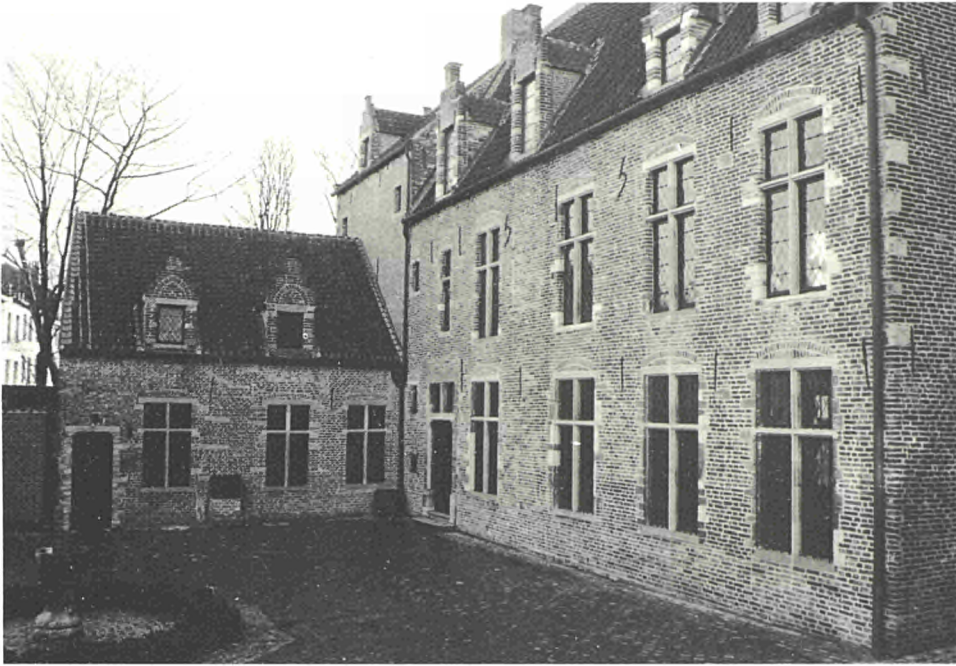


Two Houses of Erasmus



◀ The Anderlecht (Brussels) residence of the Renaissance humanist who has given his name to ERASMUS, the Programme. Converted into an 'Erasmuseum', the recently restored premises house numerous mementos recalling the life and work of the great scholar.

▶ The symbol and centre, at Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, of an enterprising initiative by students at the French-speaking Université Catholique de Louvain to provide a briefing service for outgoing ERASMUS students from the same institution and to accommodate, welcome and inform the incoming ones from abroad (see, inside, our article 'The Maison Erasme at Louvain-la-Neuve').



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

On May 22nd, 1989, the Council of EC Education Ministers adopted the LINGUA Programme for the promotion of training in foreign languages within the Community. Their decision is momentous. With an initial five-year budget of ECU 200 million, LINGUA becomes operational from January 1st 1990. Thenceforth, it will be crucial in revitalizing use of the EC national languages among all those committed to the ideal of the People's Europe — whether as students and teachers, or as professionals in business and industry working towards the Internal Market of 1992. The greater part of LINGUA will be aimed at the higher education sector, in particular as regards the training of future language teachers. It will be organically linked to ERASMUS and no doubt have positive repercussions on the whole Programme.

The Council meeting also gave a first response to the Commission's proposals for Phase Two of ERASMUS (see feature on pp.6-9). There was marked enthusiasm over the early results of Phase One and the need for development and consolidation was stressed.

Finally, Council also agreed on the principle of opening the COMETT Programme to countries in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). This is good news for the EFTA Member States (Austria, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) which have been pressing hard to join COMETT for some time.

As regards more routine matters, few are now more important for would-be ERASMUS grant-holders than the procedure for applications for the 1990-91 academic year (see p. 3). However, sights are firmly fixed also on the longer-term future. Demand for ERASMUS to date has amply demonstrated that there exists in universities throughout the EC, a powerful will to cooperate in a wide range of higher education activities, given the means to do so. The most significant development this year has been the increase of some 60% in demand, in terms of proposed student numbers within ICP applications, for the organised student mobility central to the Programme from the outset. This enthusiasm is inseparable from the conviction that ERASMUS deserves to prosper. Thus grass roots Programme practitioners and the Commission have worked increasingly together to evaluate the Programme, and identify the improvements needed to consolidate its initial success. Besides forming the basis for the first evaluation report to the European Parliament required by the 1987 Decision, the messages emerging from ERASMUS Phase One are at the root of the Commission proposals for Phase Two agreed on April 26th.

Three further aspects of ERASMUS get a hearing for the first time in this *Newsletter*. One is the expanding activity of the EC Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (p. 13). The second is the value of student initiative and comment in the life of the Programme, to which we devote a new section intended as a regular feature (p. 15). Finally, there is a need for similar coverage of NGAA activity given its crucial role in the ERASMUS administrative arrangements. Jacques Pertek of the French NGAA has kindly kicked off for us by offering a glimpse of a typical day in his office at the CNOUS (page 11). We hope other NGAA administrators may follow suit soon.

CONTENTS

Editorial	1	<i>Sources of Feedback for Evaluation</i>	7	NARIC	
<hr/> ERASMUS ICP News <hr/>		<i>Looking Ahead</i>	8	What's My Diploma Worth Abroad?	13
New Links Forged in European Psychology ICP	2	<i>Behind the Text - the Brass Tacks</i>	9	<hr/> New Publications <hr/>	
Oviedo and NIHE Dublin Exchange in Chemistry	3	New Commissioner for EC Education Programmes	9	ICP Directory 1988-89	14
ERASMUS Grants 1990/91	3	ECTS Plenaries set spirit for September Launching	10	Two Tales of Two Programmes	14
Tripartite Nuclear and High Energy Physics	4	<hr/> NGAA News <hr/>		<hr/> Students Have the Last Word <hr/>	
Fundamental and Applied Toxicology	4	Trials and Tribulations of an Administrator in an ERASMUS Country	11	The Maison Erasme at Louvain-la-Neuve	15
ICP Offers Food for Thought	5	<hr/> International <hr/>		From Portugal to Poitiers... And back! ... with ERASMUS!	16
Liège Joins Cranfield Double Degree ICPs	5	New Study on Higher Education Exchange with East and Central Europe	12	Contact Corner	16
<hr/> News from Brussels <hr/>		FEDORA - A European Student Counselling Association	12	Acknowledgements	16
Forging Phase Two of ERASMUS	6	Diary	12		
<i>Lessons Learnt So Far</i>	6				

New Links Forged in European Psychology ICP

by
Professor J. Richard EISER,
*Head of the Psychology Department,
University of Exeter, U.K.*

The University of Exeter this year admitted its first students to a new honours degree called the 'B.A. in Psychology with European Study' which we coordinate from the University as an ERASMUS ICP. As a required part of their course, these students will spend a year at another European university, studying psychology in the language of that country. The students admitted to this course will typically be those who have studied a modern language to an advanced level at school. Further language teaching is provided during the first two years at Exeter to prepare them for their year abroad. The languages now being offered are French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch. In the case of the last three languages, students can start from scratch provided that they are proficient in another modern language.

Because of the year abroad the course lasts for four years instead of the three more typical of undergraduate degrees in the United Kingdom. This was considered far more flexible, in that our students would receive the 'standard' curriculum of psychology courses here, *and* be able to pick the best courses on offer from their host university, without being restricted by any of the administrative problems to do with comparability of curriculum content and of examination standards that are associated with some other forms of student exchange. Thus our students will end up knowing *more* psychology, as well as having the extra experience and linguistic skills derived from their study abroad.



Eiser: 'more psychology, extra experience and linguistic skills'.

The applications for the new B.A. course are buoyant and of high quality, and further growth is limited only by government policy on university funding and student numbers, rather than any lack of market demand. However this is only one of the ways in which students can benefit from the links being forged between different European departments of psychology. The list of partners in the ICP is extensive: Aix-Marseille I in France; Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium; the Technical University, Berlin, Kiel and (soon) Heidelberg in the Federal Republic of Germany; Bologna and Padova in Italy; Autónoma (Madrid) and La Laguna (Tenerife) in Spain; and Amsterdam and (soon) Tilburg in the Netherlands. Students from a number of these universities are already visiting Exeter for periods of between three months and a year as part of reciprocal exchanges. Their time at Exeter is spent attending seminars, and conducting research projects with members of the Exeter staff. Typically these students are at a more advanced stage of study. However, this depends to some extent on their home university system.

Different systems are more flexible at different stages in terms of enab-

ling students to make good use of a period of time abroad. Within the German system, for instance, there seems considerable flexibility between the *Prediplom* and *Diplom*. Within a number of other systems, arrangements are easier for doctoral students than for undergraduates. This underlines the principle that such student exchanges do not have to be strictly reciprocal in terms of exact equivalence of numbers, levels, or periods of study. At present, the exchanges are on a bilateral basis, with Exeter being the hub of the wheel, as it were. The plan, however, is to develop a network of partnerships which will enable multilateral exchanges.

The academic benefits of this kind of programme extend beyond even the considerable opportunities provided for the individual students and staff concerned. For a discipline like psychology, which attempts to understand human behaviour and experience not just in the abstract but in real contexts, there is a need not just for an international outlook but also for sensitivity to cultural variety. Contemporary psychology is strongly influenced by North American research, which, despite the high levels of professionalism one might expect, is not universally notable for such sensitivity. Too often, complementary traditions have found it difficult to gain a hearing, and not only for reasons of language. Through linking important European centres of research within this kind of programme, the stature and influence of such traditions may be enhanced. This must be good for the healthy development of the discipline. ■

Oviedo and NIHE Dublin Exchange in Chemistry



by

*Professor P. Tuñon Blanco
University of Oviedo, Spain.*

Our ERASMUS ICP was launched when three students from the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Oviedo went to the National Institute for Higher Education (NIHE) in Dublin in September 1988. Two of them are taking the final year of the degree course, having chosen subjects in the NIHE analytical sciences degree course which has a very novel and up-to-date syllabus, compared with what is generally expected from today's analytical chemists. The third student is using the credits necessary to complete her third level studies. My Department had already decided on the type of recognition to be granted the subjects studied at the NIHE — provided, of course, that the Oviedo students pass the examinations there — and the academic authorities of my University are expected to approve the arrangements involved.

From the outset, the Spanish students were welcomed at the NIHE, which provided them with full facilities to ensure their integration there, and enabled them to settle into the relevant classes. Special, intermediate examinations are being arranged for them to test their progress every four months. Prior to their departure, the University of Oviedo intensified their preparation in English through its Institute of Languages. The students will continue with their language studies in Dublin

for the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency, which will certainly help them in finding work when they return to Spain. During their short Christmas holidays (shorter than at Oviedo), they were very enthusiastic about their experiences, and compared the different educational systems of both institutions with Spanish students in their own classes. They also received local newspaper publicity following a press conference in which the contrast between the two educational systems was made clear, and the advantages of the exchange highlighted.

The reciprocal exchange involves two students from Dublin who have been working for part of their third year credits at Oviedo, after first improving their knowledge of Spanish at their home institution.

Planning and development of the teaching mobility component of our ICP is also in hand. ■



Ana Rodriguez and Maria Jesus Fernandez in the NIHE laboratory.

ERASMUS Grants 1990/91

Applications are now invited in respect of financial support under the ERASMUS Programme, in the academic year 1990/91.

Detailed *Guidelines for Applicants* and application forms have now been sent to all eligible higher education institutions, and further copies 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 Inter-university Cooperation Programmes (ICPs), including requests for students within these programmes, should be mailed by universities to the Bureau **before October 31st 1989** (as per postmark).

Students **NOT** participating in an ICP, who wish to apply for a student mobility grant ('free movers'), can obtain all information concerning the application procedures to follow from the National Grant Awarding Authority (NGAA) in each Member State. They should **always** apply to the NGAA for a grant **jointly with their home higher education institution** which must countersign the application to certify that the conditions for grant eligibility have been satisfied. **They must also provide their NGAA with clear evidence from the host university that they have been formally accepted for a period of study there, and will not be required to pay tuition fees.** All applications of this kind relating to the 1990/91 academic year should be submitted to the NGAA before **January 1st 1990**.

As regards financial support, under ERASMUS, for Study and Teaching Visits, for publications, or for university associations and consortia, there will be no fixed deadline for applications. **Applications for visits in the period from July 1st 1990 to June 30th 1991 may now be submitted at any time, provided this is at least six months before the visit or project is planned to take place.** ■

Tripartite Nuclear and High Energy Physics

In an ICP coordinated from Greece, ERASMUS has led to a pooling of facilities and academic expertise for the development of a sophisticated Greek university nuclear physics laboratory. The initiative involves the Universities of Thrace and Liverpool, and the Technical University of Aachen.

The universities in the ICP aim to improve their courses for students, while developing facilities at Xanthi, Thrace, for advanced experimental nuclear projects for final-year undergraduates.

Four undergraduates from Thrace currently get grants under ERASMUS to visit Liverpool to undertake nuclear projects using the Liverpool Research Reactor, after doing some of the preparation beforehand in Xanthi. The period abroad is an integral part of a project for the five-year electrical engineering degree.

Developed by Professor N.F. Tsagas, the nuclear teaching laboratory of the Democritus University has units enabling students to follow up theoretical lectures with basic nuclear experiments. Planned extensions to the facilities include a purpose-built laboratory for work in the

area of large-scale radiation. However, the latter is not yet equipped for all the potential final-year undergraduate activities, so postgraduate collaboration with Liverpool has been extended to undergraduate project activity. Facilities have been provided at Liverpool for projects on topics like neutron physics, and gamma-ray spectroscopy.

The students feel that ERASMUS provides a valuable opportunity for cultural exchange. The ICP has further enabled two Liverpool undergraduates to go to Thrace to conduct nuclear shielding experiments and examine nuclear facilities. Intensive language courses are also provided.

There is additional ERASMUS support for three postgraduates. Dr. I. Kappos obtained his Ph. D in 1987, and two other postgraduates who

have already been involved in ERASMUS are to continue their work at Liverpool and Aachen respectively.

The ICP also includes teaching staff exchange between the three universities. Liverpool staff have visited the nuclear radiation laboratory, assessing the equipment, facilities and arrangements for undergraduate experiments. An evaluation of the reports was discussed in the group, and lectures and seminars organized. In reciprocal visits to Liverpool, the summer project plans were finalised and the preliminary work for the students visiting Liverpool was prepared.

The collaboration has satisfied all those taking part, so it is hoped that future financial support will persuade more students to take advantage of the excellent educational opportunity ERASMUS offers. ■

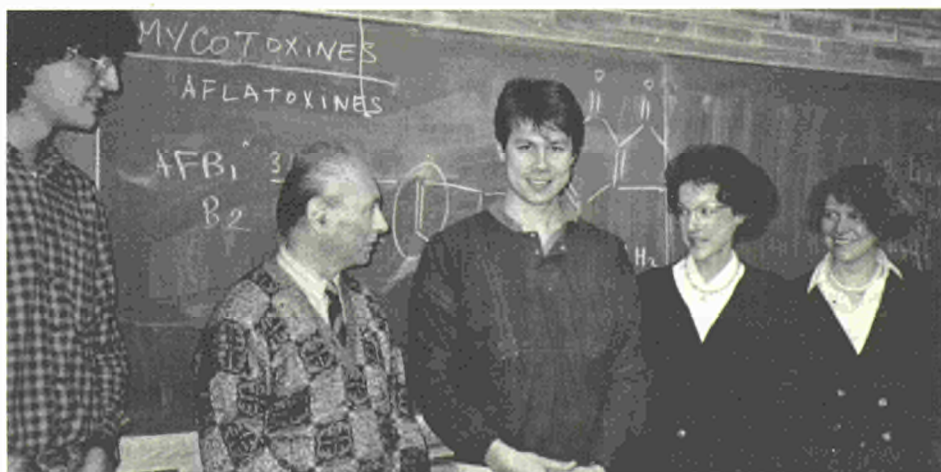
Fundamental and Applied Toxicology

Toxicology is a pluridisciplinary subject area requiring high standard specialist training in which it pays to mobilise teaching capacity in the field at European level. This is the aim of an ICP partnership between the Universities of Paris VII, Düsseldorf, University College London, and the French-speaking Catholic University, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

The first part of the teaching is a basic training in toxicology in which all students work towards the qualifications of their home institution. The second part is a four-week

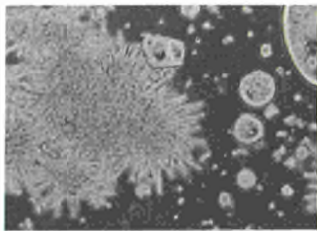
intensive course supervised by one or two European colleagues and also validated as equivalent. The ICP began in October 1988.

Here four students from the participating universities discuss their work with Dr. Charles Frayssinet (second from left). ■



ICP Offers Food for Thought

A student mobility ICP between the department of biological sciences at Heriot Watt University (HWU), Edinburgh, Scotland, and the Ecole nationale supérieure d'Agronomie et des Industries alimentaires (ENSAIA), Nancy, France, involves fifth-year HWU students and final-year students from ENSAIA. The Scottish students prepare jointly the M.Sc. degree of their own University, and the *Diplôme d'études approfondies* (DEA) in biotechnologies and the food industry, of the ENSAIA. The French students prepare simultaneously the HWU M.Sc. and the ENSIA diploma of *Ingénieur des industries alimentaires*. At present, four students go to Edinburgh and three to Nancy.



Penicillium roqueforti
(x 200).

Linguistic training for students coming to France is carried out in a university linguistic training centre. The DEA itself requires quite advanced mathematics for which a stronger element of theoretical instruction is given. As to the French students, they are expected to show interest in laboratory work, but to date have needed little training in English.

All the students complete theoretical training and laboratory research work. At HWU, subjects studied include yeast immobilisation, and bacillus isolation and identification: at ENSAIA, production of an amino-acid using yeast and proteolysis by lactic bacteria. The subjects for research derive from related themes, and common subjects may well develop soon. ■

Liège joins Cranfield Double Degree ICPs



Belgium is the latest Member State to join ERASMUS initiatives in mechanical and aeronautical engineering already operational at the Cranfield Institute of Technology, U.K., and a cluster of French institutions. Cranfield ICP Project Director John Jammes discusses the venture to date.

The strong and growing emphasis at Cranfield on international links as reflected in the series of double degree programmes partially financed as ERASMUS ICPs, has recently attracted a new partner — the Faculty of Applied Sciences at the University of Liège, Belgium. Four Liège students hoping to obtain their joint degrees in 1989 are now well into a two-year programme in aerospace engineering, aerospace vehicle design, or industrial robotics.

The Belgian link is a novel development in what had previously been for Cranfield an exclusively French connection. The first bridge to be built was with the Technological University of Compiègne, in the form of a two-year integrated programme, in which French and British students cover exactly the same syllabus, one year being spent at Compiègne and one at Cranfield. Thus all students in the ICP obtain both the M.Sc and the *Diplôme d'Ingénieur*.

The four courses at present available in the Compiègne partnership are energy studies, materials (with options in engineering metallurgy, aerospace materials engineering, and polymers and offshore engineering), innovative design for manufacture of machine systems and industrial robotics. The many double degree holders to have graduated are true European engineers qualified to practise their skills throughout the EC.

There are similar conventions between Cranfield and the Ecole supérieure d'Ingénieurs de Marseille (ESIM). ESIM is a major constituent of the new Institut Méditerranéen de

Technologie (IMT) at present being built in Marseille. A special feature of this programme is that, during their one-year stay there, the U.K. students do a three-month project in French industry.

A further venture brings together Cranfield and the Toulouse Ecole nationale supérieure d'Ingénieurs de Constructions aéronautiques (ENSICA). At the heart of the French aerospace industry, ENSICA is ideally placed to provide U.K. students with a particularly appropriate working environment. Cranfield's latest link is being developed between the Institute's College of Aeronautics and the Ecole nationale de l'Aviation civile (ENAC), also Toulouse-based.

The double degree ICPs are resulting in an extremely close co-operation between the lecturing staffs of the institutions involved, and many staff exchanges have already taken place. It is confidently expected that many more will follow. Meanwhile, the increase in the funding from ERASMUS in 1988-89 has been welcomed and appreciated by the students, and augurs well for the future development of the double degree ICPs in which they are involved. ■



Robotics at Cranfield ... and a shot in the arm for ERASMUS!

FORGING PHASE TWO OF ERASMUS

With ERASMUS near the third and final year of its initial phase (1987 to 1990), evaluation, by the Commission of the European Communities, of experience gained during the first two years is close to completion. Its results have inspired a set of Commission proposals for a Council Decision to adapt the Programme and take it into its second Phase up to the mid-1990s. At the 1992 milestone, the Commission hopes that 10% of the Community's six million students, or an average 150,000 a year, will complete a recognised period of study in another Member State. Although still subject to discussion and adoption by the Council, ERASMUS Phase Two is firmly on the table. The following report reviews the issues to be hammered out there.

Lessons Learnt So Far

ICP Funding is too Short-Term

Even the most firmly established ICPs still have to go back into the hat annually in the selection for ERASMUS financial support. There would be greater long-term commitment and bolder planning from ICP coordinators if the ECU cash taps were left on longer too. Pluriannual funding would also facilitate proper advance linguistic preparation.

Grants Policies Need Polishing

The best EC policy for the ERASMUS student grants is arguably the one giving the most balanced student participation in ERASMUS across Member States and disciplines. Sometimes there has been a mismatch between the global allocation for the grants in a Member State (based on its student numbers and the population of its 18 to 25 age-group) and the ICP demand for them at its university institutions, resulting in too little money for too many eligible students or *vice versa*.

Even as top-up payments, many grants so far have been too small. Moreover, the ERASMUS grant handout has sometimes appeared inequitable because of wide differences in the national grants systems, and this has been one of the main factors which have pushed the NGAAs towards different policies for awarding the ERASMUS grants. The problems have been compounded by difficulties in devising satis-

factory arrangements for ERASMUS grants to 'free mover' students (those not in ICPs), on which NGAA policy has also varied widely.

Languages are Vital

Sound advance language training of ERASMUS student and staff participants is crucial to the success of the Programme. Several of the root problems are addressed by the Commission's proposed LINGUA Programme (see the *ERASMUS Newsletter*, 2/1988). But a further distinct effort is required under ERASMUS to tackle them, despite the many commendable initiatives already operational (like the creation of new curricula including a language component). Most important are the linguistic requirements of students in subjects other than languages. The engineering undergraduate needs the right specialist vocabulary to follow courses abroad but will want to mix socially with his foreign student acquaintances too.

There is still relatively little provision for instruction in the lesser-spoken European languages. Yet balanced participation in ERASMUS depends considerably on the will to learn them. Though sometimes a lifeline, stop-gap use of English here is a second-best which may sometimes even hinder proper immersion in the host country culture.

Study Abroad should last longer

The current minimum three months' study abroad for ERASMUS student grant holders may not be enough for substantial benefit to be derived from it. It may even blunt student motivation, especially as regards foreign language learning. The three-month minimum may also turn any search for private sector accommodation abroad into a time-consuming race against the clock, given landlords' unwillingness to lease even furnished rooms for such a limited period.

Broader Student Eligibility Criteria

Many highly motivated students interested in recognized study abroad are probably excluded from ERASMUS by the requirement making academic recognition the sole responsibility of the home (rather than the host) university, instead of either. A common group are those who, after getting a first degree in their own country, would like to obtain an additional qualification in another Member State. Such students, who are often very highly motivated and have a very clear idea of the type of studies they wish to pursue while abroad, are a vital resource for the future development of the Community. It is regrettable that ERASMUS does not at present cater for them. ■

Sources of Feedback for Evaluation

The ERASMUS Advisory Committee

The Committee consists of two official representatives from each Member State. Both have in-depth knowledge of higher education systems and inter-university cooperation, and at least one is from the academic community. The Committee is an advisory body, providing regular expert recommendations on the running of ERASMUS. In Programme evaluation, its role has thus been crucial, the first major contribution being the September 1988 meeting at the University of Nancy II. In February and March 1989, Committee members took part in an important series of bilateral discussions between Member States and the Commission. On April 5th 1989, they also met specifically to make recommendations concerning the Commission proposals for Phase Two.



The Committee debates Phase Two.

ICP Project Directors

A first think tank organized by the Commission for ERASMUS ICP project directors was held at Alden Biesen on January 19-20th. It was attended by 25 project directors from all Member States and covering numerous subject areas. Many had been involved in international cooperation programmes for several years and their commitment to ERASMUS was impressive. The meeting led to in-depth discussion of a wide range of topics,

including information problems, administration of ERASMUS within university institutions, academic recognition, linguistic preparation and staff mobility, the significance of some of which is reviewed briefly opposite and on p. 9. It also formally confirmed the desirability of strengthening the ERASMUS European University Network.

An equally important and regular input of project directors to evaluation is in the technical reports they send the Commission each year, which describe ICP operations in detail, providing pointers to the main achievements and problems.

ERASMUS Students

There was a similar think tank for students at the State University of Ghent on January 16-17th. The meeting was an open discussion of experience and problems encountered by a representative sample of 37 ICP students from all EC countries in a variety of disciplines, and with experience, between them, of all Member States as host countries. While in unanimous agreement as to the academic and personal benefits of ERASMUS, participants emphasized the need to improve advance preparation of students (see p. 9) and the level of the student grants. They expressed the hope that the Programme would expand, and made a proposal for the setting up of a European association of ERASMUS students.



Students together at Ghent.

All ICP students are asked to prepare individual reports on their study abroad which are annexed to the ICP project director reports (see above) and thus available for analysis by NGAAs and the Commission. And many contact the Commission unprompted to say what ERASMUS has meant to them personally.

NGAA Representatives

Besides frequent contact with the ERASMUS Bureau by letter or telephone, officials from the National Grant Awarding Authorities (NGAAs) responsible for administration of the ERASMUS student grants in each Member State, provide the Commission with an annual report on their activities. In addition, NGAA representatives meet with the Commission in Brussels two or three times a year to review the main difficulties they face.

Along with ERASMUS Advisory Committee Members, NGAA officials were also party to most of the bilateral consultations in March and February referred to above.

Independent Studies

The Commission has relied first and foremost on ERASMUS practitioners — whether university staff, students, or administrators of the Programme — in sifting the main messages to date on its progress. But it has not done so exclusively. Independent expert studies have also been commissioned, particularly in the areas of linguistic ability and preparation (including country by country case studies), academic recognition, and obstacles to student mobility in specific subject areas like medicine or teacher training. A detailed analysis of the profile of ERASMUS students is also under way. ■

Looking Ahead

The June 1987 ERASMUS Decision requires a report on the Programme from the Commission to the European Parliament before the end of 1989, as well as, if appropriate, a proposal to adapt it. Although the Council has until 30 June 1990 to decide on any proposal, the Commission adopted a set of suggested adaptations on April 26th, with a view to securing Council agreement on Phase Two by December 1989. With this timetable, adaptations would be implemented from January 1st 1991, except the ERASMUS student grants stand-by fund (see below), which would take effect from July 1st 1990. The same schedule also eases sound forward planning, making it possible to inform universities early in 1990 about any changes liable to affect the selection procedure for the 1991/92 academic year.

The Phase Two Proposals

For the first three years of Phase Two (1990-92), a budget of ECU 192 million is proposed. The Commission wants the annual credits covering the EC contribution to ERASMUS to be established in line with the usual procedures for the annual EC budget, with effect from January 1st 1990. This will allow Programme needs and development to be reviewed as part of the quinquennial planning of the budget. The Commission is also recommending specific provision in the Decision text for the continuing evaluation and monitoring of ERASMUS. The other proposals are as follows:

Action 1: European University Network

Replace present annual funding of ICPs by pluriannual financial support (normally three years at first, subject to periodic review).

Insert a precise reference in the Phase Two Decision, to the possibility of funding advance foreign language preparation as an integral part of ICP arrangements.

Make joint curriculum development projects (currently in Action 3) and short-term intensive teaching programmes (at present Action 4) an integral part of Network

activities (Action 1). Also bring under Action 1, all types of ERASMUS study visits for teaching staff and administrators until now divided between Actions 1 and 4.

Action 2: ERASMUS Student Grants

Hive off from the total annual ERASMUS student grants budget a small stand-by fund (not more than 5% of the grants budget) for taking corrective measures when the global allocations to each Member State are not giving similar chances to all eligible ERASMUS students. The Commission would be free to use the reserve to strengthen participation in Member States or subject areas in special need. Student grant funds in exceptional programmes where administration of the grants via national agencies is impracticable would also be allocated in this way. There would be special arrangements for the national lump sum allocation to Luxembourg.

Priority to ICP and ECTS students in the award of grants. Exemption from host university tuition fees and maintenance of entire home country grant or loan entitlement would still be essential for grant eligibility, as would, normally, full academic

recognition from the home university for the study period abroad. But grants would be awarded exceptionally in cases where this period received full recognition from the degree-awarding institution in the *host* Member State, provided that this arrangement was part of an ICP.

Increase the normal minimum period for ERASMUS grants from three to six months. As an exception, grants might be for a minimum period of three months, and a maximum of more than 12 in the case of highly integrated programmes.

Retain 'free mover' students, but gradually lower their participation. The aim would be to develop the ICPs as the best vehicle for boosting EC student mobility, so that by 1994 all Member States would have introduced arrangements to minimise recourse to the free mover formula.

Action 3: Academic Recognition

Abolish the 10% ceiling of the annual appropriation for ERASMUS for Actions 3 and 4. This has already caused operational problems which would be aggravated following the introduction of ECTS.

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ERASMUS ICPs for 1989/90 announced

Following its selection for the 1989/90 academic year, the Commission of the European Communities announced, on June 7th, the award of financial support, under ERASMUS, to 1507 inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs) involving over 1000 higher education institutions. An estimated 20,000 students are also expected to receive financial assistance in the form of ERASMUS grants. The figures mean that, in three years, student mobility in the European Community will have doubled as a result of the ERASMUS Programme which in 1989/90 will have a budget of ECU 52.5 million. Mrs. Vasso Papandreou, the Commissioner for employment, industrial relations, social affairs, human resources, education and training, stated that the consolidation of the European University Network and the impressive growth of student mobility are confirmation of the success of the ERASMUS Programme in university circles.

Statistics relating to demand, as reflected in applications for financial support under ERASMUS for the 1989/90 academic year, bear further witness to this success. As regards ICP applications, the total of eligible students within the would-be 'student mobility' ICPs shot up by some 60% — from around 19,000 in 1988/89 to over 30,000 for 1989/90. The figures stood out from a total 2221 ICP applications — an increase of nearly 10% on the 2040 submitted last year.

Applications for grants for Visits stand at 3770, as compared with 3510 in 1988/89 — a rise of 7.4%, while around 150 applications have been put in for money to support publications and specific projects of university associations and consortia, an increase of 20%.

Breakdown of ICPs by Type of Activity and Member State

Each of the 1507 ICPs adopted for 1989/90 may comprise one or more type of activity, the breakdown being as follows:

student mobility	1348 ICPs
teaching staff mobility	272 ICPs
joint curriculum development	97 ICPs
intensive programmes	104 ICPs

Financial assistance paid directly to the universities totals ECU 15,950 million, or an average of ECU 10,584 per ICP. On average, each ICP involves just over three higher education institutions.

The number of universities participating in the ICPs in each Member State is as follows (corresponding figures for 1988/89 are in brackets):

Member State	1989/90	%
Belgium	277 (191)	18.0
Denmark	129 (73)	8.5
Federal Republic of Germany	619 (449)	41.0
Greece	121 (74)	8.0
Spain	456 (314)	30.0
France	767 (578)	51.0
Ireland	143 (45)	9.5
Italy	450 (291)	30.0
Luxembourg	7 (4)	0.5
Netherlands	334 (260)	22.0
Portugal	150 (101)	10.0
United Kingdom	816 (571)	54.0

A better balance in the participation of Member States is beginning to emerge with a distinct increase over the previous year in the number of applications from Denmark, Spain, Italy and Portugal. (It should be noted that the foregoing figures for 1989/90 have been updated and thus vary slightly from those in the official Commission press release of June 7th, 1989).

Student Mobility

As in 1988/89, the sums allocated to Member States for ERASMUS student grants are being distributed in a decentralised way by national agencies, bearing in mind the following two factors: the number of young people aged between 18 and 25 years, and the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions. Since the overall sum available for ERASMUS grants in 1989/90 is ECU 26 million, the number of average annual grants of ECU 2000 is broken down as follows:

Member State	No. of average grants
Belgium	387
Denmark	215
Federal Republic of Germany	2,700
Greece	335
Spain	1,649
France	2,206
Ireland	134
Italy	2236
Luxembourg	98
Netherlands	663
Portugal	316
United Kingdom	2,062
TOTAL	13,000

As the average length of stay is about six-and-a-half months, it is thought that in practice some 20,000 students will receive financial support in 1989/90 (as compared with about 12,000 in 1988/89). The amount of the grants may vary from ECU 500 to ECU 5000. ■

List of Publications

(available in the nine official EC languages)

- *ERASMUS - European Community programme for the mobility of students and for cooperation in higher education*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
by ERASMUS Bureau
(22 x 11 - leaflet)

- *ERASMUS - Guidelines for Applicants: Financial support for cooperation and mobility in higher education in the European Community (Academic Year 1990/91)*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
by ERASMUS Bureau
(30 x 21 cm, 14 p., includes two application forms — 4 p., 12 p.)

- *ERASMUS Directory of programmes/Répertoire des programmes: 1988/89 (in English only)*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1989
(21 x 15 cm, 1326 p.)
Price: 27.50 ECU

- *ERASMUS Newsletter*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
by ERASMUS Bureau
(30 x 21 cm)
Price per single copy: 3.90 ECU Annual subscription: 9 ECU (3 issues per year)

- *NARIC - The European Community Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education
by ERASMUS Bureau
(21 x 10 cm, 16 p.)

- *Academic recognition of higher education entrance, intermediate and final qualifications in the European Community: Multilateral and bilateral conventions, unilateral decisions / Network of the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) in the Member States of the European Community*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
by ERASMUS Bureau
(30 x 21 cm, 70 p.)
Available in: EN, FR. In preparation: DA, DE, ES, GR, IT, NL, PT

- *ECTS - European Community Course Credit Transfer System*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth
by ERASMUS Bureau
(21 x 11 cm - leaflet)

- *European Community Course Credit Transfer System: Presentation of the ECTS Pilot Scheme*
Published for the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education
by ERASMUS Bureau
(21 x 15 cm, 29 p.)

- *The joint study programmes handbook: An overview of all projects supported within the framework of the 'Joint Study Programme Scheme' of the Commission of the European Communities, 1976-1986 (in English only)*
Published by the ERASMUS Bureau on behalf of Task Force Human resources, education, training and youth of the Commission of the European Communities
Brussels, 1989
(21 x 15 cm, 698 p.)

Action 4: Complementary Measures

In order to encourage universities to exploit their inventiveness in the development of ERASMUS, there will be specific provision for support, on an experimental basis, for alternative forms of cooperation not provided for in the present version of the Decision. These might include, for example, original actions for linguistic preparation or specific fields like fine arts.

Set a 5% ceiling of the annual appropriation for ERASMUS on Action 4. ■



New Commissioner for EC Education Programmes

From January 1st 1989, the EC programmes in education and training, including ERASMUS, became the responsibility of new Greek Commissioner, Mrs. Vasso Papan-dreou (44). Her portfolio covers employment, industrial relations, social affairs, human resources, education and training. Mrs. Papan-dreou who has a Ph.D in economics from Reading University, U.K., has taught in universities in both Greece and the U.K. She has been prominent in Greek politics in parliament and government since 1985.

Behind the Text — The Brass Tacks

If the Phase Two Council Decision is to be the locomotive driving ERASMUS into the 1990s, comfort in the carriages behind it will be crucial to a happy journey. Beyond the Commission Decision proposals lie problems thrown up during evaluation, which will probably not be mentioned in the final Council text, but which are just as critical in keeping ERASMUS on track. Many of them concerning the Programme at its grass roots were discussed at the Ghent and Alden Biesen meetings and the bilateral consultations referred to on p. 7. Here is a small sample.

ICP Administration Difficulties, such as: making appropriate financial arrangements for use of ERASMUS money within institutions' overall financial operations; reaching satisfactory administrative schedules in the face of the EC applications deadline and differing types of higher education calendar (e.g. semesters as against three-month terms); choosing appropriate institutions as partners; securing appropriate academic recognition procedures; the sheer workload of ICP coordinators as rewarding but unremunerated overtime.

The Commission favours the appointment of full-time ERASMUS coordinators at university institutions, and also plans to circulate a short *Guide* to help ICP coordinators across the main hurdles of their administrative work.

Briefing and Preparation of Students, who need adequate information before going abroad, and appropriate counselling and reception on arrival. Badly informed students may waste time enrolling in unsuitable courses abroad, or expect better services and facilities than are available. Obviously too, students need to know about all administrative requirements and charges, and make the right advance arrangements for their personal insurance and social security cover.

Improvements seem well under way. Sound academic and other forms of counselling by both home and host institution staff is becoming increasingly common, with special programmes sometimes laid on for students abroad as an integral part of existing courses.

ERASMUS Students Need a Roof. This has sparked enough concern for some ICP coordinators to make student lodging at the host university (usually coupled with a promise to provide it for incoming students in return) a precondition for their cooperation. Luckier students are sometimes saved by such arrangements for on-campus or other residential facilities. Otherwise, they join the queues for private sector housing where their ERASMUS grant may not take them far. Pioneering projects like the Maison Erasme in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium (see p. 15) are unfortunately still isolated initiatives and student associations at the host university have an important part to play in solving the accommodation dilemma. ■

ECTS Plenaries set Spirit for September Launching

With the universities in the pilot scheme for the European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS) now selected, final arrangements for starting ECTS in the 1989-90 academic year are moving fast. Two plenary meetings have already been held in the countdown to the autumn take-off in the five selected subject areas of business administration, chemistry, history, mechanical engineering and medicine. On January 26-27th, ECTS representatives, who came together for the first time at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) to draw up detailed plans for the scheme and discuss likely major problem areas, agreed unanimously on the guiding principles proposed by the Commission. The second plenary at the University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain, on April 11-12th, reached agreement on several further administrative arrangements before giving ECTS its final go-ahead.

Both meetings involved Commission officials and two representatives from each of the 84 participating institutions split into working groups, with a plenary session at the beginning and end. Each institution sent a member of the teaching staff of the department concerned plus an administrator with central responsibility for ECTS.

The will to make ECTS work well sparked a series of discussions on the problems to be overcome. Essential was a **reasonably balanced exchange of students** between the different Member States at each level of study. The Pamplona plenary decided that subject area 'clearing house' meetings would be held in different places in June 1989 in order to achieve these balanced flows within the first year.

Participants at the meetings were agreed as to the crucial role of linguistic preparation of students, in which the responsibilities of sending and receiving institutions had to be clearly identified. No less vital was the **need for excellent advance counselling of students** before their study period at another ECTS institution, and **provision of appropriate reception and accommodation facilities** on their arrival there. Good counselling was particularly necessary from the outset in order to prevent ECTS from getting a bad name amongst students.

It was further agreed that, when awarding a final degree or diploma, ECTS universities had to have **more flexibility in granting credit** than

when just receiving 'transitory' students due either to return to their institution of origin, or transfer elsewhere within ECTS for their final qualification. But willingness to give constructive consideration to awarding credit wherever possible was expected from all partners in the ECTS network. Conversely, only taught courses for which credit could be clearly given would be eligible for ECTS, normally excluding from it individual research-based doctoral-type study. However, first-year students would rarely be able to participate in the system, except under highly integrated arrangements between institutions.



Navarra is forming a network, in mechanical engineering, with 15 other universities and one consortium when the ECTS pilot project starts in September 1989.

There was general consensus that, for satisfactory launching of the scheme, ERASMUS grants to students in ECTS would have to be substantial. It was agreed that five grants of an average ECU 2000 each would be made available to all participating departments. In other words, each participating institution would get, via the NGAAs, a total of ECU 10,000 for grants for its ECTS students. (Each institution also receives a grant of ECU 13,415 to cover costs incurred in the preparatory

year, 1988-89, and the first year of operation of ECTS.)

Other matters discussed at the plenary meetings included problems liable to arise from differences in the academic timetable or calendar of participating universities, the roles of institutional and departmental ECTS coordinators, the evaluation of the pilot scheme, and the possible role of computerization within the scheme.

Following the Brussels plenary, the Commission prepared a student information leaflet on ECTS, while institutional and departmental coordinators compiled an ECTS information package about their institution, including details on departmental courses and structure. These basic information tools for students interested in ECTS were discussed and agreed at the Pamplona plenary. The student leaflet in the appropriate EC official language is now available at each ECTS institution, as are copies of the information packages on the subject area in which the institution is involved.

As a result of these initiatives, all students within ECTS departments who are interested in taking part in the pilot scheme, have access to comprehensive information both on ECTS in general, and on study courses offered at all other participating departments throughout the EC. But for the numbers seeking one of the 1000 or so ECTS student places on offer in the first year, we must await the next *ERASMUS Newsletter*. ■

Trials and Tribulations of an Administrator in an ERASMUS Country

by

Jacques PERTEK

Centre National des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires, France

While Erasmus himself travelled through most of Europe, the Programme which bears his name has already come a long way in less than two years. Halfway along the path, the Centre National des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires (CNOUS), the French national agency for administration of the ERASMUS student grants, joined those who, in Brussels, the Hague, or Bonn, were responsible for implementing this Programme, symbolising the Community today, which is no longer concerned exclusively with agricultural surpluses or the standards applicable to lawn mowers.

Over a year ago now, I went into the room which was to house this office. The equipment was meagre, limited to a modest, but attractive fitted carpet. Gradually the staff grew in number, and the facilities improved. I would like to tell you about a small portion of these trials and tribulations in an ERASMUS country: an (almost) ordinary day in the life of an administrator.

Arriving in the morning, you are inevitably faced with a pile of mail, especially if the day before you were out of the office at a forum on 'The Europe of 1992' or an information meeting. About ten letters have arrived from individuals. The number of requests for information grows steadily, particularly when a radio or television programme or an article has been devoted to ERASMUS. In most cases, these letters come from students who wish, purely and simply, to continue their studies and obtain a diploma in another EC Member State, mostly in the United

Kingdom, or in the Federal Republic of Germany, or Spain ... The only way of helping them is to give them the addresses of the organizations in these countries which could help them benefit from national programmes for the reception of students.

Then, there is a meeting with the director of a school who would like to participate in the ERASMUS Programme. He would like to do something to prepare for 1992 which, in France, seems to be surrounded by an aura of magic. You explain the various actions of ERASMUS and how to become involved in them, and

We discuss the recent directive of 21 December 1988, what this does and does not involve. That must make at least ten students, some of whom are preparing a dissertation, who have contacted us because they are working on this subject or on the implementation of ERASMUS. Instead of a Europe of diplomas, we will shortly have diplomas on the Europe of Education.

During the morning, the three members of staff in the office have had to answer about ten telephone calls from students, programme directors or 'ERASMUS correspon-



'Trials and Tribulations' ... but time for relaxation and a smile too. Pertek with (left to right) Delphine Le Guen, Lydia Noujaim, Marie Suaudeau, and Mireille Dupuy, his colleagues when the CNOUS began work as the French NGAA in 1988.

make the most of all the opportunities available. Most of the universities, and a lot of the commercial or engineering schools, are now involved in one or more Inter-university Cooperation Programmes (ICPs). However, there are so many higher education institutions that there are still a lot of potential candidates. The next meeting is with a student who has to prepare a dissertation on reciprocal recognition of diplomas for her law degree.

dents' from universities or schools'. The afternoon begins with the preparation of the amendments to the agreements reached with the universities. Many ICPs are not working, or at least, not working as planned, and the money available for their students has to be reallocated. What a headache! There is still a speech to be prepared for a colloquium to be held in Lille tomorrow on 'The University and Europe'. Among the subjects to be presented

and discussed is 'The hopes and realities of the ERASMUS Programme'.

Just at that moment, a telephone call brings you back to more immediate realities. It's the director of an ICP who does not understand why the sum he has been allocated is so small. Selection mechanisms, national quotas, the relationship between eligible applications..., after all these explanations, he calms down. But that doesn't alter the fact that the students involved risk setting off for 6 months with only ECU 500 in their pockets; if they were expecting to receive a 'grant' What can you do to see that such hopes are not disappointed? At least we were able to give our caller one piece of good news: the sum for student mobility paid via the national agency is distinct from that paid to universities via the ERASMUS Bureau.

The periods between the moment when the ICP is selected, the time when the money is credited to the university, the time when it arrives, and the moment when the ICP director can finally divide the sum among the students who left the month before are so dreadfully long!

So, to complete his day, the Erasmus administrator starts dreaming of a Programme where we would talk less about money (because we would have almost enough) and more about the opportunities of students and teaching staff today to travel around in this Community. ■

DIARY

European Vocational Training Week organised at the initiative of the Commission of the European Communities and the French Secretary of State for Vocational Training.

La Villette, Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, Paris, September 12-15, 1989 ('Entretiens Condorcet', September 12-13; 'L'Europe des Compétences', September 14-15).

New Study on University Exchange with East and Central Europe

Prospects for increased educational exchange between the West and Central and Eastern Europe are brightening, partly owing to the incentive provided by the ERASMUS model. But any such broadening of intellectual frontiers urgently requires a better grasp of the problems in 'East/West' higher education cooperation as practised at present — the aim of a new project conducted by the European Cultural Foundation's European Institute of Education and Social Policy, Paris, for the International Association of Universities.

Project surveys, analysis and a final report, will be directed for the Institute by Professor Denis Kallen, advised by specialists from Eastern and Western Europe, including representatives from the CRE (Standing

Conference of Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors of the European Universities) and CEPES (the Unesco European Centre for Higher Education in Bucharest). The aim is to identify exchange schemes of all types as organised through bilateral agreements, international agencies or by individual higher education institutions, and the quantitative scale of student and staff exchange and recent trends in its development. Later, key problems will be identified and analysed, as will recent changes in policies and attitudes.

Further information may be obtained from: European Institute of Education and Social Policy, Université de Paris IX — Dauphine, 1 Place du Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny, 75116 Paris, France. Tel: (33) (1) 47.27.06.41. ■

FEDORA — A European Student Counselling Association

FEDORA, a new association of professionals active in counselling of students in higher education throughout the EC, was established in October 1988 at the Third European Conference on University Guidance in Athens and Delphi. It will promote exchange of information and experience among its members, to improve the quality and effectiveness of guidance, especially through joint action and research. FEDORA (le Forum européen d'orientation académique) will also pass on its findings and provide a consultation service on academic guidance, putting interested bodies in touch with those working in the field. An immediate aim is publication of a directory of student advisory services in the EC Member States.

The group will provide support for EC Programmes like COMETT and ERASMUS as a result of which student advisers face a growing demand for information about Community-wide opportunities for study, work and training, including approaches from incoming foreign students.

Administrative and financial headquarters have been provided by the Italian Fondazione Rui in Rome. Further information may be obtained from the Chairman of FEDORA, Tony Raban, Careers Adviser, Cambridge University Careers Service, Stuart House, Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1XE. Tel: (44)(1) 223.338285. ■

What's my Diploma worth Abroad?

Easy student mobility within the EC has often been frustrated by problems concerning the recognition of diplomas awarded and study periods undertaken in other Member States. To remedy this, the Community has been stepping up the exchange of information on academic recognition and equivalence, through its network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARICs) created in 1984. The present article takes a brief look at development of the Network in the fresh context of the ERASMUS Programme, under which it gets annual financial support.

The Link with ERASMUS

The main users of the Network are higher education institutions, students and their counsellors, parents, teaching staff and future employers.

In some ways, the link between the NARICs and ERASMUS is especially close. The Network is informed of all developments relating to implementation of the Programme and then transmits this information to its users. The aim here is more intensive cooperation both between the different NARICs, and between each NARIC and the higher education institutions in the same country. All information about academic recognition resulting from the growth of the ERASMUS European University Network must also be available to the NARICs for their activities to be smoothly integrated with those of ERASMUS. The NARICs will be similarly informed about the development of ECTS.

Work is also in progress on plans for a Network data bank, and identification of material it might contain. Current preference is for a bank based on information available to each individual NARIC which would have access to the data held by all the others.

Professional Recognition

The 'Council Directive of 21 December 1988 on a General System for the Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas Awarded on Completion of Professional Education and Training of at Least Three Years' Duration' implies that NARICs may handle questions concerning the professional recognition of academic

qualifications, where appropriate along with the relevant professional bodies. This seeks to ensure that natural linkages between academic training and the labour market are taken into account in the Network, for it to provide an appropriate service to both the world of work and the academic community.

Publications

Two publications relating to NARIC activity have recently been prepared for the Commission: the second edition of a brochure in all nine EC official languages giving the addresses, functions and working methods of the NARICs, and a descriptive dossier entitled *Academic recognition of higher education entrance, intermediate and final qualifications in the European Community — multilateral and bilateral conventions, unilateral decisions* (also in all EC official languages). Both are available on request from the ERASMUS Bureau, 15, rue d'Arlon, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium, (tel: (32)(2) 233.01.11). Two further publications are also being prepared. The first, entitled *Academic Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in*

EC Member States, describes both the recognition of qualifications giving access to higher education institutions, and the recognition, in each Member State, of the intermediate and final qualifications obtainable in the others. The second is the final version of an EC Higher Education Diploma Directory describing all higher education diplomas and degrees awarded throughout the Community.

Network Meetings

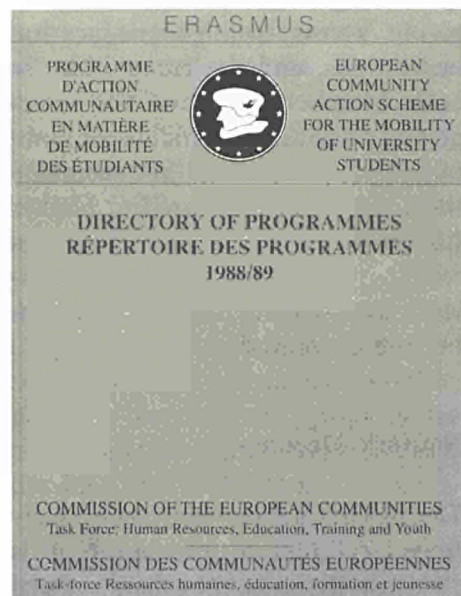
The NARICs have met twice yearly since 1984. One of these meetings is always in Brussels, the other in one of the EC Member States. The first meeting of 1989 is in Rome in June. As in the past, the meeting is examining recognition matters of special concern to the country hosting it. Thus, recognition, in Italy, of qualifications from all other EC Member States are being discussed, as is the recognition of Italian qualifications in the latter. The meeting is followed by a conference entitled 'UNIVERSITALIA' on the Italian higher education system, with a visit to some of the institutions. ■



The Hague headquarters of the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC) which is also the Dutch National Academic Recognition Information Centre.

ICP Directory 1988/89

The second edition of the ERASMUS ICP Directory is now available as a comprehensive cross-referenced source of practical information about the expanding European University Network in 1988/89.



The 1182 ICPs are given in country sections by alphabetical order. Data in each ICP description include the fields of study covered, the types of cooperation financed, the participating institutions, the explanatory summary of the programme; the names of the coordinator or the programme directors at each institution.

The book also has handy indexes for identifying ICPs by field of study, participating Member States, and the type of cooperation supported, as well as by Member State and by institution; names, addresses and telephone numbers of ICP coordinators and directors are also given. Finally, there is an expanded statistical section, and explanatory notes for potential applicants for all forms of ERASMUS support.

The directory is on sale (ECU 27.50) from the Sales and Subscriptions branches of the EC Office for Official Publications (see inside back cover of the *Newsletter*). ■

Two Tales of Two Programmes

As Italy has taken advantage of the opportunities offered by the EC COMETT and ERASMUS Programmes, a welter of information has been showered on an unsuspecting public. Up front have been two recent accurate, readable, yet complementary books which we review briefly here.

Corradi, Sofia: *ERASMUS e COMETT*, Bulzoni Editore, Rome 1988.

Professor of Adult Education at Rome 'La Sapienza' University, the author — a well-known expert in university and university/industry cooperation — clearly defines for both students and staff the objectives of two programmes which, she says, had full backing in Italy during their conceptual phase but, in the operational phase, lost steam there. As often in the case of issues lacking any obvious direct national interest and therefore a little remote to the uninitiated, information about the Programmes has tended to be piecemeal and difficult for its potential users to exploit.

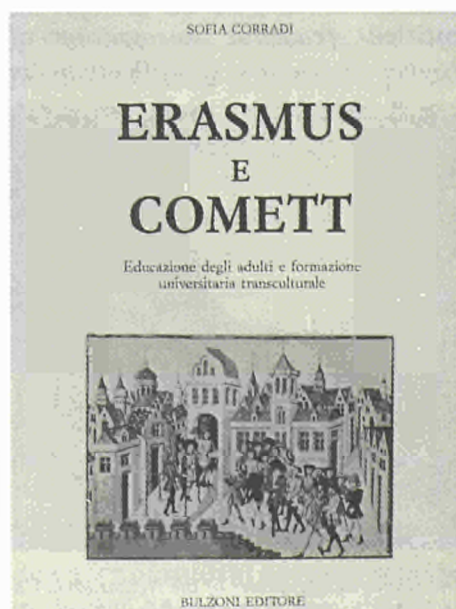
The book follows the evolution of the idea of student mobility, outlines a number of organisational problems and provides a picture of the opportunities available to students, staff

and firms within the Programmes. The end-product is a *Vademecum* which clarifies the philosophical bases of ERASMUS and COMETT, their structures, how they work, and their aims. It also provides answers to questions like 'How can I benefit from this?' and 'How can I ensure that what I propose corresponds to the Commission's philosophy of a People's Europe?'

Monasta, Attilio: *Erasmus e La Cometa: Guida pratica alla mobilità degli studenti e dei professori universitari in Europa*, San Casciano Val di Pesa, McColl: Publisher, (1988)

A more chatty book as its sub-title suggests. The self-avowed intention of the author — who is Professor of Education at Florence University and an experienced practitioner in the field of European inter-university cooperation — is to present a 'fast-food brochure' containing not only good, accurate information, but also ideas and practice-turned-into-theory in an attempt to help readers understand better the information given and therefore make better use of it.

This ease of explanation and expression makes Monasta's book the ideal reader for all those who wish to launch themselves into the experience of European cooperation but have no idea where to start or go for advice. As such, it provides a wealth of apparently self-evident tips and hints which, on reflection, may not have been thought of before. ■



The Maison Erasme at Louvain-la-Neuve

You lift the receiver and dial the number. If no-one answers — though as a rule someone does — you hear 'for further information on the ERASMUS Programme, please contact the Secretariat for International Cooperation ... the ERASMUS student reception centre at Louvain-la-Neuve would be glad to help you'. The recorded message is not from a local outpost of the Commission of the European Communities, the ERASMUS Bureau, or the Belgian NGAA, but the premises of the so-called Maison Erasme at Louvain-la-Neuve. The 'House' is a resourceful student initiative for helping the many ERASMUS students either going abroad from, or visiting, the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) to make their way. Two of the student movers behind the idea, Nicolas Stassens and Henri Monceau, explain.

The premises of the 'house' (see inside front cover) have so far been more a symbol than an operational reality, as the building is not fully assuming its novel role until 1989-90. In 1988-89 it has continued to provide rooms for Belgian students and staff at Louvain, its initial purpose on the UCL campus. However, it was officially inaugurated as the Maison Erasme by UCL Rector Professor Pierre Macq in October 1988. For the 'house' is a formal association (as well as a physical entity) which, in 1988-89, started to provide for ERASMUS students the services soon to be centred more intensively in the building where we already spend most of our time.

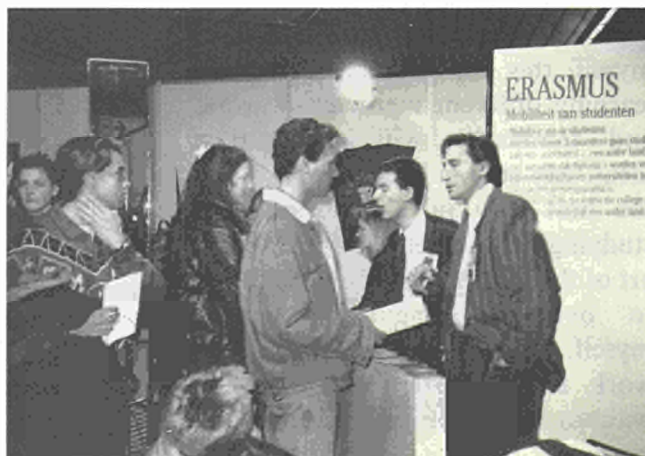
The first of these services, for the incoming students from abroad, is quick value-for-money accommodation. The 'House-as-building' only offers some of this, and we are increasingly trying to arrange for ERASMUS students from abroad to take over campus accommodation vacated by those setting out from Louvain. In the 'House' itself are some 30 student bedrooms, including five for ourselves and our helpers. They are equipped with two hot-plates, sink and a shower, but are not over-functional. There are also 10 bedsitter flats on the premises available for visiting ERASMUS ICP staff, and a communal room with its own kitchen on each floor.

In 1988-89, we found rooms elsewhere on the campus for about 110 ERASMUS students whom we helped settle down by providing them

with information about ERASMUS and UCL. But we also briefed ERASMUS students setting out from UCL about the Programme, including checklists on the sort of things to remember while at their host institution abroad. We regard this as just as important as our contact with the arrivals.

Of course, we hope to make our ERASMUS visitors feel at home, but we are also seeking more than that — a focal point for mutual enrichment where there is a real community, a 'neo-Louvainistic' centre of exchange and information for today's young Europeans. It is an ambitious undertaking. Yet thanks to the support of the UCL Secretariat for International Cooperation and student organisations, like the General Assembly of Louvain students and the Fédération des Étudiants Francophones, the idea is fast becoming a reality. An important aim here is the organisation of meetings for students to participate actively in the development of European initiatives in education.

Students had a further opportunity to get general information about the ERASMUS Programme at the Second Belgian Student's Fair, Brussels, in mid-February 1989. Visitors (left) to the ERASMUS stand at the Fair in the Centre Rogier on 'European Day', February 15th.



More specifically, we want information about the ERASMUS Programme to be broadly circulated. Very few students, however intensely motivated, know about the ins and outs of a course in another European institution. Where and when should applications be made and to whom? Where should one go and under what terms? In November 1988, the Maison Erasme, with the Centre d'Information et de Documentation sur les Études et les Professions (CID), and the UCL Secretariat for International Cooperation, organised a meeting, with ERASMUS Bureau participation, at which students were given precise information and told how they might take things further. The 'House' has tried to sustain the spirit of this initiative throughout the year. We have also sought reflection and debate on more fundamental issues in ERASMUS. What are we to make, for example, of the modest level of some of the student 'grants' which does no justice to the breadth of inspiration behind the Programme and blunts its root objectives? ▶

► Our initial activity has already given us an idea of how we might now best invest our efforts. Unquestionably for us, the Maison Erasme is a fitting response to the fresh challenge for universities of making study more Europe-oriented in such a

way that new closer and more direct relations may be established between them. It is to the establishment of a network of this kind that the enthusiasm of those running the Maison Erasme is dedicated. ■

From Portugal to Poitiers ... And back! — with ERASMUS!



Under ERASMUS, the 'home' university is normally the one at which a student first enrolls and which awards the final qualification at the end of a course with a study period in another Member State. So it is not necessarily in the student's country of origin. Isabel Côte Real from Lisbon studying for a *Maîtrise* in the history of art at the University of Poitiers recently returned as an ERASMUS student to the University of Coimbra in her native Portugal to study 'abroad'.

Any travel offers considerable enrichment, but when linked with our studies, it is also a unique opportunity to become acquainted with a different style of life — in particular the student style. And, in this respect, Coimbra is particularly rich in traditions.

Although the educational leanings of our universities are not the same, the way in which they complement each other can be of nothing but the greatest benefit to students. For myself, this year has been one for learning different methods of work and familiarity with contrasting ideas. My stay in Portugal has been the best way of discovering and studying 'in the field' the history of art of this country. While not having to overcome linguistic barriers myself, I can see how it is difficult to work for a degree in a country without being competent in its language.

Sending students to foreign universities should lead to regular exchanges between institutions. Yet students still do not seem sufficiently aware of ERASMUS. This has less to do with any lack of information, than perhaps with an inevitable tendency to see each exchange in individual terms. For now, it is easier to talk about one's personal experience than to place it within the European framework. But the contacts are lasting so, within a few years, the scheme will certainly blossom. ■

Contact Corner

Staffordshire Polytechnic, U.K., is considering the introduction of European language options in its LL.B (Honours) degree programme. The Polytechnic would welcome contacts with other higher education institutions in the EC which might profitably collaborate as partners in a future ERASMUS ICP.

Contact: Richard Painter, Head of Department of Law, Staffordshire Polytechnic, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2DE, Staffordshire, U.K. Tel: (44)(782) 43.74.12.15.

The Université de Toulon et du Var has prepared a *Guide* to provide information on conditions of admission, by level and area of study, to higher education courses with a 'European bearing' in French universities and colleges of commerce and management. Details regarding content of courses and the possible availability of grants are also included.

Contact: Mlle F. Pessel, Vice-Présidente du CEVU, Université de Toulon et du Var, SUIO, 93130 La Garde, France. Tel: (33) 94.21.43.70.

The University of Surrey, U.K. announces the availability of *The 1989 Compendium of Postgraduate Studies in Psychology* (£18.20 including postage and packing). As well as information about postgraduate courses and research opportunities in psychology in U.K. universities and polytechnics, the *Compendium* also includes a section on degree courses in psychology and educational sciences in the EC.

Contact: Helen McIntyre, Compendium Secretary, Department of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, GU2 5XH, U.K.

The Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE), U.K., has designed a certificated course in software engineering, in collaboration with the National Computing Centre and British Computer Society. Details about the course, including procedures for accreditation and administration, are available from the IEE.

Contact: SECEB Secretariat, Qualifications Department, Institution of Electrical Engineers, Savoy Place, London WC2R 0BL.

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