUS Newsletter 2/88

Education to increase international contacts both within and beyond ERASMUS (see 'Denmark launches Major New Plans to promote Study Abroad', *ERASMUS Newsletter*, 2/87). While advanced students coming to Denmark to work on specific projects can sometimes get by in English, this is not the case with undergraduate study. Copenhagen's new intensive language course has been developed initially to cater for the needs of students participating in the University of California's Education Abroad Program, but if successful it will be of enormous value in boosting the University of Copenhagen's involvement in ERASMUS also.

Greece

University decentralisation

In spring 1988, the then Greek Minister of Education, Mr. A. Tritsis announced a major transfer of responsibilities relating to the 'institutions of university education' (A.E.I.) from the Ministry of Education to the rectors of the universities themselves. These responsibilities concern the nomination, appointment, tenure, and renewal of working contracts of university staff.

Source: *Kathimerini*.

Spain

Budget boost for research training

In February 1988, the Director General for scientific and technical research announced a 1988 budget of 7705 million pesetas to revitalize the training of new researchers and the retraining of university teachers in centres abroad. Foreign scientists spending sabbaticals in Spain are getting a further 150 million pesetas, while a similar sum is to be allocated to the retraining of some 100 Spanish researchers abroad.

Source: *El País*.

DIARY

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

European University Public Relations and Information Officers.

Meeting at Leuven, Belgium, April 7th 1989.

Theme: *ERASMUS Evaluation and Future Development.*

Further information: Inge Knudsen, Head of Information, Århus Universitet, Information and Contact Centre, Gustav Wiedsvej 10, DK-8000 Århus C. Tel: (45)(6) 202000/202533.

Seventh World Congress of Comparative Education

University of Montreal, Montreal, Canada, June 26-30th, 1989.

Theme: *Development, Communication and Language.*

Further information: Dr. Jacques Lamontagne, Chairman, Organizing Committee, VIIth World Congress of Comparative Education, Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université de Montréal, C.P. 6128, succursale A, Montréal, Québec, Canada, H3C 3J7. Tel: (514) 343.6449 or (514) 343.6650.

Eleventh European AIR Forum

A European Conference of Research on Higher Education
University of Trier, Trier, Federal Republic of Germany, August 27-30th, 1989.

Theme: *Towards Excellence in European Higher Education in the 90's.*

Further information: Dr. Edgar Frackmann, HIS GmbH, P.O. BOX 2920, D-3000 Hannover 1, Federal Republic of Germany. Tel: (49)(511) 1220-204.

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

Ninth General Assembly
Durham, U.K., September 10-16th, 1989.

Further information: Mrs. Ann Lewis, Assistant Registrar, University of Durham, 32, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN, U.K. Tel: (44)(91) 374 3721.

France

More Maths from the Ministry

The Ministry of Education has been persuading school heads to open up hundreds of extra Baccalauréat classes in mathematics for the so-called Baccalauréat C, traditionally the most selective, and major gateway to the prestigious Grandes Écoles. The move followed concern that because of its difficulty, only 11% of all candidates for the 'bac' in June 1987 went for the maths option. The new classes are expected to steer students towards the 'Bac C' itself, or the less prestigious 'Bac D' in biology. The Ministry has been putting its money where its maths is by offering financial incentives to school heads to lay on the extra classes.

Source: *The Times Educational Supplement*.

Ireland

Costly brain drain

The total cost to Ireland of graduates and nurses who emigrated in 1986 was almost £87 million, a recent conference was told. Addressing the sixth conference organised by the Commerce and Economics Society, University College, Cork, Mr. Patrick B. Diggins, director of the Drumcondra Teachers' Centre, Dublin, said that the sum represented £6 million less than the combined budget for primary, post-primary and higher education. It was just £5 million short of last year's total current public expenditure on higher education, and three-and-a-half times more than the capital invested in forestry.

Source: *The Irish Times*.

Luxembourg

Plans to double studies

Until now, the Luxembourg Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg has offered first-year courses in certain subjects to students who then usually continue their studies abroad. However, the Ministry of Education and Youth is now planning to set up a second year of studies there in some of the subjects offered.

Source: *Unité Nationale d'EURYDICE, Luxembourg*.

The Netherlands

University reform proposals

Under the terms of the higher education bill due to come into force on 1st August 1990, studies at this level will last a maximum five-and-a-half years instead of six. Those wanting to study longer will have to pay an annual 5000 guilders, while tuition fees will be about 1,600 guilders.

University independence and control over quality will be increased by allowing students to put together their own study programme approved by exam committees. The system will consist of 'study points', a certain number of which must be completed depending on the course followed, and which give students five-and-a-half years to finish their studies. Any student taking less time can keep the points for a later date.

The *numerus clausus* is also to be scrapped to allow universities to respond better to the demands of the graduate job market in specific disciplines.

Sources: *NRC Handelsblad* and *Het Nieuwsblad*.

Portugal

Higher education set for new take-off

In spring 1988, Minister of Education Roberto Carneiro announced a higher education investment and expansion programme to take effect from 1992. His aim is to push the participation rate of 18-24 year-olds in higher education up to 18%.

Source: *Jornal de Noticias*.

Contact Corner

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: Mr. Brian Frost-Smith, *ERASMUS Newsletter*, ERASMUS Bureau, rue d'Arlon, 15, B-1040 Brussels.

The Ecole nationale des sciences géographiques (ENSG) near Paris, under certain circumstances offers courses for outsiders independently of its mainstream training of the technical staff involved in the cartographic work of the French Institut Géographique National (IGN). The courses are given by the School's Département des stages et de la formation continue, and information on this activity in 1989 is available from the end of 1988.

Write to: Institut géographique national, Ecole nationale des sciences géographiques, 2 avenue Pasteur, B.P. 68, 94160 Saint Mandé, France. Tel: (33)(1) 43.74.12.15.

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