Ulrich Teichler (ed.)

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Findings of an Evaluation Study

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Disclaimer

This publication is based on the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study. Chapters 2-10 of this publication are edited and partly shortened versions of the Evaluation Study.

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The views which this publication as well as the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study contain are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Commission.

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Preface

By Bernd Wächter

When Professor Ulrich Teichler, the editor of the present evaluation of the ERASMUS part of the SOCRATES programme, enquired six months ago if the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) was interested in publishing the work of himself and his team, the question struck me as rhetorical. Needless to say, I was enthusiastic. For several reasons. I shall state only two.

First, the work of ACA has been closely linked with that of the European Union education and training programmes since its foundation in 1993. Most of its members – national-level organisations which promote and fund international cooperation in (higher) education – act as the national agencies for various parts of the SOCRATES and LEONARDO programmes. ACA, as a European-level organisation, has been instrumental for some time now in helping the European Commission to implement the programmes at Community level. In other words, ACA "believes" in these programmes and tries its best to contribute to their success.

Second, ACA is also an organisation which is devoted to research into and analysis of education and training, and more particularly international cooperation in higher education. It has its own publication series, the *ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education*, in which the present evaluation is published. Of its numerous activities, the evaluation of international programmes is an important one. To publish an evaluation report of the quality of the present one and on a theme so "close to home" therefore seemed a foregone conclusion and even more so since the European Commission, strained for funds, felt that putting the SOCRATES evaluation report on the Internet was sufficient. But I agree with Professor Teichler: it is not.

For the sake of precision, it should be noted that the present publication is a slightly revised excerpt of the larger evaluation report which Teichler and his colleagues produced in 2001. The original report investigated the entire SOCRATES programme. The present publication only concerns the ERASMUS programme, the higher education part of SOCRATES.

I sincerely hope that this volume will find many readers. It was, of course, first and foremost written for the benefit of the European institutions, and the European Commission in particular. The European institutions need to know whether or not the SOCRATES programme attains the aims for which it was set up as a basis for possible programme adaptations. This is what they will find in this report at a level of quality rarely achieved. But the report also makes valuable reading for everyone else involved in the European educational project, and more generally in the internationalisation of education, be it at the level of national or regional government, in a research function, or at the level of those who benefit from the programmes, i.e. the higher education

institutions and those who use ERASMUS. They will find ample material to compare their own approaches and practice with those of their counterparts in Europe.

The strength of this study is that it provides far more than a “snapshot” of ERASMUS in the first years after its reform. The material collected and analysed on this period is impressive enough. But what makes this evaluation so valuable is that it can draw on the results of many previous evaluations – the vast majority of which were conducted by Professor Teichler and his team. The findings from these earlier works on ERASMUS, but also on the little remembered “Joint Study Programmes”, on TEMPUS, on the predecessor of the “Marie Curie” scheme for young researchers, and on many bilateral internationalisation programmes, enrich the study in two ways. They enable the authors to put their new findings into a “vertical”, i.e. historical perspective, and they allow for “horizontal” comparisons with the results and impacts of other schemes.

What are the main findings of the study? It would make little sense for me to duplicate the Observations and Recommendations chapter at the end of this book and the excellent and succinct summaries that serve as conclusions to most individual chapters. I shall nevertheless take the liberty to speak of a few key findings, but in the form of comment rather than recapitulation. Readers will easily realise that the issues I concentrate on mainly hinge on the major elements of the reform that the ERASMUS programme underwent when it was “put under the roof” of the wider SOCRATES scheme.

If I had to distil a *motto* or *leitmotif* that encapsulated the most important message, it would probably be that ERASMUS is strangely indestructible. Teichler and his colleagues underline that the overriding tendency of the findings is one of continuity, despite the revolutionary fervour of the reforms of the mid-1990s. It almost appears as if the programme has a will of its own, which gently resists or cushions off initiatives aimed at massive change, be they inspired or misinformed. What I mean by these cryptic remarks will hopefully become clear when I reiterate and comment on the main traits of the reform below.

One major change was that ERASMUS was incorporated into the larger SOCRATES programme. The creation of the two “framework” or “umbrella programmes” SOCRATES and LEONARDO was a hotly contested issue at the time. Those in favour argued that, in addition to giving visibility to the Union’s wider engagement in all sectors and thematic areas of education, the framework programme would also create “synergies” between these different parts of the programme and thus create the basis for a more transversal, if not “holistic”, approach. Critics feared that the integration of ERASMUS into the wider structure would rob it of its identity, which was, they maintained, crucial to the continued loyalty of programme beneficiaries and therefore to its further success. It seems that both were wrong. ERASMUS kept its

identity. I think that this is due to the construction principle of SOCRATES. LEONARDO "dissembled" its predecessor schemes into little pieces and reconfigured them into one single new structure, so that the former programmes were no longer recognisable. SOCRATES grouped or "packaged" the previous schemes (and of course added new components). Hence, the identity of ERASMUS could be maintained. But perhaps this also explains why some of the high hopes for "synergy" remained unfulfilled.

The second and most contested change was the shift to the Institutional Contract from the earlier reliance on transnationally-networked academic units and individuals. The aspirations at the time went far beyond a mere reform of the organisational or managerial mechanisms of the programme. The intention was that ERASMUS would evolve from its early "grass-roots" orientation to a programme which would substantially involve the institutional leaders and help to develop institution-wide "strategies" for European cooperation. Institutions were to develop a "European mission" and formulate it in a "European Policy Statement". The "accidental" and "fragmented" nature of European cooperation activities, which stood and fell with the existence of a few enthusiastic (some said masochistic) professors, would be transformed into a systematic and sustainable institutional commitment. Critics of the reform warned against a walk-out of the professorial "matadors" and the disadvantages of "centralism".

Again, there are signs that both were wrong. True, the involvement of the "centre" has been strengthened. New responsibilities and bodies were created at that level and support services were improved. But these were mainly organisational improvements which facilitated the creation and implementation of a strategy. They do not yet constitute a strategy. I doubt if the strategic potential of ERASMUS has actually increased significantly. At one point, the present report indicates that the way of putting together IC applications is often "inductive", instead of "deductive". I cannot escape the impression that institutions often "collect" the individual elements of the IC from departments and individuals and develop a "strategy" around them, instead of first making strategic choices and then deciding on activities to implement them. One cannot but join the evaluation team in pointing out that these avoidance tactics were mirrored in the European Commission's own ambivalent way of dealing with the IC – and possibly reinforced. In assessing and selecting the IC applications and in allocating funds, the Commission first and foremost looked at the individual parts and not at the IC as a whole. Likewise, little attention was paid to a consistency between the European Policy Statement and the operational parts of an application.

At the same time, and possibly as a result of the above "inverse" way of proceeding, it seems as if the dreaded walk-out of the earlier "matadors" has not occurred. One must be careful here, as are the evaluators. The related questionnaire could obviously only address those matadors who decided to

stay in the game, and not those who might have thrown in the towel. But the fact that quite a number of them could still be found is an indication that some remained loyal to the programme.

In other words, a frivolous observer might come to the conclusion that the IC has been an act of collective make-believe. Apart from some organisational changes, the various actors agreed to go through the motions, but to essentially leave things as they were. Therefore, ERASMUS' contribution to strategic internationalisation (or Europeanisation) probably remains limited, but the apocalyptic scenarios of the critics did not come true either.

A third major reorientation of ERASMUS under SOCRATES concerned the non-mobile students. In reaction to the fact that it might not be possible to achieve the initial ERASMUS target of a study-abroad rate of ten per cent of all higher education students in Europe, and probably also in response to the greater importance ascribed by theorists of internationalisation to curricular innovation, the attempt was to add a "European Dimension" to the education of the 90+ per cent of non-mobile students. The four curriculum development "activities" introduced to achieve this objective were to complement the strong mobility focus of the programme by a "structural" or "qualitative" element. Prior to the introduction of the CDs, the Commission mounted a major information campaign, which raised high hopes.

The CD part of SOCRATES indeed turned into a counterpart to the "mass" element of mobility. But not quite in the way originally intended. Due to limited funds, and therefore slightly against the original intention, the CD part became "selective", i.e. the success rate of applications was low. This was the source of widespread disappointment after the first application rounds. The initial reaction of disenchantment is quite understandable against the background of an earlier socialisation process of beneficiaries who were used to an ERASMUS programme which was "inclusive" rather than "selective" and gave a little to everyone. But the CDs are a vivid proof of the strong adaptation potential of the programme and its users: application numbers had fallen so dramatically in recent years that the application-retention ratio is now much better again. It is questionable, however, if one should only be happy about this self-regulating mechanism that is apparently inherent to the programme. It is one thing that "customer dissatisfaction" remains limited. It is quite another that the scarce funds available are very unlikely to create a major upswing in the curricular Europeanisation of this continents' higher education institutions. To my mind, the latter and not the former should be the yardstick.

The CD-related part of the present evaluation should be followed up by a more in-depth study, as the authors demand. Constraints of time and resources beyond the control of the evaluation team and a brief life-span of these new activities put limits to what could be achieved. The evaluation team was hampered by adverse conditions – which should be improved in the future –

not only in respect of the CDs, but also by the lack of regularly collected statistics on many aspects of "achieved" mobility. It is embarrassing, to say the least, that real the volume of teaching staff mobility in the early years of SOCRATES will always remain a matter for conjecture. Evaluations can only be as good as the "raw material" available for analysis. This, and other constraints quoted by the authors, underscore the legitimacy of Ulrich Teichler's demand for the (re-) introduction of a regular reporting system, which existed in ERASMUS in earlier years.

Much more would merit further comment and scrutiny. The team's rich findings on student mobility, for example, which seem to indicate, despite data limitations, that it is not possible to forever increase mobility with stagnating budgets. The fact that ERASMUS students are not rewarded by higher salaries than their non-mobile counterparts, but obtain the type of work they want: one with an international dimension. But also, that this goes for study abroad programmes of any sort, be they organised in the student-friendly way of ERASMUS, or more along "lone rider" principles. Interestingly, students with a study abroad experience also marry later – and more often choose partners with higher educational qualifications than their immobile counterparts. Study in a foreign country seems to transform students. Or is it that a particular type of student is attracted by study abroad?

All these issues deserve further reflection. But this is not the purpose of this preface. I shall instead address only one more issue – the way the programme is managed. Or, in less polite parlance: "bureaucracy". On all the above issues, my main conclusion was that the programme has, for better or worse, an almost ineradicable "self-preservation" quality. It is not so clear if this will also hold true of the cumbersome way the programme is managed – especially in times to come. The detailed regulations at all levels of the management cycle – from application, via selection, payments, to interim and final reporting – seem strangely disproportionate to the modest amounts awarded. They also stand in the way of the speedy delivery of the programme's "products", the grants, which rarely arrive on time. As Teichler rightly points out, the spirit displayed by such over-regulation also stands in stark contrast to the "on trust" philosophy of the programme: while beneficiaries are rightly expected to cooperate on the basis of trust, they often have the feeling that the awarding authority mistrusts them. It is little consolation that this view is also shared by those involved in the European Commission and its technical support services, who all seem to suffer from the Commission's overly laborious rules on budgetary matters. That there can be a *malaise* without a culprit makes things more alarming, not less!

The evaluation study points to a way out, in this respect as in many others: to replace a system built on micro-steering and on a technocratic input orientation by one that concentrates on macro-steering and output orientation. And here, Teichler's two demands for an on-trust principle in programme manage-

ment and delivery and for the creation of a regular reporting system converge. For a system that measures beneficiaries by results rather than adherence to a set of technical regulations would also, *en passant*, create the data and content basis for a regular reporting system.

1. ERASMUS Under the Umbrella of SOCRATES: An Evaluation Study

By Ute Lanzendorf and Ulrich Teichler

1.1 The Dynamics of the European Support Programme for Student Mobility and Cooperation in Higher Education

In 2001, the European Union could look back on 25 years of promoting student mobility and cooperation in higher education. The activities which received support had grown within a quarter of a century from involving about 100 departments and about 1,000 mobile students to almost 1,800 higher education institutions and about 100,000 students spending a period of study in another European country each year. Though keeping a certain core from the outset, the nature of the activities and the organisational context of the programme changed in many respects over the years.

The European Economic Community, after its foundation in the 1950s, initially addressed educational matters only in the areas of vocational training and the transition from education to employment (see Neave, 1984). When higher education became part of the European agenda in the 1970s, one of the first activities was to promote student mobility (cf. European Commission, 1994). The Joint Study Programmes (JSP) were established in 1976 and remained in operation for about a decade. It provided financial support for networks of departments that exchanged students for a period of up to one year and also included some funds, though on a moderate scale, for mobile students (see Smith, 1979). The JSP programme was widely viewed as successful in creating a fruitful academic and administrative environment for student exchange between cooperating departments of higher education institutions in different countries. All of them established various modes of organisational and academic support for mobile students, many were active in joint curricular development, and the most ambitious departmental networks even created double degrees (see Dalichow and Teichler, 1996). However, the limited timespan of institutional support and the extra costs incurred by students during study periods abroad constituted barriers to far-reaching success.

Subsequently, in 1987, the ERASMUS programme was inaugurated. Its name not only reminded one of the Dutch humanist and theologian Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus (1466-1536), but also served as an acronym for European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. ERASMUS not only aimed to increase the quantity of European higher education activities, but also to broaden their scope. It rapidly became the most visible of the various newly-emerging European educational programmes. Though the financial basis of the programme did not reach the amount needed to pursue the ambitious aim initially set by the European Community of

supporting a temporary study period in another European country for 10 percent of higher education students, ERASMUS became the largest student mobility programme hitherto established.

A new chapter in the history of European support for temporary student mobility and transborder cooperation of higher education institutions was expected to begin when the SOCRATES programme – named after the Greek philosopher and educational reformer of the fifth century B.C. – was established in 1995. Implemented in the area of higher education as from the academic year 1997/98, SOCRATES brought together the various education programmes, thus aiming at greater administrative efficiency and substantive cross-fertilisation of education activities in various sectors. When ERASMUS became a sub-programme of SOCRATES, support for student mobility and cooperation in higher education was substantially increased. In addition to student mobility, teaching staff mobility and curricular innovation were now promoted to place special emphasis on a broad development of the European dimension in higher education and to make the non-mobile students also benefit from European exchange activities. The responsibility for administering student mobility and cooperation was moved away from the networks of cooperating departments previously supported, named Inter-University Co-operation Programmes (ICPs), to the centre of the higher education institutions. As from 1997/98, the European Commission and the individual higher education institutions became partners by concluding Institutional Contracts (IC).

The development of SOCRATES during its first five years of operation was the subject of a major empirical investigation, the results of which were presented in the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study. The findings of this study which addressed most sub-programmes of SOCRATES have been published on the Internet (Teichler, Gordon and Maiworm, 2001). In addition, two summary articles on the evaluation of the ERASMUS sub-programme were published in journals (Maiworm, 2001; Teichler, 2001). This publication now extracts the analysis of the ERASMUS programme during its first years under the umbrella of SOCRATES from the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study and presents it for the first time in print. This chapter will introduce the reader to the key features of ERASMUS prior to and after having become a sub-programme of SOCRATES, to general aspects of the implementation of SOCRATES, and to the concept and the conditions of the evaluation research conducted on ERASMUS within SOCRATES.

1.2 The ERASMUS Approach

In order to understand the objectives, the schemes and operations and the expected results of the promotion of student mobility and cooperation in higher education in the framework of SOCRATES, one must look back to its predecessor the ERASMUS programme, which was established in 1987 and

remained in operation in more or less the same form until the academic year 1996/97. Although many features of ERASMUS have been preserved, SOCRATES brought about some changes which are best understood by referring to the previous context.

Financial support for temporary student mobility within Europe – more precisely grants aiming to cover the additional costs for study abroad – has been the most visible component of the ERASMUS programme from the outset. More than half the ERASMUS funds were allocated to student mobility grants. The European Commission also provided funds for the departments which were involved in student exchange. Additional actions of the programme provided support for staff exchange, notably teaching staff mobility, as well as for curriculum development, short intensive programmes and some other activities (cf. European Commission, 1994; Teichler and Maiworm, 1997). As from 1989/90, funds were also made available to departments that cooperated in the establishment of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The characteristics of ERASMUS during that period could be described as follows (see Teichler, 1996, pp. 155-156).

– ERASMUS supported regional mobility, i.e mobility between European countries rather than global mobility.
– ERASMUS promoted temporary study abroad, i.e. a period of study of up to one year which was part of a course programme leading to a degree.
– ERASMUS almost exclusively supported collective mobility, i.e. directed flows of students between countries. Few “free movers” received grants.
– ERASMUS promoted mobility and cooperation within networks of departments which sent students abroad and hosted students (from 1987 to 1997).
– ERASMUS expected organised study abroad, i.e. participation presupposed measures on the part of the participating institutions and programmes to facilitate study abroad: preparatory programmes, foreign language training, help with accommodation and administrative matters, and so forth.
– ERASMUS encouraged curricular integration, ranging from coordinated curricular activities to study abroad programmes being an integral part of the home curriculum.
– ERASMUS had an inclusive approach towards temporary study abroad, with recognition on return of the progress achieved during the study period abroad being the key criterion for granting support.
– ERASMUS was a partial and incentive-funding scheme. Students were awarded a moderate grant to cover the additional costs of study abroad, and networks or the universities received a moderate subsidy for the costs incurred.

ERASMUS was quickly considered the flagship of the educational programmes administered by the European Union. Despite widespread criticism of bureaucratic hypertrophy and too little funding for individual students and universities, ERASMUS is seen as having helped student mobility in Europe become one of the normal options for students instead of an exception and cooperation in higher education being upgraded from a marginal phenomenon to an activity that was intertwined with almost all issues of the regular life of a university. ERASMUS changed the conceptual map of international student mobility: The traditionally dominant vertical mobility from the less favoured to the most prestigious countries and institutions was complemented by a large component of student exchange on equal terms and mutual trust in the quality of higher education provisions amongst partners.

ERASMUS was viewed at that time as extremely successful in mobilising cooperation and mobility in higher education. This does not mean, however, that it was considered perfect by all of those involved at European and national level or within the higher education institutions. Detailed evaluation studies underscored both the achievements and problems of the ERASMUS programme and the activities undertaken with the support of ERASMUS. Moreover, the growth of activities called for new arrangements in many respects. Finally, new objectives of educational and societal policies may have contributed to the call for revisions, despite the general success of the programme.

1.3 The SOCRATES Approach

The SOCRATES programme, above all, aimed to create links between various areas of support in education. As a large umbrella programme, it should symbolise the extension of responsibility of the European Union to all education areas since the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht. Also, the administrative load associated with the management of the programme should be reduced through a merger of individual programme structures. Last but not least, SOCRATES should stimulate cooperation in European matters of education across different educational sectors.

SOCRATES therefore integrated more than a dozen educational programmes which had been established in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They were revised or supplemented to form two new large European programmes, namely SOCRATES for the different sectors of general education and LEONARDO DA VINCI for vocational education. SOCRATES absorbed ERASMUS and LINGUA, which became two of a total of five sub-programmes. The ADULT EDUCATION sub-programme was the result of the restructuring of a programme that already existed. The amount of funds available for adult education was substantially increased. COMENIUS was introduced as a sub-programme for the school sector, and OPEN and DISTANCE LEARNING was the most noteworthy addition to already existing programmes.

As regards ERASMUS, the most obvious changes envisaged under the new umbrella of SOCRATES were of a managerial nature. “For the purpose of being awarded support as from the academic year 1997/98,

(a) each higher education institution had to submit *one application that encompassed all its exchange and cooperation activities*, thus replacing the previous pattern of submission of applications by networks of cooperating institutions (Inter-University Cooperation Programmes). This application became the basis for an Institutional Contract between the European Commission and the individual higher education institution.

(b) *Bilateral cooperation agreements* between partner institutions replaced the inter-university agreements between networks of departments. The higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES were expected to keep and provide on request written traces of the cooperation that had been established between them and other European institutions.

(c) Each institution that submitted an application for SOCRATES support was requested to include a *European Policy Statement* (EPS). This statement was designed to provide a framework for all the European activities to be carried out by the applying institution and to define the role SOCRATES support would play in this framework.

This managerial change of the SOCRATES programme was generally conceived to imply more salient changes than a mere amendment to bureaucratic procedures. Implicitly, SOCRATES challenged the higher education institution wishing to be awarded grants for cooperation and mobility

– to reflect and put greater *emphasis on the coherence of goals* to be pursued and the coherence of European activities to be undertaken,

– to *strengthen the responsibility of the central level* of the higher education institutions regarding European activities, notably in taking priority decisions, in providing a support structure and in ensuring the resource basis for European activities, and

– to develop and reinforce strategic thinking in terms of setting clear targets and pursuing them successfully” (Kehm, 1998, pp. 9-10).

ERASMUS under the umbrella of SOCRATES was expected to take further steps towards cooperation and the qualitative development of course provision in European higher education. For example, greater efforts were envisaged to foster a common substance of knowledge across Europe. “The European dimension” was advocated as a goal to be pursued more vigorously than in the past.

While ERASMUS in the past had focused on the learning opportunities of mobile students, SOCRATES aimed to also address the non-mobile students, i.e. to make the majority of students benefit from the European dimen-

sion in higher education. Notably, curricular innovation and increasing teaching staff mobility were expected to contribute to European experiences on the part of the non-mobile students.

For this purpose, activities supported in addition to student mobility were allocated an increasing share of the available resources and were expected to play a greater role than before. Financial support for teaching staff exchange was substantially increased. Support for Curriculum Development and Intensive Programmes was extended and restructured. The promotion of the European Credit Transfer System became one of the priorities of the targeted measures to improve the conditions of student mobility. In addition, Thematic Network projects were introduced. They were expected to stimulate innovative concepts of educational change through joint deliberation and development activities in networks of experts and key actors, focusing on individual fields of study or special cross-cutting issues.

The emphasis placed by SOCRATES on these new directions of change was not meant to reduce support for mobile students. The funds reserved for student grants actually increased. Moreover, some of the measures described were intended to contribute to better academic and administrative support of student mobility, notably

– the growing responsibility of the higher education institutions as a whole should increase the degree of administrative support both for outgoing and incoming mobile students;

– the bilateral cooperation agreements between partner higher edcucation institutions were expected to ensure that a certain minimum quality at the academic and administrative level would become universal and was not left to a few key persons as in the past;

– greater teaching staff mobility and growing activities of curricular innovation should also contribute to a better learning environment for non-mobile students;

– the further spread of ECTS was expected to be not merely a mechanism to assess study achievements abroad, but also to lead to better information and growing international cooperation in curricular matters.

However, it was clear from the outset that the SOCRATES approach also implied risks as far as academic support for student mobility was concerned. The discontinuation of support for the networks of departments could have led to lesser commitment on the part of many academics. Moreover, the further growth of the number of students, alongside a loss of the glamour which had prevailed during the pioneering period of innovation, could have ended up in quality losses amidst a routine of student mobility.

Many oral and written statements on the contribution of SOCRATES to student mobility and cooperation in higher education put so much emphasis on

the changes quoted above that the element of continuity might be overlooked. A careful analysis of the major goals and types of activities eligible for support suggests that the changes in ERASMUS under the umbrella of SOCRATES are of an evolutionary rather than of a revolutionary nature.

1.4 Implementing ERASMUS as a Sub-Programme within SOCRATES

The European Community action programme on education, SOCRATES, was adopted by the European Parliament and Council Decision No 819/95/EC of 14 March 1995 for the period from 1 January 1995 to 31 December 1999. This decision set in motion the implementation of the first overall programme in the field of education at the European level.

The general objective of the SOCRATES programme is described in Article 1 of the relevant Council Decision: “This programme is intended to contribute to the development of quality education and training and the creation of an open European area for cooperation in education”. In the perspective of lifelong learning, its aim is to optimise the skills and competences of the citizens of Europe, to promote equal opportunities and to encourage the development of active and responsible citizenship with a European dimension. These general objectives are made operational by nine specific objectives described in Article 3 of the Council Decision:

“a) to develop the European dimension in education at all levels so as to strengthen the spirit of European citizenship, drawing on the cultural heritage of each Member State;

b) to promote a quantitative and qualitative improvement of the knowledge of the languages of the European Union, and in particular those which are least widely used and least taught, leading to greater understanding and solidarity between the peoples of the European Union, and to promote the intercultural dimension of education;

c) to promote wide-ranging and intensive cooperation between institutions in the Member States at all levels of education, enhancing their intellectual and teaching potential;

d) to encourage the mobility of teachers, so as to promote a European dimension in studies and to contribute to the qualitative improvement of their skills;

e) to encourage mobility of students, enabling them to complete part of their studies in another Member State, so as to contribute to the consolidation of the European dimension in education;

f) to encourage contacts among pupils in the European Union, and to promote the European dimension in their education;

g) to encourage the academic recognition of diplomas, periods of study and other qualifications, with the aim of facilitating the development of an open area for cooperation in education;

h) to encourage open and distance education in the context of the activities of this programme;

i) to foster exchanges of information and experience so that the diversity and specificity of the educational systems in the Member States become a source of enrichment and of mutual stimulation."

Various sub-programmes other than ERASMUS were also relevant for higher education. COMENIUS and LINGUA addressed teacher training. OPEN and DISTANCE LEARNING and ADULT EDUCATION were open to higher education institutions. Obviously, however, ERASMUS remained the core (sub-) programme for mobility and cooperation in higher education.

After a number of amendments to its original structure under SOCRATES had been made, such as the introduction of Institutional Contracts as from 1997/98, the ERASMUS programme was structured in two broad fields of support, the "Actions":

– Action 1: Support to universities to enhance the European dimension of studies;
– Action 2: Student mobility grants.

Action 1 was subdivided into six "Activities" on the one hand and Thematic Network projects on the other. The six Activities could be granted financial support by the European Commission within the framework of Institutional Contracts, whereas the Thematic Network projects had to be organised separately from Institutional Contracts. Institutional Contracts between the European Commission and individual higher education institutions determine the nature and the amount of support to be provided by the former for the development and implementation of European cooperation activities by the latter. They normally run over three years and must include a European Policy Statement by the higher education institution for this period. Funding for Activities is granted on a yearly basis and runs from July on. All Activities must involve transnational cooperation between higher education institutions and be based on prior agreements between departments, faculties or institutions.

The six Activities for which higher education institutions could receive financial support under Institutional Contracts were the following:

– Activity 1: Support for organising student mobility

Higher education institutions were expected to create optimal conditions for students who wanted to spend study periods at partner institutions abroad. Therefore, the linguistic preparation of their students, the provision of information on the host institution, the monitoring of outgoing students and help for incoming students were eligible for financial support. Since study periods abroad had to be recognised by the home institution, meetings to discuss academic and organisational arrangements with partner institutions could

also be supported. The level of support depended on the size of the institution, the number of mobile students involved and how far the priorities of the institution coincided with the interest of the European Commission for a balanced participation of students amongst countries, regions and subject areas.

– Activity 2: Teaching staff mobility

As regards teaching staff mobility, a distinction between assignments of short duration (one to eight weeks) and fellowships of medium duration (2 to 6 months) had to be made. Participating academics had to be fully integrated in the department or faculty of their host institution; they were required to make a substantial contribution to the host institution's programme of study in terms of the number of teaching hours involved. Their lecturing should refer to courses which were assessed as part of a degree offered by the host institution. Teaching fellowships of medium duration were meant to stimulate the debate on pedagogical approaches.

– Activity 3: Intensive programmes

Intensive programmes were short programmes of study that lasted between 10 days and 3 months and brought together students and staff from institutions in at least three countries (research activities or conferences, however, were not eligible for support). They stressed efficient teaching of specialist topics, students working in multinational groups and teaching staff exchanging views on teaching content and approaches.

– Activity 4: Preparatory visits

This activity should enable academic or administrative staff to spend up to 3 weeks abroad in order to establish cooperation with departments, faculties or institutions which had not been involved in ERASMUS before.

– Activity 5: European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

ECTS was meant to provide an effective and generally applicable mechanism for recognition of students' academic achievement between partner institutions from different countries. Higher education institutions could be granted support for developing the use of ECTS within those departments in which the system had not yet been applied.

– Activity 6: Joint curriculum development

As regards this Activity, support could be granted for the joint development of curricula at initial or intermediate level, for the development of advanced level university programmes ("Masters" type), for the joint development of European modules or the joint development of integrated language courses. Institutions from at least three countries had to be involved. Cooperation with the professional world at regional, national and European level, as well as the use of new media were sought.

Additionally, Thematic Network projects could also be supported under Action 1, but separately from the Institutional Contracts. Thematic Networks served to help to define and develop a European dimension within a given academic discipline or other issues of common interest (including administrative ones) through cooperation between faculties or departments as well as academic or professional associations. They were expected to relate to curriculum innovation, improvements in teaching methods or the development of joint programmes and specialised courses. Outcomes should have a lasting and widespread impact across a range of institutions within or between specific discipline areas.

Under Action 2 of ERASMUS within SOCRATES, student mobility grants were awarded to help students cover the extra costs incurred during their period abroad (travel, language preparation and differences in the cost of living). Direct financial aid could be granted for a study period abroad of 3 to 12 months which would be recognised by the home institution. The level of grants depended on the arrangements defined by National Agencies in the participating countries. The number of student grants awarded to an institution was decided by considering not only the number of outgoing students which a university entered in its application for an Institutional Contract to the Commission, but also the available overall budget, the balance of student flows between countries and in single subject areas, the availability of funding from other sources, etc. Not all ERASMUS students necessarily had to be awarded a Community-funded mobility grant.

1.5 Experience with Regard to the Evaluation of European Mobility and Cooperation in Higher Education

The European educational programmes tend to be assessed regularly. As a matter of procedure, Article 8(1) of the Council Decision taken in March 1995 to launch SOCRATES obliged the European Commission to undertake continuous monitoring and evaluation of the SOCRATES programme. Article 8(2) stipulated that the Commission had to "submit to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee of the Regions, before September 1998, an interim report on the launch phase, and before September 2000, a final report on the implementation of this programme."

The processes and results of mobility and cooperation in higher education have been analysed more thoroughly than those of any other similar education programme. The evaluation study on the Joint Study Programmes (Dalichow and Teichler, 1986; Baron and Smith, 1987; Burn, Cerych and Smith, 1990; Teichler and Steube, 1991), for example, played a significant role in the decision-making process in the mid-1980s to establish the ERASMUS programme. When it was launched, an interim evaluation was scheduled to be carried out after three years and a final evaluation after five years. Both these studies were undertaken by consulting firms and have not been

published. Additionally, the European Commission undertook some studies in-house and commissioned a multitude of external analyses – all of them called “monitoring” studies by the Commission. For example, various studies (published in the “ERASMUS Monographs” series) addressed the specific conditions of European mobility and cooperation in individual fields of study. In a major project conducted by a German university research centre headed by the editor of this publication, more than 20 statistical analyses and questionnaire surveys addressed mobile students, the ECTS scheme, mobile teachers, coordinators and others in charge of ERASMUS during the first seven years of this support programme (Teichler and Maiworm, 1997). An additional study based on interviews and group discussions summarised the state of ERASMUS in the mid-1990s. It was undertaken by a group of experts headed by two French scholars (Rossell and Lentiez, 1999).

The European Commission regularly compiles statistical overviews of the activities envisaged in all applications for Institutional Contracts on the one hand and in those applications which were eventually awarded support on the other. The study by Teichler and Maiworm (1997) established statistics on student mobility during the first seven years of the ERASMUS programme. Subsequently, this type of analysis was pursued by the European Commission on an in-house basis. As regards other activities supported by ERASMUS, however, no statistics have been compiled.

When SOCRATES was launched, the ERASMUS sub-programme again was addressed by various analyses supported by the European Commission. After three years, an evaluation which remained unpublished was undertaken by a consulting firm. Various specialised studies examined aspects such as the social composition of ERASMUS students (this study has not been published), the development of ECTS (Adam and Gehmlich, 2000) and the activities of Thematic Network projects (Ruffio, 1998, 2000). The largest project, undertaken by the Association of European Universities (CRE) in cooperation with the German university research institute referred to above, analysed the European Policy Statements the higher education institutions had to formulate as part of their applications for SOCRATES support and the role played by the EPS within the higher education institutions (Barblan, Kehm, Reichert and Teichler, 1998; Barblan, Reichert, Schotte-Kmoch and Teichler, 2000).

1.6 The Design of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study

In spring 1999, the European Commission invited to tender for the external evaluation of the SOCRATES Community action programme in the field of education in general (DGXXII/05/99), as well as for specific aspects of the SOCRATES programme (DGXXII/06/99). Following the call for tender, the European Commission awarded a contract to the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work (Wissenschaftliches Zentrum für Berufs- und

Hochschulforschung, WZ I) of the University of Kassel, Germany, to carry out the overall evaluation of the SOCRATES programme, subsequently called "SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation". Additionally, three specific evaluations were commissioned which covered the participation in SOCRATES of persons with specific educational needs (European Agency for Special Needs, 2000), the impact of ERASMUS in the area of engineering (Sociedade portuguesa de inovação, 2000), and the results of COMENIUS Action 1 and LINGUA Action E (Deloitte and Touche, 2000).

The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation was coordinated by Professor Ulrich Teichler, director of the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work of the University of Kassel. The deputy coordinator was Friedhelm Maiworm, head of the Gesellschaft für Empirische Studien (GES), Kassel (Germany).

Essentially, the evaluation study was divided into two sub-projects:

– Sub-project A on ERASMUS was undertaken by the team in Kassel (project director: Ulrich Teichler, in cooperation with Friedhelm Maiworm),

– Sub-project B on COMENIUS, LINGUA, OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING, ADULT EDUCATION and Questions of common policy interest was undertaken by the European Institute of Education and Social Policy (EIESP), Paris (France) (project director: Jean Gordon).

The sub-projects cooperated closely in conceptual and administrative matters. Moreover, they jointly undertook the study of European policies and activities at national level related to the SOCRATES programme and the survey at European level. Finally, both sub-projects closely cooperated in writing those parts of the final report which are transversal to all or some strands of the programme.

Within the framework of sub-project A, the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) of the University of Twente, Enschede (Netherlands) (coordinator: Marijk van der Wende), carried out various tasks, in particular the analysis of policies in the national context and of the results of the work of the Thematic Networks. Sub-project B was supported by the European Forum on Education Administration (EFEA) through the organisation of a workshop and various consultancy activities.

With respect to ERASMUS, the evaluation team undertook seven separate pieces of research, amongst which various questionnaire surveys which allowed for comparison with the results of previous surveys and thus made it possible to identify changes which took place between 1990 and the late 1990s:

– an analysis of the central ERASMUS administrative database;

– an analysis of national ERASMUS administrative databases;

– an analysis of applications and reports in relation to Thematic Networks;

– an analysis of documents and workshops with coordinators and partners in relation to Curriculum Development (CD) and Intensive Programme (IP) projects;
– a postal survey of ERASMUS institutional coordinators;
– a postal survey of academic staff who had been mobile under ERASMUS;
– a postal survey of the ERASMUS students of 1998/89;
– a survey of graduates who had been mobile during their course of study.

With respect to COMENIUS, LINGUA, ODL (OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING) and ADULT EDUCATION, 17 studies were undertaken, many of which were based on interviews and workshops. In addition, interviews and a postal survey addressed key persons at national level, thereby analysing SOCRATES as a whole. Finally, some interviews were conducted with key persons at the European level.

According to the invitation to tender, the main goals of the SOCRATES evaluation were

– to assess how far the objectives of the programme had been achieved,
– to provide quantitative and qualitative data regarding results and the range and types of impact on the target population and the education systems,
– to assess the effectiveness and the efficiency of organisational and operational mechanisms.

As these guidelines for the evaluation were rather broad, strategic priorities had to be set by the evaluation team. Six of the overall agreements are worth mentioning.

The first was to take the commonly expressed opinions of the actors and beneficiaries about the strengths and weaknesses of SOCRATES as a starting point of the analysis. As the key reasons for the programme's popularity did not need not be reiterated, the evaluation team only listed typical criticisms, the validity of which they aimed to verify. These were:

– over-bureaucratisation,
– under-funding (resources too thinly spread),
– superficiality (emphasis on visible actions rather than on substantial educational change),
– "fuzziness" of the overall configuration of activities,
– mix of over- and under-steering,
– the "quality versus spread" dilemma for various areas of activities, and finally the
– "innovation trap" (conflict between continuation of successful components and shift of funds towards new activities).

Second, the aim of the team was to analyse the SOCRATES activities from a development point of view. The question was whether or not the same activities would continue to be supported. Thus, the evaluation study sought to focus on possible improvements over time under constant goals and procedures. However, the question could be asked whether or not a change of goals and measures would be the most suitable next step for the development of European educational activities. It was felt that this issue could be addressed notably with respect to ERASMUS because it had the longest history and its early development had been analysed in-depth by various studies.

Third, the evaluation study aimed to take into account a broad range of goals and expectations. It was not viewed as sufficient to examine SOCRATES simply from the point of view of the goals put forward in the Council Decision. Moreover, it was considered appropriate to examine the extent to which the programme had been shaped by informal goals and hidden agendas by those responsible for it and to what extent the goals of the beneficiaries came into play: does SOCRATES provide room for bottom-up strategies?

Fourth, the decision was taken to collect information on the actors' and beneficiaries' experiences and views, in addition to statistics and documents. A comparison of the different standpoints helped to provide detailed knowledge and the necessary distance from the specific value judgements of individual groups of respondents and interviewees. This, however, meant that due to limited time and financial resources, no information could be collected about other groups of interest, e.g. non-participants.

Fifth, some activities supported under SOCRATES were not evaluated. The research did not examine information and advisory systems such as EURYDICE and the NARICS Network, nor did it address activities set up in the framework of exchange of information and experience. This decision was taken because other methodologies would have had to be chosen and different persons would have had to be addressed. This study did not analyse the European Policy Statements formulated by higher education institutions and the role they played because they had been analysed in depth by separate research projects (see Barblan, Kehm, Reichert and Teichler, 1998; Barblan, Reichert, Schotte-Kmoch and Teichler, 2000).

1.7 Conditions Affecting the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study

The SOCRATES Evaluation Study provided an opportunity to take stock of experiences, i.e. to examine the goals, the financial setting, and the educational activities and their outcomes, and to draw conclusions regarding the future of SOCRATES. In order to understand the potential and limits of the study, one must take into consideration the conditions in which it was conducted.

First, the time span for conducting the study was very brief. As only ten months were available and as there was a broad range of themes to be

addressed, material could not be gathered and analysed as comprehensively as would have been desirable. Moreover, the statistical analysis of activities had to remain incomplete, because satisfactory data were available for only a few activities. The evaluation team suggested that statistical data should be gathered and surveys should be undertaken on a regular basis so that future evaluation studies would no longer have to spend time collecting basic information, but could concentrate on synthesising this information.

Second, many beneficiaries of SOCRATES and actors were willing to support the evaluation study by taking time to answer the questionnaires and participating in interviews and meetings. However, one cannot ignore some evaluation fatigue as a consequence of the high administrative and reporting workload put on participating institutions and the gradual normalisation or routine of ERASMUS which no longer guaranteed enthusiastic participation in evaluation studies.

Third, the SOCRATES Evaluation study was in some respects carried out too early. Notably, the postponement of the transition of ERASMUS to the new setting under SOCRATES from 1995 to 1997 limited the opportunity of examining outcomes of pluri-annual activities and gradual developments. Moreover, the involvement of Central and Eastern European countries in SOCRATES was so recent at the time of the study that it could not be fully evaluated.

Fourth, before the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study was completed and the experiences of the SOCRATES I period could be summarised, the key decisions had already been taken for SOCRATES II for the period 2001-2006. This evaluation study, therefore, could not enlighten key decisions about the future direction of SOCRATES, but rather only contribute to modifications within a given framework or long-term developments.

These issues, however, are endemic for the relationship between evaluation and system change. The resources for evaluation and the time available for evaluation studies generally tend to be more limited than one would ideally wish. Policies are likely to be revised before a long-term impact can occur. Last but not least, the context is likely to change before programmes such as SOCRATES have been fully implemented. For example, already at the time when SOCRATES II was set in motion, the “Bologna process” towards a European Higher Education Area got so much momentum that the time seemed ripe to revise the European support for mobility and cooperation in higher education.

1.8 The Publication of the ERASMUS Experience

The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study was made public on the Internet in February 2001 (Teichler, Gordon and Maiworm, 2001). This volume now aims to make available to a wider public those results of the SOCRATES

2000 Evaluation Study which address the ERASMUS sub-programme. The results of the evaluation studies on the other SOCRATES sub-programmes were published by the coordinator of these studies (Gordon, 2001).

The text of the present publication was edited by the authors of this introductory chapter. Chapters 2-6, as well as Chapter 10 of this volume have largely been taken from the Internet publication. Chapters 7-9 are abridged versions of the respective chapters in the Internet version.

In addition to the authors of the different chapters of this volume, the evaluation of the ERASMUS sub-programme was inspired by those in charge of the evaluation of the other sub-programmes of SOCRATES, notably Jean Gordon, Jean-Pierre Jallade and David Parkes. In addition to previous studies, this study could also draw from the expertise accumulated on ERASMUS, and previous evaluation studies by Alan Smith, Angeliki Verli (both European Commission) and Bernd Wächter (Academic Cooperation Association, Brussels). Experts from nine countries served as consultants and interviewers: Astrid Berg (Denmark), John Heywood (Ireland), Barbara M. Kehm (Germany), Petri Lempinen (Finland), Montserrat Santos Sanz (Spain), Adrian Stoica (Romania), Pina Scalera (Italy) and Eva Michelidaki (Greece). The organisation of the survey was supported by Anne Fleck and Christoph Gilleßen, the text-editing by Christina Keyes and the text production and project administration by Helga Cassidy, Dagmar Mann and Sybille Meyer. Last but not least, the study could not have been carried out without the valuable feedback of the thousands of actors and beneficiaries of SOCRATES.

2. Participation in ERASMUS: Figures and Patterns

By Friedhelm Maiworm

2.1 Sources of Information and Limitations of the Study

This chapter provides a statistical overview of the participation of institutions, countries, students and academic staff members in ERASMUS and of the key features of the different ERASMUS activities supported during the first phase of SOCRATES. Largely because of the data available, but also because of the late start of SOCRATES, the analysis only takes into account the period since the introduction of the Institutional Contract, i.e. the three academic years 1997/98, 1998/99, and 1999/2000. It is based on data from the contract database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office (TAO) in Brussels and from databases of National Agencies on achieved student mobility 1997/98.

A database on ERASMUS students 1993/94 compiled by the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work of the University of Kassel, Germany, was used to compare the patterns of student mobility within the former ERASMUS Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) and those within the newly-introduced Institutional Contracts (ICs).

Most of the statistics presented in this chapter refer to activities that were approved by the European Commission as part of the ICs, but were not necessarily carried out. At the time of this evaluation, the final reports on ERASMUS activities undertaken within Institutional Contracts had neither been assessed by the Commission nor stored in a database. Therefore, hardly any data on activities that had been carried out were available. We know from previous evaluations that the real number of mobile persons is much lower than originally intended, especially in the cases of student and teaching staff mobility.

2.2 Institutional Contracts

With the implementation of SOCRATES, the task of coordinating student mobility and other ERASMUS-related activities was transferred from networks of departments to the centres of the higher education institutions. This reform was implemented in the academic year 1997/98. Each higher education institution was requested to apply individually for financial support and could be awarded an Institutional Contract by the Commission for a maximum of three years. During an interim period from 1995 to 1997, the support of networks of departments within Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) was continued. Altogether, 2,673 ICPs were approved in 1995/96 and 2,483 were approved in 1996/97.

As Table 2.1 shows, the number of approved Institutional Contracts was 1,479 in the subsequent academic year 1997/98, 1,624 in 1998/99, and 1,764 in

1999/2000. This increase is mainly due to the fact that institutions from certain Central and Eastern European countries became eligible for participation in ERASMUS in 1998/99 and 1999/2000. Table 2.1 also shows that the vast majority of Institutional Contracts were renewed for a second and third year. Only about 5 to 8 per cent were not prolonged after the first year.

Table 2.1
Number of New and Renewed SOCRATES Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (absolute numbers)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
New	1,479	259	201	1,939
Second year	–	1,365	244	1,609
Third year	–	–	1,319	1,319
Total	1,479	1,624	1,764	4,867

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office (TAO)

The following chapters first focus on participation and activities supported within Institutional Contracts and then refer back to the years of transition from Inter-University Cooperation Programmes to Institutional Contracts in order to compare patterns of participation and mobility.

2.3 Participation of Countries

The number of countries which were eligible for ERASMUS support increased during the first phase of the SOCRATES programme:

– Between 1995/96 and 1997/98, only the 15 Member States of the European Union and three countries of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), i.e. Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, were eligible.

– In 1998/99, the pool of eligible countries grew with the inclusion of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Slovak Republic, as well as Cyprus, thus increasing the number of eligible countries to 24.

– In 1999/2000, there was a further growth with the opening of ERASMUS to higher education institutions in Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Slovenia. Thus, the number of eligible countries grew to 29.

Most universities and other large higher education institutions in the eligible countries participate in ERASMUS. The highest share of Institutional Contracts was awarded to French institutions (about 20 per cent), followed by German institutions (about 15 per cent), and by British institutions (about 11 per cent) of all awards.

Table 2.2
SOCRATES Institutional Contracts – by Country[1] and Academic Year
(absolute numbers and participation rate of higher education institutions)

		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000	
	Eligible institutions	Institutional contracts		Institutional contracts		Institutional contracts	
	Number	Number	Participation rate*	Number	Participation rate*	Number	Participation rate*
AT	176	52	29.5	58	33.0	59	33.5
BE	97	93	95.9	79	81.4	77	79.4
DE	376	230	61.2	236	62.8	241	64.1
DK	239	80	33.5	87	36.4	88	36.8
ES	90	63	70.0	66	73.3	73	81.1
FI	391	94	24.0	77	19.7	77	19.7
FR	1,237	308	24.9	306	24.7	324	26.2
GR	48	31	64.6	31	64.6	33	68.8
IE	53	31	58.5	28	52.8	29	54.7
IT	155	87	56.1	91	58.7	96	61.9
LU	5	2	40.0	2	40.0	2	40.0
NL	115	66	57.4	66	57.4	63	54.8
PT	299	53	17.7	67	22.4	71	23.7
SE	57	50	87.7	48	84.2	40	70.2
UK	568	189	33.3	188	33.1	192	33.8
LI	3	1	33.3	2	66.7	2	66.7
IS	11	8	72.7	8	72.7	7	63.6
NO	63	41	65.1	40	63.5	42	66.7
CY	10	-	-	2	20.0	7	70.0
EU and EFTA	3,993	1,479	37.1	1,482	37.2	1,523	38.2
BG	36	–	–	–	–	8	22.2
CZ	27	–	–	22	81.5	23	85.2
EE	14	–	–	–	–	10	71.4
LT	24	–	–	–	–	16	66.7
LV	22	–	–	–	–	13	59.1
HU	86	–	–	36	41.9	44	51.2
PL	153	–	–	46	30.1	76	49.7
RO	49	–	–	30	61.2	32	65.3
SI	10	–	–	–	–	5	50.0
SK	21	–	–	8	38.1	14	66.7
CEE	442	–	–	142	42.3	241	54.5
Total	4,435	1,479	37.1	1,624	37.6	1,764	39.8

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office
*Percentage of eligible institutions

[1]AT Austria BE Belgium BG Bulgaria CH Switzerland CY Cyprus CZ Czech Republic
DE Germany DK Denmark EE Estonia ES Spain FI Finland FR France
GR Greece HU Hungary IE Ireland IS Iceland IT Italy LI Liechtenstein
LT Lithuania LU Luxembourg LV Latvia MT Malta NL Netherlands NO Norway
PL Poland PT Portugal RO Romania SE Sweden SI Slovenia SK Slovak Republic
UK United Kingdom

As Table 2.2 shows, the percentage of eligible higher education institutions which were awarded an Institutional Contract slightly increased from 37 per cent in 1997/98 to 38 per cent in 1998/99 and 40 per cent in 1999/2000. As regards the individual countries, the quotas ranged from about 20 per cent to over 90 per cent. With less than one third, the lowest contract rates could be observed in Portugal, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Austria, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. But two-thirds or more of the higher education institutions in Belgium, Spain, Greece, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, and in most of the Central and Eastern European countries were awarded an Institutional Contract in 1999/2000. As regards the success of the programme, the participation rate in ERASMUS amongst the eligible institutions from individual countries in SOCRATES must be considered a weak indicator for two reasons:

– The number of institutions actually participating in SOCRATES was higher than the number of institutions signing an Institutional Contract because some acted as partner institutions only. From the overall number of about 3,100 higher education institutions listed in approved ICs during the first three years of SOCRATES, 1,886 were contract holders and the remainder took part in the programme only as partner institutions.

– The quota of participating institutions was low in countries with many small colleges.

The Institutional Contracts are based on bilateral agreements between the contract holder and the partner institutions from other eligible countries. With the exception of CEE countries and a few smaller EU and EFTA countries, most countries participated through one or more institutions in at least half the Institutional Contracts. As Table 2.3 shows, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France were the most strongly represented (80 per cent or more).

On average, each Institutional Contract covers the international cooperation of institutions from 10 countries. However, there are large differences between the individual contracts in this respect. A maximum of 5 countries could be observed in about a quarter of the contracts, 6 to10 countries in another quarter, 11 to 14 in the third quarter, and 15 or more countries in the remaining quarter.

The growing cooperation between institutions from EU and EFTA countries on the one hand and the CEE countries on the other is underlined by the fact that two-thirds of the Institutional Contracts in 1999/2000 covered institutions from both regions. Information provided in interviews suggests that the TEMPUS programme played a major role in establishing the ties that facilitated a rapid integration of higher education institutions from Central and Eastern European countries in SOCRATES.

Table 2.3
Participation Rate of Countries in SOCRATES Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (percentages of countries in all Institutional Contracts)

	Academic year			Total
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
AT	48.9	51.3	50.1	50.2
BE	64.6	65.0	62.8	64.1
DE	82.3	83.6	83.0	83.0
DK	55.6	55.0	53.7	54.7
ES	74.3	74.3	74.3	74.3
FI	66.2	66.0	64.8	65.6
FR	82.0	81.0	79.1	80.6
GR	51.8	51.5	50.4	51.2
IE	51.0	46.5	43.5	46.8
IT	64.2	64.4	62.8	63.8
LU	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.8
NL	70.2	69.7	67.8	69.1
PT	56.7	54.9	55.2	55.6
SE	60.4	60.1	58.1	59.5
UK	88.4	85.0	81.4	84.8
CH	2.8	.6	.7	1.3
LI	.1	.2	.2	.2
IS	11.3	11.1	11.0	11.1
NO	44.8	42.3	40.0	42.3
BG	.0	.0	3.6	1.3
CY	.0	2.8	4.9	2.7
CZ	.1	20.0	26.2	16.2
EE	.0	.0	6.5	2.4
HU	.1	23.3	31.7	19.3
LT	.0	.0	8.2	3.0
LV	.0	.0	6.3	2.3
MT	.1	.0	.1	.1
PL	.0	24.4	37.1	21.6
RO	.1	19.7	25.2	15.8
SI	.0	.1	5.0	1.8
SK	.0	3.7	9.5	4.7
(n)	(1,479)	(1,624)	(1,764)	(4,867)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

2.4 Range of Activities and Financial Support

The SOCRATES Institutional Contracts cover a broad range of possible cooperation activities: Organisation of Student Mobility (OMS), Teaching Staff Mobility (TS), Introduction of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), Curriculum Development (CD), including Curricula at Initial or Intermediate Level (CDI), Programmes at Advanced Level (CDA), Modules focusing on the history, society, culture, politics, or economies of other European countries (EM) as well as Integrated Language Courses (ILC), and finally Intensive Programmes (IP).

As Table 2.4 shows, almost all Institutional Contracts included financial support to organise student mobility and the vast majority included teaching staff mobility. Financial support for the introduction of ECTS was provided by more than half the contracts. This stresses the importance of the implementation of formal recognition mechanisms by the participating institutions and the European Commission.

Table 2.4
Activities Supported by SOCRATES Within the Framework of Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (percentages of contracts)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
Student mobility (OMS)	97.3	98.3	96.8	97.4
Introduction of ECTS	51.9	58.0	55.9	55.4
Teaching staff mobility (TS)	81.0	85.8	88.8	85.4
Curriculum development				
(CDI, CDA, EM, ILC)*	11.6	13.2	10.9	11.9
Intensive programmes (IP)*	13.3	12.5	12.5	12.8
(n)	(1,463)	(1,608)	(1,752)	(4,823)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

* Percentage of institutions coordinating at least one single CD or IP among all institutions signing an IC.

The relatively low proportion of Institutional Contracts which comprise the development of curricula or intensive programmes is misleading because only the activities of the coordinating institutions are taken into account. The overall number of institutions involved is substantially higher. For example, we heard of estimates according to which some 30 per cent of all higher education institutions participating in SOCRATES between 1997/98 and 1999/2000 were engaged in curriculum development, either as coordinator or as a partner institution.

The average ERASMUS support per institution awarded by Institutional Contracts was about €17,000 in 1997/98 and about € 20,000 each in 1998/99 and in 1999/2000. These figures do not include the mobility grants for students because student grants were administered by National Agencies.

In comparing these figures with the amount applied for by the higher education institutions we note that only 25 per cent on average was finally awarded. The average amount requested in the applications dropped after the initially high expectations of 1997/98 were not met. This is the prime cause for the substantial increase from 12 per cent to 32 per cent of the ratio of grants that were awarded in relation to grants that were applied for (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5
Budgets Requested and Awarded in the Framework of Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (mean in Euro per Institutional Contract)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
Budget requested (Euro)	173,635	113,373	93,874	125,538
Budget awarded (Euro)	16,930	19,983	19,615	18,941
Mean of ratios* of grant awarded to grant requested (%)	12.8	27.7	32.0	24.6
(n)	(1,479)	(1,624)	(1,764)	(4,867)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

* The ratios of grants that were awarded in relation to grants that were requested are calculated separately for each individual institution. The table shows the mean of the individual ratios.

The average level of budgets for individual activities per higher education institution was € 3,533 for the introduction of ECTS, € 6,281 for the organisation of student mobility, € 7,239 for teaching staff mobility, € 16,001 for intensive programmes, and € 22,206 for curriculum development (see Table 2.6). As has already been mentioned, the budgets for intensive programmes and for curriculum development had to be shared between the coordinating institution and its partner institutions.

Table 2.6
Budgets Awarded for Individual Activities Within Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (mean in Euro per Institutional Contracts)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
Student mobility (OMS)	5,146	6,713	6,803	6,281
(n)	(1,377)	(1,573)	(1,690)	(4,640)
Introduction of ECTS	3,252	3,385	3,892	3,533
(n)	(760)	(932)	(980)	(2,672)
Teaching staff mobility (TS)	7,305	7,755	6,730	7,239
(n)	(1,159)	(1,375)	(1,549)	(4,083)
Curriculum development (CDI, CDA, EM, ILC)	20,215	22,131	23,987	22,206
(n)	(158)	(195)	(185)	(538)
Intensive programmes (IP)	13,446	16,050	18,195	16,001
(n)	(191)	(199)	(218)	(608)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

By and large, a slight increase in the average budgets per activity could be observed. The only exception was the budget for teaching staff mobility, which decreased from € 7,755 in 1998/99 to € 6,730 in 1999/2000. Funds made available to higher education institutions for the support of student mobility (OMS) increased from € 68 in 1997/98 to over € 100 in the subsequent year on average of students stated in the successful applications for an IC. Actually, these funds were awarded according to a degressive model: the higher the number of mobile students, the less the average support per student.

On average, € 244 were made available per mobile teacher who was successful in the application for an IC in the academic year 1997/98, € 300 in 1998/99, and € 263 in 1999/2000. Institutions participating in curriculum projects either as coordinators or as partners could expect SOCRATES support of about € 2,650 per year.

Data on realised ERASMUS student mobility provided by the National Agencies suggest that, in 1997/98, each ERASMUS student was awarded a grant of € 809 on average to cover the additional costs for the period abroad (€ 126 on average per month). This overall grant is € 282 lower (the monthly grant was about € 50 lower) than in the academic year 1993/94 for which respective figures were available.

Substantial differences in the level of student grants could be observed by home country. Whilst students from Austria, Belgium, Spain, Sweden and Finland received less than € 100 per month, those from Greece and Iceland received more than € 300.

Table 2.7
Amount of the ERASMUS Student Grant 1997/98 – by Country of Home Institution (mean in Euro)

Country of home institution	Total grant	Monthly grant
AT	592	91
BE	442	86
DE	863	121
DK	584	113
ES	707	98
FI	410	82
FR	788	111
GR	1,595	318
IE	845	124
IT	1,120	166
NL	697	135
PT	1,389	237
SE	485	88
UK	891	148
IS	1,949	323
NO	734	151
Total	809	126

Source: Data provided by the National Agencies

2.5 Bilateral Cooperation Agreements

Higher education institutions applying for a SOCRATES Institutional Contract must establish bilateral cooperation agreements with eligible partner institutions in other European countries. 46.6 bilateral agreements are made on average per Institutional Contract. However, great differences could be observed. As Table 2.8 shows, about half the higher education institutions which concluded a SOCRATES contract with the European Commission cooperated with at most 20 partner institutions. A further 20 per cent of the Institutional Contracts comprised up to 50 partners, 15 per cent up to 100 partners, and 15 per cent more than 100. No significant changes in this respect occurred during the period under observation.

Table 2.8
Number of Bilateral Cooperation Agreements Between Higher Education Institutions – by Academic Year (percentages of Institutional Contracts)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
1 – 5	17	18	20	18
6 – 10	15	12	13	14
11 – 20	17	19	16	17
21 – 50	20	21	21	20
51 – 100	16	15	14	15
More than 100	15	16	15	15
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(1,449)	(1,594)	(1,739)	(4,782)
Average number of partner institutions	45.9	47.0	46.9	46.6

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

The number of partner institutions is closely correlated with the size of the higher education institutions in terms of numbers of students enrolled. Smaller institutions with at most 500 students on average established only about 10 bilateral cooperation agreements, whilst large institutions with over 20,000 students cooperated with 150 partner institutions on average in the framework of ERASMUS.

Institutions in the United Kingdom (on average 16 per cent of the bilateral arrangements), Germany (14 per cent), France (12 per cent), and Spain (10 per cent) were most frequently represented as partner institutions in ICs, whilst most other countries were represented by less than 5 per cent of the partner institutions on average (see Table 2.9).

Higher education institutions in the Central and Eastern European countries are often represented in Institutional Contracts, as shown above. Table 2.9 indicates, however, that the spread of partners by country is somewhat lower than on the part of higher education institutions from EU and EFTA countries. Notably, institutions in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania primarily cooperate with institutions in Finland. As regards the larger EU countries, German higher education institutions are over-represented as partners in all CEE countries, whilst the proportion of British institutions is below average. French higher education institutions are the most common partners of Romanian institutions (31 per cent), but play a minor role with other CEE institutions.

Table 2.9
Country of Partner Institutions in New and Renewed Institutional Contracts 1997/98, 1998/99 and 1999/2000 – by Country of Contract Institution (mean of percentages)

	Country of Contract Institution																												Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	LU	NL	PT	SE	UK	LI	IS	NO	BG	CY	CZ	EE	LT	LV	HU	PL	RO	SI	SK	
AT	.6	1.9	2.6	2.7	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.0	4.8	3.5	16.3	3.3	1.7	2.7	2.7	.0	7.4	3.9	.0	6.4	8.0	.5	.6	.2	9.1	4.2	1.7	7.0	2.6	2.8
BE	4.7	.4	3.9	6.1	5.5	6.0	7.6	6.4	4.6	5.9	.0	9.0	8.7	5.1	4.8	.0	3.1	3.9	9.9	.4	6.2	1.2	16.0	4.8	8.2	5.6	6.6	28.7	9.4	5.7
DE	17.9	11.1	.2	11.8	15.6	16.3	17.9	17.5	25.8	15.5	26.2	15.2	8.1	16.3	15.1	.0	26.6	18.4	19.3	15.0	23.0	15.3	17.7	27.7	24.7	32.4	16.3	12.9	29.8	14.2
DK	2.2	2.5	2.8	.2	2.8	4.4	2.5	2.2	2.6	2.0	.0	3.0	1.7	3.5	4.0	.0	7.2	7.3	.0	.0	1.8	4.4	8.7	4.1	1.3	2.8	1.2	14.5	2.1	2.8
ES	5.4	12.3	9.8	7.1	.4	5.8	13.1	7.7	6.9	17.4	2.1	8.0	17.2	7.2	11.2	50.0	3.8	6.6	5.1	2.3	4.8	3.0	4.2	13.9	4.0	5.0	6.7	3.3	7.9	9.9
FI	6.0	5.9	7.2	9.3	3.4	.7	4.0	4.8	7.1	2.7	.0	7.3	7.7	7.4	9.5	.0	5.3	6.6	.0	19.4	4.1	39.5	22.9	23.7	8.8	3.7	2.6	1.2	4.1	6.0
FR	12.1	16.3	17.8	7.4	20.7	8.4	.5	15.5	19.9	19.0	37.4	10.0	17.7	9.5	19.1	.0	2.8	8.5	22.3	3.5	9.8	4.7	5.7	.7	12.3	10.7	31.2	4.1	6.6	12.3
GR	3.0	3.4	2.9	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.0	.7	1.8	3.7	9.0	2.4	3.3	3.0	2.5	.0	2.7	1.6	12.2	34.5	2.8	.4	1.2	.0	1.3	2.5	6.1	1.3	1.6	2.9
IE	3.3	2.6	4.0	2.7	1.9	3.5	3.0	1.8	.5	1.6	.0	2.2	1.3	2.0	1.8	.0	4.7	2.0	3.0	.4	1.4	.0	.1	2.5	.4	.8	.9	.4	1.2	2.5
IT	7.2	7.8	6.8	2.2	12.1	3.3	10.3	9.6	3.9	.4	2.1	4.1	6.5	4.4	7.6	.0	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.2	4.8	11.0	3.4	1.6	3.7	5.3	8.2	1.7	7.5	6.7
LU	.3	.1	.2	.0	.0	.0	.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.1	.1
NL	8.2	10.7	7.2	9.6	5.1	8.0	4.2	4.6	5.5	3.9	1.0	.5	5.2	9.4	6.9	.0	5.9	7.2	1.6	.4	7.1	6.2	6.4	3.9	12.1	10.3	3.0	1.7	1.7	6.3
PT	3.8	4.6	2.5	2.9	5.0	2.9	3.2	6.3	1.5	3.2	1.7	3.2	.4	3.4	3.2	.0	.9	5.3	11.2	.2	3.0	.7	1.1	1.1	1.3	3.7	2.3	.8	.5	3.2
SE	4.4	3.5	5.3	7.5	2.7	4.4	3.7	2.8	2.3	2.3	.0	5.0	3.4	.1	4.9	25.0	13.7	7.5	.0	.2	5.7	9.6	8.4	8.5	2.9	3.0	.9	15.8	4.9	4.3
UK	13.5	13.2	19.1	21.8	17.3	26.4	19.9	11.6	10.2	15.1	2.1	20.3	12.8	20.4	.5	25.0	12.9	17.7	12.1	14.1	16.9	3.5	1.6	5.5	8.8	9.7	11.5	6.6	18.5	15.6
CH	.1	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
IS	.6	.4	.5	.6	.2	.2	.1	.3	.2	.4	.0	.1	.1	.4	.4	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3
LI	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
NO	2.3	1.1	2.3	3.5	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.1	.0	2.1	2.4	2.8	2.6	.0	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	.5	1.8	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.8
BG	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
CY	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.3	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
CZ	1.6	.4	.7	.2	.3	.5	.5	.9	.2	.3	.0	.6	.3	.8	.7	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.5
EE	.1	.0	.1	.1	.0	.4	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.1	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.5	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
HU	1.4	.5	1.1	.4	.4	.9	.5	.8	.2	.6	.0	1.4	.3	.5	.7	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.7	.0	.2	.0	.0	.6
LT	.0	.0	.1	.2	.0	.5	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
LV	.0	.0	.2	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.1	.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.5	.0	.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
MT	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
PL	.7	.5	1.8	.3	.5	.5	.7	.8	.2	.6	.0	.7	.6	.5	.9	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.5	.0	.0	.2	.0	.0	.2	.7
RO	.2	.5	.5	.2	.3	.1	.9	1.2	.3	.4	.0	1.1	.3	.1	.5	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.6	.0	.0	.5
SI	.1	.0	.0	.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
SK	.2	.0	.2	.3	.0	.1	.1	.1	.0	.1	2.1	.2	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(156)	(247)	(701)	(250)	(199)	(238)	(930)	(92)	(87)	(271)	(6)	(193)	(189)	(137)	(562)	(4)	(23)	(121)	(7)	(9)	(45)	(10)	(15)	(11)	(79)	(117)	(59)	(4)	(20)	(4782)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Among EU and EFTA institutions, we note cooperation between institutions from neighbouring countries. Common or similar languages also play an important role.

2.6 Student Mobility

The European Commission regularly publishes the "estimated" number of ERASMUS students by reporting the number of prospective mobile students stated in the successful applications for ICs. It grew from about 160,000 in 1995/96 to about 220,000 in 1999/2000. This corresponds to an annual increase of about 9 per cent. Part of this increase (about 2% annually) is due to the opening up of SOCRATES to institutions in CEE countries.

Table 2.10
Number of "Estimated" Mobile Students* per Institutional Contract – by Academic Year (absolute numbers and mean)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
None	4	3	4	4
1 – 10	17	18	18	17
11 – 20	13	13	13	13
21 – 50	19	19	18	19
51 – 100	12	12	12	12
101 – 250	18	20	18	19
More than 250	16	15	16	16
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(1,484)	(1,625)	(1,765)	(4,875)
Average number of "estimated" ERASMUS students	122.3	122.4	123.4	122.7
Quota of "estimated" ERASMUS students**	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8
(n)	(1,298)	(1,527)	(1,695)	(4,520)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office
* "Estimated = number of students quoted in the successful application
** Percentage of "estimated" ERASMUS students in total enrolment

As Table 2.10 shows, the average number of ERASMUS student applications per SOCRATES Institutional Contract is more or less constant at about 123 over the three academic years under study. More than half the ICs envisaged a maximum of 50 students. Only about a third comprised applications for sending more than 100 students abroad.

The number of estimated mobility grants decreased in only about 30 per cent of the Institutional Contracts which were renewed for a first or second time. In 60 per cent of ICs it increased, and in a further 10 per cent the number remained constant.

Table 2.11
Home Country of the "Estimated" ERASMUS Students – by Academic Year (absolute numbers and percentages)

	Academic year								Total 1997/98 - 1999/2000	
	1995/96		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000			
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
AT	3,193	2.0	3,783	2.1	4,405	2.2	4,672	2.1	12,860	2.1
BE	8,111	5.1	7,615	4.2	8477	4.3	9,023	4.1	25,115	4.2
DE	23,927	14.9	30,551	16.8	32,668	16.4	35,584	16.3	98,803	16.5
DK	3,747	2.3	3,977	2.2	4,573	2.3	4,946	2.3	13,496	2.3
ES	18,101	11.3	23,169	12.8	25,540	12.8	28,704	13.2	77,413	12.9
FI	3,917	2.4	6,341	3.5	7,457	3.7	8,195	3.8	21,993	3.7
FR	27,263	17.0	31,057	17.1	31,644	15.9	33,933	15.6	96,634	16.1
GR	4,726	2.9	4,016	2.2	4,511	2.3	5,023	2.3	13,550	2.3
IE	4,422	2.8	3,573	2.0	3,504	1.8	3,754	1.7	10,831	1.8
IT	13,482	8.4	16,576	9.1	18,090	9.1	20,215	9.3	54,881	9.2
LU	21	0.0	39	.0	36	.0	42	.0	117	.0
NL	9,491	5.9	10,032	5.5	11,069	5.6	10,488	4.8	31,589	5.3
PT	4,763	3.0	4,477	2.5	5,406	2.7	6,201	2.8	16,084	2.7
SE	4,534	2.8	6,579	3.6	6,999	3.5	7,581	3.5	21,159	3.5
UK	28,826	16.7	26,947	14.9	26,175	13.1	25,080	11.5	78,202	13.1
CH	1,738	1.1	–		–		–		–	
IS	132	0.1	250	.1	262	.1	311	.1	823	.1
NO	2,087	1.3	2,473	1.4	2,871	1.4	3,000	1.4	8,344	1.4
BG	–		–		–		98	.0	98	.0
CY	–		–		119	.1	191	.1	310	.1
CZ	–		–		1,126	.6	1,523	.7	2,649	.4
EE	–		–		–		350	.2	350	.1
HU	–		–		1,102	.6	2,048	.9	3,150	.5
LT	–		–		–		432	.2	432	.1
LV	–		–		–		339	.2	339	.1
PL	–		–		1,524	.8	3,207	1.5	4,731	.8
RO	–		–		1,542	.8	2,396	1.1	3,938	.7
SK	–		–		71	.0	462	.2	533	.1
SI	–		–		–		240	.1	240	.0
Total	160,470	100.0	181,455	100.0	199,171	100.0	218,038	100.0	598,664	100.0

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

The higher education institutions of most countries aimed to send larger numbers of students abroad in 1999/2000 than in the mid-1990s. There are exceptions, though, as can be seen in Table 2.11. First, the number of "estimated"

mobile students from the United Kingdom decreased continuously. Second, in the wake of the transition from the network of departments (ICPs) to the Institutional Contract, the number of "estimated" mobile students decreased in 1997/98, but thereafter increased again in Greece, Ireland and Portugal.

Table 2.12
Host Country of the "Estimated" Number of ERASMUS Students – by Academic Year (absolute numbers and percentages)

	Academic year								Total 1997/98 - 1999/2000	
	1995/96		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000			
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
AT	2,993	1.9	4,040	2.2	4,587	2.3	5,114	2.3	13,741	2.3
BE	7,591	4.7	8,094	4.5	9,183	4.6	9,597	4.4	26,874	4.5
DE	21,355	13.3	26,050	14.4	29,201	14.7	31,964	14.7	87,215	14.6
DK	3,475	2.2	4,281	2.4	4,695	2.4	5,180	2.4	14,156	2.4
ES	18,038	11.2	21,294	11.7	23,497	11.8	26,209	12.0	71,000	11.9
FI	3,368	2.1	5,738	3.2	6,696	3.4	7,798	3.6	20,232	3.4
FR	28,362	17.7	31,547	17.4	32,412	16.3	34,775	15.9	98,734	16.5
GR	3,646	2.3	4,355	2.4	4,521	2.3	5,052	2.3	13,928	2.3
IE	6,321	3.3	4,629	2.6	4,438	2.2	4,721	2.2	13,788	2.3
IT	11,732	7.3	14,739	8.1	16,912	8.5	18,798	8.6	50,449	8.4
LU	14	0.0	27	.0	46	.0	44	.0	117	.0
NL	9,586	6.0	10,548	5.8	11,341	5.7	11,464	5.3	33,353	5.6
PT	4,000	2.5	4,710	2.6	5,123	2.6	5,824	2.7	15,657	2.6
SE	4,340	2.7	6,646	3.7	7,310	3.7	8,168	3.7	22,124	3.7
UK	32,816	20.4	31,925	17.6	32,055	16.1	31,471	14.4	95,451	15.9
LI	0	0.0	0	.0	1	.0	5	.0	6	.0
IS	98	0.1	294	.2	320	.2	365	.2	979	.2
NO	1,826	1.1	2,538	1.4	2,720	1.4	2,864	1.3	8,122	1.4
CH	1875	1.2	0	.0	20	.0	0	.0	20	.0
BG			–		–		64	.0	64	.0
CY			–		66		148	.1	214	.0
CZ			–		878		1,403	.6	2,281	.4
EE			–		–		255	.1	255	.0
HU			–		1,009		1,785	.8	2,794	.5
LT			–		–		295	.1	295	.0
LV			–		–		257	.1	257	.0
PL			–		1,135		2,504	1.1	3,639	.6
RO			–		889		1,483	.7	2,372	.4
SK			–		114		268	.1	382	.1
SI			–		2		163	.1	165	.0
Total	160,470	100.0	181,455	100.0	199,171	100.0	218,038	100.0	598,664	100.0

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

As regards the host country, an increase can also be observed in most cases (see Table 2.12). However, the number of students "estimated" to be hosted by Irish higher education institutions decreased after the introduction

of the Institutional Contract. Similarly, the number of students "estimated" to be hosted by British institutions slightly decreased initially.

Actually, the real number of ERASMUS students in 1997/98 was 86,300 (see Table 2.13). More recent data were not available at the time of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation. Available information suggests that the real number exceeded 100,000 for the first time in the year 2000.

Table 2.13
"Estimated" and Real Number of ERASMUS Students 1997/98 – by Home Country (absolute numbers and percentages)

Home country	Estimated mobility Number	Per cent	Realised mobility Number	Per cent	"Take-up rate"
AT	3,783	2.1	2,438	2.8	64.4
BE	7,615	4.2	4,233	4.9	55.6
DE	30,551	16.8	13,785	16.0	45.1
DK	3,977	2.2	1,796	2.1	45.2
ES	23,169	12.8	12,468	14.5	53.8
FI	6,341	3.5	3,052	3.5	48.1
FR	31,057	17.1	15,263	17.7	49.1
GR	4,016	2.2	1,431	1.7	35.6
IE	3,573	2.0	1,509	1.7	42.2
IT	16,576	9.1	9,334	10.8	56.3
LU	39	.0	*	*	*
NL	10,032	5.5	4,171	4.8	41.6
PT	4,477	2.5	1,834	2.1	41.0
SE	6,579	3.6	3,173	3.7	48.2
UK	26,947	14.9	10,582	12.3	39.3
IS	250	.1	123	.1	49.2
NO	2,473	1.4	1,071	1.2	43.3
Total	181,455	100.0	86,263	100.0	47.5

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

The actual number in 1997/98 corresponds to only 48 per cent of the "estimated" number. This "take-up rate" of ERASMUS mobility had dropped from 60 per cent in 1990/91 to 53 per cent in 1993/94 and to 48 per cent in 1997/98, i.e. more than one per cent a year. Obviously, the introduction of Institutional Contracts did not lead to a halt of the continuously increasing over-booking of mobility grants on the part of the institutions.

The gap between the so-called "estimated" and real number of mobile students varies substantially according to home country (see Table 2.13). In 1997/98, the ratio of actual to initially estimated students was highest in Austria (64 per cent), Italy and Belgium (56 per cent each), and lowest in Greece

(35 per cent) and the United Kingdom (39 per cent). In looking at the "take-up rate" by host country (see Table 2.14), we notice that the ratio of students actually hosted to those estimated was highest in the case of those going to the United Kingdom (66 per cent) and Ireland (61 per cent), while it was lowest in the case of those going to Greece (23 per cent). A similar pattern was already observed in 1993/94 (see Teichler and Maiworm, 1997).

Table 2.14
"Estimated" and Real Numbers of ERASMUS Students 1997/98 – by Host Country (absolute numbers and percentages)

Home country	Estimated mobility Number	Per cent	Realised mobility Number	Per cent	"Take-up rate"
AT	4,040	2.2	1,744	2.0	43.2
BE	8,094	4.5	2,855	3.3	35.3
DE	26,050	14.4	10,991	12.7	42.2
DK	4,281	2.4	1,562	1.8	36.5
ES	21,294	11.7	11,426	13.2	53.7
FI	5,738	3.2	1,836	2.1	32.0
FR	31,547	17.4	15,193	17.6	48.2
GR	4,355	2.4	994	1.2	22.8
IE	4,629	2.6	2,844	3.3	61.4
IT	14,739	8.1	5,697	6.6	38.7
LU	27	.0	8	.0	29.6
NL	10,548	5.8	4,939	5.7	46.8
PT	4,710	2.6	1,382	1.6	29.3
SE	6,646	3.7	2,941	3.4	44.3
UK	31,925	17.6	20,938	24.3	65.6
IS	294	.2	88	.1	29.9
NO	2,538	1.4	818	.9	32.2
Total	181,455	100.0	86,256	100.0	47.5

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

As Table 2.15 shows, the ratio between the – real – incoming and outgoing students varies substantially by country. The United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Netherlands hosted more ERASMUS students than they sent abroad in 1997/98. France, Sweden, and Spain hosted about the same number, whilst Belgium, Italy, and Finland hosted only about 60 per cent of the number of ERASMUS students they sent abroad. If we compare these findings to the situation in the early 1990s (see Teichler and Maiworm, 1997, p. 34), we note that the Netherlands are no longer an "exporting" but an "importing" country.

Table 2.15
Ratio of ERASMUS Students Actually Hosted to Students Actually Sent in 1997/98 – by Country (absolute numbers)

	Number of students 1993/94			Number of students 1997/98		
Country	Hosted	Sent	Ratio	Hosted	Sent	Ratio
UK	15,737	10,255	1.53	20,938	10,582	1.98
IE	2,155	1,455	1.48	2,844	1,509	1.88
NL	3,739	4,306	0.89	4,939	4,171	1.18
FR	12,375	8,590	1.44	15,193	15,263	0.99
SE	1,208	1,747	0.69	2,941	3,173	0.93
ES	6,560	6,873	0.95	11,426	12,468	0.92
DK	1,063	1,522	0.70	1,562	1,796	0.87
DE	7,754	10,887	0.71	10,991	13,785	0.80
NO	365	748	0.49	818	1,071	0.76
PT	1,000	1,299	0.77	1,382	1,834	0.75
AT	717	957	0.75	1,744	2,438	0.72
IS	9	57	0.16	88	123	0.72
GR	820	1,424	0.58	994	1,431	0.69
BE	2,559	2,747	0.93	2,855	4,233	0.67
IT	3,944	6,643	0.59	5,697	9,334	0.61
FI	373	962	0.39	1,836	3,052	0.60
Total	60,378	60,472	1.00	86,256	86,263	1.00

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

The distribution of students according to field of study remained more or less stable over the years. The statistics on “estimated” ERASMUS students suggest that this also holds true for the first phase of the SOCRATES programme (see Table 2.16). About 20 per cent of the “estimated” number of ERASMUS students were studying business, about 15 per cent foreign languages, 12 per cent engineering and technology, and 10 per cent social sciences. Other fields of study comprised between one per cent and at most seven per cent of all the “estimated” ERASMUS students.

A comparison of realised student mobility and “estimated” student numbers in 1997/98 shows that the students in business studies (24 per cent) and languages (19 per cent) were more strongly represented among the real mobile students than initially “estimated”, whilst fewer students in engineering and technology (9 per cent) than one could have assumed on the basis of the applications actually participated in ERASMUS.

Table 2.16
Fields of Study of the "Estimated" ERASMUS Students – by Academic Year (absolute numbers and percentages)

	Academic year								Total 1997/98 - 1999/2000	
	1995/96		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000			
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Agricultural sciences	3,876	2.3	4,180	2.3	4,406	2.2	5,048	2.3	13,634	2.3
Architecture, town and regional planning	4,729	2.9	4,659	2.6	5,558	2.8	6,185	2.8	16,402	2.7
Art and design	5,782	3.6	6,785	3.7	8,069	4.1	8,946	4.1	23,800	4.0
Business studies, management sciences	30,005	18.7	35,458	19.5	37,639	18.9	40,264	18.5	113,361	18.9
Education, teacher training	5,879	3.7	7,501	4.1	7,936	4.0	8,544	3.9	23,981	4.0
Engineering, technology	18,910	11.8	22,220	12.2	24,069	12.1	27,225	12.5	73,514	12.3
Geography, geology	3,049	1.9	3,769	2.1	4,314	2.2	4,832	2.2	12,915	2.2
Humanities	5,304	3.3	7,802	4.3	8,903	4.5	9,489	4.4	26,194	4.4
Languages, philology	14,103	8.5	27,799	15.3	29,382	14.8	31,749	14.6	88,930	14.9
Law	11,035	6.9	12,171	6.7	13,378	6.7	14,317	6.6	39,866	6.7
Mathematics, information sciences	5,549	3.5	6,715	3.7	7,195	3.6	8,213	3.8	22,123	3.7
Medical sciences	6,185	3.9	9,265	5.1	10,567	5.3	11,497	5.3	31,329	5.2
Natural sciences	8,795	5.5	10,254	5.7	11,445	5.7	12,477	5.7	34,176	5.7
Social sciences	15,623	9.7	17,650	9.7	20,544	10.3	22,724	10.4	60,918	10.2
Communication and information sciences	2,211	1.4	3,044	1.7	3,245	1.6	3,853	1.8	10,142	1.7
Other subject areas	1,676	1.0	2,183	1.2	2,521	1.3	2,675	1.2	7,379	1.2
Framework agreements	5,961	3.7								
LINGUA	12,018	7.5								
Total	160,470	100.0	181,455	100.0	199,171	100.0	218,038	100.0	598,664	100.0

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Although the ERASMUS classification of subject areas differs from that used by Member States, it is nevertheless evident that students in business studies and foreign languages are over-represented among ERASMUS students. Most other fields of study are somewhat under-represented, with some – notably medical sciences and teacher training – being strongly under-represented.

Altogether, the patterns of student mobility supported within the framework of Institutional Contracts under SOCRATES in recent years did not differ significantly from those that had developed under Inter-University Cooperation Programmes in previous years. However, this analysis is only based on real data of the first year in the framework of the Institutional Contracts and "estimated" data on the first three years. It seems obvious that, with the introduction of Institutional Contracts, the Commission weakened their instruments to shape the composition of ERASMUS students by field of study and countries. Therefore, one can expect that the concentration of student mobility in certain host countries and fields may increase in the future.

2.7 Teaching Staff Mobility

With the launching of SOCRATES, support for teaching staff mobility increased. The number of "expected" mobile teachers grew from 13,866 in 1995/96 and 12,755 in 1996/97 to 30,486 in 1997/98, 34,035 in 1998/99, and 40,891 in 1999/2000. Greater teaching staff mobility was expected to provide a European dimension for non-mobile students and to contribute to curricular innovation. Unfortunately, no figures on the actual participation in teaching staff mobility were available at the time of this study. Thus, the actual development is not yet known. According to estimates, the "take-up rate" is about 20-25 per cent in recent years. On average, each new or renewed Institutional Contract comprised 22 "estimated" mobile teachers. Only small numbers, i.e. between 1 to 10, were given in 38 per cent of the contracts, between 11 and 50 grants in 34 per cent, and more than 50 grants in 12 per cent of the Institutional Contracts. By and large, the average "estimated" number did not change significantly during the period under study (see Table 2.17).

The proportion of institutions which did not apply for teaching grants fell from 20 per cent in 1997/98 to 12 per cent in 1999/2000.

If the full number of teachers contracted for actually went abroad, 8 per cent of the teaching staff of the institutions holding an Institutional Contract could temporarily teach abroad.

According to the applications, about 60 per cent of mobile teachers came from the five largest Member States of the European Union: 14 per cent each from Germany and the United Kingdom, 12 per cent from France, 11 per cent from Spain, and 9 per cent from Italy. Most of the other countries received only between 1 and 2 per cent of the grants. With the exception of France, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Iceland, a small increase in the number of "estimated" mobile teachers specified in the successful applications could be observed between 1997/98 and 1999/2000. However, the increase was not continuous in Italy and Sweden (see Table 2.18).

Table 2.17
Number of "Estimated" Mobile Teaching Staff per Home Institution – by Academic Year (percentages and mean)

	Academic year			Total (new/renewed contracts)
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
None	20	15	12	16
1 – 5	21	23	24	23
6 – 10	14	16	15	15
11 – 20	15	14	16	15
21 – 50	18	20	20	19
More than 50	12	12	13	12
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(1,484)	(1,625)	(1,766)	(4,875)
Average number of grants	20.5	20.9	23.2	21.6
Quota of grants for academic staff	7.7	7.9	9.2	8.3
(n)	(1,362)	(1,550)	(1,706)	(4,618)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office
* "Estimated" mobile teaching staff as a percentage of all teaching staff

The distribution of "estimated" teaching staff mobility by host country shows a pattern similar to that of the distribution by home country. Without intervention through selective awards on the part of the Commission, the proportion of teachers going to and coming from individual countries is fairly balanced. However, some countries are under-represented, notably the Central and Eastern European countries.

Some priorities of teaching staff flows reflect the priorities of bilateral cooperation agreements: academic staff members from CEE countries are more often inclined to teach in Germany and less often in the United Kingdom. Finland is a favourite host country for teachers from Estonia, whereas Romanian and Bulgarian teachers go to France. The distribution of academic staff members from EU and EFTA countries by host country is more widespread. This could be a result of more than 10 years of student and staff exchange in the ERASMUS programme. However, there is a disproportionately high exchange of teaching staff among Southern European countries (France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy), whilst exchanges among Nordic countries are rather limited.

Table 2.19 suggests that teaching staff mobility is likely to be frequent in engineering and technology (13 per cent of grants approved), languages and

Table 2.18
Home Country of "Estimated" Number of Mobile Teaching Staff – by Academic Year (absolute numbers and percentages)

	Academic year							
	1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
AT	528	1.7	668	2.0	748	1.8	1,944	1.8
BE	1,314	4.3	1,644	4.8	1,854	4.5	4,812	4.6
DE	4,380	14.4	4,905	14.4	5,701	13.9	14,986	14.2
DK	761	2.5	673	2.0	762	1.9	2,196	2.1
ES	3,611	11.8	3,927	11.5	4,504	11.0	12,042	11.4
FI	1,638	5.4	1,716	5.0	2,126	5.2	5,480	5.2
FR	4,520	14.8	3,846	11.3	4,421	10.8	12,787	12.1
GR	1,195	3.9	1,206	3.5	1,637	4.0	4,038	3.8
IE	510	1.7	446	1.3	500	1.2	1,456	1.4
IT	3,059	10.0	2,910	8.6	3,476	8.5	9,445	9.0
LU	9	.0	4	.0	3	.0	16	.0
NL	1,545	5.1	2,032	6.0	1,960	4.8	5,537	5.3
PT	966	3.2	1,113	3.3	1,453	3.6	3,532	3.4
SE	1,150	3.8	1,050	3.1	1,253	3.1	3,453	3.3
UK	4,761	15.6	4,733	13.9	4,898	12.0	14,392	13.7
LI	0	.0	1	.0	1	.0	2	.0
IS	48	.2	39	.1	47	.1	134	.1
NO	491	1.6	531	1.6	526	1.3	1,548	1.5
BG	0	.0	0	.0	73	.2	73	.1
CY	0	.0	48	.1	79	.2	127	.1
CZ	0	.0	572	1.7	772	1.9	1,344	1.3
EE	0	.0	0	.0	112	.3	112	.1
HU	0	.0	530	1.6	809	2.0	1,339	1.3
LT	0	.0	0	.0	147	.4	147	.1
LV	0	.0	0	.0	141	.3	141	.1
PL	0	.0	683	2.0	1,230	3.0	1,913	1.8
RO	0	.0	745	2.2	1,297	3.2	2,042	1.9
SK	0	.0	13	.0	230	.6	243	.2
SI	0	.0	0	.0	131	.3	131	.1
Total	30,486	100.0	34,035	100.0	40,891	100.0	105,412	100.0

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

philology (13 per cent), business and management (11 per cent), and social sciences (11 per cent). No major changes can be observed in recent years. The composition of teaching staff by field of study corresponds to the size of these fields at universities in Europe more closely than the composition of ERASMUS students by field of study.

Table 2.19
Fields of "Estimated" Mobile Teaching Staff – by Academic Year
(absolute numbers and percentages)

	Academic year							
	1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Agricultural sciences	923	3.0	1,075	3.2	1,329	3.3	3,327	3.2
Architecture, town and regional planning	1,074	3.5	1,285	3.8	1,391	3.4	3,750	3.6
Art and design	1,629	5.3	2,040	6.0	2,462	6.0	6,131	5.8
Business studies, management	3,564	11.7	3,665	10.8	4,317	10.6	11,546	11.0
Education, teacher training	1,851	6.1	2,010	5.9	2,432	5.9	6,293	6.0
Engineering, technology	3,628	11.9	4,491	13.2	5,519	13.5	13,638	12.9
Geography, geology	959	3.1	1,090	3.2	1,280	3.1	3,329	3.2
Humanities	1,705	5.6	1,674	4.9	2,043	5.0	5,422	5.1
Languages, philology	4,250	13.9	4,172	12.3	5,010	12.3	13,432	12.7
Law	1,550	5.1	1,515	4.5	1,763	4.3	4,828	4.6
Mathematics, informatics	1,682	5.5	1,967	5.8	2,474	6.1	6,123	5.8
Medical sciences	1,935	6.3	2,349	6.9	2,714	6.6	6,998	6.6
Natural sciences	1,432	4.7	1,841	5.4	2,220	5.4	5,493	5.2
Social sciences	3,352	11.0	3,766	11.1	4,514	11.0	11,632	11.0
Communication and information sciences	466	1.5	492	1.4	630	1.5	1,588	1.5
Other fields	486	1.6	603	1.8	793	1.9	1,882	1.8
Total	30,486	100.0	34,035	100.0	40,891	100.0	105,412	100.0

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

The current situation in the Central and Eastern European countries is characterised by a concentration of "estimated" teaching staff mobility within a selected number of fields. Engineering and technology and natural sciences are over-represented in most CEE countries. Taking into account that cooperation in these areas was on the priority list in the TEMPUS Phare programme, it is not surprising that the already established cooperation agreements in these fields were prolonged during the first two years of participation in SOCRATES.

2.8 Curriculum Development

In 1995/96 and in 1996/97, curriculum project awards were still granted in the framework of Inter-university-Cooperation Projects to 226 ICPs and 157

ICPs respectively. With the introduction of the Institutional Contract, 206 new curriculum development projects were supported by the European Commission in 1997/98. Most were continued in the subsequent year and additionally, 87 new projects were established (see Table 2.20). In the academic year 1999/2000, another 43 curriculum projects were set up and 216 projects were continued either from 1997/98 or 1998/99.

From a total of 336 projects that were awarded support since the introduction of the Institutional Contract,

– 70 were classified as curricula at initial or intermediate level (CDI),
– 117 as programmes at advanced level (CDA),
– 131 as modules focusing on the history, society, culture, politics or economics of other European countries (EM), and
– 18 as integrated language courses (ILC).

Table 2.20
Number of Curriculum Development Projects – by Academic Year
(absolute numbers)

	Academic year										
	1997/98			1998/99			1999/2000			Total	
	Contracts			Contracts			Contracts			Contracts	
	New	Renewed	Total	New	Renewed	Total	New	Renewed	Total	New	Renewed
CDI	48	-	48	14	45	59	8	54	62	70	59
CDA	65	-	65	27	54	81	25	63	88	117	78
EM	82	-	82	40	74	114	9	87	96	131	104
ILC	11	-	11	6	8	14	1	12	13	18	12
Total	206	-	206	87	181	268	43	216	259	336	253

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

While the total number of curriculum development projects which received support did not change substantially in the last two years of SOCRATES I, the number of newly approved projects decreased significantly. Besides the limitations of available budgets for this strand, uncertainties about the future of SOCRATES could explain this support policy.

A curriculum development project comprised on average 12.5 higher education institutions from 5 different countries. The average number of participating institutions was highest in projects concerned with curricula at initial or intermediate level (13.7) and lowest in projects working on integrated language courses (9.8).

Table 2.21
Fields of Curriculum Development Projects – by Type of Project
(percentages)

	Type of CD-project				Total
	CDI	CDA	EM	ILC	
Agricultural sciences	4	5	3	0	4
Architecture, town and regional planning	0	7	3	0	4
Art and design	6	8	8	6	7
Business studies, management	6	3	13	17	8
Education, teacher training	14	7	9	6	9
Engineering, technology	21	9	5	22	11
Geography, geology	7	3	4	0	4
Humanities	1	4	4	0	3
Languages, philology	1	5	2	28	4
Law	1	3	11	6	6
Mathematics, information sciences	7	8	3	0	5
Medical sciences	11	9	8	17	10
Natural sciences	1	6	2	0	3
Social sciences	10	14	19	0	14
Communication and information sciences	6	3	2	0	3
Other fields	1	4	6	0	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(70)	(117)	(131)	(18)	(336)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Most of the curriculum development projects were established in the fields of social sciences (14 per cent), engineering and technology (11 per cent), medical sciences (10 per cent), education and teacher training (9 per cent), and business and management (8 per cent). As Table 2.21 shows, the development of initial and intermediate curricula was most often undertaken by engineering and technology departments (21 per cent) and education and teacher training departments (14 per cent). The development of courses at an advanced level was relatively frequent in the social sciences (14 per cent), and the development of modules was frequent in the history, society, culture, politics or economics of other European countries (19 per cent). The strong role of languages and philology in the development of integrated language courses is less of a surprise than the relatively high proportion of engineering faculties in this area (22 per cent).

One out of four curricula projects was coordinated by an institution from the United Kingdom, every seventh by a French institution, and every tenth by a German institution. Other countries where more than 5 per cent of the projects were coordinated were the Netherlands (9 per cent), Italy (8 per cent), Finland and Belgium (6 per cent each). As Table 2.22 shows, institutions in the United Kingdom coordinated the most projects concerned with the development of European modules (33 per cent) and programmes at advanced level (26 per cent), whilst German institutions coordinated the most projects for curriculum development at the initial or intermediate level (21 per cent).

Table 2.22
Country of Coordinating Higher Education Institution of Curriculum Development Projects – by Type of Project (percentages)

	Type of CD-project				Total
	CDI	CDA	EM	ILC	
AT	4	3	4	0	4
BE	6	5	5	22	6
DE	21	4	8	22	10
DK	4	0	2	0	1
ES	1	5	2	6	3
FI	9	3	8	6	6
FR	7	15	18	6	14
GR	0	6	2	0	3
IE	0	1	1	0	1
IT	9	15	2	0	8
NL	9	9	8	22	9
PT	0	0	1	0	0
SE	7	3	2	0	4
UK	19	26	33	11	26
IS	0	1	0	0	0
NO	0	0	2	0	1
CZ	0	0	0	6	0
HU	3	0	2	0	1
PL	1	1	0	0	1
RO	0	3	1	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(70)	(117)	(131)	(18)	(336)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Although institutions in Central and Eastern Europe played only a minor role as coordinators of curriculum projects (3 per cent), they began establishing cooperation agreements immediately after they became eligible to participate in SOCRATES in 1998/99. In the final year of SOCRATES I, they took part in about one third of the new projects and in about one fifth of the continued projects.

Table 2.23
Participating Countries in Curriculum Development Projects – by Type of Project (percentages of CDs**)**

	Type of CD-project				Total
	CDI	CDA	EM	ILC	
AT	19	15	11	0	13
BE	29	29	28	22	28
DE	67	50	52	72	56
DK	17	17	15	11	16
ES	37	53	44	39	46
FI	41	26	37	44	35
FR	50	52	53	44	52
GR	16	25	22	6	21
IE	23	10	12	6	13
IT	30	44	36	6	36
LU	1	0	0	0	0
NL	39	41	39	44	40
PT	20	30	20	22	24
SE	31	24	25	33	26
UK	74	64	75	56	70
CH	0	0	1	0	0
IS	1	1	0	6	1
NO	10	8	15	6	11
BG	1	0	0	0	0
CY	1	0	0	0	0
CZ	6	7	5	11	6
EE	1	0	0	0	0
HU	4	5	8	6	6
LT	0	1	0	0	0
LV	0	1	0	0	0
PL	6	4	2	0	4
RO	3	9	5	0	6
SI	0	1	0	0	0
SK	0	2	1	0	1
Total	529	519	505	433	511
(n)	(70)	(117)	(131)	(18)	(336)

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Institutions from all EU and EFTA countries participated in some curriculum development projects. As Table 2.23 shows, institutions from the United Kingdom were either coordinators or partners in 70 per cent of the projects, institutions from Germany in 56 per cent, and institutions from France in 52 per cent. As one might expect, institutions in smaller countries participated less frequently, although the differences between them are worth noting, e.g. between Austria (13 per cent) and Finland (35 per cent).

2.9 Intensive Programmes

Intensive Programmes (IP) supported by SOCRATES are short study programmes, i.e. between 10 days' and 3 months' duration, that bring together students and staff from different participating European countries. Their aim is to enable

- specific topics to be taught efficiently and multi-nationally,
- students to work together in multinational groups,
- members of the teaching staff to exchange views on teaching content and approaches.

The number of IPs supported before the transition from Inter-University-Co-operation Programmes to Institutional Contracts was 337 in 1995/96 and 341 in 1996/97. When the Institutional Contract was introduced, the number of IPs dropped to 295 in 1997/98 and to 288 in 1998/99. In the final year of the first phase of SOCRATES, there was a slight increase to 310 IPs. As Table 2.24 shows, about two-thirds of the IPs that were awarded support in the framework of an Institutional Contract were continued for a second or even a third year.

Table 2.24
Number of Intensive Programmes Awarded Support in the Framework of SOCRATES Institutional Contracts – by Academic Year (absolute numbers)

	Academic year			Total
	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
New	295	133	119	547
Renewed	–	155	191	346
Total	295	288	310	893

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

On average, 15 higher education institutions in 7 countries participated in an Intensive Programme. Most IPs involved institutions from more than three countries (participation of three countries is the minimum requirement): 15 per cent included institutions in 4 countries, 16 per cent in 5 countries, 25 per

cent in 6 to 7 countries, and 31 per cent institutions in more than 7 countries (see Table 2.25).

Almost equal numbers of Intensive Programmes were coordinated by higher education institutions in the United Kingdom (14 per cent), France (13 per cent), the Netherlands (13 per cent), and Germany (12 per cent). All other countries coordinated between 1 and 6 per cent of the IPs each. All institutions in Central and Eastern European countries together coordinated only 5 per cent.

Table 2.25
Number of Countries Represented in Intensive Programmes – by First Year of Support (percentages and mean of Intensive Programmes)

	First year of support			Total
	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	
Up to 3 countries	13	13	14	13
4 countries	15	17	13	15
5 countries	17	13	16	16
6-7 countries	23	31	26	25
More than 7 countries	33	26	31	31
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(295)	(133)	(119)	(547)
Average number of countries	6.7	6.3	6.5	6.6

Source: Database of the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office

Institutions in the United Kingdom (74 per cent), Germany (67 per cent), France (59 per cent), Spain (54 per cent), and the Netherlands (50 per cent) participated in half or more of the Intensive Programmes. As one might expect, lower percentages could be observed for Irish (20 per cent), Austrian (22 per cent), and Danish (25 per cent) higher education institutions.

Most Intensive Programmes were set up in the social sciences (13 per cent), education and teacher training (12 per cent), engineering and technology (10 per cent), and medical sciences (9 per cent).

Generally speaking, the composition of Intensive Programmes by participating countries and by field is very similar to that of projects concerned with curriculum development. This could be because a core of higher education institutions in Europe had already established international academic cooperation beyond mobility, whereas, for the majority of institutions, the exchange of students and teachers constituted the only way of internationalising teaching and learning.

3. The Policies of Higher Education Institutions

By Friedhelm Maiworm and Ulrich Teichler

3.1 Aims, Design, and Procedures of the Survey

When the ERASMUS programme began to be administered according to the new SOCRATES principles, the centres of the higher education institutions were expected to play a more important role than in the past. Instead of networks of cooperating departments, each institution had to submit an application. It had to provide evidence that mobility and cooperation between institutions in different countries were based on bilateral agreements and included a European Policy Statement which explained the rationale behind an institution's European activities and the role SOCRATES support would play in this framework. The new SOCRATES approach was expected to strengthen the role of central management of the higher education institutions both with respect to:

– setting coherent goals for Europeanisation and developing or strengthening strategic thinking in order to pursue these goals successfully, and
– improving quality and efficiency in terms of decision-making, administration of the programme, and support and services.

A SOCRATES-ERASMUS 2000 Higher Education Institutions Survey was undertaken to examine how the key persons at the centre of higher education institutions perceived their institutional policies, how SOCRATES was administered, and how its impacts were assessed. All the institutions that were granted SOCRATES support in 1998/99 were sent a questionnaire and asked to provide information on:

– the institutional profile (fields of study, number of students and staff, etc.),
– SOCRATES-supported activities undertaken,
– objectives of Europeanisation and internationalisation,
– administration and funding of SOCRATES-supported activities,
– support and services rendered with respect to international cooperation and mobility, and
– their assessment of SOCRATES-supported activities and their impact.

The questionnaire comprised 24 questions and over 600 variables. It was sent to 1,608 institutions in the first week of February 2000. About six weeks later, a reminder with a copy of the questionnaire was sent to all the institutions which had not answered. By the end of May 2000, 875 questionnaires were returned. The return rate of 54.4 per cent slightly exceeded that of a similar survey undertaken in 1994 on institutions participating in ERASMUS in 1992/93 (Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler, 1996).

Some limitations of the survey should be borne in mind. The length of the questionnaire was short in order not to overload the institutions, which might see it as a further administrative burden in addition to the already time-consuming processes of SOCRATES application, procedure management, and reporting obligations. Moreover, in an institutional survey, there is the risk that the answers may reflect the views of different types of respondents, i.e. the leadership of the institution or the administrators of international relations. One must also remember that, in most cases, information could only be gathered by generalising about departments, i.e. it was not possible to refer to individual departments and fields of study. Finally, the respondents had experienced the new SOCRATES approach for only three years. This could be too short to assess its effects.

The interpretation of the findings of this survey was enriched by comparing them with the results of the study quoted above on the institutional context of the ERASMUS programme undertaken six years earlier. This comparison enabled us to examine a change in the course of time in some respects. The EUROSTRAT surveys conducted by the CRE – Association of European Universities – on the European policies and related institutional strategies of the higher education institutions participating in SOCRATES (Barblan et al., 1998; Barblan et al., 2000) also provided relevant information to interpret the results of the present survey.

3.2 Objectives of Europeanisation and Internationalisation

In the 1990s, many higher education institutions in Europe put great emphasis on strengthening the international and European dimensions of their activities. When asked about the role that various objectives of Europeanisation and internationalisation had played in their institution, most respondents of the SOCRATES-ERASMUS 2000 Higher Education Institutions Survey answered that

– strengthening Europeanisation and internationalisation in general,
– improving the international visibility of the institution, and
– establishing a coherent policy

were on the agenda in the late 1990s and that SOCRATES was seen as playing an important role here. These objectives were most strongly underscored by large higher education institutions (over 20,000 students). Higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe laid greater emphasis on these objectives than their Western European counterparts (see Table 3.1).

A comparison between the statements on the objectives of Europeanisation and internationalisation in general and the role SOCRATES is expected to play shows that many higher education institutions in Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Norway and many Central and Eastern European countries see its role

as crucial for their internationalisation and Europeanisation policies. In contrast, SOCRATES is least emphasised as a key element for internationalisation policies in Sweden, the United Kingdom and some Central and Eastern European countries.

Table 3.1
Importance of Overall Objectives of Europeanisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in the Late 1990s and the Role SOCRATES was Expected to Play – by Country Groups (percentages*)

	Country groups		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Strengthening Europeanisation/ internationalisation in general			
Importance of objective	85	95	86
Expected role of SOCRATES	77	87	78
Introduction of a coherent policy for Europeanisation/internationalisation			
Importance of objective	68	81	70
Expected role of SOCRATES	65	84	67
Improvement of the international visibility of the institution			
Importance of objective	82	90	83
Expected role of SOCRATES	70	86	71

Question 1.1: How important were the following Europeanisation and internationalisation objectives at your institution during the last five years and what role was SOCRATES expected to play in this context?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “very important” to 5 = “not important at all”

As regards specific activities, most institutions participating in SOCRATES aimed to

– increase the number of mobile students,
– improve the quality of teaching and learning, the administrative support and academic advice for mobile students, and the arrangements for recognition, and
– increase the mobility of teachers (see Table 3.2).

Notably, higher education institutions in Finland, Spain and Portugal, as well as in most Central and Eastern European countries, pursued these aims and SOCRATES was generally seen as playing an important role here. Again, these objectives were advocated most strongly by the largest institutions.

Fewer SOCRATES-supported institutions put emphasis on improvements for non-mobile students, curricular matters, research cooperation and activities

which are not necessarily based on mobility than on mobility. This is confirmed by the results of the EUROSTRAT project.

Table 3.2
Important Objectives of Higher Education Institutions Regarding Mobility and Cooperation During the Last Five Years – by Country Group
(percentages*)

	Country groups		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Improvement of the quality of teaching/ learning for mobile students			
Importance of objective	71	80	71
Expected role of SOCRATES	60	83	62
Improvement of recognition (e.g. ECTS)			
Importance of objective	70	79	70
Expected role of SOCRATES	76	85	77
Increase in number of outgoing students			
Importance of objective	86	98	87
Expected role of SOCRATES	84	96	85
Increase in number of incoming students			
Importance of objective	78	86	78
Expected role of SOCRATES	77	76	77
Increase in number of outgoing teaching staff			
Importance of objective	67	86	69
Expected role of SOCRATES	67	85	69
Increase in number of incoming teaching staff			
Importance of objective	65	86	67
Expected role of SOCRATES	63	74	64
Improvement of the administrative support for mobile students			
Importance of objective	72	76	73
Expected role of SOCRATES	62	70	63
Improvement of academic advice and support for mobile students			
Importance of objective	72	80	73
Expected role of SOCRATES	62	74	63

Question 1.1: How important were the following Europeanisation and internationalisation objectives in your institution during the last five years and what role was SOCRATES expected to play in this context?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “very important” to 5 = “not important at all”

Most of the institutions that laid stress on these activities stated that SOCRATES played a less important role in carrying them out than it played with regard to mobility. SOCRATES was not only viewed as playing a limited role in research, but was also considered of little importance for the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning for non-mobile students (see Table 3.3). However, the views varied according to country: more than three quarters of Greek as well as Central and Eastern European institutions expected SOCRATES to play a major role in contributing to the internationalisation and Europeanisation of curricula.

Most SOCRATES-supported higher education institutions seemed to pursue the goal of developing their international and European activities. They wanted to involve many departments and fields and increase the number of their

Table 3.3
Important Objectives of Europeanisation and Internationalisation at the Higher Education Institutions During the Last Five Years – by Country Group (percentages*)

	Institution from		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Improvement of the quality of teaching/ learning for non-mobile students			
Importance of objective	51	70	53
Expected role of SOCRATES	31	37	32
Improvement of teaching/learning measures (e.g. ODL)			
Importance of objective	35	54	37
Expected role of SOCRATES	22	41	24
Europeanisation/internationalisation of curricula			
Importance of objective	59	78	61
Expected role of SOCRATES	55	76	57
Development of joint curricula			
Importance of objective	42	61	44
Expected role of SOCRATES	44	56	45
Participation in thematic networks			
Importance of objective	29	50	31
Expected role of SOCRATES	34	48	35
Improvement of the quality of research			
Importance of objective	50	66	52
Expected role of SOCRATES	20	23	20

Question 1.1: How important were the following Europeanisation and internationalisation objectives in your institution during the last five years and what role was SOCRATES expected to play in this context?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “very important” to 5 = “not important at all”

partners both in Europe and beyond (see Table 3.4). This was especially true for higher education institutions in Spain and in various Central and Eastern European countries.

Many institutions intended to concentrate their international activities on certain fields or partners. Some preferred this to a further spread, whereas others pursued both a policy of concentration and of spread. Dutch and Irish higher education institutions stated that they aimed to concentrate on their international and European activities.

Table 3.4
Important Objectives by Higher Education Institutions to Change the Pattern of SOCRATES-Supported Activities During the Last Five Years – by Country Group (percentages*)

	Institution from		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Increase of number of partner institutions in Europe			
Importance of objective	63	93	66
Expected role of SOCRATES	74	89	76
Concentrate/reduce partnerships to the most suitable ones			
Importance of objective	53	49	53
Expected role of SOCRATES	47	44	47
Increase of number of partner institutions outside Europe			
Importance of objective	53	42	52
Expected role of SOCRATES	14	6	13
Spread of European/international activities across many subject areas			
Importance of objective	55	73	57
Expected role of SOCRATES	43	65	45
Concentration of major European/international activities on a selected number of subject areas			
Importance of objective	32	40	32
Expected role of SOCRATES	28	40	29

Question 1.1: How important were the following Europeanisation and internationalisation objectives in your institution during the last five years and what role was SOCRATES expected to play in this context?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “very important” to 5 = “not important at all”

3.3 Participation in European Programmes and Mobility

The SOCRATES-supported higher education institutions that answered the questionnaire had an average share of some 6 per cent of foreign students and 1 per cent of foreign staff and some 3 per cent of their students studied abroad. On average, the total number of incoming and outgoing ERASMUS (or LINGUA) students was about 50 per institution; slightly more than one per cent of the student population were ERASMUS students.

The SOCRATES-supported higher education institutions mainly cooperated with institutions from nine countries. Partner institutions were mostly located in

– Germany (16.6 per cent),
– United Kingdom (16.0 per cent),
– France (14.1 per cent), and
– Spain (10.0 per cent).

The institutions reported that ECTS was introduced in most of the groups of fields of study for which SOCRATES support was applied for. The way the question was posed did not allow us to determine whether ECTS was introduced in the group of fields as a whole or in only one or a few single programmes. According to the answers received, ECTS was introduced most frequently in management, engineering, humanities, language studies and law.

21 per cent of the institutions which answered the questionnaire coordinated curriculum-related projects (IP, CD, ODL) in the academic year 1998/99. A further 30 per cent were only involved as partners. Another 32 per cent saw one or more applications for curriculum-related projects rejected.

90 per cent of the SOCRATES-supported higher education institutions provided language training for incoming students or staff, either by themselves or in another institution on their behalf. 78 per cent provided training in the host country language for ERASMUS students, by means of courses which, in most cases, were also open to other foreign students. In addition, most institutions provided language training in an average of five foreign languages, the most frequent being English, French, German and Spanish.

Higher education institutions in the United Kingdom (38 per cent) and Greece (35 per cent) often played a coordinating role in curriculum-related projects. Participation was most frequent in Spanish, Greek and Irish institutions (about two thirds each) and least frequent in institutions in Norway and most Central and Eastern European countries.

Of the higher education institutions which answered the questionnaire, 98 per cent received ERASMUS support and 18 per cent LINGUA (Action C) support. Many institutions supported by SOCRATES also received support from other European programmes:

Table 3.5
Participation of SOCRATES-Supported Higher Education Institutions in Curriculum-Related Projects (IP, CD, ODL) in 1998/99 – by Country (percentages)

	Country																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
a. Number of projects coordinated																					
None	71	65	79	82	70	77	84	65	93	77	71	90	87	62	86	87	78	100	84	80	79
One	20	28	16	14	18	10	12	5	0	11	19	5	7	24	10	13	22	0	0	20	14
Two	2	8	4	2	3	10	1	25	0	6	0	5	7	9	0	0	0	0	5	0	4
Three and more	7	0	1	2	9	3	3	5	7	6	10	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	11	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
b. Total number of projects participating																					
None	44	53	56	59	45	44	60	35	43	57	29	45	53	47	76	73	61	71	47	80	54
One	24	25	20	14	15	23	25	15	7	17	29	14	20	16	0	13	17	25	16	10	19
Two	10	13	11	16	6	15	10	10	36	11	14	19	7	9	7	7	13	0	16	10	11
Three and more	22	10	13	10	33	18	5	40	14	15	29	21	20	29	17	7	9	4	21	0	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
c. Number of projects applied for which were rejected																					
None	71	70	67	63	52	69	75	70	57	72	57	71	53	60	76	53	74	83	47	100	68
One	20	20	16	24	18	18	11	5	29	9	10	14	13	20	14	20	13	8	26	0	15
Two	0	3	7	4	6	3	8	5	7	2	24	0	13	2	3	13	4	8	0	0	5
Three and more	10	8	10	8	24	10	6	20	7	17	10	14	20	18	7	13	9	0	26	0	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(41)	(40)	(141)	(49)	(33)	(39)	(154)	(20)	(14)	(47)	(21)	(42)	(15)	(45)	(29)	(15)	(23)	(24)	(19)	(10)	(821)

Question 5.2: For how many curriculum-related projects (IP, CD, ODL) did your institution receive SOCRATES support in the academic years 1995/96 and 1998/99 and how many applications were rejected?

Table 3.6
Financial Sources of Higher Education Institutions for Student Mobility Grants and for Activities Linked to International Policies 1998/99 – by Country (mean of percentages)

	Country																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
Student mobility grants																					
Own funds of the institution	3.4	10.1	8.0	20.8	18.9	26.9	11.5	10.5	10.7	21.7	24.9	13.2	14.1	5.2	5.9	8.2	15.1	13.2	9.2	27.5	12.7
State funds	52.4	4.1	10.2	21.6	8.3	28.5	10.6	2.2	.0	3.8	12.3	1.1	8.3	4.5	37.8	16.8	10.3	11.5	4.9	5.6	12.8
Region and local communities	3.1	17.1	.8	2.2	6.3	3.2	26.8	.0	.0	9.1	.9	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.8	.0	.0	.0	7.2
European Commission	38.9	65.2	67.2	42.5	58.2	36.6	45.7	85.1	81.1	61.6	43.7	77.7	67.1	88.4	50.4	66.2	67.7	65.2	74.3	50.0	59.5
Other sources	2.1	3.4	13.8	13.0	8.3	4.9	5.4	2.2	8.3	3.9	18.3	8.0	10.5	1.8	5.9	8.4	6.3	10.1	11.6	16.9	7.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(36)	(39)	(130)	(45)	(32)	(36)	(142)	(18)	(15)	(47)	(20)	(37)	(15)	(49)	(27)	(15)	(20)	(23)	(19)	(8)	(773)
Activities Linked to International Policies																					
Own funds of the institution	20.6	30.4	34.8	52.9	42.1	40.7	34.7	41.3	49.4	52.1	63.1	31.1	54.3	58.4	45.7	24.7	24.7	25.8	20.2	34.3	38.6
State funds	41.1	5.9	18.6	24.1	10.3	35.3	23.2	18.3	6.9	2.3	7.7	12.1	28.5	10.7	22.8	33.6	19.3	30.0	23.2	39.2	19.9
Region and local communities	2.1	9.8	2.0	.5	2.0	1.7	8.4	2.5	.0	2.2	.5	.4	1.7	.5	.0	1.5	2.6	1.4	.0	.0	3.1
European Commission	34.5	51.9	34.1	19.1	41.9	19.1	29.0	36.4	41.7	39.9	22.5	51.6	10.5	29.2	25.2	34.7	46.3	40.5	44.6	24.8	33.5
Other sources	1.8	2.1	10.5	3.4	3.7	3.1	4.7	1.6	2.0	3.4	6.3	4.8	5.0	1.2	6.3	5.5	7.1	2.3	12.1	1.7	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(37)	(36)	(115)	(47)	(33)	(35)	(139)	(16)	(15)	(46)	(20)	(36)	(15)	(37)	(26)	(15)	(20)	(22)	(18)	(9)	(737)

Question 2.2: To what extent do the following financial sources contribute to the budget of your institution for the development of your international policy in 1998/99 (Please exclude student grants and costs for regularly employed staff members from the calculation)?
Question 2.3: To what extent do the following financial sources contribute to the budget available for mobility grants for your own students?

– 54 per cent from LEONARDO da VINCI,
– 43 per cent from TEMPUS,
– 23 per cent from the Jean Monnet Action,
– 14 per cent from Training and Mobility of Researchers (TMR),
– 2 per cent from MED CAMPUS, and
– 25 per cent from other European programmes.

As was to be expected, the participation in TEMPUS was dominated by Central and Eastern European institutions. But the pattern of participation in other European programmes was similar to that in 1993/94 (see Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler 1996, pp. 35-40).

3.4 Funding of European and International Activities

This study also aimed to analyse to what extent the higher education institutions spent other funds than those provided by SOCRATES for their European and international activities. As modes of calculation differed among the countries, the institutions were asked to state the sources of their budget for mobile students and their international expenditure, excluding regular staff costs. The answers suggested (see Table 3.6) that:

– on average, about 60 per cent of the funds provided for student mobility grants were SOCRATES funds, and 40 per cent derived from other sources,
– on average, about one-third of the expenses linked to the international policies of the higher education institution were borne by SOCRATES, more than one-third by the institutions themselves, and less than one-third by other sources.

Institutions in Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, and the Netherlands succeeded in obtaining other funds than ERASMUS (and possibly LINGUA) funds to provide grants to students. The Nordic countries and the Netherlands relied least on the European programmes to fund their European and international activities linked to the development of their policies.

3.5 Administration of European and International Activities

On the basis of an analysis of the European Policy Statements and interviews conducted during site visits at selected institutions, the EUROSTRAT study suggested that many SOCRATES-supported institutions established new responsibilities in order to ensure more targeted policies and better management of their European and international activities. The SOCRATES-ERASMUS Higher Education Institutions Survey confirms this, but suggests that substantial changes in the reallocation of responsibilities were less frequent than expected, as is seen in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7
Formal Administrative Responsibilities for European and International and European Activities at the Central and Departmental Level of Higher Education Institutions in Europe 1995 and 2000 (percentages)

	1995	2000
Responsibility with the leadership of the institutions		
President/rector/vice-chancellor	61	54
Vice-president etc. in charge of a wider range of functions	20	20
Vice-president etc. especially appointed for internat. activities	9	14
Executive officer of department for internat. relations, etc	6	8
SOCRATES Coordinator	4	4
Total	100	100
(n)	(757)	(844)
Committee at the central level involved in SOCRATES		
Committee in charge of teaching, research etc. in general	18	17
Committee in charge of international/European policies and activities	24	31
Committee especially in charge of SOCRATES	13	19
No committee involved	45	32
Total	100	100
(n)	(699)	(835)
Main persons responsible in the faculties/departments		
Dean	24	22
Administrative staff	19	21
Academic appointed/elected for European/ international activities	38	44
Academic informally in charge	16	10
Other	3	3
Total	100	100
(n)	(718)	(829)
Faculty/department committees involved in SOCRATES		
Committee in charge of teaching, research etc. in general	18	16
Committee in charge of international/European policies and activities	15	20
Committee especially in charge of SOCRATES	10	17
No committee involved	57	47
Total	100	100
(n)	(630)	(766)

Question 2.1d: What formal administrative responsibilities for European/international activities were established at your institution in 1995 and are established now?

– The number of institutions which appointed a pro-rector as the person responsible for European and international activities increased from 9 per cent in 1995 to 14 per cent in 1999/2000.

– The number of institutions which have established committees partly in charge of international activities or exclusively in charge of SOCRATES and possibly other European programmes increased from 37 per cent to 50 per cent.

– The clear distribution of responsibilities for European and international activities at department level increased from 79 per cent to 88 per cent, notably through the appointment and election of individual academics (from 38 per cent to 44 per cent).

– The number of institutions where departments established committees in charge of European and international issues, or specifically of SOCRATES and possibly other programmes, increased from 25 per cent to 37 per cent during the period examined.

The highest increase in institutionalisation of European and international responsibilities were observed in Spain, Poland and Romania. By the year 2000, Spanish and Romanian higher education institutions had the highest level, followed by Belgium, the Netherlands, and Hungary.

Another question aimed at establishing which actors played an important role in determining SOCRATES-related policies and in taking key decisions for the higher education institutions as a whole. As can be seen in Table 3.8:

– key managers (rectors, pro-rectors etc.) in most cases took the main decisions regarding funds for international activities,

– both key managers and staff of international offices played a key role with regard to decisions concerning administrative and service support rendered and determining public relations activities concerning the internationalisation of the institution,

– staff of international offices often prepared the administrative agenda for cooperation and exchange, determined the use of resources provided by SOCRATES and monitored SOCRATES-related activities,

– both staff of international offices and academics in charge were often important actors – sometimes together with key managers of the institutions and with deans – in taking the initiative for the development of joint curricula, establishing or discontinuing partnerships, and implementing ECTS, whereas

– committees at the central level, committees within departments, administrators in departments, and students were key actors in only a minority of cases.

The institutions in Central and Eastern Europe tended to reserve a much stronger policy and key decision role for the rectors, pro-rectors, and deans than Western European institutions, which left more room for manoeuvre to staff of international offices and academics in charge.

Table 3.8
Role of Various Actors at Higher Education Institutions in Socrates-Related Policies and Key Decisions (percentages*)

	Key manager	International officer	Central committee	Dean	Spec. Administrator	Spec. Academic staff	Decentralised committee	Students
Formulating EPS	59	69	27	16	12	22	5	4
Preparing the academic agenda for cooperation and exchange	28	63	21	20	16	43	7	4
Taking the initiative for the development of joint curricula	28	40	15	23	10	47	8	2
Preparing the administrative agenda for cooperation and exchange	15	77	17	8	20	24	5	2
Taking initiatives for establing or discontinuing partnerships	37	59	17	25	14	46	8	4
Taking initiatives for the implementation of ECTS	39	58	24	31	14	34	9	3
Key decisions regarding the administrative/servicesupport	61	55	18	18	11	10	3	2
Key decisions regarding funds for international activities	77	43	23	27	7	10	5	1
Determining the use of resources provided by SOCRATES	41	71	29	14	11	21	6	2
Monitoring SOCRATES-related activities	31	78	26	14	16	29	7	4
Determinng public relations of international activities	60	62	18	21	12	18	5	4
(n)	(862)	(862)	(862)	(862)	(862)	(862)	(862)	(862)

Question 2.4: Role of various actors in SOCRATES-related Policies and Key Decisions.

* Scores 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = “no role at all” to 5 = “very important role”

The larger the institution, the more diverse the actors involved in key decisions. In small institutions, key decisions were often left to the staff of international offices, whereas in large institutions, the key managers and the academics in charge in the departments often played important roles.

3.6 Administrative Support and Services

Almost all the institutions involved in SOCRATES had an international office, either as an independent central unit (in about two-thirds of the cases) or as part of a larger unit. Even at the departmental level, 55 per cent of the institutions had administrative staff and units exclusively in charge of international relations in at least one department, and a further 16 per cent had units serving international relations as part of a broad spectrum of functions.

Since ERASMUS and LINGUA student mobility activities were placed under the umbrella of SOCRATES, the growing tasks of the centres of the higher education institutions led to greater institutionalisation of support and services for SOCRATES. In 1999/2000, some 40 per cent of the institutions had units exclusively in charge of SOCRATES and 30 per cent had personnel specifically in charge of SOCRATES. SOCRATES offices are most frequently found in large institutions (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9
Those Responsible for Administrative/Service Activities of SOCRATES at the Central Level of Higher Education Institutions – by Number of Students Enrolled (percentages)

	Number of students enrolled						Total
	Up to 500	501 – 2,000	2,001 – 5,000	5,001 – 10,000	10,001 – 20,000	More than 20,000	
International office/unit exclusively in charge of SOCRATES	18	34	40	45	52	62	39
Individual person(s) exclusively in charge of SOCRATES	49	27	18	27	19	22	28
Neither	32	34	39	27	27	15	30
Other	1	5	3	0	2	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(136)	(202)	(137)	(102)	(98)	(94)	(769)

Question 3.2: Who is responsible for the administrative/service activities of SOCRATES (and possibly other European programmes) at the central level?

On average, the higher education institutions which participate in SOCRATES have four staff positions (full-time equivalent) for international activities at the central or departmental level. This is less than two per cent of all administrative staff. Two staff positions on average – half the staff in charge of international administration and services – are specifically in charge of SOCRATES.

The data of the previous survey show that, in 1993/94, higher education institutions involved in ERASMUS had on average 6.5 persons in charge of international administration and services, including language centres, etc. (Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler, 1996, p. 74). The two surveys are not comparable, however, since the previous survey included international functions and units which were not international offices, e.g. the administration of language centres. Yet, the new findings suggest that international offices have not substantially grown in size as a consequence of the administrative tasks related to SOCRATES or of further growth of internationalisation activities.

Table 3.10 shows that some 3 per cent of administrative staff at institutions with less than 5,000 students and 1 per cent at those with more than 20,000 students are in charge of international relations. There is an economy of scale effect leading to lower student: international officer ratios in large institutions.

Table 3.10
Number of Administrative Staff Employed at the Higher Education Institutions in 1998/99 – by Number of Students Enrolled (Mean)

	Number of students enrolled						Total
	Up to 500	501 – 2,000	2,001 – 5,000	5,001 – 10,000	10,001 – 20,000	More than 20,000	
Total administrative staff	13.3	38.0	83.3	221.1	448.8	1052.1	242.2
Administrative staff in charge of international relations	.9	1.7	3.0	4.7	6.1	11.0	3.9
Administrative staff specifically in charge of SOCRATES	.6	.8	1.3	2.5	2.6	5.7	1.9
(n)	(118)	(173)	(121)	(87)	(92)	(80)	(671)

Question 6.3: Please state the number of administrative staff at the central and department level in 1998/99 (please calculate in full-time equivalents).

Table 3.11
Role of Various Actors at Higher Educaton Institutions in Activities Linked to the Mobility of Outgoing Students in 1998/99 (percentages*)

	Central: Special staff	Central: Admin. staff	Faculty: Special staff	Faculty: Admin. staff	Faculty: Acad. staff	Students
Selection of students	43	10	32	8	61	8
Academic matters (incl. approval of study programme)	35	10	30	8	69	5
Preparation for the period abroad	53	21	28	11	42	22
Information about ERASMUS/ LINGUA and recognition matters	66	25	29	13	37	7
Matters concerning financial support	68	33	20	10	13	3
Information about the host institution	59	22	30	10	41	14
Work placement	36	16	20	8	28	8
(n)	(860)	(860)	(860)	(860)	(860)	(860)

Question 3.4: Who carries out the following activities related to student mobility within ERASMUS and/or LINGUA (Action C).

* Scores 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = “no role at all” to 5 = “very important role”

Table 3.12
Role of Various Actors at Higher Education Institutions in Supporting Incoming Students in 1998/99 (percentages*)

	Central: Special staff	Central: Admin. staff	Faculty: Special staff	Faculty: Admin. staff	Faculty: Acad. staff	Students
Academic matters (incl. recognition of study achievements)	43	15	27	10	56	3
Accommodation services	50	38	14	13	8	8
Special orientation programme	46	17	22	7	24	14
Special courses besides regular course programme	36	12	17	6	28	2
Organising social events	39	17	15	6	11	46
Registration, etc. at own institution	44	46	17	24	10	4
Matters concerning financial support	43	26	12	8	6	3
Other practical matters (e.g. insurance)	47	37	13	13	7	12
Information about own institution	62	27	25	13	32	12
Work placements	29	13	17	8	25	4
(n)	(841)	(841)	(841)	(841)	(841)	(841)

Question 3.4: Who carries out the following activities related to student mobility within ERASMUS and/or LINGUA (Action C)?

* Scores 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = “no role at all” to 5 = “very important role”

The core activities of administering student exchange, e.g. selection of students, establishment of study programmes and modes of recognition, supporting the students' preparation for the period abroad and their installation upon arrival etc., are often undertaken in cooperation with different persons and units. The representatives of higher education institutions pointed out that it was mostly academics who played an important role in selecting students and the study programme and in its recognition, both with regard to incoming and outgoing students (see Tables 3.11 and 3.12). In contrast, staff of international offices at the central level played the major role in matters concerning information, funding, and services for preparation of study periods abroad or upon arrival of foreign students.

In a previous study, institutions were asked a similar question about the ways of administering student exchanges in 1993/94 (see Table 3.13). Although the question was stated differently, one could compare the results.

Table 3.13
Role of Various Actors at Higher Education Institutions in Activities Linked to the Mobility of Outgoing Students in 1993/94 (percentages*)

	Central: Special staff	Central: Admin. staff	Faculty: Special staff	Faculty: Admin. staff	Faculty: Acad. staff	Students
Selection of students	18	3	17	3	64	2
Academic matters (incl. approval of study programme)	17	6	17	4	64	2
Preparation for the period abroad	30	6	18	5	43	11
Information about ERASMUS/ LINGUA and recognition matters	44	12	18	5	38	3
Matters concerning financial support	54	17	12	4	17	5
Information about the host institution	36	10	17	5	38	7
Work placements	25	7	15	6	41	6

Question 3.4: Who carries out the following activities related to student mobility within ERASMUS and/or LINGUA (Action C)?

* Scores 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no role at all" to 5 = "very important role"

Source: Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler 1996

In 1998/99, academic staff was involved in as many institutions as in 1993/94 in more or less all matters regarding outgoing students and in all academic matters concerning incoming students. However, in 1998/99, they cooperated or shared the work with administrators at central or departmental level more frequently than before. As regards administrative and service matters in relation to incoming students, academics were far less often involved in 1998/99 than in 1993/94.

Table 3.14
Role of Various Actors at Higher Education Institutions in Supporting Incoming Students in 1993/94 (percentages*)

	Central: Special staff	Central: Admin. staff	Faculty: Special staff	Faculty: Admin. staff	Faculty: Acad. staff	Students
Academic matters (incl. recognition of study achievements)	18	7	14	3	60	1
Accommodation services	43	26	11	8	15	7
Special orientation programme	34	9	12	3	32	5
Special courses besides regular course programme	27	5	14	4	39	2
Organising social events	27	8	10	3	15	31
Registration etc. at own institution	26	16	16	7	37	4
Matters concerning financial support	40	13	10	5	14	4
Other practical matters (e.g. insurance)	42	23	11	7	13	7
Information about own institution	40	13	15	5	30	5
Work placements	23	8	15	6	40	3

Question 3.4: Who carries out the following activities related to student mobility within ERASMUS and/or LINGUA (Action C)?
Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = “no role at all” to 5 = “very important role”
Source: Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler 1996

3.7 Assessment of SOCRATES and Other International Activities

In the SOCRATES-ERASMUS 2000 Higher Education Institutions Survey, the institutions were asked to asses changes in various international activities during the last five years. As Table 3.15 shows, a growth or improvement was felt in all areas, especially in student exchange, administrative support for incoming students, and recognition by the home institution of academic achievements during the study abroad period. Progress was stated by about two-thirds or three-quarters of the institutions. Least progress was reported in respect to cooperation with the region and industry in SOCRATES matters, and teaching in foreign languages and cooperation with partner institutions in administrative matters only improved in about half the cases.

The greatest progress regarding international activities in recent years was perceived by Finnish and Czech higher education institutions. Across countries, small non-university higher education institutions perceived least progress.

Table 3.15
Considerable Improvement of International Activities and Cooperation During the last 5 Years – by Country
(percentages*)

	Country																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
International cooperation in research	74	58	65	48	90	62	45	74	64	66	44	69	77	60	62	100	62	78	89	44	63
International student exchange	93	87	95	79	97	97	87	89	80	94	91	98	100	73	87	100	100	96	100	90	91
Academic support for foreign students	72	82	71	73	88	95	73	95	80	73	83	90	94	80	77	87	86	78	79	70	78
Administrative support for foreign students	89	92	85	75	91	95	81	95	87	81	91	85	94	86	90	94	95	73	79	70	85
Foreign language provision for your students	68	50	71	45	56	73	57	41	67	68	27	56	41	55	52	87	71	73	84	50	61
Language training for incoming students	70	72	74	51	73	84	61	89	73	75	52	63	69	57	59	64	65	59	71	40	67
Recognition of academic achievements acquired abroad by own students	89	78	86	65	85	89	69	95	80	78	74	80	71	70	80	87	90	96	100	89	80
Visits/teaching assignments by foreign scholars	84	79	70	64	74	81	64	83	87	76	39	73	76	63	48	73	77	87	89	60	71
Courses taught in foreign languages	60	41	60	53	36	92	35	39	36	34	57	23	81	13	48	88	59	70	68	60	49
Ties/links with region, industry etc. regarding SOCRATES	37	13	21	28	21	57	37	37	47	38	17	18	40	24	18	42	29	43	47	20	30
Cooperation with partner institutions on academic matters	60	68	63	73	91	97	52	79	87	73	78	90	82	82	71	100	86	100	95	90	73
Cooperation with partner institutions on administrative matters	52	45	47	47	61	81	41	84	67	50	43	59	71	62	72	100	86	91	74	67	56
(n)	(44)	(40)	(146)	(49)	(33)	(37)	(161)	(19)	(15)	(48)	(23)	(42)	(17)	(56)	(30)	(16)	(22)	(23)	(19)	(10)	(850)

Question 4.1: If you compare your institution today to 5 years ago, do you note any changes?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Considerably more/better" to 5 = "Considerably less/worse"

A similar question was put six years before to higher education institutions in Europe. At that time, a similar degree of progress was perceived to have taken place during the preceding five years. One difference was that a substantial increase or improvement of ties with the region, industry, etc. was reported at that time by 56 per cent of the institutions (cf. Maiworm, Sosa and Teichler, 1996, p. 118), whereas in the recent survey only 30 per cent reported having perceived a substantial increase or improvement in these areas.

Asked about problems encountered by the higher education institutions with regard to SOCRATES, the respondents evoked four major areas of concern.

– First, funding of student and staff mobility: low level of grants for individual students (53 per cent stated serious problems) and teachers (58 per cent), as well as insufficient means to support all teachers who were willing to teach abroad (50 per cent) and all students who were willing to study abroad (33 per cent),
– second, lack of resources of the higher education institution for SOCRATES, as far as personnel (46 per cent) and funds (41 per cent) were concerned,
– third, lack of interest of academic staff with respect to teaching abroad and curriculum related domains of SOCRATES (41 per cent each), and
– administrative problems of the SOCRATES programme, i.e. late timing of the award decision and delay in the transfer of funds (35 per cent each).

Four other problems were stated by slightly more than 20 per cent of the institutions: reluctance of departments to introduce ECTS (26 per cent), lack or low quality of student accommodation (22 per cent), lack of interest on the part of the students to study abroad, and last-minute renouncements by students who were initially planning to study abroad (21 per cent each).

On average, across the various subjects, serious problems were most often mentioned by:

– British higher education institutions, which reported a great lack of interest of students to study abroad (63 per cent), last-minute renouncements by students (40 per cent), and a lack of interest on the part of key persons at the central level of the institutions (26 per cent), and by
– Dutch higher education institutions, which stated a great lack of interest on the part of staff in teaching periods abroad (78 per cent), and a lack of students wanting to study abroad (43 per cent).

In contrast, most institutions in Central and Eastern Europe seemed to face fewer problems. Although complaints about delays in the receipt of the SOCRATES budget were widespread, they reported significantly fewer problems concerning the interest of the staff, the students and the administrators (Table 3.16).

Table 3.16
Significant Problems Encountered by Higher Education Institutions with Regard to SOCRATES – by Country Group (percentages*)

	Country group		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Lack of interest of students to study abroad	23	1	21
Insufficient number of grants to support all student applicants	33	38	33
Insufficient individual grants for students	53	51	53
Last minute renouncement by students to study abroad	23	8	21
Lack of interest of academic staff in teaching periods abroad	44	11	41
Insufficient financial resources to fund all applicants for teaching periods abroad	48	69	50
Insufficient individual grants for mobile teachers	57	64	58
Finding academic staff members to assist/guide/advise outgoing students	17	14	17
Finding academic staff members to assist/guide/advise incoming students	16	13	16
Reluctance of departments to introduce ECTS	27	23	26
Lack of interest in SOCRATES of key persons at the central level of the institution	9	6	9
Timing of decision to award the Institutional Contract	36	22	35
Delay in receipt of the institutional SOCRATES budget from the Commission	33	57	35
Lack of internal personnel resources to handle administration and service functions related to SOCRATES	47	38	46
Lack of financial means to cover own institutional costs related to SOCRATES	42	39	41
Lack of internal cooperation in the administrative procedures related to SOCRATES	17	14	17
Insufficient competencies of incoming students	11	3	10
Insufficient competencies of outgoing students	2	3	2
Insufficient competencies of incoming teaching staff	1	0	0
Lack of interest of the academic staff of your institution in the curriculum-related domains of SOCRATES	43	24	41
Lack or low quality of accommodation for foreign students	22	21	22
Finding suitable partner institutions for SOCRATES activities	11	2	10
Problems of communication with partner institutions on administrative matters	9	3	8
Problems of communication with partner institutions on academic matters	7	3	6
(n)	(781)	(88)	(869)

Question 4.2: Have you encountered significant problems with regard to SOCRATES in the following areas?

* Scores 4 and 5 of a scale from 1 = “no problems at all” to 5 = “very serious”

Table 3.17
Perceived Impact of SOCRATES on the Higher Education Institutions – by Country (percentages*)

	Country											
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT
SOCRATES is a key element in motivating students to study abroad	84	98	67	60	97	65	75	85	80	96	74	100
SOCRATES is a key element of European awareness and cooperation in teaching and learning	65	61	48	48	77	60	70	60	80	86	26	77
SOCRATES has led to the creation/ strengthening of administrative services for international relations	67	67	53	64	82	77	61	75	67	72	52	60
There is a general trend towards growing European awareness and cooperation; SOCRATES is only one of the components	70	57	73	69	71	77	81	70	67	69	61	60
SOCRATES has contributed to a better quality of teaching and learning at the institution	51	44	33	17	42	30	33	50	20	50	30	30
SOCRATES has contributed to innovate teaching methods in the institution	49	34	22	21	20	38	24	55	20	43	17	23
The SOCRATES progamme leads to stronger cooperation with the region, industry etc.	12	10	8	22	21	26	27	20	20	19	14	12
Studying abroad in the framework of SOCRATES leads to a decline of students' overall achievements	7	2	1	13	11	15	2	10	7	21	4	5
SOCRATES and other European programmes tend to weaken the institutions' cooperation with other parts of the world	23	14	6	17	21	8	11	10	7	23	22	17
(n)	(43)	(42)	(146)	(50)	(36)	(40)	(163)	(20)	(15)	(50)	(23)	(43)

(Table 3.17 continued)

	Country								Total		
	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	Impact	No impact	Mean
SOCRATES is a key element in motivating students to study abroad	65	67	70	94	91	83	95	50	78	7	1.8
SOCRATES is a key element of European awareness and cooperation in teaching and learning	53	59	53	69	87	75	89	40	63	14	2.2
SOCRATES has led to the creation/ strengthening of administrative services for international relations	71	45	77	81	48	78	68	60	63	18	2.3
There is a general trend towards growing European awareness and cooperation; SOCRATES is only one of the components	82	62	70	80	70	70	79	50	71	9	2.1
SOCRATES has contributed to a better quality of teaching and learning at the institution	29	28	30	87	57	54	78	30	37	16	2.7
SOCRATES has contributed to innovate teaching methods in the institution	18	27	13	63	57	54	79	30	31	25	2.9
The SOCRATES progamme leads to stronger cooperation with the region, industry etc.	0	7	15	13	18	8	37	20	17	48	3.5
Studying abroad in the framework of SOCRATES leads to a decline of students overall achievements	6	5	11	6	5	13	5	11	7	83	4.4
SOCRATES and other European programmes tend to weaken the institutions cooperation with other parts of the world	41	7	20	6	17	13	21	30	14	71	4.0
(n)	(17)	(59)	(30)	(16)	(23)	(24)	(19)	(10)	(869)	(869)	(869)

Question 4.3: How would you describe the impact of the SOCRATES programme on your institution?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "strongly agree to 5 = "strongly disagree"

Asked about the impact of SOCRATES, most respondents agreed that it contributed to a growing interest for student mobility, greater European and international awareness, and cooperation in teaching and learning, as well as better international services. Most respondents, however, were aware that the growing interest in cooperation and mobility could not be attributed to SOCRATES alone.

Almost as many respondents each agreed and disagreed with the statement that SOCRATES had contributed to better teaching and learning and to innovative teaching and learning. Only 17 per cent saw a substantial contribution of SOCRATES to cooperation of higher education institutions with the region, industry, etc.

Concerning possible negative impacts, only 7 per cent saw a decline of student achievement due to SOCRATES. 14 per cent were concerned that SOCRATES tended to weaken institutional cooperation with non-participating countries.

The impact of SOCRATES was viewed most positively by the larger Central and Eastern European countries involved (Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland), followed by the Southern European countries (Spain, Greece, Portugal, and Italy), as is seen in Table 3.17. Cautious views were taken by Dutch institutions where the contribution of SOCRATES to the European awareness in the cooperation of teaching and learning and innovative teaching methods was rated considerably more negatively than in other countries, and by Swedish institutions which often voiced concern that SOCRATES tended to weaken cooperation with non-participating countries.

3.8 Summary

Higher education institutions that participate in SOCRATES send and receive about 50 mobile students on average in this framework. About half are involved in curriculum-related projects (IP, CD, ODL). They have on average four staff members (full-time equivalent) in charge of international relations at the central or departmental level, two of whom are in charge of SOCRATES. These figures do not suggest major growth since ERASMUS was put under the umbrella of SOCRATES. The institutions reported that they cooperated on average with partners from nine countries.

The SOCRATES-supported institutions lay great emphasis on the Europeanisation and internationalisation of their policies and activities. Most want to strengthen them in order to increase the international visibility of their institution and to establish a coherent policy in that respect. They strongly advocate mobility, as well as the Europeanisation and internationalisation of curricula. Most want to spread these activities across fields of study and across countries, whilst some opt for greater concentration.

Since ERASMUS support is channelled through institutional contracts between the European Commission and the higher education institutions in the framework of SOCRATES, there was a re-allocation and specific institutionalisation of the international and SOCRATES-related activities, although at a moderate pace. For example, the number of institutions that have a committee in charge of international – or more especially SOCRATES-related – activities at the central level grew from 37 per cent in 1993/94 to 50 per cent in 1999/2000. Staff in international offices often play an important role in the coordination of decision-making processes. According to the respondents, academics tend to be involved in all decisions regarding academic matters of exchange and cooperation, though the coordination of the processes may now often rest with the international offices.

The process of establishing specific administrative units for SOCRATES continued. In 1999/2000, about 40 per cent of the SOCRATES-supported institutions had specific persons or units serving SOCRATES. They undertook various SOCRATES-related activities in cooperation with other persons and units. According to the respondents at the central level, the introduction of SOCRATES did not reduce the academics' participation in the preparation for the study abroad period or in academic matters related to incoming students. However, they now undertook these activities more frequently in cooperation with the international offices or other actors and were less involved in administrative matters regarding the incoming students than in the past.

The SOCRATES funds are not greatly complemented by other funds. About 60 per cent of the funds for fellowships are granted by SOCRATES and about 40 per cent of the fellowships awarded through the institution come from other sources. About a third of the expenditures for the international policy of the institution are SOCRATES funds, whilst two-thirds come from the institution itself or other sources.

Most of those responsible for SOCRATES at the central level of the higher education institutions stated a development or improvement of cooperation and mobility activities. The assessments were similar to those in a survey undertaken six years before. This suggests that continuous progress is perceived. The respondents, however, saw few improvements in teaching in a foreign language and cooperation with the region, industry, etc.

Yet many institutions identified serious problems with regard to SOCRATES. Lack of funds for mobility activities were stated as serious problems by most institutions and lack of personnel and other resources for international activities within the institution by almost half. About 40 per cent perceived a lack of interest on the part of academic staff, and about a third complained about the administrative procedures involved in SOCRATES.

According to those responsible for SOCRATES at the central level of the institutions, SOCRATES did not contribute to mobility, European and interna-

tional emphasis in teaching and learning, and better related services. However, they believed that SOCRATES did not substantially contribute to the quality of teaching and learning or to major innovations in teaching and learning. Finally, 14 per cent were concerned that SOCRATES tended to weaken their institutional cooperation with other parts of the world.

Generally speaking, SOCRATES was viewed most favourably by respondents from Southern Europe and from Central and Eastern Europe. More sceptical voices were heard from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Sweden.

According to those responsible for ERASMUS activities at the central level of the higher education institutions, cooperation and mobility continued to improve. The SOCRATES approach has led to some changes, but only in a minority of cases had there been a substantial reorganisation of the tasks and responsibilities. Academics were less burdened with administrative matters, but continued to be involved in academic matters as in the past, though more frequently in cooperation with other actors.

4. The Students' Experience

By Friedhelm Maiworm and Ulrich Teichler

4.1 Aim, Design and Process of the Survey

4.1.1 Aims and Development of ERASMUS

The ERASMUS programme was launched in 1987 after the ten-year pilot phase of Joint Study Programmes (JSP) had proven successful and the wish to develop European educational activities was felt. ERASMUS soon became the most visible of the educational programmes established in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Student exchange was its key element, since ERASMUS is the acronym for European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. Student mobility absorbed most of the ERASMUS budget.

The ERASMUS programme supported student mobility in very specific ways (see Teichler and Maiworm, 1997, pp. 3-4). It promoted regional mobility in Europe, encouraged temporary study abroad, and supported almost exclusively collective mobility by sending abroad and hosting groups of students. The collective approach was the basis for pursuing further goals: departments were expected to form networks in order to co-operate closely. "Organised study abroad" was encouraged to facilitate mobility. Curricular integration was advocated as best practice, and an inclusive approach was made mandatory: financial support was granted on condition that study achievements abroad were recognised upon return as equivalent to parts of the home country course. Furthermore, from the outset, ERASMUS was a partial funding scheme for the students because it only aimed to cover the additional costs for study abroad and an incentive funding scheme for the higher education institutions, i.e. it expected them to complement the European funds by their own resources.

The year of the launch, some 3,000 students were awarded an ERASMUS mobility grant. This figure grew to about 28,000 in 1990/91 and to about 52,000 in 1992/93 when the number of eligible countries grew beyond 12. In 1999/2000, ERASMUS supported some 100,000 mobile students in 29 eligible countries.

The conditions, processes and results of student mobility were analysed in the early 1990s. Representative surveys were undertaken of the 1988/89 ERASMUS students (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler) and the 1990/91 ERASMUS students (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler 1993b). The students who participated in the first three years of ECTS pilot schemes were also surveyed (Maiworm and Teichler, 1995b).

4.1.2 The Changing Context

On the one hand, conditions, processes and outcomes of student mobility may have changed from the early 1990s because of the growth of the programme and of the number of participating countries. On the other, there may have been effects of consolidation and routine. The European Credit Transfer System which was strongly advocated by the European Commission became instrumental for about half the ERASMUS students. Additionally, student mobility within ERASMUS could be affected in various ways by a changing context of Europeanisation and internationalisation.

Last but not least, the organisational and educational setting of ERASMUS was bound to change when SOCRATES became the umbrella of the various educational programmes. Since the academic year 1997/98, it is no longer networks of co-operating departments that are supported. Instead, the higher education institutions must apply for ERASMUS funds. They are expected to formulate European Policy Statements in which they put student mobility in a broader perspective and prepare and sign bilateral cooperation contracts with other institutions. First reactions to the changes show that institutional policies may have gained some weight and services may have been coordinated in a more consistent manner. But playing down the role of academics as coordinators could lessen their involvement in the programme. Finally, the role of teaching staff exchange and curricular innovation within ERASMUS under the umbrella of SOCRATES were expected to develop.

Some aspects of these changes became visible in recent studies on ERASMUS students, notably a study on their social background (The European Commission, 2000) and a study on ECTS (Adam and Gehmlich, 2000, mimeo).

4.1.3 Aims and Content of the 1998/99 ERASMUS Student Survey

In order to examine the conditions, processes and outcomes of ERASMUS student mobility in the first phase of the SOCRATES programme, a representative survey of 1998/99 ERASMUS students was undertaken after some months in the subsequent academic year, i.e. at a time when students could provide information on recognition. The questionnaire survey “Experiences of ERASMUS Students 1998/99” asked the students to provide information about their socio-biographical profile, their motivation and preparation for study abroad, their experiences during the ERASMUS-supported study period in another country, funding and accommodation, whether their studies abroad were recognised and their opinion about the outcomes of studying in another European country.

4.1.4 Survey Procedures

The questionnaires were distributed to 1998/99 ERASMUS students with the help of selected higher education institutions. They were sent to the 280

higher education institutions which had agreed to support the survey.[1] Depending on the number of mobile students in the academic year 1997/98 – the most recent year for which figures on ERASMUS student mobility were available –, the participating institutions in the Member States of the European Union and in EFTA countries were each provided with between 5 and 30 copies of the questionnaire. Institutions in CEE countries which were eligible to participate in ERASMUS since 1998/99 received 20 copies each because no data on their mobile students were available at the time of the survey. A second package was sent to all institutions at the end of April as a reminder. Finally, about 3,400 questionnaires were distributed by the higher education institutions which supported the survey. By the end of August 2000, there was a return rate of 40 per cent.

The ERASMUS student questionnaire comprised 50 questions and more than 450 variables. It was translated into all the official languages of the European Member States. Students from CEE Countries were provided with a German, English, and French version to allow them to choose the most appropriate language for their answers.

In order to ensure the representativity of the statistical analysis, the data were adjusted as regards subject area and home country in accordance with the total 1998/99 ERASMUS student population.

4.2 Biographical Profile and Motives

4.2.1 Gender

More than half the students who responded were women (60 per cent). As statistics show, the number of women participating in ERASMUS was slightly higher than that of men since the launch of the programme.

The subsequent report does not discuss differences according to gender. Almost all the differences in the answers of the men and women – notably an above-average interest in the cultural domains – only reflect the greater representation of women in foreign languages and other humanities and their under-representation in engineering. By field, women's experiences of the ERASMUS programme are similar to men's.

4.2.2 Parents' Educational Background and Income

36 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students reported that their father had a higher education degree and 28 per cent that their mother had a degree. Of 21 per cent of the ERASMUS students surveyed, both the father and the mother were graduates (see Table 4.1).

1 In order to support a special evaluation of mobility in engineering and technology programmes, over 1,200 further questionnaires were mailed to the institutions to be distributed exclusively to students in these fields (ERASMUS subject area codes 6.0 – 6.9).

Table 4.1
Educational Attainment of Parents – by Country of Home Institution (percentages)

	Country of home institution																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
The fathers' educational attainment																					
Compulsory education	43	11	37	15	28	17	32	28	38	30	21	33	40	30	13	12	17	14	15	17	29
Sec./higher vocational ed.	18	28	5	24	20	43	29	22	21	38	35	22	33	14	24	15	19	26	21	14	23
Up to two years of higher ed.	2	10	13	22	19	7	13	7	18	2	27	10	0	12	19	0	9	20	0	6	12
First HE degree	21	35	31	34	23	10	16	31	6	23	17	27	11	26	18	30	25	22	32	26	23
Advanced HE degree	17	16	14	5	9	23	10	12	17	7	0	6	16	18	26	43	30	18	31	37	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
The mothers' educational attainment																					
Compulsory education	57	18	53	10	38	25	24	28	28	35	32	39	31	27	25	8	0	10	18	23	33
Sec./higher vocational ed.	22	23	6	35	29	41	31	28	25	39	33	24	17	26	25	37	27	20	29	6	26
Up to two years of higher ed.	6	20	11	33	19	3	15	8	16	3	26	3	12	16	26	13	20	25	15	9	14
First HE degree	12	31	28	21	10	13	25	22	9	18	10	26	27	26	12	22	25	25	21	20	21
Advanced HE degree	4	7	3	0	4	18	5	14	22	4	0	7	13	6	11	20	27	20	17	43	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Parents with a higher education degree																					
Both	13	31	26	15	10	19	20	31	16	17	5	25	22	26	16	37	45	29	36	57	21
Father	24	19	19	23	22	14	6	12	6	13	11	8	4	17	26	36	7	11	27	6	15
Mother	2	7	4	5	3	12	10	4	13	6	4	7	18	5	7	4	4	16	2	6	7
None	61	43	51	58	65	56	64	53	65	65	79	59	56	53	51	22	44	44	35	31	58
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(36)	(52)	(205)	(22)	(198)	(45)	(229)	(26)	(23)	(153)	(57)	(32)	(46)	(150)	(16)	(13)	(12)	(21)	(14)	(15)	(1364)

Question 1.6: What is the highest level of education attained by your father and mother?

In 1990/91, the respective figures were 35 per cent, 20 per cent and 15 per cent (Maiworm and Teichler, 1997, p. 40). There are no exactly corresponding data available on parents' educational background of students in Europe in general. Data published by EURYDICE on all tertiary education students in 1995 suggest that the educational background of the parents of ERASMUS students is close to the average. The increase in the number of parents holding a higher education degree during the 1990s does not indicate a growing selectivity of the ERASMUS programme, because higher education expanded substantially during the period when the parent generation was at the typical age of enrolment:.

As identical occupations do not necessarily have the same status in all European countries, the students were not asked to state their parents' occupations, but rather their income status.

– 37 per cent considered their parents' income to be above average (41 per cent of the 1990/91 cohort),
– 48 per cent (44 per cent) as average, and
– 15 per cent (13 per cent) as below average.

The data contradict the assumption that ERASMUS might have become more socially selective in the 1990s as a consequence of the drop in the coverage of the ERASMUS grant of the overall expenses for studying abroad.

4.2.3 Prior International Experiences and Motivation for Studying Abroad

79 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students (slightly fewer than in the 1990/91 cohort) had spent a minimum of one period abroad of at least one month between the age of 15 and the ERASMUS-supported period. The average total duration of previous stays abroad was 6.4 months (6.5 months in 1990/91), with 2.3 month on average (1.8 months) already spent in the ERASMUS host country.

Students were asked to choose the reasons that influenced their decision to study abroad from a list of 14 possible motives and to weight them (see Table 4.2). The answers suggest that there were many important reasons: learning a culture, academic learning, improving their knowledge of a foreign language and professional enhancement. It is worth noting that a "strong reason" increased during the 1990s by 4 per cent on average across all categories with no change in the overall patterns: recent students thus expressed the high and manifold expectations they harboured to a greater extent than those of the early 1990s.

As we can see from Table 4.2, students of agriculture, architecture, fine arts and mathematics were mostly interested in academic and educational matters, students of education underscored cultural reasons, and students of economics mainly hoped for a career advancement. Students of humanities,

Table 4.2
Important Reasons for Deciding to Study Abroad – by Field of Study (percentages*)

	Field of study																Total
	Agr	Arc	Art	Bus	Edu	Eng	Geo	Hum	Lan	Law	Mat	Med	Nat	Soc	Com	Other	
Wish to become familiar with subjects that are not offered at your institution	50	46	63	24	26	23	27	33	29	28	34	40	30	33	37	26	31
Hope to obtain better marks/examination results after your return from the study period abroad	14	4	21	16	24	15	15	13	38	11	18	11	8	17	10	8	18
Wish to become acquainted with teaching methods that are not used at your institution	59	57	74	49	56	41	42	54	51	47	63	65	47	45	30	51	51
Wish to gain academic learning experience in another country	91	85	86	83	75	84	84	91	77	84	77	82	85	81	81	87	82
Wish to have access to specific laboratories and equipment	20	30	30	10	11	28	9	11	14	7	22	34	22	15	6	19	16
Learning a foreign language	90	79	71	89	83	89	74	89	93	93	92	78	86	78	94	88	87
Wish to travel (e.g. ERASMUS offered convenient/cheap means of going abroad)	76	65	67	68	62	74	81	80	71	70	67	68	69	74	77	81	71
Other friends were going	9	6	3	11	13	9	10	10	9	4	3	9	3	13	3	7	9
Wish to have another perspective on your home country	55	66	69	53	60	52	78	55	55	57	47	54	48	54	48	72	56
Wish to enhance your understanding of the host country	60	65	61	72	81	59	84	82	90	67	63	71	52	74	70	82	73
Wish to improve career prospects	71	58	57	84	54	82	68	70	70	79	63	57	67	56	80	63	71
Wanted a break from your usual surroundings	62	81	73	66	62	65	60	61	56	60	66	71	63	80	82	74	66
Opportunity for self-development	85	83	84	91	86	88	87	81	85	90	83	89	86	89	93	88	87
You did not think much about it (e.g. it was required for the degree programme)	2	2	8	4	5	5	0	1	17	4	2	7	5	3	0	2	6
(n)	(44)	(49)	(39)	(257)	(58)	(114)	(23)	(70)	(243)	(95)	(59)	(50)	(66)	(118)	(25)	(56)	(1366)

Question 1.5: Which of the following reasons influenced your decision to study abroad?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Strong influence" to 5 = "No influence at all"

languages, law, social sciences and natural sciences were close to the average, whereas students of geography/geology, medical fields and communication underscored "various reasons" less strongly than the average and were less interested in other matters.

4.3 The Study Period Abroad in the Course of Study

4.3.1 Duration and Participants' Age

The average age of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students was about 23 years when they went abroad. It varied by country from under 22 years to about 25 years on average. This reflects differences by country according to the age at entry to higher education, but also to the stage in the course of study when they go abroad.

On average, ERASMUS students had been enrolled at a higher education institution for 3.0 years before they went abroad (the 1990/91 ERASMUS cohort reported 2.8 years). Students from the United Kingdom (after 2.0 years) and Ireland (after 2.2 years on average) went abroad at the earliest stage (because of the comparatively short length of initial degree programmes in these countries). In contrast, Italian and Spanish students went abroad with the help of ERASMUS after four years of prior study.

ERASMUS students in 1998/99 went abroad for an average of 7.0 months (the 1990/91 cohort for 6.9 months). Only 10 per cent spent 3 months or less in another European country. This figure is substantially lower than eight years earlier (20 per cent). 43 per cent reported a stay of 4-6 months and 47 per cent a stay of 7 months and more. Short periods of study were most often stated by students from Central and Eastern Europe (5.0 months on average) and by those from the Netherlands and Greece (5.3 months each). The average duration differed to a lesser extent according to field of study.

4.3.2 Major Activities and Time Spent on Study

About three quarters of the students studied full-time for all or part of the study period in another European country. Half the remaining students stated that they were part-time students. Other activities, often alongside study, included

– work placement (11 per cent on average), most often chosen by students in medicine, agriculture and education,
– work on a thesis (8 per cent), most frequently reported by students in engineering, agriculture and humanities, and
– laboratory work (7 per cent), often undertaken by students in natural sciences, engineering and medicine (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3
ERASMUS Students' Major Activities During the Study Period Abroad – by Field of Study (percentages, multiple response possible)

	Field of study																Total
	Agr	Arc	Art	Bus	Edu	Eng	Geo	Hum	Lan	Law	Mat	Med	Nat	Soc	Com	Other	
Full-time study	65	70	89	85	79	59	93	82	86	87	81	46	52	79	67	69	77
Work placement	31	3	14	9	28	13	0	4	6	0	5	45	14	10	14	7	11
Work on thesis	14	9	2	5	3	32	7	11	5	3	6	4	9	6	8	12	8
Part-time study	17	18	6	10	12	10	4	15	11	10	15	11	17	12	30	17	12
Laboratory work	7	8	7	1	3	22	3	2	0	0	5	26	38	2	1	8	7
Other	0	12	9	6	13	5	1	12	5	6	4	6	5	9	10	9	7
Not ticked	3	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	1
Total (n)	136 (44)	120 (49)	127 (39)	118 (257)	137 (58)	141 (114)	111 (23)	127 (70)	114 (243)	107 (95)	116 (59)	141 (50)	135 (66)	119 (118)	131 (25)	122 (56)	123 (1366)

Question 2.5: What were your major activities during the ERASMUS period abroad?

This was reflected in the answers to a question about the time ERASMUS students spent on various activities during the study period abroad. They spent 37.6 hours per week on study and related activities. This means that1998/99 ERASMUS students spent less time on study (0.3 hours) on average than 1990/91 students. There were no significant changes according to the type of activity.

Table 4.4
Average Weekly Hours Spent by ERASMUS Students on Study During Stay Abroad – by Field of Study (mean)

	Field of study																Total
	Agr	Arc	Art	Bus	Edu	Eng	Geo	Hum	Lan	Law	Mat	Med	Nat	Soc	Com	Other	
Courses and related activities	22.1	23.1	16.5	21.2	24.3	20.2	22.0	18.5	17.1	15.5	24.1	18.7	17.8	16.0	23.0	18.6	19.3
Practical projects, laboratory work, etc.	2.8	6.5	11.4	1.9	2.8	4.4	2.6	.9	1.2	.8	5.6	10.0	6.7	2.1	4.6	3.6	3.2
Independent study	10.5	11.0	8.3	8.7	7.2	10.9	9.7	10.1	8.8	13.4	8.0	10.1	11.1	8.8	8.6	7.1	9.4
Work on thesis/ dissertation/ etc.	2.5	1.1	1.4	2.2	2.6	2.4	4.5	3.3	1.7	2.3	1.2	1.9	1.2	4.1	3.3	3.1	2.3
Field trips, excursions, etc.	2.1	1.1	3.4	.6	.7	.5	2.7	.7	.7	.7	.3	.2	1.0	1.2	1.8	.8	.9
Language training	1.5	1.3	1.7	2.2	1.3	2.2	1.6	1.5	3.4	1.8	1.1	1.4	1.8	2.0	3.4	1.0	2.1
Other study activities	.1	1.5	.1	.4	.1	.0	.1	.8	.2	.1	.2	.2	.8	.9	.0	.5	.4
Total hours (n)	41.6 (32)	45.6 (40)	42.8 (30)	37.2 (195)	38.9 (41)	40.6 (84)	43.3 (18)	35.9 (51)	33.1 (196)	34.7 (73)	40.3 (48)	42.4 (36)	40.5 (51)	35.1 (93)	44.7 (22)	34.7 (46)	37.6 (1058)

Question 5.3: How many hours per week did you spend on average on the following types of study? Please estimate for the ERASMUS academic study period only (i.e. excluding work placement and holiday periods).

The average number of weekly hours spent on study and related activities varied from 33 hours on average in language studies to 46 hours in architecture. Hours spent on courses varied more substantially according to the home country than according to the host country or field of study. While students from Italy only spent 11 hours per week in classes, those from Portugal spent 25 hours and those from Spain and Germany 23 hours.

Independent study abroad was most frequent among ERASMUS students in law. Practical projects and laboratory work were most strongly emphasised by students in natural sciences, architecture and medicine (see Table 4.4).

4.4 The ERASMUS Study Grant: Administration and Funding Level

4.4.1 Timing of Application and Award

One of the major complaints about the SOCRATES programme was the timing of the decision regarding the award of the study grant. The 1990/91 ERASMUS students reported that the period between their application and the actual receipt of the grants was 8.3 months on average. This meant that students received the first payment on average only 1.8 months after their departure.

This issue was often taken up in debates and various rearrangements were made. According to the 1998/99 students from EU and EFTA countries, however, the period between the application and the receipt of the grants increased to 8.4 months on average (there were too few responses to this question by students from CEE countries to take them into account).

Students wishing to be awarded an ERASMUS study grant in 1998/99 typically

– had their institution apply 6.4 months prior to the beginning of the study period abroad,
– knew they were accepted 4.1 months prior to the period abroad,
– were officially notified that they had obtained a grant 3.2 months in advance,
– knew the amount of the grant 1.2 months before they went abroad, and
– received the first funds 2.0 months after they went abroad.

As Table 4.5 shows, the overall time span was longest for students from France (10.5 months) and Italy (10.0 months).

Table 4.5:
Application, Notification and Receipt of ERASMUS Study Grant in Relation to Departure to the ERASMUS Host Country – by EU and EFTA Countries (mean)

	Country of home institution									Total
	AT	BE	DE	ES	FR	IT	PT	UK	Other EU and EFTA	
Timing of application for ERASMUS support in relation to date of departure	-6.5	-6.6	-7.0	-6.9	-6.3	-6.7	-6.2	-6.4	-5.5	-6.4
Notification about the acceptance for the ERASMUS supported period in relation to date of departure	-3.9	-3.2	-4.4	-4.7	-3.5	-4.6	-3.7	-4.3	-3.8	-4.1
Notification of award of the ERASMUS grant in relation to date of departure	-2.8	-2.2	-3.7	-4.5	-.9	-4.8	-2.9	-2.5	-3.1	-3.2
Information about the amount of the ERASMUS grant in relation to date of departure	-3.4	-.8	-1.1	-1.2	1.2	-2.7	-2.1	-.5	-2.2	-1.2
Time of receipt of the first funds in relation to date of departure	.6	1.7	1.2	2.3	4.1	3.3	.9	1.3	.2	2.0
(n)	(12)	(26)	(87)	(141)	(178)	(109)	(11)	(61)	(53)	(678)

Question 2.6: In relation to your departure to the ERASMUS host country, when:...

4.4.2 Costs and Funding of the Study Period Abroad

The 1998/98 ERASMUS students spent an average of 712 € a month during their study period in another European country. This not only included the expenses for their stay abroad, but also continuing expenses at home or part of the travel expenses to the host country and back to the home country. The average additional expenses during the study period abroad amounted to 306 € a month.

According to the students who provided information on this topic, the average monthly ERASMUS grant was 158 €. It only covered 22 per cent of the total expenses during the study period abroad and only 52 per cent of the additional costs for studying abroad, i.e. the initial target of the ERASMUS scheme. Thus, 148 € per month on average and about 1,036 € for the whole study period in another European country had to be covered by other sources – predominantly parental support.

In 1990/91, the additional expenses while abroad were 218 ECU. ERASMUS covered 194 ECU, i.e. 89 per cent. Only 24 ECU per month and 166 ECU for 6.9 months were needed from other sources (see Table 4.6). The authors of the 1990/91 study argued that the ERASMUS fellowship could be seen as covering more than the additional costs abroad, if free rent at home was calculated as part of the costs at home (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 91-93).

Table 4.6: The Role Played by ERASMUS in Funding Study Abroad 1990/91 and 1998/99 (means/percentages)

	1990/91	1998/99
Monthly expenses during study period at home (ECU/€)	363	406
Change (1990/91 = 100)	(100)	(112)
Monthly expenses during study period abroad (ECU/€)	581	712
Change (1990/91 = 100)	(100)	(123)
Additional monthly expenses while abroad (ECU/€)	218	306
Change (1990/91 = 100)	(100)	(140)
Monthly ERASMUS grant (ECU/€)	194	158
Change (1990/91 = 100)	(100)	(81)
Additional monthly costs not covered by ERASMUS (ECU/€)	24	148
Change (1990/91 = 100)	(100)	(616)
Average duration of period abroad (months)	6.9	7.0
Total additional costs not covered by ERASMUS (ECU/€)	166	1,036

Question 3.2: How much money did your receive as an ERASMUS grant for your whole study period abroad in 1998/99?

Question 3.3: Please state the overall costs of your return trips.

Question 3.4: Apart from return travel and related expenses, how much did you spend on average per month in your own country and during your ERASMUS-supported period abroad?

Thus, the additional costs which were not covered by ERASMUS almost sextupled between 1990/91 and 1998/99, even if inflation was taken into consideration (here counted as increase of costs at home).

The increased additional costs not covered by ERASMUS were not made up by home country grants and loans, although they increased from 108 ECU in 1990/91 to 128 € in 1998/99. However, the relative contribution of these sources to the expenses while abroad remained stable by about 18 per cent. In contrast, the proportion of expenses borne by the students or their relatives increased from about 44 per cent to about 53 per cent (see Table 4.7).

The flexibility of the individual countries in adjusting the ERASMUS grants to conditions in the home country, host country, social needs, etc. did not seem to lead to a similar financial burden for the individual students. We noted for example that the additional monthly costs that were not covered by ERASMUS varied greatly according to home country: Whereas Spanish students reported 347 € additional costs per month which were not covered by ERASMUS, the British and most CEE students received more ERASMUS funds on average than their additional costs abroad. But students going to the UK spent 242 € per month for additional costs not covered by ERASMUS, while students going to CEE countries lived more cheaply there on average than at home, but still received an ERASMUS grant that was

Table 4.7
Sources of Income during the ERASMUS-Supported Period Abroad – by Country of Home Institution (mean)

	Country of home institution																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
ERASMUS grant	36.7	21.7	16.6	12.7	19.1	16.2	18.0	36.3	23.3	35.0	20.9	36.7	7.2	19.0	16.9	71.6	78.7	73.0	81.5	24.7	23.8
Other European Community programme grant	.0	.0	1.2	.8	.5	.7	.4	.0	.0	.0	1.8	.0	.0	.5	.0	7.0	3.2	.0	.0	7.5	.6
Home country grant/scholarship	14.6	4.5	8.2	44.2	7.6	17.0	9.6	.8	7.4	5.0	26.4	1.8	19.2	17.2	19.5	.1	6.6	3.5	.5	6.4	10.7
Home country loan	.0	.5	4.5	8.8	1.9	17.2	2.9	1.4	7.1	.0	9.6	.9	62.3	10.9	42.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	22.5	7.3
Host country grant/scholarship	1.9	1.2	.0	.0	2.2	.1	.2	.9	2.2	1.2	.0	.5	.9	.6	2.3	.0	.0	2.4	.4	.0	.8
Support by work placement employer	.5	.0	.1	.3	.0	.0	.3	.0	.5	.1	.0	.0	.0	.1	1.9	2.6	.0	.0	.0	.0	.2
Other type of support abroad (e.g. free accommodation)	1.3	.0	1.0	2.1	1.5	.7	.5	.4	1.6	1.1	.0	.1	.1	.3	.1	1.6	.0	.8	.2	.4	.8
Other grants	1.1	.6	.5	2.6	.2	3.8	2.5	.5	.0	.4	3.7	.7	1.0	2.8	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.4	1.3
Parents, relatives	27.8	60.7	51.3	5.6	54.9	14.8	52.5	54.8	40.6	47.8	21.6	51.4	.6	36.3	6.1	9.0	3.6	17.2	11.9	9.3	41.2
Your own money (work, savings etc.)	14.5	10.0	15.0	21.4	12.2	17.6	13.0	4.9	17.2	8.9	16.1	7.4	8.7	11.9	10.9	7.7	7.4	3.2	5.1	28.5	12.3
Other	1.7	.9	1.6	1.6	.0	11.9	.2	.0	.0	.6	.0	.5	.0	.5	.0	.3	.6	.0	.4	.4	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(26)	(41)	(136)	(17)	(145)	(40)	(157)	(23)	(19)	(117)	(44)	(28)	(40)	(124)	(14)	(10)	(5)	(18)	(12)	(12)	(1029)

Question 3.1: How did you finance your studies at your home institution so far, and how did you finance your ERASMUS-supported study period abroad (including travel and tuition fees if any)? Please estimate percentages (including free rent, etc.). If applicable, state the name of the support scheme or of the supporting agency.

close to the average ERASMUS grant. Also, students who lived at home while studying in the home country had 284 € additional costs abroad on average which were not covered by ERASMUS, whereas those who did not live at home had only 88 € additional expenses not covered by ERASMUS. Hence, the burden seems to be very high for students whose parents cannot rent the room which was used by their children when they studied at home.

4.5 Preparation and Advice

4.5.1 The Students' Preparatory Activities

The ERASMUS programme aimed to ensure that the study period in another European country was administratively easy and supported academically by the home and host institutions and departments. Therefore, the provisions for preparation and the preparatory activities of the students were always a key issue. The administrative and academic assistance and guidance for incoming students by the host institution were also seen as a key factor for the success of "organised" study abroad.

As regarded the preparation

– 71 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students (65 per cent of the 1990/91 students) reported that they prepared themselves with regard to practical matters concerning living and studying in the host country,
– 69 per cent (74 per cent) prepared themselves by improving their foreign language proficiency,
– 64 per cent (60 per cent) as regards the culture and society of the host country, and
– 47 per cent (54 per cent) reported academic preparation.

Students were also asked to state the ways they prepared themselves.

– 69 per cent (66 per cent) cited self-study,
– 59 per cent (52 per cent) made use of the written material provided,
– 37 per cent (40 per cent) took part in preparatory meetings,
– 30 per cent (31 per cent) attended optional courses, and
– 25 per cent (39 per cent) participated in mandatory courses for preparation.

One question addressed the provision of written material on the host institution because recognition through ECTS credit transfer was expected to be supported by an information package of the host institution to enable students to choose in advance the courses they would follow abroad. 88 per cent of the ECTS students and 80 per cent of the other ERASMUS students reported that they were provided with information about the host institution.

Table 4.8
Receipt of Information Material/Information Package about the Host Institution and Satisfaction Stated by ERASMUS Students with the Information Provided – by Application of ECTS to the Study Programme
(percentages)

	ECTS applied		Total
	Yes	No	
Information received			
Yes	88	80	84
No	12	20	16
Total	100	100	100
Satisfied with information provided about*			
– the institution	66	61	64
– the department	50	36	43
– registration	49	43	46
– administrative matters	46	41	44
– language tuition facilities	46	38	42
– accommodation	52	47	50
– teaching/learning methods	32	22	27
– course description	44	33	39
– course level	32	23	28
– methods of assessment	34	25	30
(n)	(552)	(472)	(1024)

Question 4.2: Did you receive information material/an information package about your host institution? If so, were you satisfied with the information provided?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “Very satisfied” to 5 = “Very dissatisfied”

When asked how satisfied they were with the information they received, they said that further improvement was desirable. On average, across 10 areas of information addressed in the questionnaire, 45 per cent of the ECTS students and 37 per cent of the other ERASMUS students expressed satisfaction. Many students criticised the information on studies (course description, teaching and assessment methods) as being insufficient (Table 4.8).

4.5.2 Preparatory Material

ERASMUS students did not rate favourably the material provided by Portuguese higher education institutions and by French, Spanish and Greek universities. The written material provided by Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish institutions of higher education obtained the best ratings.

Asked about assistance, guidance and advice provided by the home institution,

– 18 per cent of the 1998/99 students stated substantial assistance and guidance on the 12 themes addressed,

Table 4.9
Satisfaction with Assistance/Guidance/Advice Provided by Home Institution – by Country of Home Institution (percentages*)

	Country of home institution																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	
Information about ERASMUS and recognition matters	62	39	41	40	33	47	40	63	53	29	33	60	49	33	37	48	55	44	50	77	40
Registration, courseselection etc. at host institution	39	31	28	29	27	30	32	36	27	31	25	47	17	26	28	25	45	36	33	49	30
Accommodation	34	33	27	31	24	38	30	38	22	28	35	38	27	20	23	31	75	32	43	40	29
Matters regarding financial support	49	36	30	36	18	34	32	42	29	28	30	35	44	29	60	72	60	54	45	34	31
Other practical matters (e.g. insurance, registration with civil authorities)	36	28	22	26	17	49	29	41	37	18	7	37	27	25	31	35	43	30	37	29	25
Academic matters	39	22	29	22	21	36	25	41	38	32	13	43	28	33	41	45	55	30	41	40	29
Work placement matters (if applicable)	29	34	29	19	9	26	28	23	33	9	32	38	28	32	18	27	67	14	33	44	23
Information about the host institution and the higher education system in the host country	37	18	31	24	25	29	33	12	39	25	23	31	16	33	38	34	45	40	31	43	29
Language training	40	48	41	40	16	44	40	19	52	27	33	34	40	50	48	48	47	40	26	17	36
The host country in general	28	28	27	34	20	36	36	20	39	28	27	36	32	44	41	24	45	19	31	15	31
The local community in which the host institution is situated	18	28	22	23	17	26	30	23	37	22	21	34	14	21	38	30	43	18	14	48	24
Personal matters	35	29	27	17	19	25	23	31	35	30	12	37	40	22	35	28	61	28	31	45	26
(n)	(35)	(48)	(196)	(21)	(192)	(43)	(225)	(24)	(22)	(144)	(57)	(31)	(45)	(144)	(16)	(12)	(11)	(21)	(14)	(15)	(1317)

Question 5.1: Were you provided with assistance/guidance/advice for your ERASMUS study period abroad by your home institution or your host institution prior to the study period abroad? Were you satisfied with the assistance/guidance/advice provided?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very satisfied" to 5 = "Very dissatisfied"

– 43 per cent little assistance and guidance, and
– 39 per cent none at all.

This pattern did not change significantly between 1990/91 and 1998/99 (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 38-40).

4.5.3 Preparatory Assistance by Home Institutions

When asked if they were satisfied with the assistance, guidance and advice provided by the home institution for the preparation of their study period abroad, ERASMUS students answered cautiously and were more negative than positive. But they were satisfied with the information about exchange and recognition matters, as is seen in Table 4.9. In respect to all other matters, negative ratings slightly outnumbered positive ratings. Altogether, the ratings on the part of the 1998/99 students were somewhat more positive than those of the 1990/91 students. This holds true both for programme and academics matters and for administrative and cultural matters, etc.

On average, across the various themes, ERASMUS students from Central and Eastern Europe and from Finland and Portugal expressed greatest satisfaction with the assistance and guidance provided by the home institution. Least satisfied were students from Spain, Italy, Greece and Belgium. There was no substantial difference of ratings between the ECTS students and other ERASMUS students.

4.5.4 Overall Assessment of the Preparation

Altogether, about half the students believed they were well prepared for the study period abroad in terms of society and culture of the host country, language of the host country and practical matters concerning living and studying abroad. However, only one-third felt well prepared regarding academic matters and study at the host institutions, while one-third did not. A higher proportion of ECTS students felt well prepared with regard to academic matters, whereas other ERASMUS students felt slightly better prepared with regard to the culture and society of the host country.

The overall assessment varied substantially according to home country. Students from Central and Eastern Europe felt best prepared, followed by those from Denmark, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. The most negative ratings came from Italian, French and Portuguese students (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10
Positive Assessment by Students of Degree of Preparation for the ERASMUS Study Period Abroad – by Country of Home Institution
(percentages*)

	Country of home institution										
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	
Practical matters in the host country	50	41	57	55	53	52	33	43	37	38	
Society and culture of the host country	57	54	67	68	58	57	42	47	62	40	
Academic matters/study at the host institution	39	34	31	35	36	33	28	33	29	26	
Language of the host country	52	59	62	70	40	49	46	51	65	30	
	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	Total
Practical matters in the host country	53	42	56	47	68	66	51	60	49	66	47
Society and culture of the host country	51	45	69	58	76	70	58	63	60	94	55
Academic matters/study at the host institution	44	25	31	27	37	58	53	45	52	46	32
Language of the host country	67	39	70	66	76	71	47	70	33	63	52

Question 4.3: How well prepared were you for the ERASMUS study period abroad?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very well prepared" to 5 = "Not very well prepared"

4.5.5 Prior Study Arrangements and Recognition

The preparatory provisions by the home institutions and the assistance by the host institutions interacted when efforts were made to settle matters of study (course programme, examinations and matters of recognition) before the study period abroad. Efforts were made in the context of ECTS to settle the following issues in advance:

– 42 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students reported that the courses to be taken at the host institution were settled in advance,
– 27 per cent reported prior arrangements concerning the types of examination to be taken during and after the study period abroad, and
– 49 per cent stated that academic recognition arrangements were made prior to the study period abroad.

These prior arrangements were more frequent if ECTS was applied. The difference of an average of 6 per cent across the three categories is small, however, if one considers the extent to which these efforts are often underscored as being typical of the ECTS scheme.

A comparison of the answers to this question and of those to other questions suggests that the extent to which study matters abroad are settled in advance largely depends on the host institution and only to a limited extent on the home institution. Altogether, the differences according to host country are

smaller than in respect to the various means of assistance and guidance during the study period abroad. Study matters are most often settled in advance by students going to Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands and least often by those going to Central and Eastern Europe.

4.5.6 Assistance and Guidance by Host Institution for Incoming Students

Altogether, ERASMUS students reported that they were provided with more assistance, guidance and advice by the host institutions regarding the various study matters than by the home institution regarding the preparatory phase.

– Substantial support was stated by 33 per cent of the students across the 14 themes addressed,
– little assistance and guidance by 42 per cent, and
– none at all by 25 per cent on average.

The 1998/99 students reported somewhat more assistance and guidance than the 1990/91 students (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 42-44). This holds true for various practical matters, as well as recognition matters, language training and personal matters.

Asked if they were satisfied with the assistance, guidance and advice provided, the ERASMUS students also rated the assistance by the host institution far more positively than the assistance by the home institution. Again, the ratings by the 1998/99 students were slightly more positive than those by the 1990/91 students.

Substantial differences were visible as regards country. As Table 4.11 shows, assistance and guidance by Finnish and Swedish institutions were greatly appreciated, but students spending their study period in Greece, France and Italy were not very satisfied.

4.6 Activities and Problems During the Study Period Abroad

4.6.1 Broadening Education Experiences

Many ERASMUS students used the opportunity of studying in another European country to participate in courses that differed from those offered by the home institution. The 1998/99 students were slightly more active in this respect than the 1990/91 students (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 52-55). They mainly took:

– courses on topics which were not available at the home institution (69 per cent),
– language courses in the host country language (55 per cent),

Table 4.11
Satisfaction with Assistance/Guidance/Advice Provided by Host Institution – by Host Country
(percentages*)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
Information about ERASMUS and recognition matters	29	43	41	46	33	57	28	25	36	28	48	22	47	34	54	27	36
Registration, course selection, etc. at host institution	67	70	58	47	43	86	41	20	40	41	64	24	75	56	70	57	53
Accommodation	43	62	71	68	32	87	40	50	41	39	55	46	77	58	88	25	54
Matters regarding financial support	20	9	25	11	17	32	21	11	15	13	28	13	54	24	17	29	22
Other practical matters (e.g. insurance, registration with civil authorities)	63	52	51	67	20	64	32	35	46	40	59	30	54	37	55	59	43
Academic matters	59	57	51	60	39	60	36	32	54	38	73	41	74	52	57	50	50
Work placement matters (if applicable)	37	26	45	43	21	40	24	13	49	25	46	15	48	48	56	55	37
Information about the host institution and the higher education system in the host country	46	44	57	64	44	69	38	39	44	42	71	46	73	54	54	62	52
Language training	55	62	65	53	45	64	43	41	60	65	60	58	74	55	70	52	56
The host country in general	48	60	54	71	54	80	36	45	59	43	73	30	71	47	60	55	52
The local community of the host institution	54	51	46	58	48	64	34	38	63	54	65	38	61	52	62	55	50
Personal matters	33	44	37	41	34	56	24	34	44	34	59	26	46	45	46	52	39
Social contacts with host country nationals	34	50	55	53	55	76	35	55	72	53	58	58	53	43	76	59	50
Cultural, sports, leisure activities	62	48	64	61	68	79	45	38	81	42	72	58	66	70	68	47	61
(n)	(31)	(45)	(183)	(39)	(118)	(49)	(212)	(23)	(45)	(95)	(84)	(25)	(54)	(268)	(17)	(14)	(1303)

Question 5.1: Were you provided with assistance/guidance/advice for your ERASMUS study period abroad by your home institution and your host institution prior to the study period abroad? Were you satisfied with the assistance/guidance/advice provided?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very satisfied" to 5 = "Very dissatisfied"

Table 4.12
Activities During the Study Period Abroad – by Host Country (percentages, multiple response possible)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
Take courses on topics that are not available at the home institution	74	72	70	70	68	73	66	74	63	67	66	70	72	70	43	75	69
Take courses involving teaching methods not practised or not available at the home institution	52	60	54	55	38	60	50	42	26	35	64	45	62	53	30	50	50
Use laboratories or other facilities not available or of poorer quality at the home institution	33	47	38	47	22	64	25	8	32	9	50	12	63	42	45	2	35
Take courses to broaden your academic or cultural background	75	54	54	37	49	76	49	42	74	51	51	72	51	45	38	60	52
Develop a new area of specialisation	32	27	24	38	15	19	22	13	16	25	26	32	26	22	12	9	23
Change specialisation	7	6	6	13	3	5	3	6	9	11	4	3	4	7	18	0	6
Take language courses in the language of the host country	66	46	63	58	64	51	61	71	29	84	35	53	72	38	58	81	55
Take language courses in a language other than that of the host country	30	24	25	24	20	41	24	16	22	13	27	0	14	12	19	12	20
Not ticked	0	0	5	4	5	0	7	4	2	2	6	0	0	4	9	6	4
Total	369	336	338	346	284	390	308	276	273	297	331	286	362	294	272	296	314
(n)	(32)	(47)	(190)	(39)	(121)	(51)	(230)	(24)	(45)	(97)	(87)	(26)	(57)	(284)	(19)	(14)	(1362)

Question 5.4: During your ERASMUS study period abroad, did you: (multiple reply possible)

– courses to broaden their academic and cultural background (52 per cent), and
– courses involving teaching methods that were not used at the home institution (50 per cent).

Students in communication science used these opportunities most frequently and those in medicine least frequently. As is demonstrated in Table 4.12, study in Austria, Finland and Sweden was most often used to broaden experiences in the substance and modes of teaching and learning.

4.6.2 Integration in the Host Institution's Course Programme

Most ERASMUS students took the regular course programme abroad.

– 71 per cent of the 1998/99 students took all the courses with the host country students; in 1990/91, the respective share was only 62 per cent (see Table 4.13).

62 per cent of the 1998/99 students reported that all the courses they had taken abroad were part of the regular study programme at the host institution. Again, the proportion was higher than among 1990/91 students.

Table 4.13
Common Courses Attended by ERASMUS Students with Host Country Students – by Host Country (percentages)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
All courses	84	53	76	64	86	47	73	33	76	84	43	62	51	80	51	23	71
Some courses	16	41	20	29	9	39	21	19	23	15	42	22	33	15	30	47	22
None	0	6	4	7	5	15	6	47	1	1	14	16	16	4	18	30	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(32)	(47)	(190)	(39)	(119)	(49)	(223)	(23)	(45)	(95)	(84)	(26)	(57)	(281)	(17)	(14)	(1340)

Question 5.5: Did you follow courses at the host institution with host country students?

Obviously, lack of knowledge of the host country language was the single most important factor for not joining a regular programmes. Therefore, ERASMUS students at Greek institutions and those who went to other small European countries (except Ireland) were least integrated in regular study programmes.

4.6.3 Language Used for Study Abroad

The host country language was the sole language of instruction for 59 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students and was one among several different languages of instruction for an additional 27 per cent of ERASMUS students (see Table 4.14). A comparison with the respective figures of 65 per cent and 26 per cent for the 1990/91 students indicates a slight loss of the

role of the host country language. Instead, a third language (often English) increased as the sole language of instruction from 4 per cent to 11 per cent and as an additional language of instruction from 21 per cent to 24 per cent.

As students who were taught in more than one language were asked to state the percentages, it was possible to establish the exact role played by the various languages in the courses followed by ERASMUS students. As Table 4.15 shows, it remained more or less constant from 1990/91 to 1999/98 (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, p. 57). Despite the growing weight of English as a lingua franca, the diversity of languages in teaching and learning within ERASMUS was preserved.

Table 4.14
Language of Instruction During the Study Period Abroad – by Host Country (percent of students)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
Host	32	26	63	12	69	0	68	24	75	85	2	58	8	93	29	16	59
Home	6	11	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	13	5	8	0	0	9	2
Host+home	15	0	6	3	0	7	6	0	8	1	7	7	0	1	0	19	4
Home+other	8	0	1	3	0	1	1	15	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	6	1
Host+other	30	32	23	38	22	39	20	25	17	11	21	30	39	4	32	19	20
Host+home+other	6	4	4	8	8	4	2	0	0	2	3	0	3	3	0	0	3
Other only	3	27	2	36	1	50	0	35	0	1	46	0	42	0	38	31	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(32)	(47)	(189)	(39)	(117)	(48)	(220)	(24)	(42)	(97)	(84)	(25)	(55)	(281)	(18)	(14)	(1330)

Question 5.7: What was the language of instruction of the courses you followed at the host institution? If you were taught in more than one language, please state percentages (Sum of percentages should add up to 100 per cent).

Table 4.15
Percentage of Languages Used in the Courses Taken by ERASMUS Students 1990/91 and 1998/99 (means)

	1990/91	1998/99
English	41	44
French	22	18
German	15	15
Spanish	10	8
Italian	7	7
All other languages	5	8
Total	100	100

Question 5.7: What was the language of instruction of the courses you followed at the host institution? If you were taught in more than one language, please state percentages (Sum of percentages should add up to 100 per cent).

4.6.4 Level of Courses Abroad

1998/99 ERASMUS students considered that, on average, 22 per cent of the courses taken abroad were more demanding than those at home, 47 per cent were equally demanding and 31 per cent less demanding. These figures are almost identical to those of the 1990/91 cohort (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, p. 102). More demanding courses were reported most by ERASMUS students studying in Denmark and the Netherlands and less demanding courses by ERASMUS students in Greece and CEE countries (see Table 4.16).

Table 4.16
ERASMUS Students' Average Assessment of Academic Level of Courses at the Host Institution as Compared to Study at Home – by Host Country (mean of percentages)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
More demanding	20.4	18.9	27.0	33.8	19.6	15.3	19.5	8.6	19.6	21.9	34.8	21.4	22.4	21.7	25.6	4.4	22.2
Equally demanding	53.5	52.8	51.4	46.8	46.5	47.8	47.5	46.8	44.6	44.3	46.4	61.0	51.4	40.9	43.2	39.3	46.7
Less demanding	26.1	28.3	21.6	19.3	34.0	36.8	33.0	44.6	35.9	33.8	18.8	17.6	26.2	37.5	31.2	56.3	31.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(32)	(45)	(175)	(36)	(107)	(44)	(213)	(24)	(44)	(90)	(73)	(24)	(52)	(268)	(16)	(14)	(1256)

Question 5.16: Approximately what percentage of the courses you followed while abroad was academically less or more demanding than those you would have followed at the home institution during the same period?

4.6.5 Cultural and Social Activities and Integration in the Host Country

Asked about various cultural and social experiences and activities to get to know the host country, about two-thirds of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students stated that they frequently:

– listened to or read news about the host country,
– had conversations and discussed with host country students as well as
– with teaching staff and
– with other people of the host country, and
– travelled in the host country.

About three quarters stated that they often visited museums or attended concerts, went to the theatre, cinema, etc., whilst about 60 per cent reported frequent leisure activities with host country nationals. Compared to the 1990/91 ERASMUS students, fewer 1998/99 students reported listening to and reading the news and visiting museums, theatres, etc. In contrast, they travelled

abroad more often and had frequent contacts with teachers and/or other people in the host country (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, p. 57).

62 per cent of the 1998/99 ERASMUS students considered themselves well integrated in the academic life and 66 per cent in the social life of the host country. In 1990/91, the respective assessments were slightly less positive. The ratings of academic life by the 1998/99 students were most positive with respect to Sweden and least positive with respect to Greece and Central and Eastern Europe. The greatest integration in social life was felt by students who spent their ERASMUS-supported period in Finland.

4.6.6 Accommodation

During the study period abroad, about half the ERASMUS students were provided with university accommodation. This remained more or less unchanged from 1990/91 to 1998/99, although the proportion of students living in university accommodation prior to the study period abroad dropped from 24 per cent to 14 per cent during the same period, since it played a small role in most of the new EU Member States. About one-third of the 1998/99 students shared an apartment or house with other students during their study period abroad. Living in a private home was an exception (6 per cent); this was most frequent with students who went to Denmark (34 per cent), Ireland (28 per cent) and Portugal (12 per cent).

The quality of accommodation at home, which was rated by 1990/91 ERASMUS students as 1.9 on average on a scale from 1 = “very good” to 5 = “very bad”, improved slightly to 1.7 according to the ratings of 1998/99 students. According to the students, the average quality of accommodation abroad also improved during this period from 2.6 to 2.4.

4.6.7 Problems Faced During the Study Period Abroad

Students were asked to state whether they had faced serious problems during their study period abroad. They were provided with a list of 20 problematic areas. About one-fifth (17 per cent – 23 per cent) stated serious problems regarding

– administrative matters,
– accommodation,
– recognition and credit transfer,
– financial matters, and
– guidance concerning the academic programme at the host institution.

Students who went to France and Italy encountered most problems (see Table 4.17). Academic problems were most often stressed by students going to France, Spain and Italy and least often by those going to the United King-

Table 4.17
Major Problems Encountered During the ERASMUS Study Period Abroad – by Host Country (percentages*)

	Host country																Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
Problems obtaining academic credits and credit transfer	22	11	19	9	21	36	23	17	18	14	13	16	29	14	42	23	19
Taking courses in a foreign language	5	7	17	19	11	20	14	1	6	13	7	12	8	7	19	0	11
Taking examinations in a foreign language	11	9	17	3	13	16	17	0	6	18	6	8	0	7	25	12	12
The academic level of the courses was too high	11	6	8	9	2	4	10	8	4	9	5	0	6	2	0	0	6
Differences in teaching/learning methods (between home and host universities)	4	10	16	3	20	24	17	2	10	17	18	10	5	8	0	0	13
Readiness on the part of the teaching staff to meet and/or help foreign students	15	18	11	6	17	0	23	9	5	16	5	8	4	5	3	10	11
Differences in class or student project group size	9	9	7	6	17	6	8	0	1	17	5	0	3	4	2	0	7
Administrative matters	36	10	26	7	31	8	40	47	20	34	14	25	6	11	9	37	23
Financial matters	19	16	13	28	15	26	25	5	24	20	22	9	11	23	34	11	20
Guidance concerning academic programme	21	9	16	8	25	16	25	23	12	30	9	30	9	9	5	22	17
Guidance concerning non-academic matters	16	13	9	18	9	10	15	29	2	25	5	16	7	8	3	18	11
Finding a place to concentrate on studies outside the classroom	0	15	9	5	12	0	13	31	18	19	6	21	2	4	0	10	9
Accommodation	25	17	14	19	27	5	29	28	32	41	28	26	7	21	7	35	23
Climate, food, health etc.	6	18	10	9	2	20	6	4	19	7	17	0	16	13	5	6	10
Lifestyle of nationals in the host country	9	8	4	4	2	9	4	4	12	2	4	0	7	8	0	6	5
Interaction among/with host country students	13	22	12	9	13	6	19	4	14	5	9	17	3	14	12	15	13
Not enough contact with people from your own country	5	5	8	8	2	11	4	1	7	0	3	1	16	10	0	0	6
Too much contact with people from your own country	16	17	24	1	20	8	25	0	22	15	12	10	17	19	11	10	18
Communicating in a foreign language outside the classroom	4	12	11	4	5	6	9	1	6	4	6	3	10	3	3	10	7
Not enough time available for travel	9	15	10	18	11	23	16	14	14	10	11	11	21	14	7	6	14
(n)	(31)	(47)	(187)	(39)	(120)	(50)	(225)	(24)	(45)	(97)	(87)	(26)	(56)	(282)	(19)	(14)	(1347)

Question 7.1: Did you encounter significant problems in any of the following areas during your study period abroad?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very serious" to 5 = "No problems at all"

dom. Language problems were often mentioned by students going to France, Italy, Norway, Germany and Finland. Administrative matters were a burden for students going to Greece, France, Austria, Italy and CEE countries.

4.7 Recognition

As in previous surveys, recognition of the studies abroad upon return was measured in the 1998/99 survey in three ways:

– *Degree of recognition:* the extent to which studies at the host institution were recognised (granted credit or otherwise considered equivalent) by the home institution. The mean degree of recognition for 1998/99 ERASMUS students was 81 per cent.
– *Degree of correspondence:* the extent to which studies at the host institution corresponded to the typical workload at the home institution during a corresponding period. According to the students, the mean degree of correspondence was 80 per cent.
– *Degree of non-prolongation:* on average, the 1998/99 ERASMUS students expected a prolongation of 55 per cent of the study period abroad as a consequence of studying abroad. Thus, the mean non-prolongation was 45 per cent.

In comparing these findings with those reported by the 1990/91 ERASMUS student cohort we must bear in mind that ECTS, which was established as a scheme to increase recognition through calculation, award and documentation of credits, was only a small pilot scheme in the early 1990s but was extended to about half the ERASMUS students up to 1998/99. 40 per cent of the 1998/99 students stated that the ECTS scheme was applied to them.

Table 4.18
Degree of Recognition, Correspondence and Non-Prolongation in 1990/91 and 1998/99 Reported by ERASMUS Students – by Type of Recognition (mean of percentages)

	Degree of recognition			Degree of correspondence			Degree of non-prolongation		
	ECTS	Other	Total	ECTS	Other	Total	ECTS	Other	Total
1990/91	95	74	(75)*	84	72	(73)*	77	54	(55)*
1998/99	87	74	81	81	80	80	53	37	45

* Based on two separate surveys; weighted according to ERASMUS overall statistics

Question 5.13: How far have the academic studies you undertook at the host institution been recognised (granted credit or otherwise considered equivalent) by the home institution?

Question 5.14: To what extent did the workload of your studies at the host institution correspond to the typical workload expected at your home institution during a corresponding period?

Question 5.15: The ERASMUS study period is likely to prolong the total duration of your studies by: ...

Table 4.18 shows, first, that three-quarters of the study achievements of ERASMUS students who did not study in the framework of ECTS were recognised upon return both after the 1990/91 (see Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, p. 98) and the 1998/99 study period abroad. Credit transfer in the experimental phase led to a record high of 95 per cent recognition in the first two years of the ECTS pilot programme (Maiworm and Teichler, 1995, p. 97), but was still at 87 per cent in 1998/99. As ECTS had expanded so greatly, the mean degree for recognition increased from 75 per cent to 81 per cent.

One could add that 59 per cent of the courses recognised upon return were recognised as equivalent to mandatory courses at home. This ratio, surprisingly, was slightly lower for ECTS (55 per cent) than for other ERASMUS students.

Second, the degree of correspondence was 72 per cent for the regular ERASMUS students in 1990/91 and increased to 80 per cent in 1998/99. For ECTS students, it was 84 per cent in 1990/91 and decreased slightly to 81 per cent in 1998/99. Thus, the overall degree of correspondence increased from 73 per cent in 1990/91 to 80 per cent in 1998/99.

Third, ECTS students, both in 1990/91 and 1998/99, expected substantially less prolongation of studies due to the study period abroad than other ERASMUS students of the same cohorts. Altogether, however, fear about the time by which study abroad was going to prolong the overall study period grew substantially; this is true both for ECTS and other ERASMUS students. Thus, although the application of ECTS was developed, the degree of non-prolongation dropped from 55 per cent to 45 per cent. Now, students expect a prolongation of the overall period of study of more than half the duration of the study period abroad.

Recognition of study abroad varied more strongly by home country than by host country. This does not come as a surprise because recognition is eventually determined by the home institutions and because recognition practices continue to vary.

As far as the degree of recognition is concerned, the British (63 per cent) and German higher education institutions (67 per cent), as well as those in some CEE countries, were least ready to grant recognition of study achievements abroad. In contrast, institutions in eight EU and EFTA countries granted 90 per cent or more recognition. As regards prolongation, Finnish and German students expected that their overall study period would be prolonged by more than 80 per cent of the duration of the period abroad as a consequence of study abroad. They were much more pessimistic than students in other EU and EFTA countries (see Table 4.19).

The expectations varied less according to field of study than according to home country. The greatest prolongation was expected by students in law, natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, and the least by students in communication sciences and in medicine.

Table 4.19:
Degree of Recognition of the Academic Achievements Acquired Abroad and Prolongation of the Overall Period of Study Expected by ERASMUS Students – by Country of Home Institution (mean of percentages)

	Country of home institution										
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	
Degree of recognition	91	90	67	82	80	85	90	84	73	86	
Expected prolongation (percent of duration of the period abroad)	66	11	81	39	48	82	24	49	58	61	
	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	HU	PL	RO	Other	Total
Degree of recognition	93	96	94	63	93	62	93	85	75	90	82
Expected prolongation (percent of duration of the period abroad)	66	50	59	74	34	63	49	21	75	40	55

Question 5.13: How far have the academic studies you undertook at the host institution been recognised (granted credit or otherwise considered equivalent) by the home institution?

Question 5.15: The ERASMUS study period is likely to prolong the total duration of your studies by: ...

4.8 Perceived Value of Study Abroad

4.8.1 Academic Progress

55 per cent of the 1998/99 students surveyed rated their academic progress abroad as better than they would have expected it to be during a corresponding period at home. 27 per cent perceived the same academic progress abroad as at home, and only 18 per cent believed that they learned less abroad than at home. These figures were almost identical to those of the 1990/91 survey (53, 27 and 20 per cent respectively). 1998/99 ECTS students rated their academic progress abroad slightly more positively than other ERASMUS students (57 per cent “better” compared to 53 per cent). Even if we take into consideration that students may overestimate their achievements, the high discrepancy between the perceived academic progress during study abroad on the one hand and the substantial prolongation of the time necessary to obtain a degree expected on the other suggests that students see dimensions of academic value which are not appreciated in the assessments by the higher education institutions.

Academic progress abroad was rated highly by students from CEE countries, Portugal, Italy, Spain and France, while it was assessed more cautiously by those from Finland, Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom and Austria. It was rated highest by students who had spent their study period in Sweden and the Netherlands, and most negatively by those who had spent it in Italy, Greece, Spain and France (see Table 4.20).

Table 4.20
Academic Progress Abroad – by Host Country (mean1)

	Host country																Total
Home country	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CEE	
AT	.	*	(2.1)	(2.4)	2.8	(3.0)	3.0	*	(3.0)	3.5	(2.6)	*	(2.3)	2.4	(2.5)	*	2.8
BE	*	.	2.7	*	2.6	(2.2)	(2.3)	*	*	*	(1.9)	*	(1.5)	(2.4)	(2.6)	*	2.4
DE	(2.0)	(2.0)	.	(2.5)	3.3	(3.3)	2.8	*	(2.5)	3.7	(2.0)	*	1.9	2.4	(2.3)	(2.0)	2.7
DK	*	(2.5)	(2.9)	.	(3.2)	*	(2.6)	*	(3.5)	(3.4)	*	*	*	2.8	*	*	2.9
ES	*	(2.1)	2.3	(2.0)	.	(2.0)	2.6	(2.0)	*	2.3	(1.8)	(1.8)	(2.0)	2.0	*	*	2.2
FI	(3.5)	*	(3.5)	*	(3.5)	.	(4.5)	*	(3.0)	*	(3.2)	*	*	2.8	*	*	3.2
FR	*	*	2.1	(2.7)	2.8	(2.6)	.	*	(2.2)	(2.4)	(1.9)	*	(1.9)	2.1	*	*	2.2
GR	*	*	*	*	(2.0)	(2.0)	(3.4)	.	*	*	(2.3)	*	*	(2.4)	*	*	2.4
IE	*	*	(1.8)	*	*	*	(2.8)	*	.	(2.7)	(2.0)	*	*	*	*	*	2.5
IT	*	(2.1)	2.2	(1.8)	2.8	(1.9)	2.3	*	*	.	(1.9)	(2.2)	(2.5)	2.3	*	*	2.3
NL	*	*	(2.0)	(2.0)	*	*	(2.7)	*	*	*	.	*	(3.0)	(2.2)	*	*	2.5
PT	*	(1.7)	(2.4)	*	2.3	*	2.4	*	(1.3)	2.0	(2.8)	.	*	(2.4)	*	*	2.2
SE	*	*	(2.2)	*	*	*	(2.3)	*	*	*	(2.3)	*	.	3.0	*	*	2.6
UK	(2.8)	*	3.1	*	(2.9)	(3.0)	2.9	*	*	(2.0)	(2.6)	*	*	.	*	*	2.8
NO	*	*	(3.5)	(2.3)	(1.5)	*	(3.3)	*	*	*	(3.3)	*	*	(3.3)	.	*	2.9
CEE	(1.7)	(1.9)	2.4	(3.7)	2.2	2.3	1.8	(3.0)	*	2.4	1.5	*	*	2.1	*	.	2.1
Total	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.5
(n)	(30)	(52)	(166)	(36)	(131)	(48)	(227)	(21)	(34)	(94)	(86)	(24)	(46)	(249)	(26)	(12)	(1282)

Question 7.3: How would you rate your general academic progress during your ERASMUS study period abroad in relation to what you would have expected in a corresponding period at the institution in which you were enrolled immediately prior to that period?

1 On a scale from 1 = "much better" to 5 = "much less"

Data in brackets: based on 3 - 9 responses only

* = No data provided in this table, because there were fewer than three respondents.

About one-third of the students who rated academic progress as relatively low quoted four major reasons: differences in the teaching, learning and examinations modes, lack of guidance and supervision, differences in the content of courses and language barriers. Only one-fifth thought that they made little academic progress because they themselves did not learn well.

4.8.2 Foreign Language Proficiency

ERASMUS students rated their foreign language proficiency (reading, listening, speaking and writing) prior to the study period abroad – both regarding the academic setting and outside the classroom – as neither good nor limited. Their ratings were slightly above 4 on a scale from 1 = "very good" to 7 = "extremely limited". After the study period abroad, the average score had improved by more than 1.5 on average (see Table 4.21). The 1998/99 students rated their prior language proficiency slightly better than the 1990/91 students (0.2 scale point on average), but their rating at the end of the study period abroad was similar (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 110-114). Hence, one could argue that only about half the ERASMUS students considered themselves well prepared linguistically for the study period abroad. At the end of the study period abroad, 90 per cent believed that they had reached an adequate level of language proficiency.

Table 4.21
ERASMUS Students' Self-rating of Competence in Language of Instruction Before and After Study Abroad (mean*)

	Before	After
Reading in an academic setting	3.6	2.1
Listening in an academic setting	3.9	2.1
Speaking in an academic setting	4.4	2.5
Writing in an academic setting	4.2	2.7
Reading outside the classroom	3.5	2.0
Listening outside the classroom	3.8	2.0
Speaking outside the classroom	4.0	2.1
Writing outside the classroom	4.0	2.4

Question 5.8: How do you rate your competence in the (major) language of instruction at the host institution (only reply if different from the language of instruction at your home institution)?

* Scale from 1 = "Very good" to 7 = "Extremely limited"

4.8.3 Knowledge of the Host Country

Many ERASMUS students believed that their knowledge of the host country was quite limited prior to the study period abroad. They rated their prior knowledge across 13 themes as 3.5 on a scale from 1 = "extensive knowledge" to 5 "very minimal knowledge". Back at home, they assessed their current knowledge as 2.3 on average. Again, the 1998/99 students felt slightly better

informed prior to the study period abroad than the 1990/91 students, while no significant differences could be observed between the self-assessments after the study period abroad (see Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993, pp. 114-116).

After the study period abroad, the 1998/99 students rated their knowledge about Spain and Italy as highest, but lowest about Belgium and the Netherlands.

4.8.4 Overall Assessment

Generally speaking, ERASMUS students considered the study period abroad as worthwhile. There were no significant differences in this respect between the 1990/91 and 1998/99 students. The culture and foreign language outcomes were rated most positively, as was the opportunity to develop personal experience and to enhance career prospects. The ratings of academic matters were also positive on average, though more cautious. Ratings varied only moderately according to home country. They were slightly more positive with Greek, Italian, French and Spanish students and slightly below average with Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Dutch students.

Altogether, 93 per cent of the students said they were satisfied with the ERASMUS-supported study period abroad. Only 2 per cent said they were dissatisfied. These answers of the 1998/99 students do not differ significantly from those of the 1990/91 students. Only Danish and Finnish students were slightly more reserved than students from other European countries.

4.9 Summary

The comparison of the results of the survey "Experiences of ERASMUS Students 1998/99" with previous surveys suggests a high degree of stability. ERASMUS students of the late 1990s are similar to those of the early 1990s in their socio-biographical profiles, their motives, their study experiences abroad and their assessment of the results of the study period abroad. Only four major changes are worth noting. Two are the immediate outcome of the European policy.

First, the extent to which the ERASMUS grant covered the additional expenses borne during the study period in another European country dropped substantially. The surveys suggest that the ERASMUS grants covered 89 per cent of additional costs abroad in 1990/91, but only 52 per cent in 1998/99. Thus, the overall expenses for the study period abroad not covered by the ERASMUS grant increased from less than 200 ECU to almost 1,000 €. As home country grants and loans did not increase enough to cover a larger share of the costs during the study period abroad, the students, their parents and relatives had to shoulder higher costs.

Second, the use of ECTS expanded substantially from a pilot project which comprised less than three per cent of ERASMUS students in 1990/91 to 40 per cent of the ERASMUS students surveyed in 1998/99.

Two other changes related to new developments in the overall policy, but not as directly as the former ones. Third, information and advice for ERASMUS students, though remaining stable, was modified in some respects. Hence, the students' academic preparatory activities for the study period abroad seem to have declined. But students seem to arrange their study programme abroad more in advance. Also, the assistance and guidance for incoming students by the host institutions were extended and improved in some respects.

Fourth, there were changes concerning the recognition of study achievements abroad upon return. They cannot be easily interpreted. On the one hand, study achievements abroad which are not recognised under normal conditions seem to be cut in half by ECTS, and thus the spread of ECTS ensured that the "degree of recognition" increased from 75 per cent in 1990/91 to 81 per cent in 1998/96. On the other, students increasingly expect that the overall period of study will be prolonged as a consequence of the study period abroad. Even though the spread of ECTS has a counterbalancing effect, the expected prolongation increased from about 45 per cent in 1990/91 to 55 per cent in 1998/99. These two findings, seemingly contradictory at first glance, suggest that recognition increases in terms of certification of study achievements during and immediately after the study period abroad, but that a substantial proportion of the certified recognition remains artificial because students cannot really forego a corresponding number of courses or other study activities at home and therefore are confronted with a greater workload up to graduation than the extent of formal recognition would suggest.

But some of the findings that suggest stability over time also deserve attention. First, the information on the parents' background suggests that students' participation in ERASMUS did not become more socially selective as a consequence of the lower coverage of the additional expenses abroad by the ERASMUS grant.

Second, one could have hoped after the early experiences that some organisational improvements could be achieved over time, but this was not the case. For example, one could have expected that the preparatory provision by the home institutions would have improved but, according to the students, this was not true.

Similarly, differences according to countries, though smaller than initially predicted, remained a source of concern. In the early 1990s, for example, the European Commission used the results of the earlier students' survey for bilateral talks with the individual Member States about possible improvements. The findings of the late 1990s, however, suggest that differences be-

tween countries did not disappear in the 1990s. Ratings or more demanding expectations cumulated even more clearly in respect to a few countries, notably the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and in part Finland, while findings related to the United Kingdom were less positive in the late 1990s than around 1990. But Italy, Greece, France and sometimes other Southern European countries were very often seen in an unfavourable light as far as ERASMUS student mobility was concerned.

Third, it is worth noting that the role of the various European languages in the teaching and learning of mobile students hardly changed between the early 1990s and the late 1990s. Amidst a growing role of English as lingua franca of international academic communication, its more or less constant role as covering slightly more than 40 per cent of all the teaching and learning of the ERASMUS students can be viewed as a success of the policy to reinforce the use of a broad range of European languages.

Fourth, it is worth noting that ERASMUS students continue to assess the value of the study period abroad as highly as their predecessors did when the ERASMUS programme was launched and developed. Although the "novelty" of ERASMUS as a "success story" which had created a climate of enthusiasm and a pioneering spirit in the public debate was bound to give way to a feeling of normalisation and routine, each generation of new ERASMUS students seemed to return with the belief that the study period abroad was a culturally and linguistically valuable experience and led to substantial academic progress.

5. Employment and Work of Former ERASMUS Students

By Volker Jahr and Ulrich Teichler

5.1 Aims, Design and Methods of the Study

5.1.1 Expected Impact Beyond Graduation

The promotion of student mobility has always been the core element of ERASMUS. It provided opportunities for large numbers of students to study for a few months or a whole academic year at a European partner institution or department of their home institution. The additional support, initially provided to the networks of cooperating departments and since 1997 to the higher education institutions, aimed to ensure that the institutions and departments established supportive administrative and academic conditions and environments to facilitate the study abroad period and increase its academic value. Support was provided on condition that students could count on the recognition of their achievements abroad upon return. If this period, often supplemented by work experience, is successful, we expect it to have an impact not only on the remaining period of study, but also on the transition to work and early career.

5.1.2 The Previous ERASMUS Graduate Survey

A longitudinal study was undertaken of a sample of students who spent an ERASMUS-supported study period in another European country in the academic year 1988/89, i.e. the second year of the ERASMUS programme. They were surveyed, first, in 1989/90 in order to report on their study experience abroad (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1991), then again in 1992, i.e. almost three years after their return in order to inform about transition to work (Teichler and Maiworm, 1994), and, for a third time in 1994, i.e. almost five years after their return, in order to provide information on their early career. The study showed that the respondents perceived study abroad as a help for transition to work, but not necessarily as a boost for a high-flying career. Most considered it useful for their working life. Professional contacts with the former host country were more likely if they had spent the study period in a large EU Member State. The academic value of study abroad was appreciated to a lesser extent five years later than shortly after the study period abroad, but all other impacts were seen as similar at all stages of the survey. Also, former students believed five years later that their course of study had been prolonged slightly less as a consequence of the study period abroad than they had expected during the academic year after their return. Altogether, former ERASMUS students rated the study period abroad as rather more valuable five years after returning to their home country than during the academic year immediately after returning to their home institution (see Maiworm and Teichler, 1996).

5.1.3 Combining Two Surveys in 2000

In the framework of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study, efforts were made to gather information on study after the ERASMUS-supported period, transition to work and the early career of a more recent cohort. Changes could have occurred in employment and work of former ERASMUS students as a consequence of the expansion of the ERASMUS programme, its consolidation and the growing Europeanisation and Internationalisation of the labour market.

The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study made use of the results of the Survey “Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe” which had been carried out for the CHEERS Project (Careers after Higher Education: A European Research Study) which was supported by the Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme (TSER) of the European Commission and coordinated by the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work of the University of Kassel, which was also in charge of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study. In the CHEERS survey, about 36,000 persons who had graduated in 1994/95 or in 1995/96 from institutions in 12 countries answered a written questionnaire in 1999. Questions addressed the socio-biographical background of the respondents, the course of study and study experience, the transition to work and early career, subsequent study and further education, current employment and work, retrospective assessment of study, links between study and career, and work orientation and job satisfaction.

In the framework of the SOCRATES Evaluation study an additional questionnaire “Study in Another European Country and Subsequent Employment” was mailed in spring 2000 to those respondents of the CHEERS graduate survey who had stated that they had spent a study period in another European country. It was only sent to graduates from higher education institutions in Finland, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom because it was only in these countries that addresses of the respondents were available and a request for a repeated survey was compatible with the data protection requirements. In the supplementary questionnaire, graduates were asked to provide information on:

– profile and costs of study abroad,
– study, academic matters and problems abroad,
– recognition of study abroad, and
– current activities, employment and work, and perceived impact of study abroad.

Some questions were similar or identical to those put to the ERASMUS 1988/89 cohort so as to examine the change over time.

5.1.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of the Approach

This design of the study helped to forego a time-consuming search of addresses of former ERASMUS students, which certainly would have borne biased results due to incomplete recovery of addresses. Second, it allowed us to compare the study experiences and careers of former ERASMUS students with those of students who had studied abroad with other financial arrangements and possibly in other study conditions, and also with those of non-mobile students. Finally, the information on each graduate was very fruitful because answers to two questionnaires could be combined.

However, there were drawbacks. Only five countries could be included. Additionally, as only a minority of the approximately 3,000 graduates of each country surveyed had been internationally mobile, the absolute number of former ERASMUS students traced that way was bound to be small. Finally, the information in the supplementary questionnaire was collected 6-12 months later than in the initial questionnaire.

It should be noted that the former students surveyed studied in another European country at a time when ERASMUS was not yet under the umbrella of SOCRATES. Most studied abroad during the years 1992-94. It is useful, though, to see what has happened to former ERASMUS students who studied abroad about 4-5 years after the previously surveyed cohort of former ERASMUS students.

5.1.5 Number of Respondents and Returns

1,885 graduates from the five countries under study had stated in the CHEERS survey “Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe” that they had studied abroad in Europe. Addresses were available for 1,671 of these graduates so that a corresponding number of questionnaires was sent out. 77 questionnaires did not reach their addressees because the graduates had moved and their new address was unknown. 53 per cent of the questionnaires were returned completed, but only 789 answers could be analysed because the others were incomplete or the students stated that they had not studied abroad. The analysis of the findings of the supplementary questionnaire was based on 407 former ERASMUS students and 382 former mobile students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support.

There were some minor problems in merging the answers of the supplementary questionnaire with those of the “Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe” questionnaire. They were mainly problems of identification. Thus, the answers to both data sets are only available for 728 persons (238 from Germany, 232 from France, 131 from Finland, 109 from the United Kingdom and 79 from Spain). The complete data set comprises

– 395 former ERASMUS students and
– 333 former mobile students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support.

In the analysis, two additional comparison groups can be taken into consideration:

– 1,639 former mobile students from the five countries under study for whom the origin of their financial means during the study period is not known (did not respond to the questionnaire or studied in other countries),
– 11,983 graduates from the five countries who had not been internationally mobile during the course of study.

As the total number of former ERASMUS students who were surveyed is small, no tables will be provided on their distribution by country in the course of the analysis.

5.2 Socio-biographical and Educational Background

5.2.1 Parents' Educational Background

In contrast to the findings of the ERASMUS student survey reported in the previous chapter, the graduate survey suggests that internationally mobile students come from a socially more selective background than non-mobile students. As Table 5.1 shows:

– 42 per cent of the mobile students' fathers had graduated from higher education institutions, as compared to 27 per cent of those of non-mobile students,
– the respective figures for mothers were 30 per cent and 16 per cent.

Parents of former ERASMUS students were slightly more often higher education-trained than those of former mobile students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support. The respective quotas were 44 per cent, as compared to 37 per cent in the case of fathers and 31 per cent, as compared to 26 per cent in the case of mothers.

5.2.2 Partners

At the time of graduation, former ERASMUS students were more often single than non-mobile students. This difference diminished somewhat over time, but at the time of the survey, i.e. about four years after graduation, former ERASMUS students were still more often single (29 per cent as compared to 20 per cent of non-mobile graduates) and fewer had children (12 per cent as compared to 21 per cent of non-mobile graduates).

82 per cent of the former ERASMUS students who had a partner reported that the latter had graduated from a higher education institution. The same quota was reported by former mobile students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support. For non-mobile graduates, the respective quota was substantially lower (63 per cent).

Table 5.1
Graduates' Parental and Partner's Highest Level of Education
(percentages)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Father's highest level of education						
Compulsory school or less	39	40	36	37	54	51
Completed (upper) secondary school	17	23	22	21	19	19
Higher education diploma/degree	44	37	42	42	27	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(391)	(329)	(1,606)	(2,326)	(11,609)	(13,935)
Mother's highest level of education						
Compulsory school or less	42	43	43	43	59	56
Completed (upper) secondary school	28	30	27	28	25	25
Higher education diploma/degree	31	26	30	30	16	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(393)	(326)	(1,611)	(2,330)	(11,662)	(13,992)
Partner's highest level of education						
Compulsory school or less	5	4	5	5	9	9
Completed (upper) secondary school	13	14	17	16	27	26
Higher education diploma/degree	82	82	77	79	63	66
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(250)	(235)	(1,069)	(1,554)	(7,999)	(9,553)

Question I5: Parental and partner's highest level of education

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

5.2.3 Schooling and Early International Experience

Former ERASMUS students rated their school achievement more favourably than non-mobile graduates. 33 per cent reported that they had "high grades", as compared to 24 per cent of the non-mobile graduates. But former mobile students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support rated their school achievement even more often as high (45 per cent).

Previous studies have shown that a substantial proportion of former ERASMUS students had international experience prior to study. This survey shows that this is true for all mobile students, irrespective of the source of support. 13 per cent of former mobile students had educational experience abroad, as compared to 3 per cent of non-mobile students, and 8 per cent worked abroad as compared to also 3 per cent of the non-mobile students.

5.3 The Study Period Abroad and Its Impact on the Study Period as a Whole

5.3.1 Graduates' International Experiences and Type of Financial Support – by Field of Study

According to the graduate survey in the five European countries included in this analysis, more than three out of ten students in humanities and almost two in the social sciences spent a period of study abroad. In all other fields, the quota ranged from 9 per cent to 16 per cent, as is seen in Table 5.2. Of those who were mobile in Europe and for whom the source of financial support is known, 54 per cent were supported by an ERASMUS grant. This quota was highest amongst students in law (74 per cent) and mathematics (66 per cent).

Table 5.2
Graduates' International Experiences and Type of Financial Support – by Field of Study (percentages)

	Kind of financial support			International experiences during course of study		
	ERASMUS supported time abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total respondents to suppl. survey	Mobile total	Non mobile	Total respondents to grad. survey (5 countries)
Humanities	46	54	100	31	69	100
	(90)	(106)	(196)	(626)	(1,365)	(1,991)
Social Sciences	57	43	100	18	82	100
	(111)	(85)	(196)	(671)	(3,004)	(3,675)
Law	74	26	100	14	86	100
	(32)	(11)	(43)	(139)	(808)	(947)
Natural Sciences	51	49	100	16	84	100
	(45)	(43)	(88)	(232)	(1,259)	(1,491)
Mathematics	66	34	100	9	91	100
	(19)	(10)	(29)	(82)	(779)	(861)
Engineering	56	44	100	13	87	100)
	(53)	(42)	(95)	(295)	(1,884)	(2,179)
Medical Sciences	46	54	100	12	88	100
	(15)	(18)	(33)	(133)	(926)	(1,059)
Other	63	37	100	9	91	100
	(30)	(18)	(48)	(189)	(1,958)	(2,147)
Total	54	46	100	16	84	100
(n)	(395)	(333)	(728)	(2,367)	(11,983)	(14,350)

Question 1.1: Was your study period abroad supported by the SOCRATES/ERASMUS programme?

Question B2: Did you spend time abroad during your studies (in order to work or to study)?

5.3.2 Duration and Funding of the Study Period Abroad

A substantial proportion of formerly mobile students spent more than a single study period abroad: as the survey shows, 24 per cent of former ERASMUS students and 28 per cent of students with no ERASMUS support studied abroad more than once. The duration of the single period was about seven months for the former and slightly longer for the latter. The overall duration of all study periods abroad was about 10 months for former ERASMUS students and about 11 months for other formerly mobile students.

Almost half the study costs abroad were covered by students and their parents and relatives, both in the case of ERASMUS students and other mobile students. The ERASMUS grant covered on average 32 per cent of the study costs during the period in another European country. Naturally, the source of support for other mobile students was more varied (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3
Graduates' Sources of Financing of the Study Period Abroad
(mean of the percentages of sources)

	ERASMUS supported study period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total
ERASMUS grant	32.1	–	17.1
Other EC grant/scholarship	.3	5.0	2.6
Home country grant/scholarship	9.4	13.3	11.3
Home country loan	4.2	5.5	4.8
Host country grant/scholarship	1.0	5.4	3.1
Support by employer	1.1	11.9	6.3
Other type of support abroad	.4	2.3	1.3
Other grants	1.1	2.8	1.9
Parents, relatives	34.6	27.3	31.1
Own money	13.9	20.3	17.0
Other	1.7	6.6	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(406)	(377)	(783)

Question 1.2: How did you finance your study abroad period (including travel and tuition fees if any)? Please estimate percentages (including possibly value of free rent if applicable, etc.).

Source: Supplementary Graduate Survey

5.3.3 The Study Abroad Period and Its Results

Former ERASMUS students reported greater support from their home institution as regards preparation for the study period abroad (information, counselling, preparatory courses etc.) than other mobile students, and they also rated the support more favourably. This does not hold true, however, for language training (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4
Graduates' Satisfaction with Assistance Provided by Home Institution (percentages*)

	ERASMUS supported time abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total
Academic matters concerning study abroad	38	29	34
Administrative matters concerning study abroad	41	33	37
Information about host institution and country	39	35	37
Accommodation	31	28	30
Language training	36	40	38
(n)	(401)	(343)	(744)

Question 2.1: Were you satisfied with the assistance provided by your home institution?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale of answers from 1 = 'Very satisfied' to 5 = 'Very dissatisfied'
Source: Supplementary Graduate Survey

Given the substantial assistance and guidance for the ERASMUS students, one could expect that they would have faced fewer problems abroad than other mobile students. The results of the survey, however, do not confirm this. Differences were marginal regarding most issues addressed in the questionnaire. Only two findings seem to support the above: fewer former ERASMUS students reported problems regarding administrative matters and differences in teaching and learning methods between the home and host institutions. In contrast, it is surprising to note that more former ERASMUS students faced problems in obtaining recognition and having credits transferred.

Former ERASMUS students more often took courses abroad which they considered less demanding than those at home than other formerly mobile students (33 per cent as compared to 25 per cent). The respective ratios for more demanding courses were 20 per cent and 25 per cent. This raises the question as to whether efforts to facilitate recognition of study achievements abroad could lead in some cases to a choice of less demanding courses, either by the students or upon recommendation of their teachers.

ERASMUS obviously contributes to a higher level of recognition of study achievements abroad. Former ERASMUS students reported that 71 per cent of their achievements abroad were recognised, whereas the respective figure for other formerly mobile persons was 64 per cent (only 3 per cent were awarded ECTS; one has to bear in mind that most respondents received ERASMUS grants at a time when ECTS was still at a pilot stage). Former ERASMUS students believed that their overall study period abroad was prolonged to a lesser extent than that of other mobile persons:, i.e. about 40 per cent as compared to 45 per cent of the actual length of the study period abroad. In comparison, the 1988/89 ERASMUS students estimated about five years later that study in another European country had prolonged the overall period of study by about 40 per cent (see Maiworm and Teichler, 1996, p. 14).

Graduates who had been internationally mobile rated their competence upon graduation as being higher than those who had not been internationally mobile. As was to be expected, this was most pronounced regarding foreign language proficiency. There were no substantial differences, though, between former ERASMUS and other formerly mobile students as regards their foreign language proficiency.

Those who had been internationally mobile also rated their competence at the time of graduation as higher in cross-disciplinary thinking, problem-solving and learning ability, analytical competence, ability to work independently and under pressure, and in oral and written communication skills. In contrast, non-mobile students seemed to be better at applying rules and regulations and using manual skills (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5
Competences at Time of Graduation Perceived by Graduates
(percentages*)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Broad general knowledge	57	55	62	60	56	56
Cross-disciplinary thinking/knowledge	49	52	54	53	48	49
Field-specific theoretical knowledge	62	68	65	65	65	65
Field-specific knowledge of methods	41	46	47	46	48	47
Foreign language proficiency	69	71	65	66	22	29
Computer skills	36	34	35	35	31	32
Understanding complex social, organisational and technical systems	21	16	23	22	22	22

to be continued

Table 5.5 continued

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Planning, co-ordinating and organising	38	45	40	41	39	40
Applying rules and regulations	28	37	32	32	37	36
Economic reasoning	25	25	28	27	28	28
Documenting ideas and information	53	58	54	54	50	50
Problem-solving ability	61	62	62	62	57	58
Analytical competences	64	69	66	66	59	60
Learning abilities	84	84	85	85	80	81
Reflective thinking, assessing own work	56	55	58	57	54	55
Creativity	41	50	48	47	44	45
Working under pressure	59	57	59	59	51	53
Accuracy, attention to detail	61	65	59	60	60	60
Time management	48	49	48	48	47	48
Negotiating	17	19	22	21	21	21
Fitness for work	61	69	59	60	56	56
Manual skills	28	22	27	26	33	32
Working independently	80	80	74	76	71	72
Working in a team	57	55	58	57	58	58
Initiative	50	54	57	55	51	51
Adaptability	67	63	66	66	62	62
Assertiveness, decisiveness, persistence	48	47	53	51	48	49
Power of concentration	75	74	72	73	71	72
Getting personally involve	64	61	67	65	62	62
Loyalty, integrity	67	60	64	64	66	66
Critical thinking	62	69	65	65	62	63
Oral communication skill	58	57	61	60	53	54
Written communication skill	72	72	75	74	67	68
Tolerance, appreciating different points of view	65	60	63	63	62	62
Leadership	23	24	31	29	25	26
Taking responsibilities, decision	43	41	48	46	45	45
(n)	(393)	(329)	(1,625)	(2,347)	(11,861)	(14,208)

Question E1: Please state if you had the following competences at the time of graduation in 1994 or 1995 and to what extent they are required in your current work. If you are not employed, please answer only (A).

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'To a very high extent' to 5 = 'Not at all'.

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

5.4 Transition to Employment and Early Career

5.4.1 Subsequent Education and Transition to Employment

One third (34 per cent) of the former ERASMUS students opted for subsequent study during the first few years after graduation. This could comprise a training phase required for entry to certain professions (e.g. medicine and teacher training), graduate study, etc. Amongst the 1988/89 cohort, half the former ERASMUS students had opted for subsequent education and training. Yet, as Table 5.6 shows, the readiness to choose further education and training was much higher amongst ERASMUS students of the subsequent cohorts than amongst other mobile students (29 per cent) and even more so than amongst non-mobile students (21 per cent).

The transition process and the early career of those who had been internationally mobile did not differ substantially from those who had not been mobile. In one respect, however, the formerly mobile students were more successful: they only took about five months to find their first regular employment (both former ERASMUS students and other formerly mobile persons), as compared to about seven months for those who had not studied abroad. This suggests that international study experience contributes to a smooth transition from higher education to employment.

Table 5.6
Graduates' Further Study (percentages)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Completed	30	24	21	23	17	18
Started, not (yet) completed	4	5	6	6	4	5
No	67	71	72	71	79	77
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(395)	(333)	(1,639)	(2,367)	(11,983)	(14,350)

Question B1: Please provide information about all higher education courses you have ever taken (including part-time, post graduate, and courses you did not complete).

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

5.4.2 Search for and Actual International Professional Mobility

As one might expect, the formerly mobile graduates were more interested in jobs with international components than other graduates. Almost 70 per cent of those who had been internationally mobile considered employment abroad, as compared to only 40 per cent of those who had not. Some 30 per cent of the former sought employment abroad, as compared to 10 per cent of the latter. More than four out of five of both these groups received an offer

to work abroad (see Table 5.7). It is interesting to note, though, that a higher proportion of the 1988/89 ERASMUS students sought and were offered employment abroad than of those who were surveyed recently (39 per cent as compared to 28 per cent, see Maiworm and Teichler, 1996, p. 53).

Table 5.7
Graduates' Employment Abroad since Graduation in the Mid-1990s
(percentages; multiple reply possible)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Considered working abroad	69	70	66	67	40	45
Sought employment abroad	31	32	29	30	10	13
Received an offer to work abroad	25	21	23	23	8	10
Had regular employment abroad since graduation	20	22	23	22	5	8
Sent abroad by employer on work assignments	22	24	24	23	10	12
None	21	19	21	21	54	48
Total	188	189	185	186	127	137
(n)	(386)	(314)	(1,522)	(2,222)	(10,875)	(13,097)

Question D15: Have you, since graduation ... (multiple reply possible).
Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

Over 20 per cent of the formerly mobile graduates were employed abroad and were sent abroad by their employers until about four years after graduation. The respective figures for those who had not studied abroad are 5 and 10 per cent.

5.4.3 Employers' Recruitment Criteria

Asked about their first employer's recruitment criteria, the formerly mobile graduates cited experience abroad and foreign language proficiency as the fourth and fifth most important in a list of eleven criteria (see Table 5.8). Only personality and social behaviour, field of study and main subject/specialisation were viewed as more important in the presumed employers' perspectives. These results confirm the perceptions of the ERASMUS 1988/89 cohort.

In contrast, the non-mobile graduates considered foreign language proficiency and experience abroad as the least important criteria of their employers in recruiting them. This shows that a substantial proportion of internationally mobile students successfully sought employers and jobs that required experience and competence which were linked to their study abroad experience. Study abroad, obviously, is a step towards horizontal differentiation of job roles as far as the international dimension is concerned.

Table 5.8
Important Recruitment Criteria According to the Graduates' Perspective (percentages*)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Field of study	73	77	72	73	70	71
Main subject/specialisation	55	59	59	59	59	59
Exam results	35	39	35	36	32	33
Practical/work experience acquired during course of study	45	57	49	50	43	44
Practical/work experience acquired prior to course of study	21	19	23	23	27	27
Reputation of the higher education institution	24	23	26	25	20	21
Experience abroad	56	53	49	51	5	13
Foreign language proficiency	60	60	53	55	17	24
Computer skills	49	43	41	42	41	41
Recommendations/references from third persons	32	32	35	34	33	33
Personality	81	79	77	78	73	74
(n)	(282)	(241)	(1,220)	(1,743)	(8,361)	(10,104)

Question C8: How important, according to you, were the following aspects for your employer in recruiting you for your initial employment after graduation, if applicable?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'Very important' to 5 = 'Not at all important'.

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

5.5 Current Assignments and the Impact of Study Abroad

5.5.1 Current Status

Graduates who had been internationally mobile during the course of their study did not differ substantially from those who had not been internationally mobile with respect to their early career and employment conditions (unemployment, full-time employment, indeterminate contract, etc.). The formerly mobile graduates, however, changed employers more frequently than those who had not been mobile (1.5 times as compared to 1.2 times on average) during the first four years after graduation. The formerly mobile graduates were employed to a greater extent in the private sector, both in industry and services. They were also more often employed in large organisations.

There were some indications that the position and status of former mobile students were somewhat higher than those of former non-mobile students. Table 5.9 shows that they mainly worked as lawyers, senior officials and

managers, whereas other graduates more often worked as technicians and associate professionals.

Formerly mobile graduates earned more money some four years after graduation than formerly non-mobile graduates. The average annual gross income of the former was reported to be 32,000 €, as compared to 29,400 € for the latter.

Table 5.9
Graduates' Occupation Four Years After Graduation (percentages)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Lawyers, senior officials and managers	16	17	19	18	12	13
Professionals	66	68	65	66	67	66
Technicians and associate professionals	12	10	9	9	12	12
Clerks	4	3	5	4	6	6
Service workers and sales workers	1	1	2	2	2	2
Others	1	1	0	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(297)	(278)	(1,265)	(1,840)	(8,937)	(10,777)

Question C10: Please inform us on your current major activity.

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

In contrast to the "objective" findings regarding occupational status, formerly mobile graduates did not see themselves as being in a better position. Their answers to questions concerning links between education and tasks and the match between their work and their level of education did not differ substantially from those who had not been mobile in the course of their studies.

5.5.2 International Dimension of Work Tasks

Graduates who had been internationally mobile in the course of their study estimated that about 30 per cent of work assignments had an international context. The corresponding figure for other graduates was 12 per cent. 42 per cent of the formerly mobile graduates, as compared to 21 per cent of the graduates who had not been mobile, had been abroad on business/professional journeys within the last 12 months. The former made much more frequent use (45 per cent) of their competence in foreign languages than the latter (16 per cent). Graduates who had studied abroad considered international competences as being far more important for their work than those who had not (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10
Importance of International Competences for Graduates' Current Work
(percentages*)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Professional knowledge of other countries (e.g. economic, sociological, legal)	40	45	42	42	20	24
Knowledge/understanding of international differences in culture and society, modes of behaviour, life styles, etc.	52	58	53	54	32	36
Working with people from different cultural backgrounds	62	62	62	62	43	46
Communicating in foreign languages	60	69	58	60	30	35
(n)	(339)	(297)	(1,424)	(2,060)	(10,115)	(12,175)

Question E3: How important do you consider the following competences for your current work?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'To a very high extent' to 5 = 'Not at all'.

Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

Asked about the international contacts of the organisation by which they were employed, 67 per cent of the respondents reported continuous contacts with other countries and 44 per cent reported continuous contacts with their former host country. Hence, former ERASMUS students (42 per cent) reported fewer contacts of their organisation with the host country than formerly mobile students with other sources of support. The respective figures for the 1988/89 ERASMUS cohort were higher than for the more recent graduates (71 per cent and 49 per cent, see Maiworm and Teichler, 1996, p. 55).

To trace the professional use of competences acquired abroad, the formerly mobile graduates were asked to state the extent to which they used the host country language in their job, their knowledge about the host country and their knowledge about their field of study acquired abroad, and the frequency of travel. Table 5.11 suggests that over 40 per cent of former ERASMUS students had tasks which frequently involved visible international components. Again, the comparison with the results of the survey of the 1988/89 ERASMUS cohort (Maiworm and Teichler, 1996, p. 59f.) suggests that professional use of competences acquired abroad has declined.

Moreover, the formerly ERASMUS-supported graduates made much less use of the experience they gained abroad than students who did not benefit from ERASMUS support (with the exception of professional travel to foreign countries that are different from the former host country). The difference is 6 per cent on average according to the categories in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11
Visible International Components of Graduates' Professional Tasks
(percentages*)

	ERASMUS supported study period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total
Using the host language in conversation	42	50	46
Using the host language in writing/reading	40	49	44
Using first hand professional knowledge	25	36	30
Using knowledge of the culture and society	32	39	35
Professional travel to host country	18	20	19
Professional travel to other foreign countries	34	27	31
Using knowledge of field of study	28	38	33
(n)	(395)	(368)	(763)

Question 4.4: To what extent do your professional responsibilities involve the following?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'Continually' to 5 = 'Not at all'.
Source: Supplementary Graduate Survey

5.5.3 Overall Professional Impact of Study Abroad

Formerly mobile graduates were asked to assess the benefits of study abroad for employment and work. As Table 5.12 shows,

– two-thirds of former ERASMUS students felt that their period abroad was positive in obtaining a first job, and
– almost half felt a positive impact on the type of tasks in which they were involved.

As regards income level, however, study abroad did not seem to provide clear advantages. Only 22 per cent of former ERASMUS students noted a positive impact, compared to about two-thirds who perceived neither a positive nor a negative impact and about one in eight who perceived a negative impact. It should be noted that the 1988/89 cohort had perceived a positive impact of the study period abroad on employment and work slightly more frequently (71 per cent, 49 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, see Teichler and Maiworm, 1994, pp. 64-68).

The graduates who were internationally mobile during their course of study were asked to assess the value of their study abroad in retrospect according to various cultural, foreign language, academic and career factors. Generally

speaking, personal development, knowledge of the host country and learning a foreign language were rated most positively. Least worthwhile by far was income. We note more or less identical results as in the previous survey of the 1988/89 ERASMUS student cohort (Maiworm and Teichler, 1996, p. 89f.). While graduates who were not supported by ERASMUS put stronger emphasis on professionally or practically relevant aspects, the ERASMUS-supported students tended to value factors linked to personal development (Table 5.13).

Table 5.12
Influence Perceived by Graduates of Study Abroad on Employment and Work (percentages*)

	ERASMUS supported study period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total
Impact on obtaining first job	66	67	66
Impact on the type of tasks the work involves	44	53	48
Impact on income level	22	22	22
(n)	(402)	(366)	(768)

Question 4.1: What impact do you feel that your study experience abroad has had with regard to your employment?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'Very positive impact' to 5 = 'Very negative impact'.
Source: Supplementary Graduate Survey

Table 5.13
Value of Having Studied Abroad Stated by Graduates (percentages*)

	ERASMUS supported study period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Total
Enhancement of knowledge	65	74	69
Relevance to occupation	55	61	58
Income/salary	20	21	21
Career prospects	58	53	55
Foreign language proficiency	86	87	86
New perspectives on home country	78	73	75
New ways of reflection	79	74	77
Knowledge of the host country	89	85	87
Personal development	96	90	93
(n)	(404)	(376)	(780)

Question 4.6: From your point of view today, to what extent do you consider it was worthwhile having studied abroad with regard to the following
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'Extremely worthwhile' to 5 = 'Not at all worthwhile'.
Source: Supplementary Graduate Survey

Finally, answers to various questions show that graduates who had been mobile during their course of study retrospectively tended to rate their study as a whole (not only the period abroad) substantially more positively than the non-mobile graduates. This holds true regarding personal development, career prospects and finding a satisfying job (see Table 5.14), as well as preparation for present professional tasks and tasks in other spheres of life.

Table 5.14
Utility of Study in General as Perceived by Graduates (percentages*)

	International experiences during course of study					
	ERASMUS supported period abroad	Study abroad, not ERASMUS supported	Study abroad, support unknown	Mobile total	Non-mobile	Total
Finding a satisfying job after graduation	65	67	66	66	58	59
For your long-term career prospects	67	68	66	66	60	61
For the development of your personality	70	71	73	72	67	68
(n)	(394)	(331)	(1,627)	(2,352)	(11,874)	(14,226)

Question J1: To what extent did your studies help you ...?
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = 'To a very high extent' to 5 = 'Not at all'.
Source: CHEERS Graduate Survey (5 countries)

5.6 Summary

ERASMUS seems to contribute to a smooth transition from higher education to employment. Many former ERASMUS students believe that study abroad was helpful in obtaining their first job. On average, they spent two months less on seeking a job than non-mobile students.

The most striking link between study abroad and subsequent career is the frequency of international job assignments. Former ERASMUS students perceive international experience and foreign language proficiency as relatively important criteria for their future employers. They also state a visible international dimension of their tasks or a substantial use of their international competences – often in the range of 40 to 50 per cent of the dimensions addressed in the questionnaire, as compared to around 20 per cent on average in the case of graduates who were not mobile.

As regards other substantive and status dimensions, former ERASMUS students retrospectively rate their professionally-relevant competences upon graduation as better in various respects than non-mobile students. They also rate their studies as a whole as more valuable for a career and a satisfying job than those who have not studied abroad.

Regarding the extent to which they use their competences on the job and the match between their position and their level of education, the answers of the former ERASMUS students do not differ greatly from those who did not

study abroad. Very few believe that ERASMUS helped them in having a higher income. It is not certain that studying abroad with the support of ERASMUS leads to better careers.

Available data show, however, that former ERASMUS students are over-represented in some high level occupations and earn about 10 per cent more than non-mobile persons. But this seems to be predominantly a consequence of the fact that the proportion of ERASMUS students in business studies is relatively high.

As for the interpretation of these findings, we could quote our conclusion in the previous ERASMUS survey on the 1988/89 cohort: “It might be disappointing, at first glance, for some advocates of study abroad to note that these graduates did not seem to reach higher positions and higher salaries during the early stages of their careers. ... One should bear in mind, though, that the additional costs of study abroad were covered by public funds. ERASMUS was clearly a public investment stimulating publicly desirable changes in the composition of competencies. ... the individual can expect to be rewarded for his or her non-monetary investment in study abroad, mainly in the risks and efforts involved, in terms of interesting work rather than a status advantage” (Teichler and Maiworm, 1997, p. 200).

Most graduates who were surveyed had studied abroad with ERASMUS support between 1992 and 1994. Their answers are similar in some respects to those of the 1988/89 ERASMUS graduates surveyed earlier. But a lower proportion of the more recent graduates stated visible international assignments or use of their international competences for their tasks and position. This is certainly linked to the fact that ERASMUS was still an “élite” programme in 1988/89 and has now expanded to a “mass” programme, but it also suggests that jobs with a strong international component have not developed as fast as one might have expected.

Finally, there is no evidence that the specific arrangements of ERASMUS contribute to closer links between study and work or to better careers upon graduation. In many respects the answers of former ERASMUS students are similar to those of graduates who had studied abroad with the help of other resources, and in some respects they fare less well than the other formerly mobile students. This is probably due to the fact that ERASMUS does not rely solely on the high motivation and international orientation of students of the kind who tend to go abroad anyway. Rather, ERASMUS aims to contribute to a mobilisation of those students who are not necessarily inclined to do so and for whom support could be crucial to consider studying in another European country.

6. The Academics' Views and Experiences

By Friedhelm Maiworm and Ulrich Teichler

6.1 Aims, Design and Procedures of the Survey

The launching of SOCRATES was expected to change the role of the departments and teachers within ERASMUS in five ways:

– The administrative responsibility for student mobility was transferred from the departments and networks to the centre of the higher education institutions.
– The leadership of the higher education institutions became more strongly involved in reflecting upon and determining the strategic options for European and international activities related to ERASMUS.
– The teaching staff mobility component of ERASMUS was enlarged.
– The ERASMUS support for various components of curricular innovation was widened and diversified.
– Both teaching staff mobility and curriculum innovation were expected to serve non-mobile students to a greater extent than in the past, when it was mainly mobile students who were taken into consideration.

As the role of the academics were thus partly weakened and partly strengthened, their experiences and views constitute a key source of information for the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study.

A questionnaire survey "Experiences of Academic Staff Members in the Context of ERASMUS" was undertaken. It aimed to contribute to the understanding of:

(a) the changing role of academics in the transition from the former network-oriented ERASMUS to the institution-coordinated ERASMUS under the umbrella of SOCRATES,

(b) conditions, activities and impact of teaching staff mobility,

(c) the overall assessment of the ERASMUS programme by the academics.

The questionnaire addressed teaching staff mobility, since no other major source of information was available in the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study on this subject. But it also took up the other two subjects which are addressed in the institutional survey and in studies on curriculum development and thematic networks.

The study aimed to gather information on the experiences and views of two groups of academics: those in charge of the coordination of ERASMUS in their institutions or departments, and those who are mobile for teaching purposes. It was obvious that the two groups overlapped: hence, a third group

could be formed with those who were both ERASMUS coordinators and ERASMUS-supported mobile teachers.

It must be borne in mind that a survey addressed the academics who were recently involved in ERASMUS, but not those who were active when networks of departments still played a major role. It was not feasible to trace the addresses of the latter. Therefore, this study cannot measure the extent to which their interest changed as a consequence of the SOCRATES approach of strengthening the role of the centre of the higher education institutions as far as ERASMUS and other Europeanisation activities are concerned.

As no addresses of mobile teachers were available at the Commission or the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office in Brussels, more than 4,000 questionnaires were sent to the 280 higher education institutions which had agreed to support the survey[1]. They were asked by the evaluation team to distribute two-thirds of the questionnaires to mobile teachers and the remaining third to academic staff members who were more especially concerned with ERASMUS. However, the proportion of mobile teachers amongst the respondents was slightly lower than expected (57 per cent). Each institution was given between 5 and 30 copies. Furthermore, the institutions were asked to distribute the questionnaires in a way that the subject areas participating in ERASMUS were adequately represented. A second package was sent to all the institutions as a reminder a few weeks later.

According to the figures provided by the institutions, 2,900 questionnaires were distributed. Thus, about three quarters of the total number of questionnaires were forwarded to the target group of the survey. 1,666 questionnaires were returned, which corresponds to a return rate of 57 per cent.

The ERASMUS academic staff questionnaire comprised 30 questions and over 300 variables. It was translated into German, English and French. All staff members for whom none of these languages was the mother tongue received all three versions of the questionnaire in order to allow them to choose the most appropriate.

A comparison of the background of mobile teachers participating in the survey with the background of the beneficiaries of all teaching staff mobility grants available within the Institutional Contracts shows a slight over-representation of teachers from small countries, but a very similar pattern concerning the distribution by subject area. In order to ensure the representativity of the statistical analysis the data were adjusted as regards home country.

Some of the questions used for the SOCRATES 2000 academic staff member survey had already been included in one of the following surveys conducted about 10 years earlier.

1 In order to support a special evaluation of the fields of engineering and technology, more than 1,200 further questionnaires were mailed to the institutions to be distributed exclusively to students in these fields (ERASMUS subject area codes 6.0 - 6.9).

– Coordinators of Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICP) of the academic year 1989/90 (Maiworm, Steube and Teichler, 1993),
– ERASMUS-supported mobile teachers in the academic year 1990/91 (Kreitz and Teichler, 1997), and
– ICP Local Directors of the academic year 1991/92 (Maiworm and Teichler, 1995).

Hence, it is possible to reveal changes with regard to experiences and assessment over time.

6.2 The Profile of the Academics

According to the survey, ERASMUS mobile teachers in 1998/99 were 47 years old on average, i.e. roughly the same as those surveyed in 1990/91 (46 years). The average age of the academics surveyed recently who had some coordination function in ERASMUS at the department level of their institution was 48, i.e. exactly the same as that of ICP local directors in 1991/92. But the age spread had grown substantially in recent years: about two-thirds of the 1998/99 cohort were aged between 36 and 55, somewhat more than 20 per cent were older and somewhat more than 10 per cent were younger.

The respondents to the recent survey had been employed at their institution for about 15 years on average. In addition, they had been professionally active for more than 7 years, with almost two-thirds working in other higher education or research institutions. The distribution of different professional positions was as follows:

– 34 per cent were full professors,
– 46 per cent were in other senior ranks,
– 18 per cent were in other academic ranks, and
– two per cent currently held an administrative position.

94 per cent of the respondents were employed full-time and 89 per cent had a permanent contract. Again, these data only differ marginally from those of previous surveys.

31 per cent of the mobile teachers and 34 per cent of the coordinators of ERASMUS were women. This proportion is substantially higher than that of the mobile teachers in 1990/91 (18 per cent) and of ICP local directors in 1991/92 (20 per cent). Women involved in teaching abroad and in other ERASMUS-related functions were slightly younger on average than men who were active in ERASMUS and were less often full professors (27 per cent as compared to 37 cent).

The respondents stated that they had good knowledge of two foreign languages on average:

– almost 90 per cent spoke English (excluding those from institutions where English is the native language),
– almost half spoke French, amongst whom most Flemish-Belgian as well as the majority of Portuguese and Spanish respondents,
– a quarter spoke German, the majority of whom were Danish and Dutch respondents,
– about one-eighth spoke Italian and Spanish (among the latter, the majority were Portuguese respondents),
– one in 14 spoke Swedish, amongst whom the majority of Finnish respondents for whom Swedish is a minority native language, and
– all other languages were spoken by less than 5 per cent of respondents.

The respondents came from various fields of study: 8 to 15 per cent each from languages and philological studies, engineering, social sciences, natural sciences, business studies, and humanities.

6.3 Tasks and Functions within ERASMUS

Of all those with a coordination function in ERASMUS who were surveyed,

– 11 per cent stated that they were mainly coordinators at the central level of the institution,
– 64 per cent had a coordinating function in the department, and
– 25 per cent had other coordinating functions.

About half had been in charge of these activities for five years or more. Another quarter had been involved for 3 to 4 years. Only about a quarter took over these functions within the last two years, i.e. since ERASMUS came under the umbrella of SOCRATES.

Asked about their specific coordination tasks, over three quarters stated that they were involved in:

– selecting own students for participation in ERASMUS, and
– advising incoming students.

Almost two-thirds reported that they participated in

– preparing their own students for the period of study abroad, and
– establishing partnerships with other institutions.

Half the coordinators were involved in organising staff mobility. About a third was responsible for general programme administration. About a quarter each gave special lectures to incoming students and was involved in curriculum development activities. Finally, one-fifth participated in the preparation of intensive programmes. As Table 6.1 shows, the tasks vary according to the level and type of major functions in ERASMUS.

Table 6.1
Tasks Undertaken by Academics with Coordination Functions in ERASMUS – by Type of Coordination Function (percentages, multiple reply possible)

	Type of coordination function			Total
	Central	Departmental	Other	
General programme administration	66	40	25	39
Establishment of partnerships with other institutions	90	77	55	73
Guidance/assistance/advice to incoming students from ERASMUS partner institutions abroad	84	85	66	80
Giving special lectures for foreign students	27	24	36	28
Selection of your students for participation in ERASMUS	85	90	68	84
Preparation of your students for a study period abroad	71	69	57	66
Organising teaching staff mobility	68	56	44	54
Curriculum development activities	31	28	29	28
Preparation of intensive programmes	32	18	21	20
Other	12	4	6	5
Total	567	491	405	477
(n)	(132)	(747)	(323)	(1202)

Question 2.2: What were your tasks in connection with the functions mentioned above?

Coordinators who taught abroad (51 per cent) not only taught foreign students and organised teaching staff mobility more often than coordinators without teaching tasks, but they were also more involved in curriculum development and intensive programmes.

Almost two-thirds of the academics involved in ERASMUS-related coordination functions received technical assistance from their institution and more than half said they received administrative or secretarial assistance. 12 per cent saw a reduction in their teaching load and 6 per cent received additional remuneration (see Table 6.2).

37 per cent of those with coordinating functions in ERASMUS since the launching of SOCRATES received travel funds from their home institution. The respective ratio for ICP local directors was only 12 per cent (Maiworm and Teichler, 1995, p. 35). This suggests that about a quarter of the higher education institutions decided to make travel funds available to ERASMUS coordinators after the Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICP) were discontinued.

The academics with coordinating functions in ERASMUS on average had spent five hours a week on this function in the previous two years, i.e. in the framework of SOCRATES. Of these, women spent slightly more time on this

function than men. Similarly, the academics in charge of ERASMUS coordination functions had spent about five hours a week when they were in charge of these functions before the launching of SOCRATES (see Table 6.3). This suggests that the move towards SOCRATES has not contributed to reduce the coordination workload of those academics who continued with their coordination functions at the central or departmental level, or in respect to specific tasks and actions.

Table 6.2
Kind of Assistance Received by Academics from the Home Institution for ERASMUS-related Work in the Academic Years 1997/98 and 1998/99 – by Type of Involvement in ERASMUS (percentages, multiple response possible)

	Type of involvement		Total
	Mobile teacher and coordinator	Coordinator only	
Technical support (e.g. telephone)	63	66	64
Administrative/secretarial assistance	56	57	56
Reduction of teaching load (compensation)	13	14	13
Additional funds for travel	41	33	37
Additional remuneration (compensation for working overtime, honorarium, etc.)	5	8	6
Other	3	2	2
No assistance at all	11	14	12
Not ticked	4	2	3
Total	196	196	196
(n)	(586)	(555)	(1,140)

Question 2.3: What kind of assistance did you receive from your institution for your ERASMUS-related work?

In the survey of the ICP Local Directors 1991/92 (Maiworm and Teichler, 1995), a workload of three hours a week on average was reported for local directors who were not in charge of the ICP as a whole, and a workload of about 5 hours for ICP coordinators. This suggests that academics in charge of ERASMUS functions have not seen their workload reduced as a consequence of the new administrative context of SOCRATES. One should bear in mind that the number of academics involved in those functions may have dropped – an assumption that unfortunately cannot be examined with the help of this survey.

Only about a quarter of the academics with coordinator functions in ERASMUS were involved in the discussion and formulation of the European Policy Statement (EPS) in their higher education institutions. While about half of these only

made suggestions to those in charge of the EPS, a third each were members of committees or coordinated the activities at the departmental or central level. Seven per cent were members of a committee at the central level in charge of the EPS, of whom 4 per cent were key coordinators (see Table 6.4).

Table 6.3
Average Hours per Week Spent by Academics Responsible for ERASMUS Coordination Functions – by Gender (mean)

	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Average hours per week 1997/98-1998/99	6.7	4.4	5.1
Average hours per week 1995/96-1996/97	6.7	4.5	5.1
Average hours per week 1987/88-1994/95	5.8	4.6	4.9
(n)	(321)	(701)	(1,022)

Question 2.4: Please estimate the average hours a week you usually spent on work related with ERASMUS when you had specific ERASMUS functions?

Table 6.4
Involvement of Academics in the Discussion and/or Formulation of the European Policy Statement (EPS) of the Home Institution – by Type of Involvement in ERASMUS (percentages, multiple response possible)

	Type of involvement		Total
	Mobile teacher and coordinator	Coordinator only	
None	74	77	75
You made suggestions on an individual basis to the persons/committees in charge of preparing the EPS	13	12	12
You were a member of a special group/ committee in charge of the EPS at faculty/ departmental level	10	8	9
You were the coordinator for the EPS at faculty/departmental level	10	8	9
You were a member of a special group/ committee in charge of the EPS at the central level of the institution	7	7	7
You were in charge of the overall coordination of the EPS for your institution	4	4	4
Other	1	1	1
Total	120	116	118
(n)	(561)	(540)	(1,100)

Question 2.5: Were you involved in the discussion and/or formulation of the European Policy Statement (EPS) of your institution requested by the European Commission in the application for the SOCRATES Institutional Contract?

6.4 Teaching Staff Mobility

6.4.1 Problems Concerning Teaching Periods Abroad

Teaching abroad for a short period cannot be organised easily. Many academics did not teach abroad because they were not interested or because they considered this too difficult. But those who did often stated serious problems, and more especially:

– too small financial support provided by the Commission (45 per cent),
– heavy workload during the preparation of the teaching abroad period (35 per cent),
– difficulties in interrupting teaching and research commitments at the home institution (33 per cent), and
– finding replacement staff (28 per cent).

Table 6.5
Difficulties Encountered by Mobile Teachers When Organising a Teaching Period Abroad – by Selected Countries and Country Groups
(percentages*)

	Country of home institution						Total
	FR	IT	SE	UK	Other EU and EFTA	CEE	
Difficulties to interrupt teaching or research commitments at the home institution	21	29	50	45	35	23	33
Difficulties to interrupt administrative commitments at the home institution	13	14	18	28	15	11	16
Problems with regard to interruption of career advancements	13	5	14	6	7	0	7
Finding replacement staff	23	17	38	29	32	15	28
Administrative matters regarding leave of absence	5	10	10	13	11	1	10
Academic problems with host institution prior to the visit	6	5	9	5	8	7	7
Administrative problems with host institution prior to the visit	2	0	5	8	6	5	5
Linguistic problems	17	9	14	19	8	4	10
Social/family difficulties	9	11	29	13	10	0	10
Little financial support provided by the SOCRATES programme	33	46	59	49	46	36	45
Heavy workload for the preparation of a teaching period abroad	22	28	30	44	39	19	35
(n)	(80)	(76)	(20)	(99)	(519)	(78)	(873)

Question 3.1: To what extent do academic staff members from your institution face the following problems when organising a teaching period abroad?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = “Very serious problems” to 5 = “No problems at all”

Other academic, administrative and social problems were mentioned less frequently as being serious.

The average frequency of problems stated was more or less identical to that stated by teachers who were mobile in 1990/91. The percentage quoted for each item varied at most by 6 per cent (see Kreitz and Teichler, 1997, pp. 28-30). This suggests that the conditions for a temporary teaching period in another European country under the auspices of ERASMUS did not improve between the early and the late 1990s. This is all the more surprising, because some problems can be assumed to be more serious if the period of teaching is relatively long. However, as stated in detail below, the teaching periods abroad were much shorter on average in the late 1990s than in the early 1990s.

As Table 6.5 shows, most mobile teachers from Central and Eastern Europe stated fewer serious problems in achieving teaching staff mobility. As long as the problems mainly rested with the home institution and country, the teachers from CEE countries cited less serious problems than their Western European counterparts. Obviously, the motivation for participation was so high in CEE countries that obstacles were more easily overcome.

Concerning the Western European countries, Italian and French teachers saw the least obstacles to teaching staff mobility. In contrast, Swedish and British teachers very often stated serious problems. While British teachers stated difficulties in interrupting administrative commitments at the home institution and heavy workload for the preparation of teaching abroad period, teachers from Sweden most frequently mentioned difficulties in interrupting teaching or research commitments. This could reflect both a lower appreciation of teaching abroad and a stronger commitment to regular teaching and other services than in other European countries. Swedish mobile teachers referred to social and family issues far more frequently than teachers of any other European country.

The same question was put to academics with ERASMUS coordination functions who did not teach abroad. They considered that the problems were far more serious than those who taught abroad.

Support for teaching mobility was frequently mentioned as a problem; therefore, the mobile teachers were asked to provide information about the sources for funding their teaching period abroad. A comparison between the information provided by the teachers who were mobile in 1998/99 and those who were mobile in 1990/91 suggests that the coverage by the ERASMUS grant has dropped. In the early 1990s, the ERASMUS grant covered about 70 per cent of the costs incurred, but only about 61 per cent in the late 1990s. Most of the difference, however, was covered by the home institutions. Thus, the contribution from the mobile teachers themselves remained constant at 19 per cent on average (see Table 6.6).

Table 6.6
Coverage of Additional Costs for the ERASMUS-supported Teaching Period Abroad – by Academic Year of Teaching Abroad (mean of percentages)

	Academic Year	
	1990/91	1998/99
ERASMUS grant	69.8	60.5
Special support from home institution (excluding salary)	3.6	11.0
Support from host institution	6,9	7.2
Your own money	19.1	19.5
Other	0.6	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0
(n)	(626)	(695)

Question 3.6: How did you cover the additional costs (i.e. any addition to the costs you would have had if you had not gone abroad) for your ERASMUS-supported teaching period abroad ?

6.4.2 Duration of the Teaching Period

Mobile teachers supported by ERASMUS funds in 1998/99 spent on average just over eight days in the host country. Almost 60 per cent spent at most one week abroad. In 1990/91, in contrast, the average period was 24 days, and only 24 per cent stayed in another European country for at most one week (Kreitz and Teichler, 1997, pp. 22-23). In the late 1990s, teachers from Central and Eastern Europe spent a longer teaching period abroad on average than their Western European colleagues (see Table 6.7).

Table 6.7
Duration of Teaching Period Abroad – by Country Group (percentages and mean)

	Country group		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
Up to 5 days	25	9	24
6 - 7 days	36	31	35
8 - 10 days	20	19	20
11 days and longer	19	41	21
Total	100	100	100
(n)	(784)	(74)	(858)
Average duration of teaching period abroad	8.0	11.0	8.3

Question 3.3: Description of your ERASMUS-supported teaching periods abroad in the academic years 1995/96, 1996/97, 1997/98 and 1998/99.

Table 6.8
Percentage of Languages Used by Mobile Teachers for Teaching at the Host Institution – by Host Country
(mean of percentages)

	Host country																		Total	
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	CZ	PL	RO	Other	Various EU/ EFTA	Various EU and CEE	
Czech	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	9.4	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
German	37.7	.7	44.0	.7	3.9	5.5	7.0	1.3	1.4	4.8	15.5	16.5	.0	24.2	.0	7.1	6.9	5.1	8.1	9.1	9.9
Portuguese	.0	.0	.5	1.7	.0	.9	.0	.0	.6	.0	19.0	.0	.0	5.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.8	.3	1.0
Danish	.0	.0	.3	.0	.9	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1
Greek	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	6.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.1	.0	.2
Romanian	.0	1.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	14.7	.0	.0	.2	.4
Dutch	.0	6.5	.0	.0	.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	14.7	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.7	1.2	1.1
Hungarian	.0	.0	.0	.4	.0	1.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.3	.0	.0	.0	.0	3.0	.0	.6	.4
Slovak	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
English	58.7	38.3	43.7	35.4	93.9	26.7	86.7	59.2	36.7	80.5	29.3	69.8	84.4	54.9	100.0	82.9	23.1	74.6	67.4	64.6	57.8
Italian	1.2	.0	1.5	10.6	.0	.0	.0	.0	47.3	.0	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	4.1	3.6	4.3
Spanish	.0	4.3	4.1	42.4	.0	5.8	.0	4.2	5.2	.0	20.3	.0	5.5	.0	.0	.0	.0	7.0	6.9	2.2	6.8
Finnish	.0	3.8	.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	1.3	.0	.0	.2
Norwegian	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	6.2	.1	.0	.2
Swedish	.5	.0	.0	.0	.2	.8	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	6.6	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.3	.4
French	1.2	45.3	5.8	7.6	.9	59.0	.3	35.3	8.8	.0	15.8	7.1	8.8	6.3	.0	10.0	55.3	2.8	10.1	17.0	16.9
Polish	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Other	.5	.0	.0	1.2	.0	.2	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.3	.9	.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(n)	(19)	(28)	(76)	(49)	(40)	(103)	(21)	(14)	(44)	(26)	(20)	(25)	(79)	(10)	(1)	(18)	(21)	(25)	(195)	(45)	(858)

Question 3.5: What was the language of instruction of your lectures? If you used more than one language, please state percentages.

6.4.3 Language of Instruction

Unlike students involved in student exchanges, mobile teachers are not expected to learn the language of their respective host country prior to or during their stay abroad. But as mobile teachers are most welcome if they speak the students' mother tongue, teachers with language competences are more likely to teach abroad. 28 per cent of the mobile teachers in 1998/99 reported that they taught exclusively in the host country language; in addition, almost 20 per cent taught partly in the host country language and partly in a language which was not their mother tongue.

Altogether, 58 per cent of the lessons taught by mobile teaching staff in the framework of ERASMUS were taught in English, 17 per cent in French, and 10 per cent in German (see Table 6.8). The 1990/91 teachers had been asked to state the language(s) they used, but were not asked to state the respective shares if they made use of more than one language; 61 per cent mentioned English, 27 per cent French, 13 per cent German and 31 per cent other languages. Though not directly comparable, the data suggest a moderate increase in English as the language of instruction.

6.4.4 Integration into the Regular Course Programme

The extent to which mobile teachers are integrated into the regular study programme at the host institution was addressed in the questionnaire. First, the respondents were asked to define the role of the teaching staff at the home institution and possibly at the host institution. The answers indicated that:

– about a quarter of the respondents was mobile in the framework of a regular reciprocal exchange of staff,
– about a third was mobile in a framework where teaching mobility became a regular phenomenon in one direction, and
– more than a third was mobile in a context where teaching mobility remained occasional.

Central and Eastern European higher education institutions established about twice as many reciprocal exchanges as Western European institutions (36 per cent of CEE teachers as compared to 21 per cent of Western European teachers were mobile in this framework).

Second, the mobile teachers were asked to state whether their courses were part of the regular programme at the host institution, were compulsory, and whether students were awarded credits. Half the respondents stated that all the courses they taught were part of the regular course programme at the host institution. A third reported that some courses were incorporated into the regular programme and one-sixth that none of their courses were incorporated. In addition, all their courses were compulsory for the students at the host institution in 37 per cent of the cases, some courses were compulsory in 36 per cent of the cases, whilst the courses were not compulsory in 27 per

cent of the cases. Similarly, host students obtained credits for all courses in 36 per cent of the cases, for some courses in 29 per cent of the cases, while no credits were awarded in 35 per cent of the cases.

A comparison with the answers to the same question put to the 1990/91 teachers (Kreitz and Teichler, 1997, pp. 39-40) shows that the integration of the mobile teachers' courses into the host programme had not improved over time. The proportion of mobile teachers who experienced no integration at all remained constant (see Table 6.9). The increase in the statement "some courses" suggests that a greater number of mobile teachers offers an open lecture or a short course which is not part of the regular programme in addition to a regular and compulsory course, even though the teaching period abroad was shorter.

The integration of courses into the programme of the host institution varied by country. As Table 6.10 shows, within the Member States of the European Union, it was highest in Ireland (67 per cent), Finland (65 per cent), Sweden (64 per cent) and Italy (61 per cent), whilst it was lowest in Greece.

Table 6.9
Integration of Courses Taught Abroad by Mobile Teachers into the Regular Course Programme of the Host Institution – by Academic Year of Teaching Abroad (percentages*)

	Academic year	
	1990/91	1998/99
Courses were part of the regular course programme		
All courses	64	49
Some courses	21	35
None	15	16
Total	100	100
(n)	(413)	(837)
Courses were compulsory for students of the host institution		
All courses	54	37
Some courses	19	36
None	27	27
Total	100	100
(n)	(333)	(693)
Host institution students obtained credits		
All courses	50	36
Some courses	14	29
None	36	35
Total	100	100
(n)	(306)	(658)

Question 3.3: How and to what extent were the courses you taught at the host institution integrated into the regular course programme?

Table 6.10
Integration of Courses Taught Abroad into the Regular Course Programme of the Host Institution – by Host Country (percentages*)

	Host country																				Total
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	CZ	PL	RO	Other	Various EU/ EFTA	Various EU and CEE	
Courses were part of the regular course programme																					
All courses	53	46	40	58	65	60	38	67	61	57	46	64	45	18	100	37	54	64	38	42	49
Some courses	23	35	44	34	19	30	30	19	24	25	38	17	37	42	0	22	36	20	50	43	36
None	24	19	16	7	16	10	32	14	15	19	16	19	17	40	0	42	10	16	12	15	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(19)	(25)	(67)	(46)	(38)	(95)	(17)	(13)	(42)	(26)	(19)	(23)	(75)	(9)	(1)	(17)	(19)	(21)	(179)	(45)	(795)
Courses were compulsory for students of the host institution																					
All courses	37	59	13	51	60	56	38	53	30	32	38	37	30	28	0	37	63	32	29	37	37
Some courses	32	22	41	21	18	27	18	47	39	36	28	33	39	27	0	15	23	33	50	49	36
None	32	20	45	28	22	17	44	0	31	32	34	30	31	45	0	48	14	35	20	14	26
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(15)	(21)	(51)	(37)	(27)	(75)	(17)	(9)	(33)	(20)	(15)	(19)	(65)	(9)	(0)	(15)	(18)	(19)	(157)	(37)	(659)
Host institution students obtained credits																					
All courses	36	35	32	34	54	42	69	50	38	60	23	30	30	27	0	58	35	38	30	23	36
Some courses	25	36	23	18	12	29	3	13	21	13	27	24	21	24	0	12	27	22	44	55	29
None	39	29	44	48	34	29	28	38	41	27	50	46	49	49	0	30	38	40	26	22	35
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(15)	(19)	(49)	(36)	(29)	(73)	(16)	(10)	(28)	(16)	(13)	(15)	(59)	(10)	(0)	(16)	(16)	(20)	(150)	(34)	(626)

Question 3.3: How and to what extent were the courses you taught at the host institution integrated into the regular course programme?

The mobile teachers estimated that about a fifth of their students were in their first or second year of study. About half were in their third and fourth year, whilst almost a third was in later years of study. The corresponding figures in the 1990/91 survey differ slightly (Kreitz and Teichler, 1997, pp. 35-37). The course provisions for students in their fifth or later years seem to have lost weight, whilst those for third and fourth year students seem to have increased.

6.4.5 Other Activities

The mobile teachers were asked to state whether they had been involved in other activities related to SOCRATES during their stay at the host institution. As Table 6.11 shows, about three quarters took on additional tasks related to student mobility and study programmes. The most frequent were the following.

– almost half were involved in advising their home students studying at the host institution where the respondents taught, and
– more than a third each was active in preparing the students of the host institution for their stay abroad, as well as in curricular and recognition issues.

As one might expect, those additional activities were more often taken on by mobile teachers who were regularly in charge of ERASMUS at the home institution than by those who did not have any of those functions.

Table 6.11
Activities Related to SOCRATES Besides Teaching Undertaken by Mobile Teachers – by Type of Involvement in ERASMUS
(percentages, multiple response possible)

	Type of involvement		Total
	Mobile teacher and coordinator	Mobile teacher only	
None	17	39	25
Assessment/examination of foreign students	19	12	16
Preparation of foreign students for a study period at your home institution	45	23	37
Selection and admission of foreign students	14	5	11
Curriculum, recognition issues, etc.	42	22	35
Assistance/guidance advice of students from your home institution	54	33	46
Other	14	12	14
Not ticked	20	42	28
Total	225	188	212
(n)	(586)	(321)	(907)

Question 3.7: Besides teaching, were you involved in other activities related to SOCRATES during your stay at the host institution?

One should bear in mind that the survey of the 1998/99 mobile teachers is likely to include a large number of teachers who play various roles related to ERASMUS. We assume that a representative sampling would have shown a smaller number of teachers taking on other ERASMUS-related activities abroad. For example, in the 1990/91 survey, only 56 per cent said they had been involved abroad in activities other than teaching. Only 44 per cent had had regular ERASMUS-related functions at home (as compared to 64 per cent of the 1998/99 survey, see Kreitz and Teichler, 1997, p. 45). In evaluating this effect statistically, we noticed that involvement in other activities – altogether and in respect to the various kinds of activities – remained more or less constant between 1990/91 and 1998/91.

6.4.6 Problems

Mobile teachers seldom came across any serious problems during their teaching period abroad.

– 7 per cent each stated serious problems concerning the teaching workload at the host institutions, and
– the lack of contacts with the staff at the host institution and outside the institution.
– Only 6 per cent encountered major problems concerning accommodation or communication outside the host institution, and
– 5 per cent concerning the academic level of students.

All other administrative and academic issues addressed in the questionnaire were not seen as causing serious problems.

A similar question was put to the 1990/91 mobile teachers. As far as the subjects were concerned, we noted that the frequency of serious problems observed remained more or less the same.

The frequency of serious problems varied substantially according to the field of study. Mobile teachers of architecture stated problems almost four times as often as teachers in other fields. In addition, teachers of agriculture, business studies, and fine arts reported problems more often than the mobile teachers in other fields (Table 6.12)

6.5 Perceived Impact of Teaching Staff Mobility

The academics surveyed, i.e. mobile teachers as well those in coordination functions who did not teach abroad, were also asked to assess the impact of teaching staff mobility on the mobile teachers themselves, on the mobile and non-mobile students, and on the departments. The ratings turned out to be most favourable as regarded the impact on the mobile teachers themselves. Most respondents believed that the teaching period abroad had contributed to improve their international and intercultural understanding, had helped them to become familiar with other teaching methods, and had been valuable for improving their research contacts.

Table 6.12
Major Problems Experienced by Mobile Teachers During the Teaching Period Abroad – by Subject Area of Faculty (percentages*)

	Subject area of faculty																Total
	Agr	Arc	Art	Bus	Edu	Eng	Geo	Hum	Lan	Law	Mat	Med	Nat	Soc	Com	Other	
Problems to teach courses in a foreign language	10	15	0	2	2	4	0	5	0	4	6	5	5	3	0	7	4
Comprehension problems for students due to your teaching in a foreign language	10	17	4	5	4	5	8	4	1	0	3	0	7	2	0	12	4
Heavier teaching load at host institution	11	7	7	9	5	6	0	9	6	4	15	5	6	4	21	0	7
Teaching did not meet students' expectations	6	6	4	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	3	5	3	0	0	2
Academic level of students was different from that which you had expected	6	6	4	6	4	5	17	2	3	3	7	4	2	5	0	19	5
Differences in class or student project group size	11	6	0	2	9	3	0	3	5	0	0	5	2	2	0	7	4
Problems regarding accommodation	6	14	9	4	4	8	6	9	4	3	3	5	5	6	0	10	6
Administrative problems with the host institution	6	11	11	2	3	4	7	5	2	0	0	3	4	3	6	4	4
Other administrative problems during period abroad	6	10	4	4	0	1	0	7	1	0	0	2	2	3	0	9	3
Lack/superficiality of contacts with host institution staff	13	13	16	8	4	3	0	7	9	8	0	3	5	6	0	7	7
Lack of communication outside the institution	6	22	8	10	5	7	7	7	7	2	0	2	5	3	0	4	6
(n)	(27)	(29)	(30)	(105)	(65)	(100)	(22)	(82)	(122)	(31)	(37)	(40)	(64)	(104)	(10)	(27)	(893)

Question 3.8: Which problems occurred during your period abroad regarding the following matters?

* Scores 1 and 2 on a * scale from 1 = "No problems at all" to 5 = "Very serious problems"

Table 6.13
Impact of Teaching Staff Mobility Perceived by Academics – by Country Group (mean*)

	Region		Total
	EU and EFTA	CEE	
On mobile teachers			
Enhancement of international/cultural understanding	1.9	1.6	1.9
Becoming familiar with teaching methods not used at home institution	2.3	1.8	2.2
Improvement of research contacts	2.3	1.8	2.3
Better career prospects	3.3	2.3	3.2
(n)	(1,343)	(122)	(1,465)
On SOCRATES-supported students whilst abroad			
Guidance/advice during the study period abroad	2.4	1.9	2.3
Better academic conditions at the partner institution	2.8	2.0	2.7
Better administrative conditions at the partner institution	3.0	2.2	3.0
(n)	(1,312)	(111)	(1,423)
On non-mobile students at the host department			
Becoming familiar with teaching methods not used at the host institution	2.8	2.5	2.7
Learning subject matters not regularly taught at the host institution	2.6	2.3	2.5
Better international/-cultural/European understanding	2.2	1.7	2.1
(n)	(1,239)	(115)	(1,354)
On the home department in general			
Improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in general	2.9	2.1	2.8
Improvement of the international/intercultural/ European dimension of curricula	2.4	1.8	2.3
Greater use of foreign language literature by staff	3.0	2.0	2.9
Greater use of foreign language literature by students	3.0	2.2	2.9
(n)	(1,291)	(120)	(1,411)

Question 4.4: How do you rate the impact of SOCRATES teaching staff mobility you experienced at your department or got to know regarding the partner departments?

* Scale from 1 = “Very strong” to 5 = “No/very limited”

But most respondents did not believe that teaching abroad had had a substantial impact on mobile teachers' career prospects (Table 6.13). Only respondents from Central and Eastern Europe expected it to have an impact on their subsequent career.

As regards the mobile students, the academics stated that teaching staff exchange contributed substantially to the guidance and advice of the students while abroad. They perceived a lesser impact on the academic and administrative study conditions at the host institution. Again, the respondents from Central and Eastern Europe perceived a much more positive impact in respect to all three dimensions addressed in the questionnaire.

Most academics also believed that the non-mobile students at the host institution developed a better international/intercultural/European understanding as a consequence of being taught by mobile foreign teachers. Also, about half the respondents believed that the non-mobile host students became familiar with subjects that were not regularly taught at their home institution due to the presence of foreign teaching staff. They perceived a weaker impact on the students' experiences of teaching methods.

6.6 Overall Assessment of the SOCRATES-ERASMUS Programme

A major issue of the overall assessment of ERASMUS was the quality of learning. Therefore, the academics surveyed were asked to state how students from other European countries performed in comparison to the home country students. Generally speaking, they stated that there was not much difference.

The views differed very slightly according to country. Students from Denmark, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden were rated slightly better than average and Italian, Portuguese and Spanish students slightly worse than average. But the ratings by Irish, Italian, Norwegian, British, and most Central and Eastern European academics of their host students' performance was slightly better than average (see Table 6.14).

Finally, the academics were asked to assess the changes they had observed at their institutions and departments concerning international and European activities in the past five years. Most perceived a substantial extension and improvement in almost all matters related to student mobility and international research cooperation. Positive assessments also dominated, although to a lesser extent, with regard to language training, teaching staff mobility, and curricular issues. Better ties with the region were not very noticeable.

On average, across the various subjects, the Romanian, Czech, and Greek respondents stated the greatest improvements over the years. In contrast, the ratings of the Belgian, German, Irish, and British respondents were somewhat more reserved. Differences according to field of study were marginal.

Table 6.14
Performance of Foreign ERASMUS Students as Compared to Own Students as Perceived by Academics – by Country of Home Institution (mean**)

Country of home institution of (foreign) ERASMUS students	Country of home institution of academics																			
	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	NL	PT	SE	UK	NO	CZ	PL	RO	Other	Total
Austria	.	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.5	(2.8)	(2.7)	2.8	2.7	(3.0)	(2.5)	2.6	(2.8)	(3.0)	*	*	*	2.9
Belgium	2.9	.	2.5	(2.9)	3.0	2.8	3.3	2.6	(2.5)	3.0	2.7	2.7	(3.0)	2.5	(2.3)	*	*	*	(3.3)	2.8
Germany	2.7	3.0	.	2.7	3.0	2.6	3.2	2.9	2.4	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.7	2.6	(2.4)	(3.0)	(2.4)	2.8
Denmark	(2.9)	(2.8)	2.9	.	3.0	(3.0)	2.9	(3.0)	*	2.7	2.5	(2.7)	2.7	2.3	(2.4)	*	*	*	*	2.7
Spain	3.4	3.1	3.4	3.4	.	3.4	2.9	2.9	(3.1)	2.8	3.4	3.0	*	3.0	(3.2)	(3.2)	*	(3.1)	*	3.1
Finland	(2.7)	3.2	3.0	(2.8)	3.0	.	3.3	3.2	(2.6)	2.9	2.9	(2.6)	2.9	2.7	(2.7)	(2.5)	(2.3)	*	*	2.9
France	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.9	.	2.9	2.7	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.6	(2.8)	*	3.2	*	3.0
Greece	(3.3)	2.9	3.6	(3.5)	3.0	3.2	2.6	.	*	3.1	3.4	(3.1)	(4.0)	3.3	*	*	*	(2.0)	*	3.2
Ireland	(3.0)	2.6	3.7	(3.0)	3.0	(2.8)	2.4	(2.8)	.	(3.5)	3.2	*	(2.5)	2.6	*	*	*	*	*	2.9
Italy	3.3	3.2	3.3	(3.5)	2.9	3.3	3.0	2.9	(3.3)	.	3.4	3.0	3.4	3.1	*	(3.0)	(3.0)	*	*	3.1
Netherlands	(2.8)	3.1	2.8	(2.8)	3.0	2.7	3.3	(2.4)	2.1	2.8	.	(2.5)	2.9	2.8	(2.5)	(2.8)	*	*	*	2.8
Portugal	(3.0)	3.1	3.6	(3.3)	2.9	(3.2)	3.0	(2.6)	*	3.2	3.0	.	(3.5)	2.8	*	*	*	*	*	3.1
Sweden	(2.9)	2.9	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.1	(3.2)	*	3.1	2.7	(2.7)	.	2.8	2.3	(2.3)	*	*	*	2.8
United Kingdom	(3.0)	2.8	3.4	2.9	3.4	2.9	2.7	3.2	(2.9)	3.3	2.8	2.8	3.0	.	2.6	(3.0)	*	(3.2)	*	3.0
Liechtenstein	(3.2)	*	(3.0)	*	(3.0)	*	*	*	*	*	(2.5)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3.0
Iceland	*	*	(2.6)	3.1	(3.0)	(2.8)	(2.7)	*	*	(3.7)	*	*	(2.8)	(2.5)	*	*	*	*	*	2.9
Norway	(2.9)	(3.0)	2.8	2.9	2.7	(2.9)	(3.8)	(3.3)	*	2.8	2.9	(3.0)	(2.9)	2.8	.	*	*	*	*	2.9
Cyprus	(3.1)	*	(3.5)	*	(3.3)	*	*	(3.0)	*	(3.5)	(2.0)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3.0
Czech Republic	(2.8)	*	3.1	(3.6)	2.8	(2.0)	(3.3)	(3.0)	*	(3.5)	(2.3)	*	(3.2)	(2.3)	*	.	*	*	*	2.9
Hungary	(3.0)	(3.0)	2.8	(3.4)	(3.0)	2.8	(3.1)	(3.5)	*	(2.8)	2.3	*	*	(3.0)	*	*	*	*	*	2.9
Poland	(3.2)	3.1	2.9	(3.6)	3.0	2.4	3.3	(2.0)	*	(2.9)	3.2	(2.5)	(3.7)	3.0	*	*	.	*	*	3.0
Romania	(3.0)	2.8	2.8	(3.7)	(3.5)	*	3.3	(3.0)	*	(2.7)	2.3	(3.4)	(3.0)	*	*	*	*	.	*	3.0
Slovak Republic	(3.2)	(3.0)	3.3	*	(3.0)	*	*	*	*	*	(3.0)	*	*	(2.5)	*	(3.0)	*	*	.	3.0
Total	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.9
(n)	(28)	(63)	(204)	(29)	(163)	(67)	(148)	(41)	(19)	(117)	(90)	(45)	(40)	(213)	(22)	(23)	(17)	(19)	(16)	(1363)

* Less than 5 respondents Figures in brackets: 5-9 respondetns

Question 4.2: All in all, how did the students who spent their ERASMUS-supported study period abroad at your institution perform as compared to your own students?

** Scale from 1 = "Host students much better" to 5 = "Host Students much worse"

Table 6.15
Changes in the Institution and Department During the Last Five Years as Perceived by Respondents to Institutional Survey and to Academics' Survey (percentages**)

	Institutional survey			Academics' survey		
	More/ better	Same	Worse/ less	More/ better	Same	Worse/ less
International cooperation in research	63	36	2	68	30	2
International student exchange	91	7	2	83	12	5
Academic support for outgoing students	*	*	*	69	28	4
Academic support for incoming students	78	21	1	70	28	2
Administrative support for outgoing students	*	*	*	73	24	3
Administrative support for incoming students	85	14	1	72	24	4
Foreign language provision for your students	61	36	3	49	46	5
Language training for incoming students	67	31	2	56	41	3
Recognition of academic achievements acquired abroad by your own students	80	20	0	65	32	3
Visits/teaching assignments by foreign scholars	71	27	2	55	39	6
Courses taught in foreign languages	49	48	3	41	54	5
Co-operation with partner institutions on student academic and recognition matters	*	*	*	64	32	4
Co-operation with partner institutions on curricular issues	73	25	2	50	45	5
Co-operation with partner institutions on administrative matters	56	41	3	37	57	6
Financial support of your university to SOCRATES-related activities	*	*	*	45	38	17
Ties/links with region, industry etc. regarding SOCRATES	30	66	4	24	69	7

Question 4.1: If you compare your institution and department today to 5 years ago, do you note any changes?

* Not addressed in the institutional survey.

** Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Considerably more/better now" to 5 = "Considerably less/worse now"

Almost the same question was put in the institutional questionnaire. A comparison of the responses shows that those who answered from an institution's point of view rated the changes in the international and European environment more positively than the academics themselves (see Table 6.15). Positive ratings by academics were almost 10 per cent lower on average. Academics only judged improvements in international research cooperation more positively than representatives of the institutional point of view, i.e. the only subject outside the domain of ERASMUS.

6.7 Summary

The survey on academics in charge of ERASMUS-related coordination functions at the central level of the institution, in their department, or in respect to specific issues shows that most of those who were active at the time of the survey had been involved for many years. Their weekly workload had not diminished since the launching of SOCRATES. In order to continue the close cooperation with the partner institutions after the discontinuation of the ERASMUS support for networks of departments, a quarter of the academics involved in ERASMUS coordination functions undertook these functions solely outside the domain of their department, i.e. centrally in their home institution. The survey, however, could not establish if academics really had fewer administrative tasks since the launch of SOCRATES, as those responsible at the institutional level claimed. Nor could it see how far the academics were ready to engage in ERASMUS, since SOCRATES underscored the responsibility of the higher education institution as a whole.

The number of mobile teachers supported by ERASMUS increased from less than 1,500 in the early 1990s to about 7,000 in the late 1990s. During this period, the average duration of the stay abroad for teaching purposes decreased from 24 days to about 8.

Although a short stay abroad caused fewer problems regarding the regular tasks at home, the 1998/99 mobile teachers stated serious problems in organising a teaching period abroad as frequently as those who were mobile eight years earlier. Since Central and Eastern European mobile teachers stated substantially fewer problems than Western European mobile teachers, and non-mobile persons with ERASMUS-related coordination functions stated greater problems concerning teaching staff mobility, we could conclude that the general climate of support for teaching staff mobility was not necessarily favourable in most Western European higher education institutions.

The conditions for teaching in another country have hardly changed. The integration of the courses given by mobile teachers at their host institution abroad as part of the regular programme, as being compulsory and securing the award of credits did not change at all. The mobile staff took on other ERASMUS-related tasks as frequently as in the past. And the mobile teachers stated problems experienced during their teaching period abroad as frequently in the late 1990s as in the early 1990s. There were no indications that the role of teaching staff exchanges had changed from serving primarily the mobile students to playing a greater role for the non-mobile students and curricular innovation.

In the early 1990s, the ERASMUS grant covered 70 per cent of the expenditure on the teaching period abroad. Recently, this share fell to 61 per cent, but the home institutions almost made up for that drop.

Mobile teachers rated the impact of teaching staff exchange positively. They appreciated their better intercultural understanding and the opportunity to become familiar with other teaching methods. They underscored the role of teaching staff exchange to provide guidance and advice for the home institution's students during their stay abroad. And they believed that the teaching experience abroad was also of benefit to the non-mobile students in contributing to intercultural understanding and providing the opportunity to learn subjects that were not taught at home.

Most academics involved in the coordination of ERASMUS-related activities or in teaching staff exchange harboured a very positive view of European mobility and cooperation. On average, they considered the incoming ERASMUS students' achievements as high as those of home students. And most observed considerable developments and improvements of European and international activities at their home institution and departments, notably with respect to matters related to ERASMUS student exchange.

There were no indications that academics now played a more important role in ERASMUS, nor that the conditions and activities of teaching staff mobility had improved over time. There were no indications either that teaching staff exchanges would become more important for the non-mobile students and curricular innovation. Yet, they were viewed positively as one of the many elements that contributed to a greater role of European and international aspects in higher education.

7. Curriculum Development Activities and Thematic Network Projects

By Anne Klemperer and Marijk van der Wende

7.1 Introduction

Curriculum development is an area of growing importance in the internationalisation of higher education. Previous research undertaken by the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) of OECD showed that international cooperation in this area had an impact on both the formal aspects of the curriculum (i.e. content and objectives) and its operational aspects (e.g. teaching and learning processes, grouping of students, evaluation methods, etc.). In the context of SOCRATES, particular emphasis was placed on the European, cultural and linguistic dimensions of the curriculum, on recognition of curriculum elements and of (joint) qualifications, and on their impact on non-mobile students. In the Thematic Networks, the emphasis was on innovation in teaching and learning processes and on quality improvement.

This part of the evaluation aimed to analyse all curriculum development activities funded within the ERASMUS component of SOCRATES, i.e. the development of curricula at initial or intermediate level (CDI); of new degree programmes at advanced level (CDA), of European modules (EM), integrated language courses (ILC), intensive programmes (IP), and finally of Thematic Networks.

Particular emphasis was placed on:

– the major results of curriculum development activities within ERASMUS in terms of content, objectives, teaching and learning processes, and qualification structures, with specific attention being given to new areas such as open and distance learning and continuing education,

– the implementation of the European dimension and of specific cultural and linguistic elements in the curricula and their integration and institutionalisation, e.g. the emergence of European programmes and qualifications that are distinct from or integrated in the existing curriculum frameworks,

– the relationship between Curriculum Development activities and other elements of the ERASMUS sub-programme (e.g. student and staff mobility) and their synergy and meaning for the European dimension in curricula for non-mobile students,

– the relationship between the expansion of ECTS and the activities in the area of curriculum development,

– the major experiences and results of cooperation in the framework of Thematic Networks, with specific attention being given to the various areas of innovation, the different disciplines, and the quality dimension,
– the dissemination of products and experiences resulting from Curriculum Development activities and Thematic Networks, both within and beyond the institutions involved.

The issues were investigated by document analysis of a sample of projects representing the various subject areas and countries. Criteria for the sampling of CD cases were

– spread over subject areas: for each subject area, one example of every type of CD activity (CDI, CDA, EM, ILC, IP) was selected from the projects undertaken in the period 1996-1998;
– geographical distribution of cases (esp. for coordinatorship);
– distribution of cases with respect to the size of the cooperation network;
– specific dimensions: relationship of this type of activities to ECTS, TSM and ODL.

For Thematic Network Projects (TNPs), all projects approved in the first year after the launch of the programme (1996-1997) were taken into account, as they had, in principle, already gone through the maximum support period of three years.

The total sample consisted of 64 CD Projects and 17 TNPs. Documents related to these projects, including project applications, interim and final reports, were obtained from the SOCRATES Technical Assistance Office.

Of the 64 CD projects selected, some could not be analysed because there were no interim or final reports, or because the projects had not been put into practice or had started in later years. The total number of projects referred to for the analysis of the results and problems encountered was therefore 53. 16 were TNPs. For two of them, the documentation included only information on the first year of the projects. In all other cases, the documentation comprised information on both the first and second years of the projects. Unfortunately, documents on the third year were not available at the time of the study (March 2000).

A seminar was held on June 16-17, 2000 in The Hague, the Netherlands, to develop the analysis and discuss the preliminary findings of the document study with a number of project co-ordinators. Ten project co-ordinators (or in some cases representatives of the co-ordinators) attended. Each type of project (CDI, CDA, EM, ILC, IP and TNP) was represented by at least one person. A range of disciplines and geographical locations were also represented. The findings of the document analysis were discussed with these representatives. This allowed for a sharpening and specification of the

conclusions. Furthermore, other overarching issues were discussed, including the potential of ERASMUS within the SOCRATES I programme for curricular innovation, major obstacles and outcomes, the relationship of curriculum development with other elements of the ERASMUS programme, the way system-related obstacles to cooperation were overcome, and the trend towards European standardisation and convergence in curriculum structures.

7.2 Types of Curriculum Development Activities and Description of the Projects

Curriculum development included the following activities, funded under the institutional contract: activities designed to build on the diversity of European expertise and comprising the joint development of

– curricula at initial or intermediate level (CDI),
– new degree programmes at advanced level (CDA) in areas of European demand for highly qualified human resources,
– European modules (EM) focusing on other countries, addressing aspects of European integration or involving a comparative approach to a given discipline,
– integrated language courses (ILC) designed to extend the possibilities of learning other European languages to a wider population of university students, in particular those who were not majoring in languages,
– intensive programmes (IP), bringing together students and staff from several countries to gain new perspectives on a specific theme and to compare and test teaching approaches in an international classroom environment.

Number of partners: In the sample, there was an average of 8 partners per project. For the total of the projects the figure was 12.5. IPs and CDIs had the highest average number of participants. The ILCs, which had the lowest average number of participants, usually served specific purposes (language training in certain fields) and therefore may aim to bring together very specific institutions which shared these interests. This may explain the relatively smaller networks of institutions involved. The largest group of partners for a single project was found in an IP programme (45 partners), followed by 31 partners (an EM programme) and 26 partners (a CDI programme). The smallest groups (2 to 4 partners) were found in all four different kinds of programmes.

Number of students: The range of (anticipated) numbers of student participants was very broad, as is shown in Table 7.1. It is important to mention here that, in most cases, these figures are based on estimates of the number of students who would participate, rather than on actual participation.

Table 7.1
Estimated Number of Students Involved in CD Projects

Estimated number of students	As percentage of projects
Not specified	14.9
< 30	20.5
30 – 100	31.2
100 – 300	11.2
> 300	22.2

In the category of 30 or fewer students, all four types of funding programmes were included, but CDA projects accounted for the majority (almost 60 per cent of CDA projects estimated that there would be 30 or fewer students participating). In the category of around 300 or more students, all four types of projects were again represented, but EM projects had the highest average number of participants. The largest number of (anticipated) students was 3,500 for an EM project.

The differences between the types of funding programmes in terms of the estimated number of student participants were clearly related to the structure of the programmes being developed and the ease or difficulty in combining them with existing study programmes. CDAs, for example, were intended to be full study programmes and therefore not necessarily intended to be combined with other existing programmes (although they may be in some cases). This may explain why participation was generally low. Other types of courses, particularly the EMs and IPs, were intended to be part of other existing courses, which made it easier for them to attract high numbers of students.

Number of teachers: The range of (anticipated) numbers of teachers was also quite broad. Overall, 34 per cent of the projects did not specify the exact number of teachers involved. Of those that did, the smallest number involved was 3 (for an ILC project) and the largest was 150 (for an EM). As Table 7.2 shows, the average number of teachers involved ranged from 9 (for ILC projects) to 29 (for CDI and EM projects).

Table 7.2
Average Number of Teachers Involved in the Various Types of CD Projects

Type of CD project	Average number
CDI	29
CDA	26
EM	29
ILC	9
IP	17

Duration of the projects: The duration of a project varied according to the type of programme. ILCs and EMs were generally the shortest (50 per cent and 54 per cent one- and two-year projects respectively). The longest duration had IPs and CDAs (73 per cent and 71 per cent, of which were three-year grants), and CDIs were somewhere in between with 67 per cent of three-year projects. These differences are linked to the structure of the programmes.

While ILCs and EMs were generally shorter projects that were meant to be integrated into the curriculum, CDAs and CDIs were more complex and involved the creation of various curricula (hence, many lasted for several years). The explanation for the relatively large numbers of IPs is that these are, in principle, all one-year projects, but many are on-going (or multiple-year grants) in the sense that the same course is repeated year after year.

Time expenditure: Interestingly, although the information was requested by the Commission, nearly two-thirds (60 per cent) of the applications did not specify the workload associated with a project (in man months per year). Of the remaining third which did, the averages ranged from just over 15 (CDA, ILC and IP) to 27 (EM) and even 30 (CDI).

Working language: As could be expected, the main working language of the projects was English (59 per cent of the project documents). 19 per cent of the projects surveyed used English in addition to one other language, while other combinations of language concerned only 9 per cent of the projects. Another 13 per cent did not mention which language(s) was used.

Some differences could be detected among the different kinds of programmes. ILC programmes were the least likely to use English as the working language (only 38 per cent) because of their focus on training in various European languages. The partners cooperating in ILC projects were therefore more likely to be proficient in other languages. In addition, a number of these programmes explicitly aimed at the promotion of minority languages within Europe.

Interestingly, all the CDAs and a high percentage of the EMs (77 per cent) reported English as the working language. This could be related to the fact that more intensive cooperation between all partners (as opposed to bilateral work between sub-groups of partners) may have been required by these programmes.

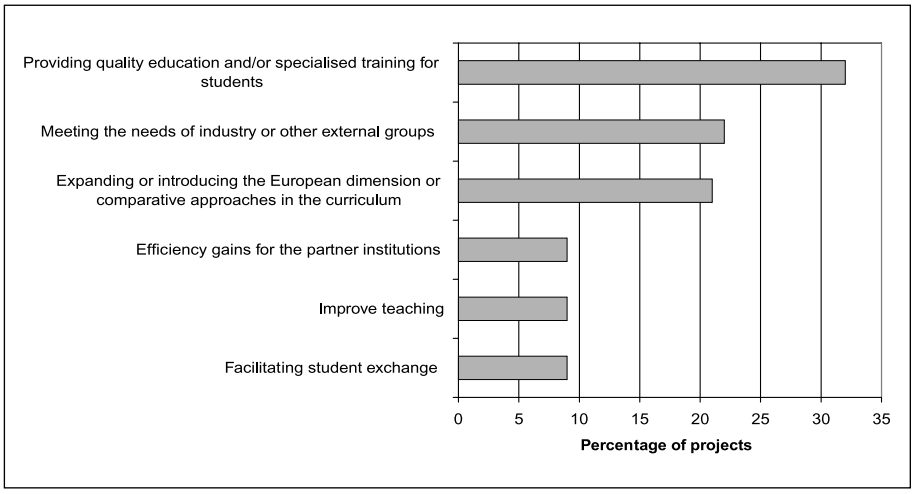
7.3 Objectives and Means

A wide variety of objectives were stated for the projects. The main common categories are shown in Figure 7.1. Efficiency gains for the partner institutions meant that it became possible for them as a group to offer specialized courses for which they did not have the necessary expertise available individually (or for which they had too few students to organize such a course on

their own), or to improve teaching. The goal of facilitating student exchange (through better aligned curricula or language training) or preparing students to study or work abroad was more common for ILCs than for the other types of programmes.

Less frequent objectives (5 per cent to 8 per cent of projects) included supporting the development of particular subject areas, informing policy-makers and contributing to societal debates, and linking professional and academic work. Individual projects mentioned a variety of other goals, such as: introducing ODL tools, strengthening the position of minority languages, encouraging teachers to formulate joint research lines, and supporting an interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving.

Figure 7.1 Objectives of Curriculum Development Mentioned
(multiple reply possible)



Nearly all the projects mentioned the development of courses, modules, teaching materials and/or joint degrees as the main way of reaching their objectives. Two others were frequently mentioned: working together to identify common elements, comparing educational programmes or material, and reflecting on European differences and ways of life, etc. (mentioned by 38 per cent of projects), and exchanging ideas and pooling expertise (approximately 20 per cent of projects).

Some other means were mentioned less frequently (5 to 7 per cent of projects): promoting interdisciplinary perspectives, fostering or enabling mobility, and developing cooperation with industry or other external groups. A number of other means were mentioned by individual projects, including: benchmarking, professionalizing the field, enhancing the IT dimension of courses, including recent research findings in teaching, and initiating research.

7.4 Content and Methods

European dimension: Across all the different categories of CD activities funded under SOCRATES as part of the ERASMUS sub-programme, 42 per cent of the projects included a European/comparative approach to the studies. 24 per cent of the documents specified the inclusion of material related to European culture and 14 per cent mentioned the inclusion of aspects of European history. This is perhaps less than would be expected. But one must keep in mind that the projects covered a broad range of subject areas and that some (humanities, for example) lent themselves much more naturally to the inclusion of these aspects than others.

Language of instruction: Concerning the “European dimension” of the projects, it is also interesting to examine in which language(s) the programmes were taught. It is rather surprising that almost half (44 per cent) the documents did not specify this. 28 per cent of the projects said that the coursework would be in the languages of the countries where the courses would be taught. 14 per cent said that English would be the teaching language, whilst 9 per cent said that a combination of English and various languages of the countries involved would be used, and an additional 6 per cent specified English and one other language.

Interdisciplinarity: A high percentage of projects (66 per cent) reported having an interdisciplinary focus. This may be related to the fact that much cutting-edge research is now being carried out in interdisciplinary areas and that the labour market expresses the need for fewer single-subject specialists and for more people who are capable of working in interdisciplinary fields.

Teaching and learning methods: The programmes created often bring together people from many different backgrounds, disciplines, and academic traditions, and people with many different approaches to education. It would therefore seem logical to assume that international educational projects spend a great deal of time comparing different approaches or coming up with common didactical approaches, and that considerable thought must be given to how students are to be tested. However, only slightly more than half (53 per cent) the projects mention a focus on particular teaching and learning methods.

This is interesting if one considers the relatively high number of projects (66%) which have an interdisciplinary focus, as didactic approaches also vary considerably across disciplines. Even fewer documents (23 per cent) explicitly mention testing or evaluation of the students. This percentage is low, but one must bear in mind that most projects only aim to create one part of a degree programme which will be integrated into an existing programme. One could expect that more attention would be paid to this issue in the courses which are offered in one geographical location (IPs, for example), or in projects which create joint degree programmes.

7.5 Links with Other SOCRATES Activities

It is interesting to see to what degree the CD funding programmes have links with the other ERASMUS activities funded under SOCRATES, especially those which fall within the Institutional Contract. Here, we shall examine to what degree CD projects include teaching and student mobility, and whether the use of ECTS is explicitly mentioned. It is important to stress that the percentages refer to projects which explicitly mention the inclusion of mobility or the use of ECTS, and that, in some cases, the project may include some mobility or the use of ECTS, but this was not specifically mentioned in the documents. In our analysis, we cannot distinguish between projects that do not include mobility and those which did not specifically mention the inclusion.

Teaching and Student Mobility: With mobility, there were great differences between the kinds of funding, as is seen in Table 7.3. Most mobility was found in the IP programmes, where all the projects which were surveyed included some elements of both teaching and student mobility. This is not surprising, as one of the aims of the IP funding programme was to create international classroom environments. These short intensive courses (a week or two) generally focused on face-to-face teaching in a single location, although several also enabled non-mobile students to participate through the use of video conferencing.

Table 7.3
Links with Staff and Student Mobility – by Type of CD Project

Type of CD project	Percentage of projects including student mobility	Percentage of projects including staff mobility
CDI	24	39
CDA	86	50
EM	54	38
ILC	13	13
IP	100	100

The projects with the second greatest mobility were the CDAs. These (as well as many EM projects) often focused on producing curricula which could be taught in many different locations. Sometimes, simultaneous presentation of the material was envisaged (via ODL techniques), but more often material was to be integrated into existing degree programmes. CDA documents often mentioned the need for particular parts of the courses to be taught by experts from different European countries. This was sometimes envisaged using distance techniques and sometimes it involved the mobility of teachers. Concerning student mobility, some programmes were structured in

such a way that students moved from one institution to another in the course of the programme, and sometimes short, intensive courses were included which brought together students and teachers from different countries. As the CDAs were generally larger than the EMs and ILCs (in terms of how much curriculum is being developed), many of these projects included elements of both traditional (face-to-face) teaching and either ODL or mobility (sometimes both).

Differences between the CDIs and CDAs in terms of student mobility can be explained by the fact that lower-level (intermediate) educational programmes tend to be much more rigidly structured than advanced studies. It can therefore be expected that it is easier to include large elements of student mobility in more advanced programmes. In addition, this difference seems to be linked to the general trend that student mobility is more frequent in the advanced phase of the study programme.

ILC projects lay the least emphasis on mobility. Many aimed to prepare students at their home institution for a mobility period. Another reason may be related to the very limited budgets and the use of ODL to replace the need for physical exchange. EMs, on the other hand, were often designed to enlarge the course offerings available to international students and therefore laid greater emphasis on student mobility. This can be contrasted with the larger CDA and CDI projects, some of which aimed to design more integrated degree programmes, with elements of student mobility built into the programmes.

ECTS: There were also some differences between the various programmes in relation to their use of ECTS. The programmes which most often mentioned the use of ECTS were the EMs (54 per cent) and the CDAs (50 per cent). For the EMs, this can be explained by the fact that one of their common aims was to develop courses for international students (as well as regular students). The use of ECTS is obviously of special importance for mobile students.

The contrast between CDAs and CDIs (33 per cent) may again be linked to the fact that substantially more student mobility was envisaged for CDAs than for CDIs (see above, section 7.5). The relatively high number of IP projects which mentioned the use of ECTS (42 per cent) can also be explained by the importance of student mobility. The very limited use of ECTS in ILC projects (13 per cent) is clearly related to the lack of emphasis on student mobility.

References to CD projects in the European Policy Statements: The European Policy Statements (EPS) in the applications for the Institutional Contract were examined to see if mention was made of curriculum development activities. The number of cases in which reference was made to this strand of ERASMUS varied according to the types of programmes. The lowest rate

was for the ILC and EM projects (both around 38 per cent of the documents) and the highest was for the IPs (83 per cent).

In between these two extremes were the CDI and CDA projects, for which 58 per cent and 64 per cent of the EPSs respectively mentioned curriculum development activities. One could conclude that the various programmes had different impacts on policy formulation at the institutional level. These differences can probably be explained by the difference in the average budgets of the types of programmes under study (ILCs and EMs have smaller budgets and are therefore likely to have less impact). Another possible explanation is that the CDIs, CDAs and IPs create a greater amount of core curriculum, or whole courses or programmes that need to gain recognition, and the institutions are therefore more involved and possibly more aware of them.

7.6 Specific Aspects

Open and Distance Learning: If the programmes are viewed as a whole, the majority (more than two-thirds) of the projects intend to apply open and distance learning (ODL) techniques on a partial basis. Only for CDIs is this percentage lower (around 54 per cent). There are, however, differences in the emphasis on ODL between the various programmes (see Table 7.4).

Table 7.4
Use of ODL – by Type of CD Project (percentages)

Type of CD activity	Partial use of ODL as percentage of projects	Majority or whole programme via ODL as percentage of projects
CDI	47	7
CDA	50	36
EM	38	23
ILC	38	33
IP	42	33

The projects which most often used ODL techniques were the CDAs. Here, distance learning technology is frequently used to make it possible to assist courses on a part-time basis, in particular for non-traditional students and working people. These courses are at advanced level and are often highly relevant for people working in the field of study. Hence, many courses aim to reach this audience in addition to traditional students.

IP projects also intend to make fairly widespread use of ODL technologies. In the case of ILCs, distance technology is used extensively in place of student and teacher mobility. Many of these courses aim to prepare students to study

abroad, and ODL technology can be an efficient and inexpensive means of teaching students the vocabulary that is specific to particular areas of study or needs. EMs are less likely to use this technology.

It is interesting that many CDIs partially use ODL techniques in the courses, but very few intend to offer the major part of the programme or the whole programme via ODL. The fact that fewer CDIs than CDAs make use of these technologies may reflect the standardized structure of lower-level (intermediate) curricula and may be evidence that it is somewhat more difficult to introduce new teaching methods and techniques at that level. It may also indicate that there is much less demand for part-time studies and that there is greater emphasis on face-to-face teaching at that level.

Continuing education: Just as with ODL, there are differences between the projects with regard to whether or not they mention the use of the study materials for continuing education purposes.

The projects which mentioned the (possible) use of the coursework for continuing education most often were the CDAs (43 per cent), followed by Ems (31 per cent). As mentioned above, the high use by CDAs is probably linked to their advanced level and their relevance for people working in the field. Given the specialized nature of the studies, it is perhaps rather surprising that a fairly low percentage of IP (17 per cent) and ILC projects (13 per cent) mentioned this.

The very low percentage of CDI project (8 per cent) documents which specifically mention the usefulness of such courses for continuing educational purposes was perhaps to be expected if one considers that part-time study at the lower levels is not very common and that the relevance of these studies for continuing education is perceived to be much weaker than studies at more advanced levels. Two projects (one CDI and one EM) mentioned that the courses being developed would also be suitable for students in vocational education programmes.

Quality assessment: 84 per cent of the projects mentioned some kind of activity in the field of quality assessment. A variety of methods were used to evaluate the projects, including assessment by students (42 per cent of the projects), project partners (28 per cent) and teachers (25 per cent), through external organisations (19 per cent) or within existing institutional/national evaluation systems (14 per cent).

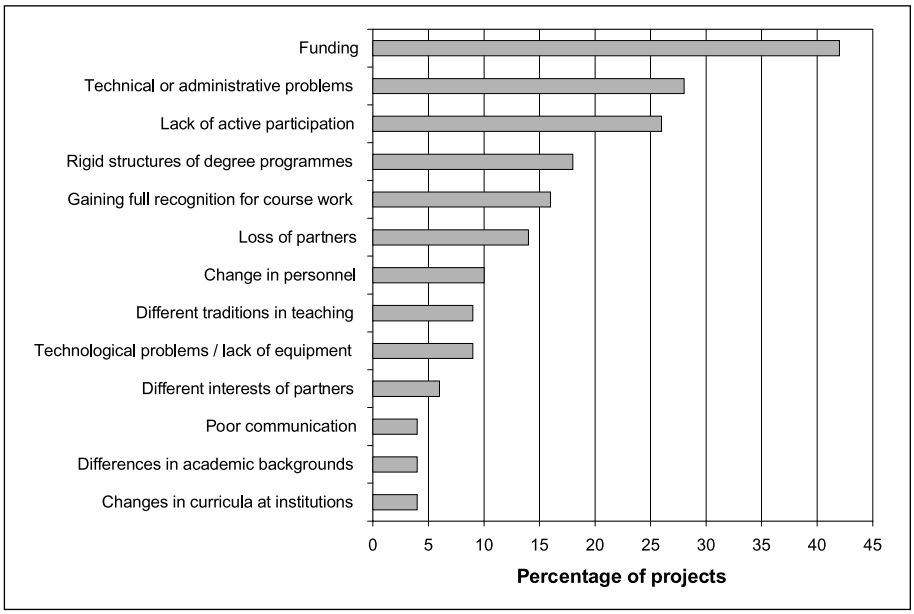
7.7 Achieving the Goals

It is not easy to judge the final achievement of projects' goals only on the basis of the written documentation. Firstly, because interim reports do not hold much specific information. They often just repeat the content of the original application. Secondly, many projects lasted for three years, but at the time of this analysis, the final reports from the last two years were not yet

available. The available interim and few reports were very informative, however, on the problems encountered and also provided some insight into changes that were made in the project objectives and plans during the first years of implementation. Additional information was obtained from the project co-ordinators during the evaluation seminar.

Problems encountered: A number of problems which were encountered were reported in the interim and final reports which were analysed. The problem which was cited most (see Figure 7.2) was *lack of funding*, or the low level of the grants received. This was reported in almost half (43 per cent) the project documents. Problems directly related to the low level of funding were also reported, such as lack of equipment (e.g. for offering the courses via ODL), the loss of partners due to lack of funds, a lack of interest in the project by (some of) the partners and a lack of time for project activities.

Figure 7.2
Problems Encountered in Curriculum Development Projects
(percentage of projects, multiple reply possible)



According to project co-ordinators, however, the problem of *lack of active participation* of partners was generally more significant than the lack of financial resources. Problems associated with “sleeping” partners were frequently mentioned. According to the document analysis, lack of (active) participation was reported in more than a quarter of the projects. Other problems associated with partners included a loss of partners (reported in 14 per cent of the documents) and a change in personnel, i.e. teachers or coordinators

(about 10 per cent). Less-frequently mentioned problems relating to partners included: poor communication (4 per cent), different needs and teaching traditions (9 per cent) and differences in academic backgrounds (4 per cent). Problems related to differences in the interests of the partners were also reported (6 per cent), including diverging interests, not having enough time for project activities, and partners pursuing their own interests rather than the aims of the project.

The project co-ordinators mentioned several causes for "sleeping" partners. One important factor was the lack of institutional and/or national recognition of curriculum development work and the lack of rewards for this kind of undertaking. This was related to the more general problem of lack of recognition for teaching (as opposed to research) activities by many institutions. The project co-ordinators also mentioned that there was sometimes a lack of correspondence or overlap of project activities with the regular activities of those involved in the project. Other factors mentioned were problems linked to the timing of the activities and the differences in the needs and expectations of the partners.

A third set of problems involved technical or administrative matters. 28 per cent of all projects reported administrative problems at the institutions themselves, as well as problems associated with the administration of the funds by the Commission. 16 per cent reported difficulties in obtaining (full) recognition of the coursework and 18 per cent reported problems associated with rigid programme or degree structures. A small number (4 per cent) encountered problems due to changes in the programme curricula at the institutions.

The fourth set of problems was linked to the products. 9 per cent of the projects reported problems linked to a lack of equipment or technological problems. One project reported a lack of uniformity in the teaching material collected and another reported problems due to differing copyright laws in the various countries.

Adjustment of project objectives: In addition to these main barriers, the interim and final reports often indicated changes that had been made to the original plan. Due to the limited funding and other difficulties encountered, plans were often scaled-down or revised.

Common changes included a slower pace (25 per cent of the projects) and smaller proportions of curriculum being developed than originally envisaged (18 per cent). Several project documents reported that a curriculum had been developed but had not been (fully) integrated into the study programmes at all the partner institutions (20 per cent). At the evaluation seminar, the project coordinators explained why it was difficult to integrate new courses or curricula into existing programmes. Sometimes it was difficult to obtain recognition for a type of degree that did not exist in all the partner countries (e.g. a Master's degree). Other problems were experienced in inte-

grating courses with content and/or teaching languages that were different from the normal study programmes at the institutions and in dealing with the accreditation procedures that existed in the various countries and at the institutions. It was generally agreed that international accreditation systems which had been developed in some fields (and are being developed in others) could help to deal with the problem of courses/curricula being approved and integrated. In addition, the current trend towards more outcome-based (as opposed to input-based) accreditation systems may help to make programme content more flexible. Many of the seminar participants were optimistic that changes to national systems following the Bologna Declaration would help to address integration problems.

Another difficulty that was raised by the seminar participants concerned integrating interdisciplinary courses/curricula into institutional frameworks (which are often discipline-based). Since most projects had an interdisciplinary focus, as discussed, this seemed to be a serious concern.

The document analysis revealed a number of other common deviations from the plans, e.g. fewer meetings had taken place than had been scheduled (9 per cent), fewer teachers had participated (9 per cent), or evaluations had not been carried out (4 per cent). Other changes included lower participation of external groups (4 per cent), no creation of core modules (9 per cent), a shorter course being given (6 per cent), a change in the type of recognition sought (2 per cent), or bilateral work replacing work involving the whole group (2 per cent). In two cases, approved projects were not carried out at all.

Results: On the positive side, nearly all the projects reported the development of syllabi and/or teaching materials. By the end of the first year, more than a third of the projects under study had already run the courses which were being developed, and another 15 per cent reported having run pilot versions of the courses. It is important to bear in mind here that many of the projects ran for three years and that this analysis did not include the reports from the last two years. The number of projects reporting having run courses would probably have been much higher if these reports had been included.

26 per cent of the projects reported having made project information available on the Internet, while 16 per cent had prepared books, CDs, or video material. In addition, several project reports indicated that some products were not part of the original plan. Examples included books or CDs (9 per cent of the projects reported this), or the creation of publicity material (reported by 6 per cent of the projects). Some cases reported (unplanned) outcomes varying from additional seminars or excursions (in 3 cases), using innovative teaching methods in the courses (reported in 2 cases), as well as publishing course material on the Internet, offering the whole course by ODL (1 case) and integrating the material into courses which were part of the regular curriculum (in

one case each). In one case as well, involvement in the project resulted in the cross-appointment of a teacher at a foreign institution.

The seminar participants stressed that there were also less easily quantified but important outcomes of the projects. The most important one concerned continuing interaction which developed from the networks created. Several examples were given of how the projects led to other, new types of collaboration amongst the partners. One example was also given in which former students continued to make use of resources available from the network years after their formal association with the project. In addition, it was mentioned that project participants sometimes developed a more international way of thinking or approaching problems which may affect many areas of their professional life and development.

It was very difficult to judge the success of projects in terms of how many students and teachers actually participated in the courses. With the exception of the IP documents (most of which included some information on participation), very few interim or final reports included information on the actual number of participants.

7.8 Institutionalisation

Due to the different types of projects involved in this study and the great variety of curriculum innovations within these different projects, a variety of types of courses with different levels of integration into existing degree programmes were created. It is rather difficult to classify these because of the lack of standardisation in the vocabulary used to describe parts of the curriculum. For example, some documents described the development of modules, whilst others referred to programmes or courses, and sometimes different terms were used to refer to similar things. In addition, some descriptions were very general and did not allow for an assessment of what type of structure had been or should be created. Furthermore, conceptions changed as projects developed over time, and therefore the structures which were created may not have much to do with the original idea. Nevertheless, a general description of the types of curriculum structures which were envisaged or created is given here.

It is obvious from the structure of the different programmes that some were intended to create new types of degree programmes and some were not. In principle, ILCs, EMs, and IPs were intended to create parts of degree programmes (courses which would be integrated into existing degrees), while CDIs and CDAs could create new types of degrees that may or may not fit into the existing degree structures. However, not all CDIs and CDAs aimed to create a complete degree programme. Only 42 per cent of CDIs and 65 per cent of CDAs aimed to do this. The differences between these can be explained by the relative inflexibility of most intermediate degree programmes in comparison with advanced degree programmes.

Of the projects that aimed to create new complete degree programmes, less than a third aimed to (eventually) create degrees that were different from the existing national ones. Most of them were at advanced level. Only one CDI aimed to create a new type of "joint" degree which would run parallel to the existing system. The other examples of new types of qualifications were all at advanced level and included various types of Master's degrees. In most cases, the documents specified that the degrees would initially be recognised within the national system and that eventually some kind of international recognition would be sought. Generally speaking, there were many problems linked to the integration of these kinds of programmes (cf. above).

Many of the CDI and CDA documents were not very specific about the structure of the courses that would be created. A fairly common structure for the CDA projects (mentioned in about a third of the CDA documents), however, was the creation of a core curriculum and some specialised (optional) modules. Of both CDI and CDA projects, approximately three-quarters mentioned the development of joint curricula. Only 8 per cent did not seem to include an element of jointly developed curriculum, and in 15 per cent of the projects it could not be determined whether this was one of the aims.

As mentioned earlier, IPs, EMs and ILCs generally created parts of degrees (individual courses or modules) which were meant to be integrated into existing degree programmes. These ERASMUS strands can therefore be analysed together. Given the goals of these projects, it is not surprising that most documents (64 per cent) stated that some part of a study programme had been created. In some documents (25 per cent), it was not clear how the courses were structured or if recognition would be sought. It is interesting to note that some documents (11 per cent) mentioned that some kind of entire programme (complete with certification) was being created.

7.9 Dissemination

It is interesting to analyse the scope of the projects, i.e. to see if the groups intended to widely disseminate their findings, and if so, to what type of audiences. About three- quarters of the projects mentioned some kind of dissemination or distribution of information beyond the institutions involved. About a quarter did not specify wider dissemination or only mentioned the partner institutions.

Whereas 19 per cent of the projects intended to disseminate their results Europe-wide (9 per cent specifically mentioned Eastern European countries), 18 per cent wanted to make them more internationally available. Of the latter, 13 per cent mentioned that material would be made available on the Web, in book or in CD form, while another 5 per cent specifically mentioned international dissemination through conference papers and presentations. 7 per cent mentioned dissemination within particular networks or professional

associations and 11 per cent to industry, other external groups, or to the local environment. Only one project specifically mentioned distribution in the partners' home countries.

7.10 Thematic Network Projects

7.10.1 General Description of the Projects

Thematic Network Project funding under SOCRATES I was for projects which fell outside the Institutional Contract. The purpose of these projects was to examine the European dimension within a given discipline or to address other cross-disciplinary or administrative issues of common interest for co-operation in higher education. It was intended that this co-operation should have a lasting and widespread impact across a range of universities within or between specific disciplinary areas. This type of funding was (and continues to be) regarded as a key instrument for the enhancement of academic quality through European co-operation.

Size and scope of the networks: The Thematic Network Projects have two types of partners: higher education institutions and a large number of other organisations, e.g. university associations, European associations, disciplinary groups, businesses, research centres, etc.

The number of project partners involved in TNPs is growing. The following figures only concern higher education institutions as partners, but they give a good idea of the growth. For the selected sample, the average number of higher education partners was 84. For the totality of projects approved in the first and the second year together it was 117 and after the third year it was 130 (see Ruffio, 2000). From the sample, the smallest networks consisted of less than 50 partners and the largest counted 298. Of approximately 50 per cent of all the TNPs approved between 1996 and 1999 there were between 75 and 150 partners. The total number of higher education institutions participating in TNPs has also increased over the years from 3,971 in 1997 to 5,555 in 1999 (since an institution can contribute to several networks, the total number of participations exceeds the number of eligible institutions). 10 per cent of this participation came from recently associated countries and 5 per cent from non-eligible countries (e.g. the USA) (Ruffio, 2000).

Structure of the TNPs: The number of sub-projects involved in each project differed greatly. In the sample, the largest number was 21 and the smallest was 3. The average number was close to 7. In general, TNPs were organized according to the principle of decentralisation, with a division of labour between a coordinating group (or steering committee), a structure giving technical support (in some cases a secretariat), and ad hoc working groups and groups of experts or contributors. The sharing of tasks seemed to be the only solution, given the complexity of the TNPs, expressed in the number of partners and sub-projects. Taking into account the fact that a large number of

countries participated (18 per TNP on average in the sample), and that related system, cultural and linguistic differences needed to be addressed, one can imagine the enormous requirements for the coordination and management of these networks.

Working language: English seemed to be the main working language of the networks. 45 per cent of the projects mentioned that it would be the main or only working language of the group as a whole. Some 37 per cent did not specify the language that was going to be used. 19 per cent (2 projects) mentioned that English and other languages (French and German) were going to be used, and these groups emphasised the importance of the multilingual aspect of the network. There were a number of projects which considered the domination of English a problem.

7.10.2 Objectives and Means

Thematic Network Projects aim to define and develop a European dimension within a given academic discipline or other issues of common interest (including administrative issues) through cooperation between faculties or departments and academic or professional associations. This overreaching objective was worked out in terms of project objectives in various ways. In the sample, the most common objectives of the TNPs were (see Figure 7.3): promoting or standardising ECTS, serving the needs of Europe, comparing programmes, promoting the European dimension, cooperation, and student and/or staff mobility. These objectives seemed to focus on two main areas. First, a practical area involving the mapping of the current situation and promoting and developing tools to stimulate inter-institutional cooperation and overcoming obstacles in this area. Second, a more analytical area focusing on the changing social and economic demands, their meaning for the role of higher education and reflection on the European dimension. The first area prevailed in the sample and showed overlap with activities which were eligible under the Institutional Contract. This is probably related to the fact that this was the first round of projects which emerged after a period when one was used to ICP networks of departments dealing with many practical issues.

The TNPs demonstrate a wide variety of activities, which can be seen as a means to reach the objectives stated above. Figure 7.4 shows that, in terms of concrete activities, the comparison and mapping of existing study programmes and structures in the various countries are major activities in the TNPs. At the same time, the overview also highlights their more innovative functions: dissemination of new teaching methods, improving quality, joint curriculum development, etc. The activities listed here coincide to a large extent with the categories enumerated in previous evaluations, where it was also concluded that the comparison of educational programmes and systems was one of the main activities of TNPs (Ruffio, 2000).

Figure 7.3
Objectives of Thematic Network Projects
(percentage of projects, multiple reply possible)

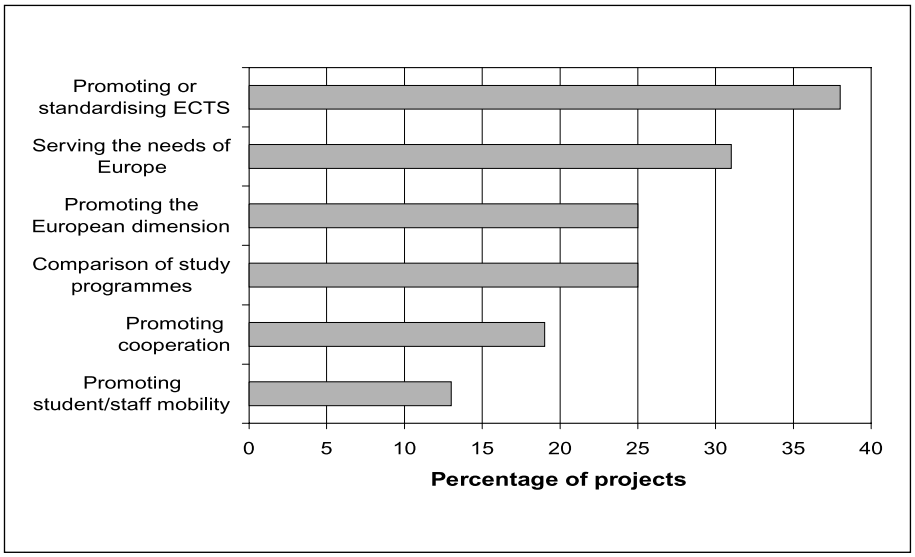
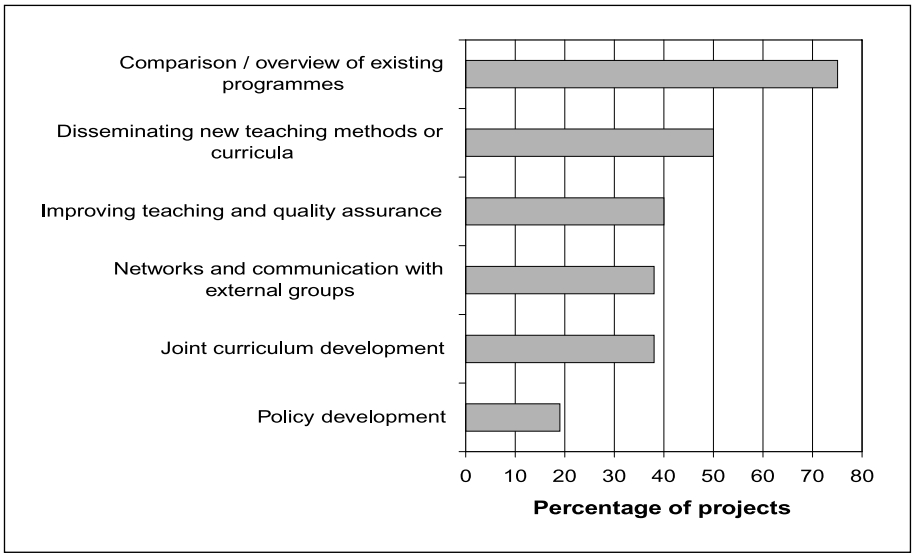


Figure 7.4
Means to Reach the Objectives of Thematic Network Projects
(percentage of projects, multiple reply possible)



7.10.3 Links with Other ERASMUS Activities

Since Thematic Network Projects fall outside the Institutional Contract, but their participation is institution-based, it is interesting to examine to what extent and in which areas there are links with other ERASMUS activities and in what ways the IC activities and the TNPs are complementary. Most links were found with student mobility and ECTS. Obviously, TNPs do not promote these activities as such, but it was specifically mentioned that studies on student mobility (56 per cent) and the introduction and use of ECTS (63 per cent) were part of the project. As many projects focused on studying different aspects of the internationalisation of particular fields, it is logical that these issues and the way to overcome obstacles in these areas would be included in the studies. Some TNPs included sub-projects which focused on curriculum development, but, generally speaking, it was not one of their most important aims. In addition, some projects included the development of European Master's programmes. Some projects which were not directly involved in any curriculum development type of activities did, however, promote this kind of work by reporting on them as part of the curriculum surveys they carried out. Only two projects specifically mentioned teaching staff mobility.

7.10.4 Content and Methods

European dimension and interdisciplinary work: All the projects surveyed focused on the European dimension. This is not particularly surprising, since this was one of the main aims of this type of project. Somewhat more surprising was the fact that less than a third of the projects had a truly interdisciplinary focus, even though interdisciplinarity was also specifically mentioned as one of the aims of the thematic network programme. One reason for this was the disciplinary Evaluation Conferences which were organized prior to the launch of SOCRATES and which formed a basis for various TNPs. Furthermore, this may also reflect the continuing importance of the disciplines in the university structure and cooperation networks..

Teaching and learning and student evaluation: All projects surveyed except for one focused on some aspect of teaching and learning. How this was incorporated into the projects varied, but common aspects were sub-projects that examined and compared different teaching methods, or the inclusion of ODL technologies. Similarly to the CD projects, very few TNPs mentioned any project work involving the evaluation of students. This can be partially explained by the fact that most TNPs are not involved in creating joint curricula and are therefore not working on the assessment of students. But one could argue that, since the focus was on teaching and learning methods, greater interest could be have been expected on how these contribute to student achievement.

Open and Distance Learning: Half the projects surveyed focused on some aspects of ODL. This ranged from studies on the extent to which ODL was being used in teaching programmes in different countries to extensive work

on developing coursework or ODL techniques which could later be applied in teaching programmes. Almost all other projects (44 per cent) included some aspects of ODL, but, here, this was not one of the main areas of concern. Only one project did not mention the use of ODL at all.

Continuing education: In contrast, a focus on continuing education was much less common. More than half the projects did not mention whether or not continuing education would be included in the activities, so one can assume that this did not play an important role in the work of these networks. A quarter, however, said that they laid emphasis on continuing education, either by studying it, promoting it, or developing it. In almost the same number of projects, there was some mention of continuing education, but, here, it did not play a major role in the network. One TNP was entirely devoted to the issue of continuing education. Its activities included a study on continuing education at university level in the various Member States.

Quality assessment: TNPs used a variety of quality assessment methods. In almost half the cases, there was some combination of internal and external sources. In almost the same number of cases, the projects mainly relied on internal forms of assessment, whilst in two cases external sources were mainly used. Only one project did not specify the form of quality assessment which would be used. In previous evaluations, it was stated that, in later years of the support period, evaluation had become a priority and that TNPs were being encouraged to instate internal quality assurance procedures. But this is still at an embryonic stage (Ruffio, 2000).

In comparison with the curriculum development projects, a much higher number of the thematic networks included some kind of external assessment. This is probably linked to the much larger size of the TNPs and the fact that many are well-connected with professional societies and other external organisations.

All projects made some reference to quality improvement and assurance in higher education. In terms of quality, about a third focused on the development or implementation of quality assessment, about a third hoped to achieve quality through international comparisons and learning from other systems, and roughly a third developed benchmarking-type activities. Previous evaluations reported that many projects were interested in the problems of evaluation and quality in higher education, but that only a few had already embarked on concrete actions. There were some notable exceptions, such as the networks in management studies, veterinary studies and dentistry (Ruffio, 1998).

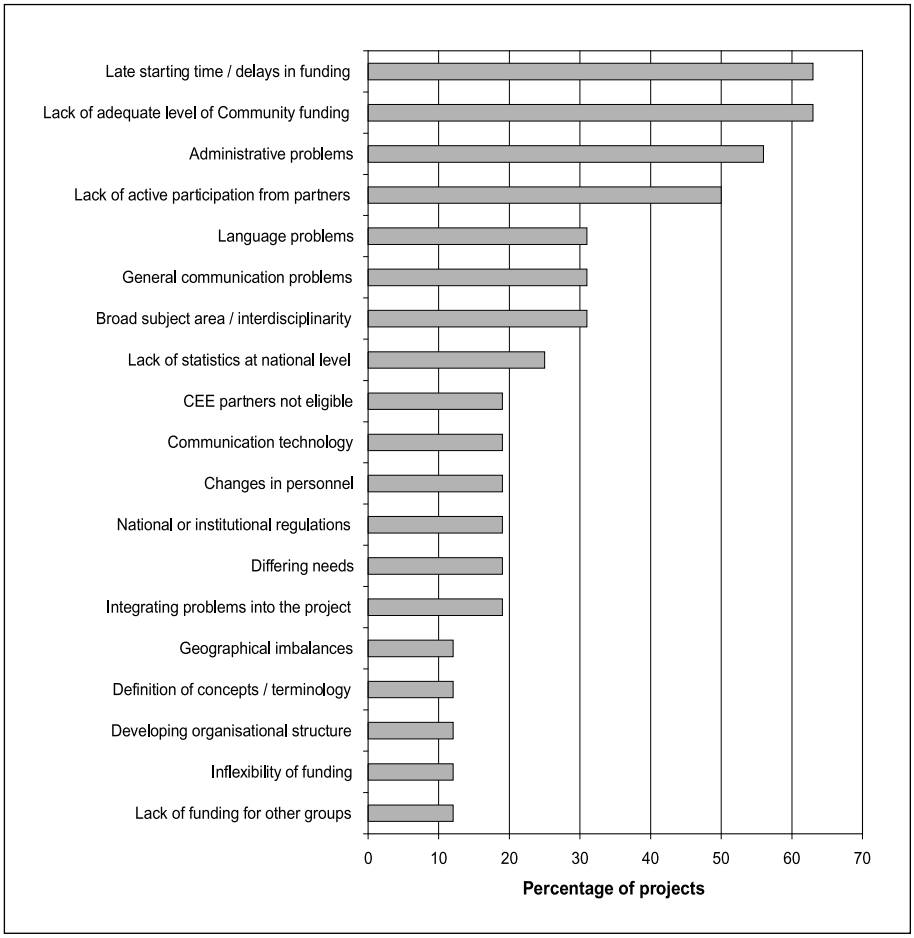
7.10.5 Achieving the Goals

Without having access to the final reports from the last year of most of the projects, it is difficult to assess whether the goals of a project have been reached.

The analysis will therefore only discuss the problems encountered, the products produced, and changes to the original plan within the first two years.

Problems encountered: The documents provided a good overview of the problems which were encountered during the first two years of the projects. Many were directly or indirectly related to the large size of the networks (e.g. the heavy administrative burden of co-ordinating the networks, communication and language problems, and the "silent partners"). Others could be considered as start-up problems and they have partly been overcome (see Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5
Problems Encountered in Thematic Network Projects
(percentage of projects, multiple reply possible)



The problems that were most frequently encountered were the late beginning of a project due to delays in receiving the funding and the inadequate level of Community funding. Many issues were linked to the lack of adequate funding, e.g. the fact that Eastern European partners or other groups of partners (from non-EU countries) were not eligible. The inflexibility of the funding – the fact that some expenditures were not eligible to be covered by the grants – was also mentioned. Furthermore, various administrative problems were often reported, including the heavy burden of co-ordinating such large and complex networks.

A problem which occurred in half the networks concerned the lack of active participation of some of the partners (the “silent or sleeping partners”). Problems were reported related to linguistic barriers and to general communication. Some projects complained of problems related to the broad subject area or the interdisciplinary nature of some of the projects. Some documents mentioned that the large size of the networks created administrative problems because faculties or departments were not used to dealing with interdisciplinary subject material or projects. In other cases, these problems were more closely related to difficulties encountered within the networks themselves (e.g. difficulties to define concepts across disciplines). The problems described above overlap with those found in the previous evaluation (Ruffio, 1998, 2000).

Adjustment of project objectives: The most common adjustments were the general scaling down of plans and the replacement of physical meetings by electronic forms of communication. Both were due to a lack of adequate funding. In two cases, plans were broadened to include new sub-projects and one project decided to develop a joint curriculum. In two cases, the development of joint (core) curriculum was replaced by the development of a broader “body of knowledge”. One project reported unplanned, but very fruitful, collaboration with one of the other thematic network projects.

Results: In the evaluation of the first three years of TNPs (Ruffio, 2000), a detailed overview of TNP products was given. Table 7.5 shows the important role of TNPs for comparative surveys on educational programmes and systems in the Member States and their contribution to the development of a European dimension in the various fields (e.g. development of teaching materials, courses and modules).

It can be said that nearly all the projects reported the use of the Internet both for communication between the partners and for dissemination of information to the larger community. In comparison with the curriculum development projects, one can thus conclude that there was greater emphasis on information technology, both for communicaing, and for disseminating results. This is not surprising considering the size of most of these networks and the way they rely heavily on information technology to replace the need for physical mobility.

Table 7.5
Products of Thematic Network Projects from 1996 to1999*

Higher education in Europe, surveys and analysis:	
Comparison and analysis at European level	50
Monographs	9
Pedagogical issues, new pedagogical tools: surveys and analysis	34
Policy notes	9
Scientific articles	35
Socio-economic context analysis and surveys	9
International or European conferences	92
Teaching material and packages:	
Teaching material (printed)	13
Teaching packages (using ICT)	14
Acquisition of new knowledge (pilot projects)	7
Course design and organisation:	
Courses	2
Short courses/modules	50
Tools for educational purposes:	
Cooperation material	21
Quality assessment and recognition procedures	8
Creation of associations / networks	8

* Source: Ruffio, 2000

7.10.6 Impact of Thematic Network Projects

The character of many of the Thematic Network Projects is fairly dependent on the *individual* involvement of academics. The involvement of institutions varies greatly and even seems to be problematic in certain cases. At the same time, their future depends on the impact they will have on higher education institutions and the way in which their proposals will be adopted and implemented by the institutions. Because their activities are still too individual and cannot be easily linked to institutional strategies, there is a considerable risk that the products and recommendations of TNPs will not be used. Other factors that may play a role in this respect are the fact that about two-thirds of TNP products consist in the classical type of academic publications and conferences and very few develop innovation (e.g. teaching and course materials). Moreover, the dissemination of innovation in education, and particularly in higher education, is generally a tough process..

7.11 Summary and Conclusions

Two samples of 53 curriculum development projects and 16 Thematic Network Projects were analysed in this study by means of document analysis, referring mainly to project applications and interim reports. Many projects are still ongoing, or final reports were not yet available. Hence, the results of this evaluation should be seen as preliminary results.

Curriculum development projects aim at providing quality education and specialised training, at meeting the needs of industry or other social groups, and at introducing a European dimension in higher education. In about two-thirds of the projects, an interdisciplinary approach was chosen to reach these objectives. Intensive Programmes, European Modules and CDA projects have close links with student and staff mobility activities. These three categories of projects also make the greatest use of ECTS. Intensive programmes and CDI and CDA projects seem to be best embedded in the institutional strategies. CDA projects, Intensive Programmes and Integrated Language Courses use ODL techniques the most. CDA projects seem to contain the most useful for continuing education. The major problems encountered in curriculum development projects are related to limited funding, technical and administrative problems and a lack of active participation of project partners. Common changes in the implementation of the projects include a slower pace, less integration of the newly developed curriculum parts in the existing curriculum and a more limited quantity of curriculum that was developed. Projects resulted most frequently in the development of course materials and syllabi and, obviously, in the actual running of courses. Because final reports were in many cases not yet available, it was difficult to assess to what degree the developed curricula were institutionalised and could thus be expected to lead to sustainable change.

Thematic Network Projects aim at mapping the current situation and promoting and developing tools to stimulate inter-institutional cooperation and to overcome obstacles in this area. They also focus on the changing social and economic demands and their meaning for the role of higher education and reflect on the European dimension by comparing existing study programmes and structures in the various countries. Besides, more innovative activities are being undertaken, such as the dissemination of new teaching methods, the improvement of quality, and joint curriculum development. The closest links between TNPs and other ERASMUS activities were found in the area of student mobility and the use of ECTS. The TNPs lay great emphasis on the European dimension in teaching and learning activities, but less on interdisciplinary approaches and on evaluation and quality assurance. Half the projects include elements of ODL, but only a few include continuing education. The most common problems were related to a late start and the delays in project funding, the lack of an adequate level of Community funding, administrative problems, and a lack of active participation of some “silent” partners.

The most common adjustments – related to limited funding – were the general scaling down of the initial project plans and the replacement of physical forms of communication by electronic ones.

Whether SOCRATES activities have actually improved the quality of education is a very interesting question, but one which is difficult to assess. Information on this could unfortunately not be obtained from the document analysis. However, there is some evidence that the overall quality of educational programmes has improved through participation in the different curriculum development projects. This is sometimes mentioned in reports produced by national and institutional quality assessment exercises that have evaluated the contents and methods of programmes which were part of the projects. Furthermore, the fact that two-thirds of the curriculum development projects had some kind of interdisciplinary focus shows that innovative programmes have been developed by bringing together people from different disciplines.

CDA projects seem to be particularly innovative. In addition to their interdisciplinary character, they make relatively frequent use of new technologies, include elements of continuing education, use different languages of instruction, and often lead to new degrees and qualifications. At the same time, they seem to have met many problems in institutionalising the innovations, especially the introduction and acceptance of new degrees. In this area, national system characteristics can create great barriers. It is expected that the Bologna Declaration and the introduction of accreditation systems in Europe will help in this respect.

Probably the greatest contribution to promoting innovation in the Thematic Network Projects was the information on innovative teaching methods (and sometimes programme contents) which has been distributed to many institutions within the networks. Many TNPs identified “best practice” in teaching and have been active in publishing this information. Furthermore, some TNPs have carried out studies on quality assessment practices and distributed this information to the partner institutions.

Nearly all the CD projects and all the TNPs produced a variety of products. In the case of CD projects, they more often took the form of concrete teaching materials, courses and modules than in the case of TNPs, which produced more traditional publications, overviews, analyses of systems and practices, etc. The participants of the evaluation seminar pointed out that sometimes the most valuable outcomes of the projects were not easily quantifiable, e.g. long-lasting relationships between partners, or people gaining a broader, European perspective on their areas of study.

But many problems were also encountered. One of the greatest was the difficulty to integrate the courses or curricula into the existing study programmes. Institutional, national, and disciplinary barriers were mentioned by the project leaders as contributing factors. Although financial problems were very fre-

quently cited, the coordinators of both CD and TNP projects who attended the evaluation seminar explained that inactive or less active partners were also a great problem. In particular, they stressed the relationship between "sleeping" partners and the lack of recognition (at the institutional and/or national levels) of the type of work carried out in the projects.

Curriculum development and thematic network projects are funded for limited amounts of time. This leaves open the question of how their work will be sustained or continued beyond the end of the grant period. One could imagine different ways in which projects could obtain funding from other sources. Some have been successful in attracting funding from external partners, or in charging for services or products produced in the framework of the project. Many curriculum development projects have studied ways of marketing and selling their products (textbooks, CDs) and some are considering ways of charging tuition fees.

The embedding of the various activities in the institutional strategies seems to vary between CD projects and Thematic Network Projects. The latter are generally larger, but represent less institutional involvement (often only one person). Integration of TNPs into the institutional contract (as will be the case in SOCRATES II) can be expected to strengthen the institutional embedding of these projects. It is hoped that this will also lead to greater synergy between these projects and certain curriculum development activities where some overlap can be observed at present.

8. The Implementation of SOCRATES at the National Level

By Stéphanie Caillé, Jean Gordon, Sander Lotze and Marijk van der Wende

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the implementation of SOCRATES at the national level and on the interaction between the programme and national policies for the internationalisation of education. Further, it aims to understand

– the way in which SOCRATES has been implemented and managed at the national level (as a whole and for individual component parts),
– the role played by SOCRATES in the national policy context, and
– the interaction between European programmes and national policies with a view to the internationalisation of education.

Data were collected in 18 countries by means of interviews and in another 11 countries recently involved in SOCRATES by means of a written questionnaire, the design and content of which were identical to the interview guidelines.

The following categories of key persons were approached:

– government administrators in charge of European policies,
– government representatives on SOCRATES advisory committees,
– non-government members on the advisory committee,
– members of the country's sub-committee for higher education,
– officers of the National Agencies.

212 persons were surveyed. Thirteen responded by returning the questionnaire (unfortunately, no replies were received from Bulgaria, Latvia, Luxembourg and Poland) and 199 persons were interviewed.

The team of researchers was able to conduct all the interviews in the national language of the country concerned except in the Czech Republic and Hungary where the interviews were carried out in English. The reporting was done in English following a semi-structured format. Questionnaires were all answered in English.

8.2 The Design of the SOCRATES Programme

The SOCRATES programme is a follow-up to a range of exchange and co-operation programmes (e.g. ERASMUS, LINGUA, etc.) and is intended to: "Contribute to the improvement of the quality and interest of education for children, youth and adults, through improvement of the European co-opera-

tion and the accessibility of education systems in the different states" (Council decision 819/95/EC). For the first time, actions and strands related to different areas of education, which previously existed in separate programmes, were combined into one programme. The SOCRATES programme consists of three chapters: one which focuses on higher education (ERASMUS), one on school education (COMENIUS), and a third, the Horizontal Measures, which covers a range of actions, including the promotion of language learning (LINGUA, OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING, ADULT EDUCATION, etc.).

Respondents were asked to reflect on this combination of activities in the various areas of education and to compare it with the previous situation. For the totality of the countries, most respondents (64 per cent) were enthusiastic and found it an improvement. However, there were some criticisms concerning its implementation:

– Most respondents argued that, although the idea of combined actions was a very good one, in practice, the synergy between the various sections and actions could be improved. This could be achieved by improving the information on the programme.

– Furthermore, it was said that the national education structure and its management, which usually depended on separate directorates (and sometimes ministries) and agencies for the different areas of education, could be another factor which prevented synergy between the different sections and actions.

– And finally the various sections of the programme were not always structured in such a way that synergy could be fully achieved.

The Northern EU countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) were fairly negative (65 per cent) about the consequences of combining the various actions within SOCRATES.

A second question concerned the coherence between objectives and means: is the programme designed in such a way that the objectives can, in principle, be achieved by undertaking the eligible actions?

70 per cent of the respondents said they considered the design of the programme coherent with its objectives. Many, however, found that the objectives were rather abstract and formulated in very general terms. Hence, they found it difficult to answer this question. In another part of the interview, some 25 per cent of the respondents identified the programme's design as one of its main failures. The abstract objectives also made it difficult to evaluate the programme. Many respondents therefore asked that the aims should be better defined so as to be able to monitor and evaluate the different strands on a more qualitative basis, leading to greater insight into the tangible effects of the programme.

8.3 Management of SOCRATES at the National Level

In order to study the role and functioning of SOCRATES at the national level, it is important to understand the structure used to manage the programme. Respondents involved in national level management were asked to provide data on the structure for the management of SOCRATES in their respective countries. This provided a wealth of information. Obviously, the situation differs greatly. Some basic data are provided here.

There are 14 different models for the management of SOCRATES in the 26 countries concerned. The model involving one ministry and one external national agency is the most frequent (6), followed by the model with one ministry and one internal agency (4) and the model with one ministry, one external agency and one advisory board (3). In other cases, various ministries are concerned, i.e. those responsible for the different levels of education, for science, research, etc. The organisation of the national agencies also differs according to country. In some cases, it is part of a ministry (internal). Respondents indicated that this presented certain advantages, such as clear and quick internal communication. However, it could also negatively affect the transparency of certain procedures and tasks. This may cause problems for applicants who want to receive information or advice.

Countries where the national agency is not part of the ministry (external) see the advantages of the model which separates administrative and political responsibilities. They claim that it leads to less bureaucracy and greater efficiency. Disadvantages, however, are the slow information flow and, in some cases, the lack of information between the organisations. Half the countries have a structure with more than one agency. Some reported competition between the agencies and/or a lack of co-ordination. In order to avoid these problems in the future and to increase transparency, there will be only one national agency responsible for the management of SOCRATES II. If necessary, it can subcontract to other organisations.

Nine out of 26 countries have a SOCRATES advisory board. Its tasks differ according to country. They may range from general exchange of information and views regarding the distribution of grants. Some boards have a sub-division on separate advisory committees for the different strands of the programme.

Countries gave different answers with respect to the decision-making process concerning the programme. The following countries stated that the ministry took the main decisions: Dutch- and French-speaking Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom. Countries where decisions are taken collectively by several actors were: Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden. Spain indicated that there were major on-going changes with respect to decision-making structures.

Concerning the interpretation of the following data on the appraisal of the national management structure, it should be borne in mind that most of the respondents themselves represent this national level: 60 per cent work at a national agency and 32 per cent at a ministry. Views from actors at other levels may thus be different.

The general appraisal of the national management structures was positive: 67 per cent of the respondents saw them as being sufficient to good, although various recommendations for improvement were made. 33 per cent found the national management structure insufficient. In France and Germany, it was reported that the complexity of the structure, involving actors and agencies at the regional level, had led, at least in the first period, to problems such as the ineffective use of grants and available budgets. Improvements had been made during the course of the programme and restructuring is foreseen for the launch of SOCRATES II. Dutch-speaking Belgium commented on a lack of transparency of the management structure and problems with respect to the division of labour between the various actors involved. On the positive side, Romania was very satisfied with its management structure. In various countries, efforts are underway to redefine the responsibilities and to accelerate the administration procedures.

With respect to the weak points, national level actors perceive the bureaucracy of the European Commission and the related high pressure on administrative processes in combination with insufficient staff at national level as a major problem. A related complaint concerned the fact that information was often not available in time. This had severe practical implications for the management of the programme at the national level. Besides, national barriers (including bureaucracy at this level) may hinder the smooth implementation and management of the programme, especially in cases where there are no clear policies for internationalisation, or where links between SOCRATES and the country's education policy are unclear. Both strong hierarchical structures, as well as the situation in which certain actors enjoy a large degree of autonomy (e.g. special categories of schools), can hinder the effective implementation of the programme. Concerning the promotion of the programme, the respondents seemed satisfied with what they had achieved so far, although further improvements would be necessary.

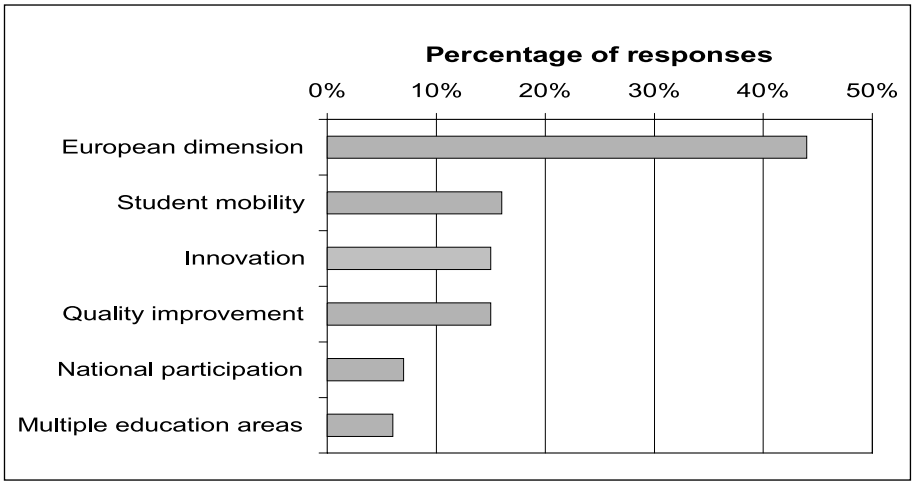
Different communication mechanisms are used to exchange information between the European, national and institutional levels, e.g. personal contacts, national programme committees, regular and ad hoc meetings, conferences, workshops, newsletters, magazines, websites, etc. The main channels used by the European Commission are the SOCRATES Committees and the Higher Education and Schools Committees. About a third each rated the communication between the European level and the national level as good, sufficient and insufficient. Ratings of the communication at national level were more positive (almost half positive) and about a quarter each sufficient and insufficient.

The main criticism of the functioning of the various committees mentioned above was the lack of a clear agenda for meetings and, above all, the consistent late arrival of documents. This caused serious problems for the preparation of the meetings and hence hampered the possibility of effective discussion and decision-making. Some interviewees mentioned that they had the feeling that these meetings were no more than a formality. They believed that a more serious reflection on the objectives of the committees and a better flow of information were necessary. The respondents emphasised that, in general and on a personal basis, the contacts with the Commission and Technical Assistance Office officers were good. Problems were mainly due to the complexity of the bureaucratic structure in which staff had to operate.

8.4 Overall Appraisal

Clearly, the main success of SOCRATES was seen in the development of a European dimension in education (Figure 8.1). This included better knowledge of foreign languages, the understanding of one's own culture in the European context and the awareness of being a part of Europe, the knowledge of the educational systems of other countries, and the exchange of best practice with other countries.

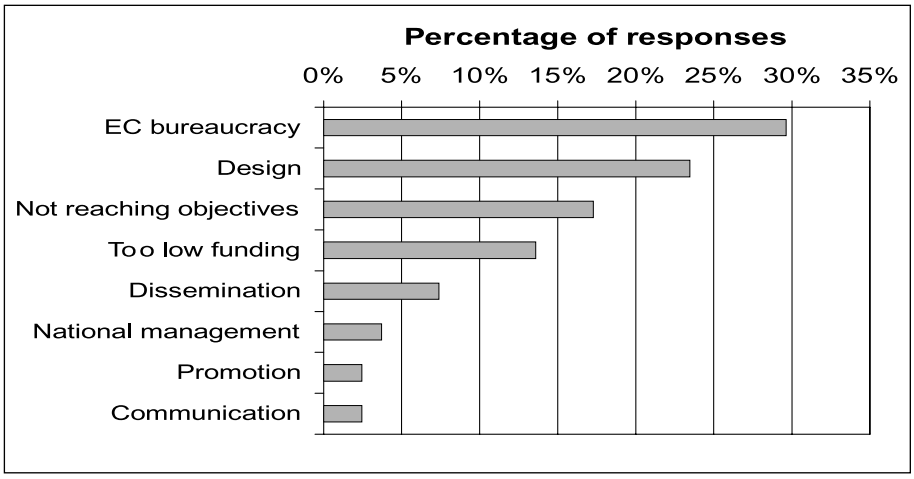
Figure 8.1
Major Successes of the SOCRATES Programme According to Actors at the National Level (percentages, n=65, multiple reply possible)



The problems as enumerated in Figure 8.2 have already been partly discussed in the previous paragraphs. The major problem was seen in the functioning of the European Commission. Complaints referred more especially to the late reception of payments, information and documents for meetings.

According to the actors at the national level, the design of the programme suffered from a lack of clear objectives, the complexity of the application procedures, insufficient financial flexibility and a lack of real synergy. As one respondent noted: “In theory it looks nice, but in practice there are too many barriers.”

Figure 8.2
Major Failures of the SOCRATES Programme According to Actors at the National Level (percentages, n=54, multiple reply possible)



Respondents felt that certain objectives were not reached or only partly reached. This concerned more especially curriculum development, teacher staff mobility, open and distance learning, and the training of teachers.

Low funding may be one of the reasons for not achieving all the objectives. This may be linked to a mismatch between objectives and the amount of available money. Respondents saw greater flexibility in the programme and its budget rules as a solution to this problem.

8.5 The ERASMUS Component

Questions concerning the ERASMUS, or higher education, component of the SOCRATES programme were only put to those with a specific responsibility for higher education. They may work in ministries, national agencies or higher education institutions.

Achievement of the ERASMUS objectives: The formal objective of ERASMUS is formulated as follows: “ERASMUS is aimed at improving the quality and the ‘European dimension’ of higher education (university and non-university sectors)”. Respondents were asked how far the objectives of the ERAS-

MUS part of SOCRATES had been reached. 72 per cent answered that they had been reached to a large degree and 28 per cent that they had only been partly reached.

Those who answered partly felt that the objective was too vague to be assessed. Furthermore, they said that they knew about the quantitative achievements in the area of student mobility but that they would also like to know about the qualitative effects. More especially, respondents from Finland and France answered that the objective was only partly reached. This may be because the Finnish respondents were not very positive about the new design of the programme either. In the case of France, it may be linked to dissatisfaction with the national management structure.

The respondents who answered “to a large degree” said that the student mobility objective had been reached. Some added, however, that a real European dimension (in the sense of intercultural awareness) had not yet been fully reached. Besides, it would be extremely difficult to assess or measure this dimension. One interviewee stated that: “The monitoring and evaluation of ERASMUS should reflect its wide scope, since it is not only aimed at providing funds for temporary student mobility and related co-operation between higher education institutions. It also seeks to influence the structure and ethos of higher education institutions and, consequently, the learning environment for students.”

New characteristics of ERASMUS in the framework of SOCRATES: With the launch of the SOCRATES programme, new measures were introduced to broaden its strategic basis at the level of the higher education institutions. They concerned the introduction of the institutional contract (IC), the introduction of the European Policy Statement (EPS) and the change from multilateral to bilateral cooperation arrangements between higher education institutions. Respondents were asked how they assessed these new characteristics. Table 8.1 shows that the overall assessment is positive.

Table 8.1
Assessment of the New Characteristics of ERASMUS by Actors at the National Level (percentages n=25-41)

	Negative	No difference	Positive
Institutional Contract	5	10	85
European Policy Statement	9	32	59
Bilateral cooperation	4	48	48

Despite the fact that many people were opposed to the new characteristics at the start of the programme, after the initial changes in 1997, many respondents came to the conclusion that they often brought improvements. As one respondent stated: “The Institutional Contract and the European Policy Statement (EPS) to be submitted for ERASMUS have forced the higher education institutions to think about an overall strategy and that was good. However, a comprehensive strategy works better in smaller institutions and is more difficult to realise in the larger ones.” It was argued that the institutional contract should become more flexible in this respect. The administrative workload weighed heavily on small institutions, unlike the larger ones which had special international offices. It was generally felt that the administrative load was too heavy in relation to the support provided.

Furthermore, it was argued that the EPS gave the impulse to think about internationalisation strategies. This was an innovation, especially in the smaller institutions and for the Central and Eastern European countries. For larger institutions, internationalisation strategies were less new. It was regrettable that so little was done with the EPSs afterwards. Some people said that, as a result, the development of new policy statements consisted in copying the statement of the year before.

The change from multilateral to bilateral arrangements was judged neutral to positive, but, here too, there were complaints about the amount of paperwork involved in the contract that had to be signed by every partner. But these bilateral agreements provided a clear legal basis for cooperation.

Procedures and criteria: The respondents were asked to indicate whether they found the procedures and criteria used in the award processes and the reporting requirements productive or counterproductive in achieving the strategic aims of the programme. 42 per cent found them productive, whilst 33 per cent considered that they ought to be improved and 25 per cent thought they were counterproductive. Concerning the last two categories, there were a number of frequently heard remarks. First, funding for student mobility should not be based on projections, but on actual numbers. Second, more information should be made available on the reasons for the rejection of proposals. Third, teaching staff mobility required too much long-term planning.

Compared to the interim evaluation, in which 50 per cent of the people were critical about the way in which the application procedures and criteria were used, this revealed an even higher percentage (58 per cent) of persons who were still not satisfied with the way in which procedures and criteria functioned. This seemed to be related to the fact that the EC bureaucracy was mentioned several times as being one of the obstacles to an effective implementation of the SOCRATES programme.

European dimension for non-mobile students: For many years, ERASMUS mainly functioned as a student exchange scheme. With the launch of SOCRATES, emphasis was placed on a wider range of actions to develop a

European dimension in the studies of non-mobile students. Activities such as curriculum development and teaching staff mobility were developed and were expected to contribute to this aim.

Respondents were asked whether they found that ERASMUS had been successful in developing a European dimension in the studies of non-mobile students. Only one-fifth each stated that teaching staff mobility and curriculum development were really successful in that respect. Most believed, however, that improvements could eventually be made.

Balance between the actions: As explained in the previous paragraph, the ERASMUS component of the SOCRATES programme includes a wide range of actions. Respondents were asked what they thought about the balance that had been reached between them. It seemed that most respondents were satisfied with the new balance, as 65 per cent said that it was good. It also seemed that SOCRATES had been successful in broadening the scope of the programme. Almost a third would like to see more non-mobility actions. This seemed to coincide with the finding that much needed to be improved in actions that focused on non-mobile students. Only few respondents (5 per cent) asked for more mobility.

ERASMUS and the Challenges of Globalisation: Higher education institutions operate not only in a European, but also in a wider international context. They are increasingly influenced by the challenges of globalisation (e.g. the emerging international student market, the role of new technologies, 'borderless' education, etc.). Most respondents agreed that ERASMUS was either important (30 per cent) or very important (67 per cent) in helping institutions to meet these challenges, although it was also said that the programme was more important for smaller institutions and countries that were not yet members of the European Union.

Furthermore, some respondents saw a relationship between the process of European cooperation as enhanced by the ERASMUS programme and the Bologna Declaration. Some wondered if and how this initiative would affect student mobility in the future. It was assumed that there would be a trend towards more structural cooperation in the area of curriculum development and the adjustment of degree systems. An expansion of the ECTS system could be expected in this context. But, according to the respondents, student mobility would remain important. The possibilities of virtual mobility by means of ICT were valuable, but they would also stimulate the demand for physical mobility. Finally, it was confirmed that, in many countries, internationalisation had become an institutionalised feature of the higher education sector.

8.6 Summary and Conclusions

225 persons involved in the management and implementation of SOCRATES at the national level, representing national agencies, ministries and higher

education institutions, etc., were interviewed or addressed by questionnaires. Their opinions and suggestions are summarised below.

The design of SOCRATES as a combined programme, integrating actions in a range of areas of education, was evaluated positively at the national level. It was found to be an improvement in relation to the previous situation where the various levels and areas of education were addressed by different EU action programmes. However, in practice, the synergy between the various sections and actions could still be improved. Respondents also emphasised that the objectives of the programme should be formulated in a more concrete way in order to enable better monitoring and evaluation.

The structure of the management of SOCRATES at the national level differs widely: 14 different models were found in the 26 countries concerned. In most cases, representatives (a majority worked for national agencies) were positive about the functioning of the structure in their country and more especially about the organisation of the national agency. Major weak points in the management at the national level were linked to the difficulties of working with the EC bureaucracy (e.g. late arrival of payments) and to national barriers and bureaucracy, which could hinder the smooth implementation of the programme.

Communication mechanisms between actors at the national level were better evaluated than communication between the national and the European level. The main criticism concerned the consistent late arrival of the documents and the lack of preparation of the meetings of the SOCRATES Committee and the sub-committees for ERASMUS and school education.

56 per cent of the national level representatives were optimistic about the changes in the management structure for SOCRATES II. Most comments concerned the future of the programme with regard to its technical and financial management, but very few concerned its long-term impact.

The major successes of SOCRATES were seen in the development of a European dimension in education. The major failures were linked to the functioning of the EC bureaucracy and the design of the programme. In particular, a lack of clear objectives, the complexity of the application procedures and the lack of flexibility and thus of real synergy were mentioned.

Most countries have national policies for internationalisation, either formal or more informal. The improvement of the quality of education is the prevalent aim of these policies, followed by the development of a European dimension and of an internationally competitive higher education sector (including higher education export). 84 per cent of the respondents stated that SOCRATES played an important to very important role in this context. In a large majority of countries, the programme was found to be complementary to or reinforced their internationalisation policy. Only in a minority of cases was it found to be competing or contradictory.

The achievement of the objectives of ERASMUS was positively evaluated. So were its new characteristics, such as the institutional contract and the European policy statement and, to some extent, the shift from multilateral to bilateral agreements between institutions. Respondents were also satisfied with the balance between the various actions, although those that focused on non-mobile students (i.e. curriculum development and teaching staff mobility) should be developed and improved. Almost all the respondents agreed that ERASMUS was important for higher education institutions to face the challenges of globalisation. But most of the respondents at the national level were still dissatisfied with the procedures and criteria used in ERASMUS.

9. The SOCRATES Support Programme: Framework and Management

By Ulrich Teichler

9.1 Introduction

Unlike the national or regional decision-making powers, the supra-national European authorities cannot set regulatory frameworks for the education system, establish and approve educational establishments, and fund and supervise the daily operations and outcomes of the educational institutions and processes. Their domain of activity is determined by the national governments and they must, in cooperation with the national authorities:

– create programmes to stimulate interest in the educational world,
– provide financial incentives for action,
– design and implement a regulatory framework that aims to determine how closely or loosely the beneficiaries follow the goals and operations envisaged in the programme.

Obviously, the means at the disposal of the European authorities to pursue certain goals are less direct and less powerful than those of the responsible authorities in the Member States. This means that, first, the educational activities and outcomes which are encouraged by the European Commission are likely to be prescribed to a lesser extent than respective activities shaped by national authorities. Second, European policies must be more imaginative than those of national authorities in order to be able to shape the educational realities. Third, the framework and the management of SOCRATES must correspond to the conditions of select programming and steering through incentives. Fourth, a policy is needed to determine if the programme steers the activities to be supported or leaves room for different uses of the support by beneficiaries, i.e. what are the acceptable activities which receive support (the terms “bottom up” versus “top down” often employed in this debate are misleading)?

This must be taken into account when evaluating the SOCRATES programme. As one key issue, the evaluation must examine whether SOCRATES is imaginative and mobilising and whether this leads to valuable results, even though the processes are steered only to a limited extent by the programme. The evaluation must also examine whether the framework and management of SOCRATES serve their purpose well in the given context. This is the major theme of this chapter.

Since the European Commission is a supra-national agency and must legitimise its actions *vis-à-vis* national governments, one can assume, as a working hypothesis of this evaluation study, that

– the governance of the SOCRATES programme could yield to the typical danger of bureaucratisation, which is considered endemic to governmental and quasi-governmental agencies in two respects: a substantial over-steering of the programmes (too strict a prescription of the activities to be supported) and a procedural over-steering of the programme (demanding over-elaborate application reports, accounting procedures, evaluation procedures, control procedures, etc.);
– the European Commission, because of the weak potential of a financial incentive programme to carry out the substantive intentions, could be all the more in danger of counterbalancing this endemic weakness by procedural over-steering.

Although this evaluation study mainly focuses on analysing the experiences of the SOCRATES beneficiaries, it certainly does not want to share the beneficiaries' most convenient view that maximum funds should be provided for activities with minimal substantive guidelines and minimal administrative requirements. Yet it is legitimate to ask whether the SOCRATES programme strikes an appropriate balance between an open pursuit of interesting educational concepts and substantive and procedural over-bureaucratisation.

This chapter does not intend to cover all the dimensions of the framework and the administration of SOCRATES. Nine themes are addressed. They are those which were most often discussed in the documents analysed or by the people addressed in this evaluation study: SOCRATES as the umbrella of programmes, the nature of the goals pursued, the types of activities supported, the funding modes, the relationship between "top down" and "bottom up," the shaping of the educational activities, the administration of the SOCRATES programme, and, finally, issues of evaluation and dissemination.

9.2 SOCRATES as an Umbrella

The introduction of SOCRATES as a "combined" or "umbrella" programme which puts most educational support measures of the European Union under a common roof seems to have been an important symbolic step. Firstly, SOCRATES, which is the first major decision to reorganise educational programmes since the Maastricht Treaty which established that European activities could cover all sectors of the educational system, symbolises the system-wide character of the educational support programme. It aims to make European educational activities more visible. Secondly, SOCRATES aims to set in motion certain substantial commonalities of the various educational sub-programmes, to open up opportunities for educational "cross-fertilisation" and to establish combined and common administrative procedures.

But the question whether SOCRATES is more than the sum of its parts cannot be answered in the affirmative without hesitation, since

– most actors surveyed in Brussels or at a national level did not observe major gains in terms of a coordination of goals, processes of administering the programme, modes of evaluation or cooperation between the sub-programmes which might off-set the additional complications of an enlarged administrative framework;

– most beneficiaries were interested in specific components of the SOCRATES programme and not in the programme as a whole. Thus, new names such as COMENIUS seem to offer more of a sense of identification than the umbrella of the programme (it is only in ERASMUS that the term SOCRATES seems to have a stronger meaning of symbolising a change of goals and administrative processes launched in 1997/98).

Obviously, the umbrella hardly affects the administrative and educational processes in the various areas of educational activities which are supported, and many individual areas seem to be small components of the overall programme. This is convincingly taken up by the decision to introduce additional names for various areas of support in SOCRATES II, e.g. GRUNDTVIG and MINERVA in addition to ERASMUS, COMENIUS and LINGUA. Thus, the identity of the European educational innovation will be reinforced by the naming of the various educational target areas, whilst SOCRATES will continue to call for inter-area coordination, where reasonable and feasible, and for a greater weight of education in overall European policies.

However, criticism was voiced about the division between SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI. In some cases, it was argued that this was inconsistent with the idea of underscoring the role of education in Europe through an umbrella programme. In other cases, problems of overlapping or lack of coordination were mentioned.

9.3 The Nature of the Goals Pursued

The configuration of the goals officially stated as major SOCRATES goals, for example in the Council decision to establish SOCRATES, and those additional or latent ones, i.e. visible only to those who are able to analyse the “inner logic”, the “disguised objectives” and “hidden agendas”, can best be characterised by classifying them into three groups:

– a multitude of operational objectives, e.g. developing mobility, promoting contacts and cooperation, extending the use of foreign languages, encouraging recognition, or modernising educational processes,

– a single major goal of enhancing the “European dimension” of education to be inspiring, while remaining vague and mysterious, and

– a difficult arena of secondary goals for which ways must be found to reduce tensions or to consolidate contradictions between serving the broadest possible participation and serving quality, between intra-Euro-

pean diversity and wishes and pressures for convergence, between "top-down" goals and stimulation of "bottom-up" innovation, between measures requiring trust amongst partners and measures which take conflicting competition for granted, between national subsidiary demands and national prerogatives and moves towards "de-nationalisation" and new common European activities, between Europeanisation and wider geographical perspectives of internationalisation and globalisation.

One could praise the characteristics of the SOCRATES goals as "concrete" or criticise them as "superficial", "flexible" or "vague", as "challenging" or "incompatible". On the basis of the information collected in the framework of this evaluation study, we argue that the strong "operational" nature of the goals pursued and the "flexibility" of the substantive goals are in many respects positive.

– The emphasis on operational goals in conformity with the impression that almost all beneficiaries of SOCRATES support consider the "experiential learning" opportunities abroad and the European mobilisation experienced in joint educational projects as most valuable, even if the impacts of these experiences cannot be clearly established.

– The "flexibility" of SOCRATES helps to strike a balance between the top-down steering desires of the European Commission and the inclinations of the potential and real beneficiaries to endlessly speculate about hidden goals, priorities and selection criteria of the Commission and to seek advantages through opportunistic adaptation on the one hand and room for bottom-up options and initiatives on the other.

– What the persons and participating institutions pursued and actually achieved can be interpreted and appreciated because of the operational and flexible thrust of SOCRATES as a major contribution to enhancing the European dimension. Deviations from national tracks, new educational methods, fostering multicultural environments, seeking a common European culture, technological competition with other parts of the world are likely to enhance the "European dimension". This emphasis, expressed as an open umbrella, does not necessarily mirror the typical political tactics of establishing heterogeneous alliances, but could be indicative of mutual stabilisation and cross-fertilisation of various "European" objectives.

Also, a certain degree of vagueness makes it easier to "survive" the heterogeneity of the secondary goals. It facilitates a coexistence of measures which serve broad participation with measures that aim at exceptional quality, measures that address the Europe region with measures that take account of Europe's position in the world, etc.

This does not mean that satisfaction is total. Two arguments in favour of a clearer European vision in SOCRATES were strongly voiced. First, targets which, unlike "mobility" and "use of different European languages," do not

allow easy operationalisation may not be pursued successfully if the vision of the European dimension does not become clearer and more concrete. For example, the aim of making ERASMUS beneficial to non-mobile students remains uninspiring if there are no concrete images of the "European dimension". Second, globalisation trends and greater efforts to move towards European convergence (the "Bologna process") were interpreted by some interviewees as calling for new European educational policies, e.g. putting the cooperation between Europe and other parts of the world to the fore and supporting activities to develop curricular models that could be used across Europe.

9.4 Types of Activities Supported

The various activities supported by SOCRATES can be divided into:

– "mass activities", i.e. mobility of large numbers (of students, teachers and persons with other functions),
– "selective activities", i.e. joint educational activities, often of a developmental nature, undertaken by institutions or persons which form a network for that purpose.

The term "mass" components of SOCRATES is justified, even if some of these sub-programmes can only provide support for a very small proportion of the target population (notably within COMENIUS and LINGUA) because they share the characteristics of mass programmes. The aim is to ensure large participation. The system of application and award is strongly shaped by "distributional" or "maximum spread" criteria which aim to ensure that the participants are statistically representative according to country or region, field, gender, socio-economic background, etc. The amount of the award per case is small. In contrast, support of the second selective type is quite substantial and is provided to a relatively small number of networks via their coordinators. Conceptual criteria of quality and relevance dominate the award decision, even if a certain spread according to country or additional distributional criteria are taken into consideration.

Many actors and beneficiaries seem convinced that a mix of "mass" and "selective" components is beneficial for SOCRATES. Mass components are viewed as important because a European dimension of education should be available to all citizens in Europe. They have a strong element of mobilisation. It was widely argued that an educational programme could not count on substantial political support if it did not involve large numbers and a broad spread of persons. Selective components were viewed as indispensable to ensure quality and developmental progress. The co-existence of mass and selective programme components can be mutually beneficial: the mass mobilisation provides a basis of persons who are ready to embark on more ambitious developmental activities, the results of which can be disseminated to improve the educational context in which the large numbers of beneficiaries are active.

This does not mean, however, that the way in which the “mass” and “selective” components of the SOCRATES programme coexist is always appreciated. The mass components of SOCRATES, i.e. the mobilisation of large numbers of persons, can be viewed as a typical first step. They can be viewed as superfluous, once mobilisation has spread. Accordingly, the European educational programme should serve the launching and “take off” period of educational innovation. If this succeeds, either the beneficiaries themselves or the national governments would provide the means to continue.

SOCRATES is expected to comprise selective support components which stimulate the development and quality of European educational activities. Most actors seem to agree that these components should be decided upon and managed centrally by the European Commission, with decentralised authorities and agencies involved mostly in pre-selection and administrative assistance. But it seems questionable whether the mechanism of reinforcing development and quality of SOCRATES-supported educational activities actually works:

– Although the amount of financial support for the individual “selective” activity seems impressive compared to support for individuals in the framework of “mass” activities, the means provided for the former are often too limited to justify very ambitious expectations and tough quality selection.
– The pressure to use “distribution” criteria, even for the support of select educational activities, is so strong that selection according to criteria of quality and relevance could easily be diluted .
– It is widely questioned whether the European Commission has the conceptual competence and the political legitimacy of selection.

According to interviews and discussions carried out in the framework of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study, the problems of justifying selection within SOCRATES seem to be enormous. Therefore, selection processes involving educational experts in order to ensure that a range of opportunities are provided for a “political” counterbalancing of the experts’ suggestions are very complex and time-consuming. The demand made on the higher education institutions to address the European dimension strategically and to present a European Policy Statement as part of their application for an Institutional Contract could not be reinforced by a policy which substantially rewards convincing strategies. Furthermore, the Commission feels hampered in implementing a central dissemination policy of the most valuable results of “selected” SOCRATES projects because some results cannot legitimately be considered as highly relevant or of good quality.

Finally, there seems to be problems in dividing the management and the criteria of support between the “mass” and “selective” components of SOCRATES. The divided support lines are often not helpful in stimulating integrated action on the part of the beneficiaries. For example, support for teaching staff

mobility both in schools and higher education institutions is administered at a decentralised level and is awarded primarily according to distributional criteria which are expected to serve the strategic action of institutions and the "selected" educational projects.

9.5 The Funding of Educational Activities

Activities that are eligible for SOCRATES support have become so popular in Europe that interest in undertaking them is greater than the financial means available in almost all areas. The award decisions seem to be guided by a rationale of dealing in part with the "bottleneck"' through selective award decisions and in part through expecting a "matching" of resources on the part of the beneficiaries. This policy is implemented differently in the various sub-programmes and actions and has different consequences.

In ERASMUS, some funds are, in theory, provided for almost all students and teachers quoted in the institutional applications. The theoretically available amount of funding per eligible student and teacher is so small that adjustment processes are accepted on both sides. Hence, a substantially smaller number of mobile students and teachers receive an award which covers a "reasonable" proportion of their expenses. We observed that less than half the "estimated mobile students" actually went abroad in the late 1990s when some 60 per cent of their expenses were covered by ERASMUS funds (as compared to over 50 percent going abroad with almost 90 per cent of their expenses funded in the early 1990s), and that less than a quarter of the "estimated mobile teachers" actually went abroad when, on average, about 60 per cent of their expenses were also covered (as compared to about half going abroad with about 70 per cent of their expenses funded in the early 1990s). There is no evidence that the increase in expected co-funding (covered by the students and their parents, as well as by the home institutions in the case of the teachers) has changed the composition of participants. Yet there are many indications that it would not be feasible to greatly increase mobility quantitatively if the rate of coverage by ERASMUS was not raised.

Concerning educational and administrative activities aimed at supporting mobility and curricular innovation activities, the higher education institutions and academics show considerable flexibility and willingness to contribute with their resources. The higher education institutions on average make available two staff positions for the administration and services related directly to ERASMUS, and teachers, on average, spend five hours a week on ERASMUS. The higher education institutions have reasons to believe that they cover the lion's share of direct expenses for European and international activities, and the changes in the educational programmes implemented as a consequence of the European programmes could be de facto the largest resource contribution by the higher education institutions in this domain. The

limits of institutional flexibility in matching are reached, however, when it comes to educational projects which have been applied for and have not received a considerable amount of ERASMUS support. In these cases, the projects are usually not be implemented.

Both administrators and teachers in higher education institutions are convinced that SOCRATES is beneficial despite these problems and that the Europeanisation of higher education has progressed substantially over the years. Yet, there are two indications that some of the improvements envisaged with the launching of SOCRATES are diluted by the award and funding policy:

– In the framework of the bilateral contracts between higher education institutions which have been required since the launching of SOCRATES to secure the quantity and quality of student and teaching staff mobility, the institutions, as a consequence of the award and funding system, make out a vast number of contracts for teaching staff mobility with no intention to either send teachers abroad or to host teachers. They do so to increase the funds made available for the actual mobility. There are great doubts as to whether a system which tries to inflate the number of agreements which will never materialise can contribute successfully to the quality of the activities that are carried out.

– Many higher education institutions react cautiously to the Commission's requirements and incentives to develop European policies. They see little room for a strategy around SOCRATES if student mobility is widespread, if teaching staff mobility is not highly attractive, and if the Commission is likely to fund at most the costs for only one or two projects of curricular innovation coordinated by the individual institution when it is the Commission that selects the projects which are awarded support. The basis for an institutional strategy is often viewed as being too limited in this context.

Schools differ substantially in their response to the provision of partial funding. They have less flexibility to reallocate their resources than higher education institutions and the school teachers' work is prescribed to a much larger extent than that of academics. Therefore, their educational activities greatly depend on the resources provided by the SOCRATES programme. Criticism was expressed that the European Commission could have designed its concept of partial and incentive funding on the basis of prior experience with higher education institutions which led them to expect too high a level of matched funding from schools.

9.6 "Top-down" Programming or Stimulating "Bottom-up" Activities

There is a perennial debate in SOCRATES about the extent to which the support programme and the Commission aim to steer European educational activities "top-down" and the extent to which the beneficiaries have room for

"bottom-up" action through the projects they design and request support for. Are activities supported within SOCRATES mainly programmed from above, or is SOCRATES a "let thousand flowers bloom" programme?

The reality certainly lies in between: dozens of flowers seem to bloom in various prescribed flower-beds. While the Commission perceives great room for bottom-up influence, many of the potential and actual beneficiaries engage in extensive speculations about the intentions and the selection criteria they ought to take into account when complaining about the lack of "transparency". And experiences with the administrative rigidities of the SOCRATES programme are often interpreted by the potential and actual beneficiaries as indications that the programme must be more strongly steered "top-down" than the Commission claims in public.

The reports on the educational activities that have been undertaken suggest that there is a wealth of diverse concepts and projects. Many of those who opt for interesting educational innovation within SOCRATES praise the flexibility of the support programmes and suggest that it should be preserved. One must bear in mind, though, that an evaluation study which focuses on the experiences and results of the activities actually undertaken is not in a position to judge the degree to which "bottom up" and "top down" thinking dominate the selection when award decisions are made.

9.7 The Administration of the SOCRATES Programme

The administration of the SOCRATES programme is a constant issue of debate. "Over-bureaucratisation" or similar terms are often used by the beneficiaries to describe what they view as a major procedural *malaise*. The perceived multitude and minuteness of regulations for application, award, use of funds and reporting requirements, and the tedious processes are sources of constant complaint. In particular,

– The work load for potential and selected support recipients that is imposed by the Commission through the requirements concerning the areas of support, rules for application, acceptable and non-acceptable items of expenditure, reporting, etc., tends to be viewed as disproportionate compared to the financial support received.
– It is widely believed that the rules implicitly favour certain types of Euro-smart applicants and create inequalities for those who do not understand them, do not have the necessary administrative infrastructure and do not want to be socialised that way.
– The decision-making processes tend to be viewed as too long and the late arrival of award decisions and provision of funds – often after the beginning of the activities – obviously puts substantial onus on the beneficiaries. This is often seen as undermining the rate of participation and the quality of the activities.

– According to some observers, the many administrative specifications could lead potential beneficiaries to restrain their educational 'imagination' and put most of their energy into finding ways to meet the requirements or 'beat the system'.
– The detailed financial regulations are claimed to create a considerable risk, as expenses incurred for activities may not be reimbursed because of bureaucratic 'traps'. Thus, some interviewees thought that regulations concerning eligible expenditure had been modified during funding periods.

Of course, it is known in the field that the Commission must strike a balance between calls for efficiency and effectiveness and increasing demands for accountability (fuelled by the recently mounting critique of misuse of funds on the part of the Commission). Critique of administrative processes is so widespread that certain complaints do not necessarily lead to administrative reform. But SOCRATES is so popular in providing highly appreciated educational opportunities that there seems to be great readiness to 'suffer'. One may have different views about acceptable amounts of administrative load and the acceptable duration of processes such as the delay between application and award. But one must bear in mind that the Commission's actions are largely determined by the Member States and that SOCRATES is a largely decentralised programme where Member States play a major role.

Yet, the critique about the management of the SOCRATES programme tends to be so bitter that it surpasses the usual complaints about administrative burdens. Beneficiaries feel they are treated like "children" or "potential criminals". And it is worth noting that many of those in charge of educational programmes in the Commission share these views and consider themselves, as one interviewee put it, as "hostages of the financial control people". If somebody were in a position to phrase the state of affairs in a polite way, he could suggest that : "The European Commission is more visionary than managerial".

Those in the educational field who greatly appreciate the substantive thrust of the European policies express concern that those in charge of European policies – the European Council, Parliament and Commission – are willing to accept such a bad image. The typical critique could be summarised in three rhetoric questions: Why, at times when educational institutions are expected to be more efficient, do the European authorities, as sponsors of educational innovation, want to be the symbol of inefficiency? Why, at times when educational institutions are asked to be more flexible than ever before, does the Commission want to be an incarnation of rigidity? Why, in a programme which aims to enhance the European dimension through cooperation based on mutual trust, do the control procedures want to create the impression that mistrust is on the European agenda? It is widely believed that the Commission no longer perceives the wide gap which can be seen in SOCRATES between the popularity of European concepts and mistrust as far as political and administrative mechanisms are concerned.

This evaluation study can report the critique, but cannot judge how strong its effects are on the quality and the impact of educational activities supported by SOCRATES. It can, however, show that efforts to improve the situation through small steps have not really led to major improvements. For example, the delay between application for ERASMUS student mobility grants and the actual transfer of funds to the students became slightly longer between the early 1990s and the late 1990s. Also, new ideas to change the modes of application and awards, e.g. the introduction of the bilateral contracts and the European Policy Statement in ERASMUS or the decentralised management of mobility, often led to greater overall complexity. Finally, we were informed that assessments of the results of the detailed financial control processes showed that there was little misuse of funds.

One of the Commission staff members who was interviewed summarised the situation as follows: the primary concern of the Commission is justifiable procedures and criteria for the selection and award decisions and compliance to the rules on how to properly spend the funds provided, but it is hardly concerned with the educational outcomes of SOCRATES. This statement is certainly too harsh, but it points to a direction of desirable improvement: the procedural control of the generally small financial support could be alleviated or substituted by an output assessment. Educational quality would be given stronger weight than procedural compliance.

9.8 Information on Activities and Evaluation

Provision of basic information, as well as monitoring and evaluation, seem to be held in high esteem by many actors and beneficiaries of SOCRATES. Evaluation (in this section used as an umbrella term for accountability-oriented information, assessment, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) could serve the following purposes:

– accountability of the SOCRATES programme as a whole,
– feedback to identify those aims and measures of SOCRATES which are likely to be successful, thus inspiring improvements in the programme as a whole,
– output-oriented accountability of the beneficiaries (possibly instead of the financial-process-oriented accountability discussed in the previous section),
– feedback to the beneficiaries in order to help them put their activities in perspective and improve them.

The climate seems to be favourable for evaluation. Also, the authors of most of the evaluation studies undertaken in the past reported that they had received great support from those they had asked to share their experiences.

But the European Commission also has many other channels of informed sophisticated guesses about the reality of SOCRATES – through the experiences of the staff in the Technical Assistance Office, through communication with the national agencies, deliberations in advisory boards, the organisation of workshops and conferences, etc. In addition, the Commission must often sum up the experiences at such short notice that the value added to systematic evaluation exercises is not always rated highly.

In the application, award and reporting system established in the SOCRATES programme, an enormous wealth of information is collected which could be transformed into a valuable quantitative and qualitative reporting system on the programme. The available data are sorted to support "distributional" award decisions regarding student and staff mobility according to home country, host country, field, etc. Hence, well-organised statistics are made available about the number of persons applying for mobility and the number of persons awarded support. Valuable as this information may be, it is often published instead of statistics on the real number of mobile persons. This often creates a misunderstanding in the public. The overbooking statistics of the estimated numbers of mobile persons are thought to be the number of those who are actually mobile with SOCRATES support. So far, the European Commission has established a system of collecting regular statistics on the actual numbers of ERASMUS students only. In most other areas, no statistics on actual numbers of activities or beneficiaries are provided – even after many years – as basic information for the final evaluation of a programme phase such as this SOCRATES 2000 evaluation.

The staff members of the Commission in charge of the various sub-programmes of ERASMUS occasionally undertake informal ad-hoc monitoring activities to prepare selection decisions, modifications of the programmes, committee meetings, etc. Valuable as these activities often are for informed decisions, they do not translate into a regular and comprehensive monitoring system.

The European Commission commissioned various studies to analyse selected areas of SOCRATES and develop concepts for further improvements (for example on the role of European Policy Statements in higher education and on ECTS). At the early stages of ERASMUS, a regular programme of evaluation studies was established over a period of seven years. A similar system has not been established in any of the sub-programmes since the launching of SOCRATES.

The studies commissioned on selected areas provide valuable feedback and ideas for improvement. Some, however, are criticised as being too sympathetic with the programme from the outset. Many studies commissioned to key actors in the field are very valuable for ideas about future developments, but often lack the necessary distance to the subject under scrutiny. Some even seem to have a stronger public relation than analytic function.

The overall evaluation studies commissioned at an interim stage or at the end of a major phase of the previous programmes and of the SOCRATES programmes (such as this study) could provide valuable information, interpretations and recommendations. However, this system seems to be quite vulnerable: some of these studies are rated by knowledgeable readers as very valuable, whilst others are more superficial and poor. These major evaluations must collect large amounts of information within a short period of time, which represents a heavy burden. They are expected to make up for the lack of continuous monitoring. Moreover, the broad range of sub-programmes and activities covered by SOCRATES makes it difficult to find experts who can analyse and assess the programme as a whole.

Evaluation and monitoring studies are occasionally published by the European Commission or other institutions or publishers. But a consistent publication strategy is not in place: some interesting studies are never published, and most publications come out very late. For the public, it is almost impossible to locate the studies being undertaken, and it is even difficult for the key staff at the Commission.

The European Commission is currently deliberating on taking steps to introduce a regular system of statistics, monitoring, and evaluation studies. The proposals indicate a high level of awareness of the potential advantages and possible problems in establishing a regular system of evaluation which could serve accountability and improvement and be valuable for the SOCRATES programme as a whole and its beneficiaries.

Based on the experience of this evaluation study, on the analysis of other studies undertaken in the framework of this study, and on prior experiences with other evaluation and monitoring studies, we suggest considering the following to improve the evaluation of SOCRATES:

(a) As the decentralisation of the management of SOCRATES has progressed, it becomes important to coordinate the evaluation between the Commission, the national agencies and the national governments. If no agreements on common thrusts are reached, the information basis will become weaker and weaker.

(b) The European Commission should establish a unit (possibly within the Technical Assistance Office) which is in charge of regularly compiling the information, monitoring the information gathering, and cooperating closely on procedural and information matters with external evaluation studies. This unit should be the storehouse of all methodological and content dimensions of the monitoring and evaluation activities (and not a mere evaluation policy unit or a unit that delegates tasks to the various programme units which must give priority to the management of the operational issues of SOCRATES).

(c) The European Commission should avoid over-ambitious decisions about priorities of regular monitoring and evaluation. There are dangers that the

evaluation and monitoring programme might collapse because it pursues over-ambitious goals, and that the work load and costs involved in setting up a good quantitative information system may not leave enough room and funds to commission valuable “qualitative” studies.

(d) Those in charge of setting up a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system should re-examine all application and reporting requirements from the point of view of how valuable they are and how the information could be easily handled in the framework of monitoring and evaluation activities.

(e) The European Commission should set up mechanisms which ensure a certain degree of independent evaluation and give greater credibility to evaluation. This could be done by appointing an evaluation coordinator or an evaluation coordinating team of external people who have substantial knowledge of the educational field under consideration and of the concepts and methodology of evaluation, statistics etc. They could moderate the expectations of those responsible for the policy and programme and those responsible for the financial control of the Commission. The European Parliament, the national governments, the representatives of the education system, etc., could suggest priorities of regular monitoring and evaluation, examine the results of the evaluation studies, and be warrants of an open publication strategy (i.e. only filtering those studies which lack the necessary quality).

(f) The regular monitoring and evaluation programme should be designed in such a way that it can feed the major interim and final evaluations of the SOCRATES programme. This would allow these major evaluations to base most of the fact-finding on a secondary analysis of prior studies.

(g) A coherent publication and dissemination policy should be established which ensures that all quality information which transgresses the internal issues of the Commission is rapidly available and generally accessible. Also, documentation that is easily accessible should be made available for research, evaluation studies, and other relevant information undertaken in a decentralised manner.

(h) The monitoring and evaluation system should be designed in such a way that it can produce credible output measures of SOCRATES-supported activities. Thus, it could provide the foundation for a replacement of the current financial- and process-oriented control system by an educational-output assessment system. Then, the Commission could be more demanding with respect to the quality of the final reports of the educational projects which, in turn, would allow for qualified evaluation activities based on those reports.

Finally, evaluation is needed to disseminate examples of “good practice”. Many observers argue that the European Commission is not very active in

promoting dissemination. It seems to be cautious in taking on an active role here, because any activity beyond establishing catalogues of the available "products" would require a substance-based prioritisation which it may not be in a position to make, or might not see itself, or be seen by others, as legitimately placed to do this.

The Commission needs to find ways of legitimising the selection of the qualitatively most demanding and most relevant project results for the purpose of wide-spread dissemination of the most valuable results. The problem of lack of competences and questioned legitimacy cited above notwithstanding, the Commission should find the means of acceptable prioritisation.

9.9 Summary

SOCRATES as an umbrella programme contributes symbolically to the visibility of the European involvement in a broad range of educational activities. However, coordination across and "cross-fertilisation" between programmes did not play a significant role. The recent policy of reinforcing or introducing new names for sub-programmes helped to support a feeling of identity for the beneficiaries, whilst the task for SOCRATES remains to call for coordination and cooperation, where feasible and reasonable, and to underscore the importance of European educational activities as a whole.

Goals pursued by SOCRATES put strong emphasis on operational objectives, leaving much room for the interpretation of the European dimension. They are controversial as far as the secondary goals are concerned (e.g. variety v. convergence). A certain variety and vagueness of the goals are positive to encourage different European activities, but may not suffice if more complex aims are to be pursued, e.g. strengthening the European dimension in the education of non-mobile students.

SOCRATES comprises support for "mass activities", notably mobility, and for "selected" ambitious projects of educational development and innovation. The need to support both types of projects cannot be disputed. It is generally assumed that the creativity and diversity of the latter projects gain from a flexible award policy, avoiding strong "top down" steering. The Commission could contribute to the quality and relevance if an acceptable prioritisation policy was found.

The structure of the SOCRATES programme, i.e. the division according to educational sectors or special cross-cutting issues, does not seem to be a major issue. It is hoped that the inequality of financial support according to sectors will fade once the role of educational policies in the overall EU policy grows.

The current system of partial and incentive funding seems to "work" in higher education to stimulate matching resources for mobility, infrastructure and

specific projects awarded by the Commission. But it does not support the idea that the higher education institutions develop interesting European strategies on their own in which they incorporate European support. Schools, on the other hand, can only mobilise personal and material resources to a limited extent and thus tend to adapt their participation to the level of support available. European educational activities could gain if schools encouraged the participation of those who cannot easily join SOCRATES and measures were developed in cooperation with national governments. This would reinforce the professional recognition of involvement in SOCRATES.

The administration of the SOCRATES programme is strongly criticised for being slow and late, requiring work loads that do not correspond to the financial support and putting humiliating emphasis on financial control. This is viewed both inside and outside the European Commission as reducing the quality of educational activities and creating a general impression that the European authorities are “more visionary than managerial”, if phrased in a friendly way, and as inefficient, rigid and based on a culture of mistrust, if phrased in a less friendly way. The authors of this study strongly recommend abandoning tedious financial controls of small awards and moving towards an educational output-oriented supervision.

Though many statistics and monitoring and evaluation are available and though the climate around SOCRATES seems favourable for evaluation, major gaps are observed. Statistics on activities only exist in a few areas, monitoring and evaluation lack continuity, the major interim and final evaluation are overburdened, evaluation is often criticised as not being sufficiently independent, and publication and dissemination lack a systematic policy. The system of statistics, monitoring and evaluation should be supported by a unit in charge of the daily routine, based on a realistic mid-term programme, coordinated with the Member States and supported by a regular publication and dissemination strategy. An independent evaluation coordinator or coordinating team should moderate the various substantive demands, the prioritisation, the quality, and the credible critical approach of evaluation.

Dissemination of the results of SOCRATES-supported educational projects is currently supported in various ways. This is appropriate because the types of results and their possible audiences are extremely varied. The Commission could improve dissemination by extending its support to major dissemination projects that follow development activities and by finding ways of legitimately supporting the joint dissemination of results of a select group of high quality and relevant projects.

10. ERASMUS – Observations and Recommendations

By Ulrich Teichler

10.1 Introduction

Student mobility has been the most visible component of the ERASMUS programme from the outset, and more than half the ERASMUS funds were allocated each year to student mobility grants. Students had become a well-established component of the European educational programmes with "mass participation" before SOCRATES was launched. SOCRATES changed the organisational and educational framework of student mobility and called for a further development of the components of ERASMUS.

The experiences of ERASMUS students and of those supporting student mobility academically and administratively, the teachers and coordinators, had been analysed in various studies since the late 1980s. The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study draws from the methods and results of previous analyses.

– The 2000 Evaluation Study tried to establish how far the conditions, processes and outcomes of student mobility and teaching staff had changed. For this purpose, questionnaire surveys were sent out in order to sample ERASMUS students, former mobile students who had graduated some years before, and teachers, many of whom had taught abroad or were assigned coordination tasks in ERASMUS.

– Beyond that, the various curricular innovation activities – in the framework of Curriculum Development, Intensive Programmes and the Thematic Network – were examined with the help of an analysis of their self-reports.

– Finally, attention was paid to how the role of the centre of higher education institutions had changed in managing and shaping the European activities as a consequence of the SOCRATES approach which discontinued support for networks of cooperating departments and encouraged the centres of higher education to become strategic actors instead and take over administrative responsibility for the activities which received support. A questionnaire was sent to all higher education institutions in Europe which were supported by SOCRATES.

10.2 Student Mobility

10.2.1 Changing Conditions

One could assume that the students' experience within ERASMUS could have changed as a consequence of the following factors:

(a) quantitative expansion, i.e. increase in the number of ERASMUS students,

(b) changes in the management of the support scheme and in the level of support, e.g. processes of application and awards, as well as level of funding per student,

(c) changes in the general environment, e.g. greater Europeanisation and internationalisa-tion in higher education and in the world of work,

(d) a consolidation process as regards conditions and provisions for student mobility within the higher education institutions,

(e) a shift from the network of departments approach of the former ERASMUS programme (ICPs) to institutional responsibility for ERASMUS under SOCRATES, which could cause changes in the academic and administrative conditions for mobile students,

(f) specific measures aimed to improve the conditions and provisions of student mobility, e.g. better recognition through the extension of ECTS.

Comparing the surveys of the early 1990s and those conducted in 1999/ 2000 provides an opportunity to examine the changes over time. However, there is no clear distinction between changes already in place until 1996/97 and those which were initiated when the SOCRATES approach began affecting student mobility. One should also bear in mind that the change in the students' experiences and the respective outcomes cannot be measured exactly. Yet the relative importance of the factors mentioned above for the development of ERASMUS student mobility remains open to – possibly controversial – interpretation.

The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study provides evidence that the development of ERASMUS student mobility from the early 1990s to the late 1990s is characterised by continuity and stability rather than by change. However, there are four elements of change.

10.2.2 Growing Number of ERASMUS Students

First, we observed a substantial growth in the overall number of students studying in another European country with an ERASMUS grant. The real number increased from about 28,000 in the academic year 1990/91, to about 80,000 in the academic year 1995/96 and to about 86,000 in the academic year 1997/98. More recent data were not available when this analysis was undertaken. In combining the available data on "estimated" number of students with data on the trend of the take-up rate (proportion of students cited in the successful applications who actually go abroad), we could nevertheless estimate that the real number of ERASMUS-supported students grew to about 92,000 in 1998/99 and to about 98,000 in 1999/2000. Thus, the total number increased from about 230,000 in the five-year period 1990/91 to 1994/95 to about 460,000 during the five-year-period 1995/96 to 1999/2000.

Thus, the actual number of mobile students in the latter half of the 1990s was twice as high as in the previous five-year period. The number of eligible countries rose from 12 in 1990/91 to 18 in 1995/96 and to 29 in 1999/2000. 10 Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus became eligible with the launching of SOCRATES.

10.2.3 Drop in Cost Coverage of the ERASMUS Grant

A second major change was the reduction of the amount of ERASMUS grants per student. According to the statistics of the European Commission, ERASMUS students in 1990/91 received on average 1,220 ECU and the 1993/94 cohort 1,089 ECU. The 1997/98 ERASMUS students, however, only received 959 EURO on average. This decline of 21 per cent in the support for additional costs of study abroad over a period of seven years was paralleled by an increase of some 40 per cent of the ERASMUS students' additional expenses for the study period abroad.

In taking into consideration a previous student survey addressing 1990/91 ERASMUS students, we noted that the share of the additional expenses for studying abroad (cost of the stay abroad, travel, continuous costs at home while studying abroad) covered by the ERASMUS grant dropped to 52 per cent on average in 1998/99 as compared to 89 per cent in 1990/91. The total amount of the additional expenses not covered by ERASMUS increased during that period from 166 ECU to 1,036 EURO on average. As the coverage by home country grants and loans did not increase, the additional burden had to be borne by the students, their parents and their relatives.

The available figures suggest that the students and their parents and relatives took on the additional expenses with no major consequences for the ERASMUS programme. The pattern of parental background remained unchanged and students' complaints about serious financial problems during the study period abroad did not increase. Yet, one must bear in mind that serious financial problems quoted by about one-fifth of the students remained one of their main problems, and that the additional costs could have been a deterrent for the rising number of students who initially wished to participate in ERASMUS but in the end did not go abroad.

10.2.4 Changes in Administrative and Academic Support

Third, the ERASMUS students of the late 1990s embarked to a lesser extent on academic preparation for the study period than their predecessors of the early 1990s. They reported, however, that the host institutions provided both more substantive academic and administrative advice and assistance than they did a decade age. It was widely assumed that the SOCRATES move away from the networks of academics towards institutional responsibility could hamper academic support and increase administrative and service

support. The findings only partly support this interpretation. The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study may have been undertaken too early. The near future will show whether this hypothesis will be validated or not.

10.2.5 Recognition – Increase or Decrease?

Fourth, according to ERASMUS students, about three quarters of their achievement abroad were recognised on their return if they did not participate in European Credit Transfer Scheme. This remained unchanged from the beginning of the ERASMUS programme until the late 1990s. ECTS students of the late 1990s reported an average credit transfer of about 85 per cent. As ECTS expanded from a small pilot programme in the early 1990s to comprising about half the ERASMUS students in the late 1990s, the overall degree of recognition grew to slightly over 80 per cent.

However, if the ultimate yardstick of recognition is that the overall study period up to the award of the degree will not be prolonged by the study period abroad, developments are less promising. Despite the growth of ECTS, the expected prolongation of studies increased from about 45 per cent on average of the study period abroad to 55 per cent.

This discrepancy could be seen as an indication that the greater part of formal recognition could be regarded as artificial. There seemed to be an increase in the achievements which were “recognised” but did not “count” for the overall study requirement.

10.2.6 Continuity

It is interesting to note that there have been few major changes. Some of the non-changes deserve specific attention. In addition to the stability in the socio-economic composition of ERASMUS students, we can observe the following. First, the long delay between application and information about award decision and the late timing of the provision of financial support to the students remained at 8.3 months on average in the 1990s. Measures to reduce the delay were counterbalanced by factors that contributed to the complexity and slowness of the process so that the two trends seem to have neutralised each other. Second, the teachers’ rating of the academic quality and achievements of ERASMUS students remained equal to that of their home students. Thus, the changes in support for the preparation of the study period abroad and for academic and administrative concerns of incoming students who might be affected by the SOCRATES approach do not seem to have led to significant changes as regards quality. Third, accommodation was no longer a serious issue, as was feared at the beginning of ERASMUS. The quantitative growth of student mobility did not lead to greater problems. Recent ERASMUS students even rated the quality of accommodation abroad slightly more positively than those of the early 1990s. Fourth, the pattern of language use had not changed substantially. Whereas it was widely

believed that the internationalisation of higher education would reinforce the drift towards English as the *lingua franca*, the use of the various host country languages did not decline and the number of students who were taught abroad in English did not increase beyond what could be expected as a consequence of a growing participation of small countries with lesser-known languages. Finally, the overwhelming majority of ERASMUS students continued to consider the study period in another European country as a very valuable experience in terms of cultural experience and personality development. Academic progress also tended to be viewed positively. Generally speaking, the students were very satisfied with their ERASMUS experience.

10.2.7 Impact on Employment and Work

In examining the impact of temporary study in another European country on subsequent employment and work we noted that more mobile students than non-mobile students eventually

– took on job assignments with international components,
– were more often employed abroad, and
– were more often assigned work abroad, if employed by a home country employer.
– Former mobile students also assessed their professionally-relevant competence somewhat more highly than the non-mobile students, and
– they also experienced a smoother transition to employment.

However, few former mobile students believed that they had a more successful career than their fellow students who were not mobile, and few had a higher income. But the contribution of ERASMUS is impressive when it comes to European and international assignments of graduates. In most respects, the findings of a recent survey of 1994-95 graduates who had studied abroad with ERASMUS support around 1992-94 confirmed those of a longitudinal study of the 1988/89 cohort. In most respects, the change over time was marginal.

But caution is called for. First, as the recent survey shows, former ERASMUS students are not better prepared for employment and work in general or for international assignments than European graduates who studied abroad with other means of funding. Second, the number of former ERASMUS students who do not find significant European or international job assignments is fairly high and seems to grow slightly over time.

10.3 Teaching Staff Mobility

10.3.1 Expected Growth of Size and Function

Whereas the stability of student mobility could be considered a success as far as processes and outcomes were concerned, teaching staff mobility was

expected to improve and serve a greater number of functions with the inauguration of SOCRATES than it did in previous years. First, the conditions for organising a teaching period abroad were considered as deplorable by most mobile teachers in the early 1990s. Improvement was clearly on the agenda. Second, with the launching of SOCRATES, direct support for networks of departments was discontinued and fewer travel funds were available to support student mobility. Therefore, teaching staff mobility could be expected to take over part of the functions traditionally served by coordinators' travel. Third, ERASMUS in the framework of SOCRATES was also expected to serve the non-mobile students. Finally, teaching staff mobility could also play a role in the recent efforts to make ERASMUS in the framework of SOCRATES beneficial for curricular innovation.

10.3.2 Changes in the Quantitative-Structural Patterns

The number of mobile teachers supported by ERASMUS increased substantially. To our knowledge, exact data on their number are not extracted regularly from the reports of the teachers or the higher education institutions, but it was calculated to be about 1,400 in 1990/91 and 7,000 in the late 1990s.

However, the average duration of the stay abroad dropped substantially. Representative surveys suggest an average drop from 24 to just over 8 days.

The share of the mobile teachers' expenses which were borne by the ERASMUS grant decreased by an average of almost 10 per cent, from about 70 per cent to slightly more than 60 per cent. Unlike with student mobility, the additional costs were not borne by the mobile persons, but primarily by the home higher education institutions.

10.3.3 Continuity of Activities

In almost all other respects, the comparison of the teaching staff surveys of the early 1990s and the recent one undertaken in the framework of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study did not indicate any major change. Four elements of stability are worth noting. First, the conditions for organising a teaching period abroad continued to be considered deplorable by the mobile teachers and their colleagues who acted as coordinators. This was all the more surprising, because one could have expected that the various difficulties could have been overcome, since the teaching period abroad had become so short. Second, teaching abroad was as integrated in the host country curriculum in the late 1990s as it was in the early 1990s (in terms of being part of the regular programmes, being compulsory and being credited). If teacher training had become a more targeted means of serving the non-mobile students, one could have expected a higher degree of integration. Third, when abroad, mobile teachers were just as involved in other tasks as their predecessors in the early 1990s. They seemed to play a similar role

in advising home and host students and in curricular matters to the one they played in the past. The contribution of teaching staff mobility to student mobility did not decline as a consequence of greater presumed emphasis of ERASMUS in the framework of SOCRATES on non-mobile students and curricular innovation. Fourth, mobile teachers continued to believe that teaching staff exchange was very valuable for themselves, for the home and host mobile students, and for the curricula in general.

10.3.4 (Not) Serving the Intended Functional Change?

All indications suggest that the role of teacher mobility has not changed as much in recent years as was hoped for. All qualitative information neither suggests any improvement in terms of emphasis on non-mobile students or curricular innovation nor any drop in its role in student mobility. Yet, there is a need for innovative ideas to improve teaching staff mobility.

10.4 Curricular Innovation and the Role of Thematic Networks

10.4.1 Examining the Potentials of Curricular Innovation

Curricular innovation is an area of growing importance in SOCRATES. Whereas student mobility puts great emphasis on “experiential learning”, curricular innovation addresses the core of the teaching function. While student mobility directly serves a minority, curricular innovation can be beneficial for the majority, with the growing emphasis of ERASMUS on non-mobile students. Finally, student mobility is valuable for those involved, but curricular innovation, if successful, can serve many institutions and departments.

Student mobility within ERASMUS was viewed from the outset as qualitatively better if embedded in curricular innovation, and it was widely assumed that greater student mobility, in turn, would stimulate curricular innovation. In the framework of SOCRATES, many sub-programmes were set up to serve curricular innovation in higher education. In the framework of ERASMUS, applications under the category of Curriculum Development (CD) had to be specified according to curricula at initial or intermediate level (CDI), new degree programmes at advanced level (CDA), European modules (EM) focusing on other countries, and integrated language courses (ILC). Intensive Programmes (IP) were also supported. The majority of “Thematic Networks”, a new area of activity in SOCRATES whereby many experts cooperate to analyse and improve major areas of higher education, also addressed curricular issues in most cases. Outside ERASMUS, various sub-programmes of SOCRATES – LINGUA, OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING, ADULT EDUCATION and also the areas of COMENIUS which address teacher training – offer higher education institutions the possibility of obtaining financial support for curricular innovation.

In the framework of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study, applications and reports of 53 Curriculum Development projects and 16 Thematic Network projects were analysed. The analysis focused on issues of implementation, links with other activities, as well as the perceived outcomes and their quality.

10.4.2 Activities

Since ERASMUS was modified under SOCRATES, every year 13 per cent of the higher education institutions that received grants through an "Institutional Contract" were provided funds for the coordination of Curriculum Development projects and 13 per cent for the coordination of Intensive Programmes. On average, 250 CD projects and 300 Intensive Programmes were granted annual support. Curriculum Development projects – most of which ask for support over a period of three years – comprise 12 partners from 5 countries on average. They are awarded some 17,000 EURO – a sum which the coordinating institutions have to share with the partners. According to estimates, about 30 per cent of the higher education institutions awarded support in the framework of Institutional Contracts participate in CD projects. On average, Intensive Programmes received 11,000 EURO a year which had to be shared among 15 partners from 7 countries.

Thematic Networks which comprise, on average, more than 100 partners, i.e. representatives of higher education institutions and other organisations such as associations, etc., focused on two main areas. First, a practical area which involved the mapping of the current situation and promoting and developing tools to stimulate inter-institutional cooperation and to overcome obstacles in this area. Second, a more analytical area which focused on the changing social and economic demands, their meaning for the role of higher education and reflection on the European dimension. During the three-year period under observation many individual projects were carried out which were mainly concerned with comparative analysis of education systems and policies, analysing the context and needs of society and the labour market, production of teaching material, implementation of new learning programmes, developing tools to stimulate inter-university cooperation, and developing tools to promote information exchanges and institutional cooperation and organisation.

The closest links between Thematic Network Projects and other ERASMUS activities were found in the area of student mobility and the use of ECTS. In addition, a substantial proportion of TNPs included sub-projects which focused on curriculum development, e.g. the development of European Master's programmes.

10.4.3 The Role of Curricular Innovation

In explaining the relevance of various SOCRATES-supported activities for the policy of the higher education institutions as a whole, most institutions

stressed in their European Policy Statements that they continued to consider student and teacher mobility as being the key areas. But over 40 per cent also lay great stress on ECTS, over a third on curricular innovation, and over a quarter on intensive programmes.

It is obvious that for many institutions curricular innovation should be at the heart of systematic efforts of Europeanisation and internationalisation of higher education. But some caution was expressed regarding curricular innovation when reflecting institutional policies. This was because most curricular innovation activities affected individual fields of study and were thus of little importance for the institution as a whole.

10.4.4 Results and Problems

Curriculum development projects seemed to greatly serve the interdisciplinary concept. Those which aimed at developing new degree programmes at advanced level seemed to be the most ambitious. Various projects took on board popular approaches to teaching and learning, e.g. the use of information and communication technology, open and distance learning, and competence-based learning. A more thorough evaluation by curriculum experts would be needed to analyse the achievements and limitations of the outcomes of curricular innovation activities supported by SOCRATES.

Thematic Networks often provided fruitful overviews of the substantive approaches to fields of study and modes of teaching and learning. But it is less certain whether many succeeded in developing new concepts that were valuable for curricular innovation.

The funds provided for Curriculum Development, Intensive Programmes and Thematic Networks seemed to be sufficient to reinforce a certain degree of stability and structure for those who were willing to take an active part in curricular innovation. The great professional autonomy of academics in setting priorities in the use of their work time was fertile ground for relatively small amounts of financial support to “go a long way”.

Yet, a certain number of participants remained inactive. Interest was often divided between those who only participated in the development of blueprints for curricular innovation and those who tried to change things. There were often barriers to the implementation of curricular innovation.

Those who were involved in curricular innovation often expressed dissatisfaction because they did not see the meaning of their activities beyond being an “island” of innovation for those who participated. They wanted feedback regarding quality, would appreciate some dissemination, and would like to know where similar or contrasting innovation was visible, etc. These comments do not so much call for evaluation as an instrument of “control”, as for activities to differentiate between successful and less successful experi-

ments and help those who had embarked on innovative activities to improve and disseminate good practice.

Last but not least, disappointment loomed large at higher education institutions after the first round of SOCRATES awards, because they had expected support for a larger number of projects of curriculum development. Subsequently, the number of application in this domain declined.

It is still too early to assess how successful Thematic Networks can be in helping to sort out and disseminate innovation in higher education with a European dimension. Various comments suggested that the expectations were substantially higher when support for Thematic Networks began than they were now. An analysis of the experiences might be timely following the final reports of the first “wave” of projects.

10.5 The SOCRATES Approach of Discontinuing Academic Networks and Increasing Institutional Responsibility

As the CRE-EUROSTRAT study suggested, the SOCRATES approach of discontinuing networks of cooperating departments and academics (ICPs) and expecting increasing responsibility of the higher education institutions as a whole, as underscored by Institutional Contracts between the European Commission and the individual institution, has led many higher education institutions to take stock of their European and international activities. This resulted in greater transparency and a growing awareness of the institutions’ strengths and weaknesses concerning their European commitments.

SOCRATES also triggered off the creation or extension of consultation processes within higher education institutions to discuss European and international matters. Similarly, the decision-making process on matters of internationalisation and Europeanisation was linked more closely to that of key issues of the institutions and was often streamlined.

Furthermore, there were also indications that the support for services and administrative processes was improved and subsequently professionalised. This seems to be the case, though the number of professional staff in charge did not increase substantially.

Finally, the findings of the EUROSTRAT project showed that many higher education institutions considered European and international issues more strategically than in the past. Most did not feel the need to formulate a European policy in order to be eligible for SOCRATES support. Often, they enumerated operational targets in European Policy Statements without embellishing trivial operations by exaggerated declarations. However, moves towards policies seemed to be emerging.

The surveys undertaken in the framework of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study suggest that the changes actually incurred in the first years were

moderate. On the basis of the institutional survey and the teaching staff survey, we observed

– few reassignments of responsibilites between the central and the depar-mental levels as well as between the various actors,
– some reduction of the administration and service functions of academics, but still almost as many educational tasks and a continued involvement of the academics in decision-making.
– marginal growth of staff positions for the administration of international activities.

The CRE-EUROSTRAT study also indicated limited moves towards strategic action on the part of higher education institutions:

– Most institutions focused so much on SOCRATES in their European Policy Statement that one can wonder whether they developed a European policy.
– As regards student mobility, most institutions were in favour of spreading it across all departments.
– As regards curricular innovation, most institutions simply supported the projects proposed by the academics and waited for the Commission to decide which projects would receive sufficient funds for their implementation.
– The specifications and rules set by the Commission for support were often viewed as limiting the room for manoeuvre concerning original strategic contributions to innovation.

In the institutional survey, concern was expressed about the academics' diminishing interest in being involved in ERASMUS. It is too early to assess whether the motivation of academics greatly declined when the support for networks of cooperating departments was discontinued. But the concern does not seem to be completely unfounded, even though changes are certainly less dramatic than some critical voices had predicted.

10.6 The Administration of SOCRATES as Perceived in the Higher Education System

Already before the launch of SOCRATES criticisms of ERASMUS primarily addressed the framework of the support programmes and various elements of programme administration. This has not changed in recent years. The SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation study did not provide any evidence that dissatisfaction in these respects had dropped in recent years.

Widespread critique continued to be voiced, first, concerning the amounts of funds per beneficiary and activity which tended to be seen as too small. A higher degree of prioritisations was frequently advocated.

Second, “overbureaucratisation” or similar terms were often used by the beneficiaries to point at what they viewed as a major procedural *malaise*. In particular,

– the overall work load on the part of the potential and actual recipients of support required by the Commission tended to be viewed as out of proportion with the financial support;
– the decision-making processes were critisised as lasting too long, and late timing of award decisions and provision of funds obviously put great onus on the beneficiaries; this often seemed to undermine the quantity of participation and the quality of the activities;
– according to some observers, the multitude of administrative specifications could lead the potential beneficiaries to restrain their educational fantasy and put most of their energy into finding ways to obey the requirements or to ‘beat the system’;
– it was claimed that the detailed financial regulations could create a major risk that expenses incurred for activities which served their purpose well may not be reimbursed, due to bureaucratic traps.

Finally, the detailed regulation system regarding activities eligible for support, reporting and financial accountability seemed to spread a climate of mistrust. It was often asked why the imagined ideas of SOCRATES aiming at cooperation based on trust were embedded in procedures based on mistrust and rigidity.

In the past, efforts to improve the management by small steps of rationalisation, alleviation of administrative requirements and decentralisation were not successful. Obviously, more drastic reform measures were needed. They would include fewer coordination steps in the application and award process, a waiver of detailed control measures in the case of the award of small sums, and a transition from procedural control to outcome assessment.

10.7 Perception of Perennial Improvements

Despite the various problems, most institutional actors and academics involved were convinced that the ERASMUS activities were part of a constant process of growth and improvement of European and international thrusts and activities. In response to a question on how they assessed the changes of the last five years, they stated increases and improvements in almost all respects – including the ERASMUS-supported activities and the conditions and provisions for increasing their efficiency and quality. In 2000, the number of institutions that stated that they had observed growth and improvement in the last five years was close to the number of institutions which answered a similar question in 1994. This suggests that the mobilisation effect of ERASMUS has not levelled off, despite many signs that the enthusiasm of the early phase had led to a climate of consolidation.

Most students, teachers and administrators involved seemed to be highly motivated and to consider ERASMUS-supported activities both as stimulating and satisfying and as academically valuable. This general mood was so positive that many of the problems were considered irrelevant when viewed in the light of the development of Europeanisation and internationalisation.

10.8 Recommendations

For various reasons, one could not recommend drastic changes. The major decisions for SOCRATES II had already been taken at the time when the evaluation of the first five years of SOCRATES was conducted. Actors and beneficiaries were generally very satisfied. However, there could be flexibility in choosing different directions of activities and different interpretations where the European dimension should be strengthened. The programme will only be acceptable in the political arena if it serves large numbers of students, teachers and institutions and a limited number of more ambitious and more costly pilot innovation projects.

This does not mean that the evaluation study can only recommend to continue as envisaged.

First, it seems advisable to consider measures to preserve the interest of academics in serving temporary study abroad. Without returning to the “old” ERASMUS approach of supporting networks of cooperating departments, the role of academic cooperation could be strengthened by providing different institutional support for student mobility according to the quality of the concepts of academic support of student mobility and by earmarking the majority of funds for institutional support for this purpose.

Second, teaching staff mobility could be more valuable if the award of funds was based on the quality of envisaged mobility in terms of serving academic support for mobile students, being integrated into the regular host institution programme and serving projects of curricular innovation. This would require a more targeted strategy in the award of SOCRATES support for teaching staff mobility.

Third, institutional strategies are more likely to be reinforced if the higher education institutions could see that the creativity of the strategy and the consistency between concepts and envisaged activities are strongly rewarded. They could also broaden their scope if the SOCRATES programme were less specific in the categories of programmes and lists of activities which are eligible for support.

Fourth, an in-depth study of the results of curricular innovation activities in higher education in the domain of SOCRATES support should be undertaken in the near future. It should not merely be seen as an assessment activity that aims to provide a basis for future changes in the SOCRATES support

scheme, but rather should be of immediate help for the existing projects to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, improve their chances of implementation and disseminate their results.

Fifth, this evaluation study of ERASMUS must reiterate that a reform of the ways the SOCRATES programme is managed is urgent, although futile efforts of the past may discourage recommendations of this kind. Yet, it would be a great shame if the critiques were not seen as a stimulus to speed up the award processes, to set clearer award priorities for interesting and consistent innovative proposals, to encourage interesting policies by reducing the many prescriptive elements of SOCRATES concerning activities that are eligible for support, and to change the reporting system from less emphasis on administrative and financial compliance to information that can be valuable for substantive evaluation and be usefully disseminated.

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Founded in 1993, the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) is a not-for-profit pan-European network of major organisations responsible in their countries for the promotion of internationalisation in education and training. Current membership is comprised of 20 national organisations in 15 European countries, as well as associate members in North America, Japan and Australia. ACA's secretariat is located in Brussels, Belgium, in easy reach of the European institutions.

ACA is active in the following fields

- the enhancement of contact and cooperation between its members;
- the provision to its members of fast and up-to-date information on important developments in the European Union institutions and in international organisations;
- the provision, to third parties, of know how and expertise in the management of international cooperation programmes and projects;
- research into and publications on internationalisation in education and training;
- contract work for third parties.

ACA projects cover a wide spectrum and are too numerous to be listed here. However, recent activities include the management of the European Union's Socrates, Leonardo and Youth programmes (in the framework of the ETAPE consortium); a publication series, the *ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education*; studies for the European Union and the Nordic Council of Ministers regarding the future of their education and training programmes; surveys on recent developments in European higher education, on transnational lifelong learning and English-language-taught degrees; and the provision of a quality assurance service, the Internationalisation Quality Review (IQR).

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ERASMUS, the "flagship" among the educational programmes of the European Union, underwent substantial programmatic and structural changes when it became a sub-programme under the umbrella of the SOCRATES programme in the mid-1990s. The role of the centre of the university was strengthened at the expenses of the networks of departments, and more emphasis was placed on curricular innovation, teaching staff mobility and on involvement of the non-mobile students. This study, being part of the SOCRATES 2000 Evaluation Study, aims to examine the changes occurred in ERASMUS in the late 1990s. It draws from available documents and statistics, and comprises surveys of students, graduates and academics as well as interviews with those involved in curricular innovation and "thematic networks". The authors call for efforts to keep academics involved, to establish administrative procedures based on trust and to ensure a stronger role of curricular innovation.

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