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(eds.)

Emerging European Policy Profiles of Higher Education Institutions

Werkstattberichte 55
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Emerging European Policy Profiles
of Higher Education Institutions

A Project of the Association of European
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Wissenschaftliches Zentrum
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The study was undertaken by the Association of European Universities (CRE) in cooperation with the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work of the University of Kassel. It was commissioned by the Directorate General XXII Education Training and Youth of the European Commission.

The present report has been prepared in the context of the monitoring and evaluation of SOCRATES. It is designed primarily for the use within the services of the European Commission, and although this report is being placed at the disposal of the general public, it is emphasized, that the views which it contains are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Commission.
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Preface

Since 1996, European institutions of higher education have been challenged by the European Union to formulate European strategies when applying for support for cooperation and mobility activities under the newly established SOCRATES programme. This challenge to formulate European strategies is the immediate result of the institutional focus given to the ERASMUS strand in SOCRATES, as a revamped programme granting responsibility for action directly to the institutions and no longer to networks of departments. Institutions were asked to define a policy encompassing their various European activities, be they linked to staff mobility, to programmes for non-mobile students or to activities supplementing student exchanges. Institutions outlined their European profile in a "European Policy Statement" (EPS). These EPSs formed a central part of the 1583 requests sent to Brussels for SOCRATES funding.

The Association of European Universities (CRE) in Geneva, in cooperation with the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work of the University of Kassel and with the support of the European Commission, set up a research team which analysed the European policies emerging from the first round of new SOCRATES applications. The project was developed in three stages during 1997:

- an analysis of all EPSs in order to understand the links between the institutional policies in general, their European and international policies, and the activities envisaged in the framework of SOCRATES and beyond,
- site visits to some twenty higher education institutions in order to validate the analyses of the EPSs as well as to explore their processes of developing policies and their potentials of strategic action,
- three workshops with rectors, international relations officers and academic staff involved in European cooperation, in order to comment on the findings of the two previous activities and to suggest future action - both for higher education institutions and for the Commission.

A report based on the findings made during these three stages was presented to the European Commission in January 1998 and eventually published in May 1998 (University Responsibility for European Cooperation and Mobility. Geneva: CRE, 1998, CRE DOC No. 4). The present publication comprises the analysis of the European Policy Statements as well as of results of the site visits. The summary report presented to the Commission is also reprinted here.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those persons who have made this project possible: Manuel Assuncao (Aveiro, Portugal), Lieve Bracke (Ghent, Belgium), Jochen Hellman (Hamburg, Germany), Zoe Miari (Thessaloniki, Greece), and Outi Snellman (Rovaniemi, Finland) participated in the analysis of the European Policy Statements. Alison Browning, (Warwick, United Kingdom), Claudio Borri (Florence, Italy), Christian Delporte (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), Julia
Gonzalez Ferreras (Bilbao, Spain), Jeroen Torenbeek (Utrecht, The Netherlands) and Hans de Wit (Amsterdam, The Netherlands) undertook interviews at various European institutions of higher education. Hilary Callan (European Association for International Education – EAIE), Edward Dhondt (European Association of Higher Education – EURASHE). Inge Knudsen (Confederation of EU Rectors’ Conferences), Pieter de Meijer and Nadine Burquel (European Centre for the Strategic Management of Universities – ESMU) and Marijke van der Wende (Academic Cooperation Association – ACA) as well as various representatives of the European Commission, Directorate XXII, served as members of the advisory board of the project. Staff members of CRE and the Centre for Research in Higher Education and Work supported the project administratively and contributed to the quality of the publication.

Andris Barblan
Barbara M. Kehm
Sybille Reichert
Ulrich Teichler
1

SOCRATES and the European University Agenda:
Findings of an analysis of the European Policy Statements prepared by the European universities in the context of the launch of the SOCRATES Programme

Barbara M. Kehm
in cooperation with Manuel Assuncao, Lieve Bracke,
Jochen Hellmann, Zoe Miariti, Outi Snellman

1 Introduction

1.1 The New Approach of SOCRATES

With the launch of the SOCRATES Programme in 1995/96, various support measures of the European Union in the field of education were brought together under a common framework. ERASMUS, i.e. the programme supporting mobility of students from institutions of higher education and other related activities in the field of higher education, became a sub-programme of SOCRATES and was modified as far as the targets of support were concerned: apart from a continued thrust on the promotion of student mobility and an extension of support for teaching staff mobility, more emphasis was placed on curriculum development, recognition issues and the promotion of innovation in higher education through various means, among others "thematic networks". The most visible changes of ERASMUS in the new context of SOCRATES though, were of a managerial nature. For the purpose of being awarded support from the academic year 1997/98 onwards, (a) each institution of higher education had to submit one application encompassing all its exchange and cooperation activities, thus replacing the previous pattern of submission of applications by individual networks of cooperating institutions (Inter-University Cooperation Programmes). This application
became the basis for an "Institutional Contract" between the European Commission and the individual institution of higher education.

(b) The institutions of higher education 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. Bilateral cooperation agreements between partner institutions substituted the inter-university agreements between networks of departments in the past.

(c) Each institution submitting an application for SOCRATES support was requested to include in its application a European Policy Statement (EPS). This statement was designed to provide a framework for all the actual European activities to be carried out within the applying institution and to define the role SOCRATES support should play in this framework.

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

- to reflect and put a stronger 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.

This managerial thrust of SOCRATES as regards the European policies of higher education institutions aroused controversies and was obviously seen as a major challenge. One could expect from the outset that the first round of applications in this new framework, which had to be submitted in autumn 1996, would be based on an interesting experimental period of deliberations, debates and efforts towards strategic decision-making.

1.2 Aims and Design of the Study

In the light of these changes, a proposal was developed for an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative changes incurred in the process of submitting the first application for SOCRATES support. The study aimed to assess, at a very early stage of the implementation of SOCRATES, whether the SOCRATES approach was taking root and was likely to contribute to achieving the aims for which the programme was originally designed. As a first stage of the study, it was agreed to
analyse all European Policy Statements which had been submitted by higher education institutions in Europe as part of their application for SOCRATES funding within the framework of the Institutional Contract.

It should be pointed out that the copies of the European Policy Statements and other parts of the application provided by the European Commission to the members of the international working group who carried out the analyses were kept absolutely confidential. At no point was information about individual European Policy Statements made available to the CRE or to the European Commission.

All European Policy Statements (EPSs) and some related texts in the applications from all the institutions of higher education applying for SOCRATES were analysed in order to identify the goals striven for, the relationships between European and institutional goals and the activities envisaged, the ways of strategic reasoning and eventually the ways in which the EPS and the first application were prepared.

The analysis of the European Policy Statements was coordinated by Ulrich Teichler from the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work (Comprehensive University of Kassel, Germany) and Barbara M. Kehm from the Institute for Higher Education Research in Wittenberg (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany). A team of experts from different European countries and versatile in all the official European languages was formed who analysed the European Policy Statements on the basis of a detailed formsheet drafted by the coordinators and discussed with this team and an advisory panel for the project. The members of the team were experienced in mobility and cooperation activities of European universities, and most of them have also been involved in research on European and international activities of institutions of higher education.

All team members undertook the extraordinarily valuable, time-consuming task of analysing the European Policy Statements and other texts of the application according to about 100 different topics and selecting passages of the EPSs worthy of quotation in order to provide a systematic picture and key examples of the thoughts presented in the European Policy Statements. Their commitment to the study and their perseverance provided the basis for this report.

The formsheets, thus completed, were sent to the Centre in Kassel for subsequent completion of coding, data input, and data analysis. Wolfgang Steube had the overall responsibility for coding, checking and data input, and Ahmed Tubail did the programming, table calculations and design as well as being involved in the data input. Annette Fleck, Torsten Harms and Bernhard Krede helped with data input.
1.3 The Themes of Analysis

The formsheet used to analyse the European Policy Statements was composed of five parts dealing with the following topics:

- Part I: Substance of goals stated and references to the institutional setting.
- Part II: Configuration of goals stated, coherence with mission, choice of partners, preferences and priorities.
- Part III: Strategic reasoning, i.e. statements about reasons, opportunities and constraints, conditions for progress.
- Part IV: Processes and tools in the management of European activities, consistency of goals and activities, consultancy and decision-making with regard to the EPS and the institutional profile, key actors and their role in management and support structures, arrangements for evaluation, institutional and administrative costs.
- Part V: Activities and priorities.

Each part consisted of several themes. For example, we tried to establish whether priority choices were made as regards the kinds of activities, the mobile students and staff, the fields of study and the countries to be covered etc. For most of the individual themes, members of the team were asked to provide information

- whether the theme was addressed,
- the ways it was addressed (targeted or vague, with strong emphasis or in passing etc.),
- what was the substance of the text in question (for example the individual goals pursued in European policies).

Finally, space was reserved under each of the topics addressed for illustrations in the form of quotations.

1.4 Countries and Institutions Participating in the First Year of SOCRATES

Almost 1,600 institutions from all EU Member States as well as Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland submitted an application for SOCRATES support in 1997/98. The analysis is based on 1,578 European Policy Statements, i.e. 99.7% of the applying institutions (see Table 1). There were some cases in which an application had been given two identification numbers and thus came up twice, and a few other cases in which for various reasons the deadline for submitting the analysis formsheet could not be met by members of the team analysing the European Policy Statements.
Table 1
SOCRATES Applications Submitted – by Country and Type of Institution
(in % and absolute numbers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Non-university</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(118)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(241)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(64)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>(132)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(67)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxemburg</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 1,583 higher education institutions actually applying, 334 (21%) were located in France, 241 (15%) in Germany and 199 (13%) in Great Britain. 753 institutions (48%) were located in other EU Member States, and 56 institutions (4%) in EFTA countries. One of the applying institutions is a supra-national European institution of higher education.

The varying number of institutions from each country applying for SOCRATES support primarily reflects the number of institutions and additionally the different size of institutions of higher education. Actually, a large number of smaller institutions can be found in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Portugal and
Norway. These frequently tend to be institutions with a strong regional orientation and a limited number of study areas.

Unfortunately, no structural data were consistently made available in the Socrates application, i.e. on the number of students and staff, the composition of fields, the type of institution, the year of establishment etc. We only had information to identify the type of higher education institution.

Altogether 40% of the institutions submitting an application in Socrates are categorised as universities and 60% as non-university institutions of higher education. The largest proportion of non-university institutions among all institutions of the respective country submitting an application in Socrates can be observed in Denmark (80%), Finland (79%), the Netherlands and Norway (78% each), Ireland (77%), France and Portugal (75% each). It should be noted, though, that actual differences by type of higher education institution may not be due to the institutional type, but rather to the size of institutions and their disciplinary structure as a previous study¹ showed, because many non-university institutions of higher education are mono-disciplinary and have small numbers of students².

1.5 Structure and Character of the Report

It should be kept in mind that the results presented here are based on the analysis of the text of the European Policy Statements and other selected parts of the application submitted by the institutions and not on an analysis of the actual situation in any institution or of the institution itself. Accordingly, results may lead to an assessment of the quality and/or deficiencies of the European Policy Statement (EPS), however they may not lead to an assessment of any institution as such.

The presentation of results of the EPS analysis in the following sections of the report is divided into four parts. The first part looks at the main dimensions of the


² In previous studies, the European Commission considered the following institutions being part of the non-university higher education sector: Austria: Fachhochschulen, Akademien für Sozialarbeit, Pädagogische Akademien/Institute; Belgium: institutions offering only short courses; Germany: Fachhochschulen; Denmark: not universities or höjere lærenstalter; Finland: Ammattikorkeakoulu, Yrkeshögskola; France: Instituts Universitaires de Technologie, Sections des Techniciens Supérieurs; Greece: Anotati Scholi Kalon Technon, Technologika Ekpaideftika Idrimata; Ireland: Regional Technical Colleges, Colleges of Technology and Colleges of Education (when not associated with a university); Iceland: Colleges; Italy: Scuole Superiore, Istituti Superiori, Art Academies; Luxembourg: Instituts Supérieurs; The Netherlands: Hogescholen (HBO); Norway: Distrikt Høgskoler, other colleges without research function; Portugal: Instituto Superior Politécnico; Spain: apart from very few individual exceptions, no non-university institutions of higher education; Sweden: Högskola (grundutbildning); United Kingdom: Colleges of Higher Education etc.
analysis on the basis of a breakdown by type of institution (universities and non-university institutions of higher education). We identified six main dimensions playing a role in the formulation of institutional strategies and policies with regard to their European and international activities:

- substance of goals and their coherence;
- the institutional context as such;
- institutional strategies and commitment to European activities;
- prioritisation of activities and consistency with goals;
- target areas of activities within institutions;
- processes and tools in the management of European and international activities.

The second part is developed on the basis of cross-tabulations between the three key aspects in the European Policy Statements: formulating institutional goals for Europeanisation, applying for support of activities to achieve these goals and developing an institutional strategy to create the necessary relationship between goals and activities and achieve further development or meet the set targets.

The third part of the report tries to identify characteristic features according to the six dimensions identified above on the basis of a breakdown by country using the aggregate number of institutions submitting an application from each country. This enabled us to identify typical patterns for individual countries or groups of countries.

The fourth part finally presents some conclusions with regard to the character of the European Policy Statements analysed, identifying strengths and weaknesses and pointing out areas for improvement.

2 European Policies of Higher Education Institutions

2.1 The Shape of the European Policy Statements

The requirement to submit a European Policy Statement as part of the SOCRATES/ERASMUS application was not contained in the previous ERASMUS Programme. It constituted an attempt to make institutions think about their European activities in a more strategic way. The guidelines in the SOCRATES Vademecum concerning the formulation of the European Policy Statement were rather brief. Therefore, it is quite surprising to note that something of a model emerged from the ways in which a majority of the European Policy Statements were formulated.

Typically, a European Policy Statement begins with the introduction of the institution applying for SOCRATES funding. In countries where there is a culture of mission statements (e.g. The Netherlands, United Kingdom), the EPS frequently includes a more or less detailed reference to the institution's mission followed by indications concerning advantages or disadvantages of the geographical location,
size of the institution, number of departments or faculties and possibly specialisations or similar distinctive features. Often we also find indications about the number of staff and students and possibly the degree of internationalisation of the student body. In countries without a tradition of mission statements, more or less detailed information about size, location and other features is usually preceded by references to statutes or founding charter followed by some statements about self-understanding or profile.

The second part of the EPS typically provides information about previous international and specifically European activities. The degree of internationalisation is often indicated, for example, by referring to the percentage of students exchanged each year, participation in various EU Action Programmes in the field of higher education (often also participation in projects and programmes of the 4th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development), the number of ERASMUS Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) the institution had been involved in, and in many cases also specific references are made to certain internationalised study or course programmes, double degree programmes and other forms of internationalisation. This is also the part of the EPS in which many institutions point out that for them internationalisation goes beyond Europe or the EU. They tend to emphasise their cooperation with CEE countries, their bilateral agreements with other higher education institutions all over the world and possibly a focus on specific parts of the world or a certain regional orientation.

The third part of the EPS typically refers to the goals the institution wants to achieve in the framework of SOCRATES and contains more or less detailed strategic reasoning concerning the activities which are to be carried out with the help of SOCRATES funding. In this part of the EPS, institutions differ greatly from each other and the institutional culture becomes quite notable. For example, if an institution has a very decentralised structure we often find a statement about some overall institutional goals followed by a kind of mini-EPS with goals and activities included for each individual faculty. Other institutions expand on their overall institutional goals from which the activities are derived, and again others provide a short justification for the activities they want to carry out but without real differentiation between (overall or institutional) goals and activities. However, there is quite frequently an emphasis on certain activities (mostly student mobility). Those cases in which goals and activities were identical or undifferentiated were relatively difficult to deal with in the analysis of the EPS because an assessment of strategic reasoning and substance of (European) policy was required from the members of the project team.

In a number of cases the third part of the EPS also informed about the institutional preparation and decision-making process with regard to the EPS and the application for an Institutional Contract. The relevant information usually refers to the actors involved in the process, to special committees established for the proc-
ess and sometimes to the outcomes of the process. In rare cases the EPS indicated that a very elaborate process of preparation and decision-making had taken place including an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT-analysis), a review of existing partnerships and/or a review of the institutional management, support and infrastructure for European/international activities.

If not covered by any of the previous parts, a fourth part of the EPS contains statements about the so-called 'transversal issues'. Transversal issues typically refer to the commitment of the institution with regard to equal opportunities, the preparation of outgoing students for their study abroad, the support offered to incoming students and the managerial and administrative infrastructure set up (or being improved) to organise and carry out the activities and to achieve the goals stated in the EPS. This includes not only references to an international office and its staff or to special committees to monitor the SOCRATES Institutional Contract, but also to SOCRATES and/or ECTS coordinators in faculties and departments, counseling and pastoral care facilities, a 'buddy-system' set up to integrate incoming students, provisions of a language centre, agreements concerning learning contracts with outgoing students, accommodation, use of (electronic) communication facilities, provision of institutional and/or external complementary funds to carry out activities and so on.

Frequently, the EPS ends with some kind of emphatic commitment to internationalisation in general and SOCRATES (or Europeanisation) in particular and - sometimes - an expression of hope that the activities applied for might be adequately funded.

From an experimental and impressionist point of view it was highly interesting to read the European Policy Statements. Although institutions did not have very detailed guidelines - apart from some orientation provided by national SOCRATES agencies and promoters and the CRE 'aide-mémoire' - and for some of them it was their first experience of formulating a policy statement at all, a very clear and individual image or profile usually emerges for the reader concerning the type and kind of institution and its relationships to its environment.

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3 In a paper circulated by CRE to all its member institutions and called 'aide-mémoire', some guidelines had been developed for institutions wanting to apply for SOCRATES support concerning the construction of the EPS, pointing out some of the information which should be included in the EPS and offering some orientation and help as regards the formulation of a European strategy and policy.
2.2 Coherence and Substance of European and International Goals Stated in the EPS

Almost all institutions of higher education applying for SOCRATES support stated the major goals of their European and international policy. Only 3% of the EPSs did not contain any statement of goals.

According to the members of the expert team analysing the EPSs, the goals stated in the EPSs were clear and targeted in 45% of the cases (50% of universities and 41% of non-university institutions) and somewhat clear and targeted in 37% of the cases. In 12% of the EPSs, goals were judged to be vague or diffuse (9% of universities and 14% of non-university institutions).

Table 2
Continuity and Change in Goals and Activities – by Type of Institution (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Non-University</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on continuity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on continuity and change</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on change</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No rating possible</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(639)</td>
<td>(939)</td>
<td>(1578)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2.3.2: Is there a reference to continuity and change in European/intern. goals and activities?

As a rule, the institutions named a multitude of goals in their EPS. The institutions themselves often claimed explicitly in their EPS that the goals actually stated were highly interrelated. According to our experts’ analysis, the EPSs did not always indicate a clear linkage between the goals stated. About 37% of the EPSs showed a clear interrelationship of goals, about half suggest that the goals are somewhat related, and in only a few cases, no linkage at all between goals could be observed. Actually, about 12% of the EPSs comprised a clear hierarchy of goals, and in 24% of the cases (34% of university EPSs and 18% of non-university EPSs), the interrelationships between the goals were elaborately explained. The overall coherence of goals stated in the EPSs was judged by our experts to be very strong or strong (1 or 2 on a scale of 1 to 5) in 70% of the university EPSs and 51% of the EPSs of non-university institutions. An insufficient overall coherence
of goals or none at all (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) was noted in 10% of the university EPSs and 24% of the EPSs of non-university institutions.

In a majority of EPSs we find a mixture of continuity and change in European goals and activities (cf. Table 2). Only 7% of institutions put an emphasis on continuity in their European/international goals, while 21% emphasised a change of goals and activities in the framework of their SOCRATES application and related European Policy Statements.

Table 3
Major European Goals Stated – by Type of Institution (in %; multiple response possible)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>427</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 1.1: What are the major goals?
At a first glance, the goals listed in the European Policy Statements look very operational (cf. Table 3). According to the EPSs of about half or more of the institutions of higher education applying for SOCRATES support,

- 61% wish to enhance student mobility and
- 46% emphasise the aim of promoting staff mobility.

Frequently, there are also very broad statements of goals. For example, 53% of the institutions underscore initially that they aim to promote the Europeanisation or internationalisation of the institution in general.

However, hardly any institution confines its statements completely to such an operational level. In most cases desired impacts of activities are formulated as goals beyond the operational level. In trying to establish some of the functions the SOCRATES programme is generally expected to serve, we note that

- almost three quarters of the EPSs (73%) name educational impacts to be striven for, such as improvement of educational achievements, increased international knowledge, improved foreign language proficiency, broadening students' horizons etc.
- 28% of the institutions state what impacts on society or culture they expect from their European and international activities. For example, a Greek institution stated in its EPS that an improvement of education and of students' achievements through European cooperation would eventually lead to a society without prejudices.
- 53% of the institutions underscore that they aim to promote the Europeanisation or internationalisation of the institution in general or to enhance their institutional development by means of a European and international policy.
- About three quarters of the EPSs underscore the aim of academic enhancement through the institution's European (and international) policy.
- 56% strive for improved training of their graduates, 49% for a closer tie between the institution and the region, 43% for increased cooperation with industry, and 37% for an improvement of the service functions of the institutions.
- 6% of the institutions refer in this context to other functions, among them most often to research, as will be pointed out below.

Reference to "European and international" policies is necessary because, although the European Commission requested the institutions to provide "European" policy statements, about three quarters of the higher education institutions saw a need to address the relationships between their European policy and their international policy. Some do so only in passing, and some provide brief explanations, while about one in ten presents a very elaborate concept within the EPS as regards the interrelationships between the European and international emphases of the institution.
As far as the institutions explicitly refer to the possible relationships between European and international goals:

- 44% put a main emphasis on Europe in their EPS,
- 17% make clear that they intend to address only European goals in the EPS (this is clearly more frequent among non-university institutions than among universities), and
- 27% refer to links between European and international goals, but stress the former more strongly in the text of their EPS.
- A somewhat smaller number of institutions point out that European and international policies should not be treated as distinct:
- 25% make clear that they see a close link between European and international policies.
- 5% explicitly state that European and international policies are not distinct for them.
- 1% refer only to an "international" policy or point out a clear dominance of international policy.

The proportion of institutions referring to their international policies within their European Policy Statement is striking. It seems justified to assume that an even higher number of institutions than those stating it explicitly perceive a clear link between or even the identical nature of their European and international policies.

This analysis therefore suggests that the emphasis placed on the various functions (teaching, research, services to society or the region etc.) differs to a lesser extent than might have been expected between university and non-university institutions. The largest difference between the two institutional types can be noted with respect to cooperation with industry. This was stated in 36% of university EPSs and in 48% of non-university EPSs.

As the SOCRATES Programme addresses directly the teaching and learning function of the higher education institutions, one could expect that more or less all institutions would refer to this function in their European Policy Statement. In specifying their objectives in terms of teaching and learning,

- 61% of the institutions expect their European policy to help prepare students for subsequent work,
- more than half of the EPSs (60%) express the expectation that the institution's policy will contribute to an increased awareness of other cultures,
- almost half (49%) aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning in general with the help of their European policy,
- and about as many (46%) emphasise the improvement of foreign language proficiency in this context.
Thus, the range of educational goals (cf. Table 4) striven for in the framework of SOCRATES-related European policy is extraordinarily wide. Hopes are expressed for improved general education through study abroad, for curricular innovation in many specialised areas, for a contribution to personality development and to the abilities of the students in general. This does not mean, however, that European and international policies aim to embrace more or less all educational goals: although the issue of continuing education and lifelong learning is high on national and European policy agendas, only very few institutions (1 %) formulated goals in their EPS related to this issue.

Table 4
Types of Teaching- and Learning-Related Goals Stated – by Type of Institution (in % of institutions stating such goals, multiple response possible)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Non-University</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General improvement of teaching quality</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised academic education</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General academic education</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-/multi-cultural education</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for work</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of knowledge and learning abilities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language proficiency</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of other cultures</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong learning, continuing education, in-service training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other goals related to teaching/studying</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(618)</td>
<td>(905)</td>
<td>(1523)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 1.7.3: Which goals related to teaching and studying are emphasised?

Research activities have been excluded from ERASMUS support since its establishment, and this continues to hold true in the framework of SOCRATES. However, as many institutions of higher education favour a close linkage of their
teaching and research activities, one could expect a reference in the framework of the European Policy Statements, even though the EPS was formulated for the purpose of applying for a SOCRATES grant.

Actually, 64% of the universities and 28% of the non-university institutions refer to goals related to research in their EPS, altogether 42% of all institutions. It is not surprising to note, however, that these references were targeted less often, less clear and less elaborate than those referring to teaching and learning. As part of their policy, institutions must have felt the need to point out the link between teaching and research which existed for them, but research-related goals did not play any direct role in the applications.

When stating their major European goals, the majority of institutions of higher education also stated that they wanted to improve their infrastructure and both their internal and external services. Altogether, 72% of the universities and 53% of non-university institutions referred to their services and infrastructure in one way or another when they stated their goals. These statements were on average more committed, targeted and elaborate than those made with regard to research. About half of all institutions wanted to improve the support for mobile students and staff, and about one third intended to improve the infrastructure for other international activities. Though less frequently mentioned, improvement of services for cooperation with industry (17%) and for international research activities (12%) were of considerable importance for some institutions.

Apart from goals directly addressing student mobility, many institutions pointed out that they intended to undertake reforms in various areas of teaching and learning with the help of SOCRATES. About half of the institutions, both universities and other institutions of higher education, stated that they wished to enhance the European and international dimension of curricula by means of activities like curriculum development, intensive programmes etc. A few institutions (12% according to the EPSs) wanted to embark on these activities for the first time, whereas a larger proportion (37%) aimed to extend or intensify them.

Almost as many institutions accorded a high relevance to improving recognition. The introduction, extension and further enhancement of ECTS played a prominent role in achieving this goal. Only a small minority of institutions stated in their EPS that they had reached agreements with their partners using means of recognition other than ECTS. Universities underscored the further development of ECTS more strongly than non-university institutions. For example, 55% of the former as compared to 32% of the latter referred to ECTS when stating the goals they wanted to pursue in the SOCRATES-supported activities they had applied for.

As the departmental network pattern of the previous ERASMUS Inter-University Cooperation Programme (ICP) has been replaced in SOCRATES by bilateral cooperation agreements, a large majority of institutions addressed the
issue of partner choice and geographical balance of partners in the framework of their EPS.

Almost 90% of higher education institutions addressed the coverage of SOCRATES-eligible countries in their European and international policies. A majority of institutions (57%) intend to cover a broad range of countries, while 28% of the institutions opted for a selective coverage. Some of the institutions underscored that efforts were undertaken to establish links with institutions from those countries which had not yet been partners in the past. As far as differences between institutions can be observed, we note, for example,

– that large institutions with well developed European activities, i.e. universities as a rule, are likely to follow a policy of broad coverage with possibly a certain emphasis on achieving a better geographical balance.

– In contrast to this, institutions with less developed activities or a small range of disciplines, i.e. often small or recently established institutions of higher education or non-university institutions, tend to follow a policy of selective coverage with either a regional focus or the aim of broadening this coverage.

We note other policies as well. With regard to Europe, those institutions with reasonably well developed European cooperation activities tend either to mention their complete coverage of all EU Member States, or the wish to achieve a better geographical balance of countries from which partner institutions are recruited. The desire to have partner institutions in all EU Member States, or to achieve a better balance by finding new partners from countries so far under-represented in the portfolio of active partnerships, is more often the case than an explicit focus on regional trans-border cooperation. Only highly specialised institutions or institutions with a very low scale of European activities develop other criteria for their partnerships. It is usually recognised that a broad coverage of partner countries requires additional efforts and provision of opportunities for language preparation of outgoing students and staff.

Specialised institutions more often have a policy of following a regional orientation. Frequently they are looking for partners with similar specialisations and a broad or balanced country coverage does not play a role in their choice of partners for bilateral agreements. Only very rarely, in particular a few small institutions in Great Britain, does the EPS contain a statement that partners in those countries are preferred in which teaching in the students' home country language, i.e. in English, was possible because of low foreign language proficiency.

As has been pointed out before, many higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES regard their European activities as part - although an important one - of their general policy of internationalisation. Therefore the European Policy Statements were not confined in their scope to the activities supported by SOCRATES. Actually, about half of each of the EPSs
- discussed the relationships between SOCRATES-supported and other European activities,
- addressed the research dimension in their European and international policy,
- named countries and regions in their policies which are not eligible for SOCRATES support, and
- explained how their European and international goals refer to SOCRATES-supported and other activities.

Links between SOCRATES-supported and other activities were named much more by universities than by non-university higher education institutions. This in part reflects the emphasis many universities put on the relationship between teaching and research. One also has to bear in mind that universities stated a link more frequently than non-university institutions between their activities in the framework of SOCRATES and TEMPUS.

A number of European Policy Statements included information not only about international activities beyond SOCRATES but also about institutions' international cooperation partners located in countries outside the EU. In this context, partnerships with institutions in Central and Eastern European countries are named quite often. These have frequently been partners in TEMPUS projects and as the majority of the TEMPUS partner countries will soon become eligible for participation in SOCRATES quite a number of EPSs referred to the goal of including partners from these countries in SOCRATES activities or of preparing them for SOCRATES participation.

Altogether, half of the institutions (50%) stated in their EPS that they wanted to include countries not eligible for SOCRATES into their European and international activities. In this context, almost three quarters referred to Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. More than 60% of those institutions planning to include partner institutions from non-EU countries also refer to other industrialised countries, for example the U.S. and sometimes Canada and Switzerland. Partnership agreements with institutions from these latter countries often include the exchange of staff and students as well as research cooperation. There are a few rare cases in which ECTS agreements are made with partner institutions outside Europe. However, it should also be mentioned that references to cooperation with higher education institutions in developing countries (28% of institutions made a statement to this effect) as part of international activities tend to be a euphemism for franchising operations in some cases, thus serving as a source of acquisition of income rather than cooperation among equal partners.

The coverage of non-EU countries to be included in SOCRATES activities tended to be more selective than the coverage of SOCRATES-eligible countries. Only 13% of institutions stated a broad coverage, while 33% opted for a selective coverage. Central and Eastern European countries (37%) and other industrialised
countries (30%) were clearly preferred over developing countries or Cyprus and Malta.

2.4 The Institutional Context and its Relationship to European/International Goals

Although the practice of formulating explicit and elaborate "mission statements" is not widespread in the SOCRATES-eligible countries, many institutions emphasise institutional goals, functions, tasks or profiles in one way or another which might be relevant for European policies. They take into consideration their previous activities, their specific institutional characteristics, general goals they pursue etc. It is worth noting that more than three quarters of the institutions of higher education applying for SOCRATES support explained more or less elaborately in their EPS why they actually chose their European and international policy.

According to the experts undertaking this study, more than two thirds of the institutions of higher education (68%) referred to their general goals and mission in explaining their European policies. In a number of cases, sections of "mission statements" or other similar documents were quoted in the EPS in order to demonstrate that internationalisation is an integral part of the institution's policy. Of these institutions more than 40% emphasised their institutional goals quite strongly in the context of their EPS (1 and 2 on a scale of 1 to 5) and a further 37% put a medium emphasis on their institutional goals or mission. The same holds true for the clarity of the statements themselves and their substance: 55% of those institutions stating an institutional mission or goals in their EPS were rated to be clear in their statement and its substance, while in 40% of these cases the statement and in 36% of them the substance were rated to be vague.

Institutions applying for SOCRATES support named a rather broad range of elements of their institutional setting which play a role in their European policy (cf. Table 5). 80% of the institutions (86% of the universities; 76% of the non-university institutions of higher education) stated in their EPS that partnerships already existing with institutions abroad were crucial for their European policy. This legacy of past European activities was by far more often stated as a major foundation of the European policy than any other element.

As regards other elements, we note striking differences between universities and other institutions of higher education as well:

- Universities often state that the existing infrastructure and support services (41%), their own institutional reputation (37%), their international student population (27%), their European and international course provisions (25%), and their foreign language provisions (22%) were at the heart of their European policies.
− In contrast, other institutions indicated that their specialisations in various fields of study (30%) were instrumental to their European policy. In addition, they often pointed out that their European policy should help to redress the lack or the limitations of European activities in the past (25%).

Table 5
Role Played by Institutional Setting in European Policy – by Type of Institution (in %; multiple response possible)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of institutional setting</th>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Non-University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing partnerships</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own reputation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own specialisation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International student population</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International staff</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalised curricula</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer of innovative European/international specialisations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer of great diversity of foreign languages</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and support services</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of/marginal European activities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised higher education institution</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual innovative department/faculty</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on inter-/multi-disciplinary approach</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merger of two or more institutions having taken place</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other elements</td>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(639)</td>
<td>(939)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 1.6.3: What elements of the institutional setting/environment play a role in the European policy?

One Irish institution, for example, emphasised in its EPS that the development of European links changes the institutional setting and helps to redress a feeling of
isolation by nurturing a new sense of belonging and of being part of the countries of the EU. A Greek institution introduced changes with regard to research topics and the promotion of policy issues in subjects according to international standards. This points to some efforts, especially by small and peripheral institutions, to make their institutional setting more attractive for students from partner institutions abroad. In some countries, in particular Norway, a number of institutions were engaged in major merger operations at the time the SOCRATES applications were submitted. This often led to difficulties stated in the EPS as regards the formulation of an overall policy or goal statement for the newly emerging institution as a whole. Problems tended to become even more difficult if the merger resulted in a multi-campus institution. For example, a Norwegian regional college in the process of integrating three previously independent institutions with different disciplinary profiles and differences in the extent of European activities stressed in its EPS that the envisaged degree of institutional integration had not yet sufficiently advanced for an overall European Policy Statement. The institution had opted instead to submit an EPS consisting of a statement from each of the three institutions merging into one.

Nevertheless, internationalisation and Europeanisation seem to become increasingly embedded into the overall goals of the institutions of higher education. In those cases in which explicit institutional missions are formulated, they were often revised in order to underscore the European and international dimensions. Even where mission statements are not customary, explicit reference was sometimes made to the fact that the fostering of European and international cooperation was an important issue in national higher education laws (e.g. in Austria and Germany) and was regarded as an equally important issue in institutional policy.

According to the experts examining the EPSs, the European and international dimension is generally central to the mission or goals of higher education institutions in more than a quarter of the cases for which respective information was presented, and played some role in about a third of the cases. On average, universities placed a greater emphasis on Europeanisation and internationalisation in their institutional mission or goal statements than non-university institutions of higher education.

The experts' ratings regarding the actual visibility of the relationship between institutional goals and European/international goals conform to these institutional statements to a rather high degree.

The emphasis on internationalisation/Europeanisation in institutional policies leads to the question of whether this affects the institution's self-understanding. In fact, almost three quarters (71%) of all institutions applying for SOCRATES stated in their EPS that European/international activities played a role for their institutional profile. In many of these cases it is the institution's policy to enhance its own profile through participation in SOCRATES. Frequently, the institutions
see themselves as having already developed an international profile to a certain degree which they want to strengthen and expand. Institutions having a less well developed portfolio of international and/or European activities aim to improve and complement their existing profile by developing their European or international activities. In these cases a certain degree of actual change in profile - rather than enhancement of an existing profile - is aimed at.

In general, we can observe that European/international activities play an important role for the change or enhancement of the institutional profile in 54% of the cases in which a statement to this effect was made. They play a medium role in 35% of the cases and a small role in 8%.

Apart from an enhancement or change of the general institutional profile, other frequently mentioned areas for which European/international activities play a role are policy decisions (41%) and resource allocations (30%) (cf. Chart 1).

**Chart 1**

Proportion of Institutions Stating Changes in Their Institutional Profile or Elements of it Through European/International Activities (in %; multiple response possible)

![Chart showing the proportion of institutions stating changes in their institutional profile or elements of it through European/International Activities. The chart includes categories such as change in institutional profile as a whole, change in policy decisions, change in resource allocations, and more, with corresponding percentages.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Institutional Profile</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in institutional profile as a whole</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in policy decisions</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in resource allocations</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in decisions related to access</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in personnel decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in profile of specific subject areas</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in management and admin. of intern. cooperation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in other areas of strategic decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 6.3.3: To what extent are European/international activities seen as an instrument to change the profile of the institution?
2.5 Institutional Strategies and Commitment to European Goals

A substantial proportion of the institutions of higher education addressed a rather broad frame of strategic reasoning in their EPS: the general educational and institutional goals which were pursued with the help of European and international policies, the considerations regarding the opportunities and constraints which played a role in opting for the European and international policy, the losses which might be expected as a consequence of the options chosen ("opportunity costs") etc. Though information on these issues was less frequent than on those addressed above, the findings should be taken into consideration.

Three quarters of the EPSs (82 % universities; 69 % non-university institutions) indicate general reasons to pursue the goals stated in the EPS. The most frequently stated reasons for universities are:
- the necessity to create an international dimension in education (36 %);
- to make students aware of international issues and to provide them with international competences which are seen as a key qualification (34 %);
- to ensure the quality of the student experience (21 %);
- to prepare students for future careers in Europe (19 %).

Non-university institutions clearly put a higher emphasis on preparing their students for European/international careers than universities (cf. Chart 2).

More than half of the universities (54 %) and more than one third of the non-university institutions (37 %) made a statement about the opportunities of and constraints for European/international activities in their EPS. In the majority of cases opportunities were emphasised more frequently than constraints. Three issues clearly stand out as influencing the configuration of opportunities and constraints: organisational and/or managerial conditions, the academic environment including attitudes of staff and students, and financial resources. In this context the issue of financial resources was more often identified as a constraint and the issue of organisational and managerial conditions was more often stated among the opportunities.

European and international activities are so high on the agenda these days that institutions of higher education are hardly aware anymore, that for any activity to which they commit themselves, e.g. Europeanisation and internationalisation, they also face possible disadvantages, losses of alternative opportunities etc. Actually, only 12 % of the institutions of higher education explicitly stated such losses or opportunity costs in their EPS, and among these only one quarter seemed to consider these opportunity costs as significant. It is interesting to note in this context that two thirds of the institutions named only the financial and resource-related burden of European or international activities as such, but few other losses or forgone opportunities.
Chart 2
Reasons to Pursue European/international Goals – by Type of Institution
(in %; multiple response possible)

Question 5.1.3: List reasons given to pursue the goals.
37% of the institutions referred to conditions in their EPS regarded as necessary for progress and further development of European/international activities. Those conditions for progress stated most frequently were a change in the academic environment, including attitudes of staff and students, and improvements of organisational and managerial conditions and resources. However, the EPS most frequently conveyed the impression that a general increase in the scope and level of activities was considered necessary for progress and further development of European/international activities.

The overall strategic thinking in policy and management of European activities was judged by our experts to be strong (1 or 2 on a scale from 1 to 5) in 44% of the EPSs of all higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES support (56% of the university EPSs and 35% of the EPSs of non-university institutions). Low scores (4 or 5 on a scale from 1 to 5) for overall strategic thinking were given to 28% of institutional EPSs (16% of the university EPSs and 35% of the EPSs of non-university institutions).

These results should not lead to the assessment that non-university institutions of higher education are less strategic in their thinking and less coherent in their European policy. Rather, typical institutional differences have to be taken into account and contrasted to ambivalences inherent in the SOCRATES Programme. The following two issues seem to play a role:

(1) Non-university sector institutions tend to be less comprehensive in their degree courses and study programmes than universities, or are specialised in one or two subjects. This may easily create a profile and portfolio in which the European activities of non-university institutions seem to be more targeted than is the case for universities. In contrast to this, SOCRATES activities of universities tend to be part of a much larger portfolio of international activities which includes a greater involvement, for example, in projects of the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development or a broader range of cooperation agreements with partner institutions outside the European Union.

(2) Apart from the mass mobility character of the former ERASMUS programme, which continues to be an important element in SOCRATES as well, SOCRATES seems to have created a perception among applying institutions of higher education that an increase and extension of activities would be rewarded. For example, many institutions devised comprehensive strategies to increase the number of students and staff participating in European activities, to extend the number of faculties and departments being involved and to cover a broader range of eligible SOCRATES activities. This enthusiasm frequently neglected the issue of establishing priorities in goals, activities and their strategic management and applicants were later disappointed by the amount of funding awarded.

According to their EPSs, 57% of all institutions applying for SOCRATES support have a rather centralised structure of decision-making, i.e. scoring 1 or 2 on a
scale of 1 (highly centralised) to 5 (highly decentralised). As regards centralisation, differences between types of institutions are not very large. The proportion of institutions indicating a rather decentralised structure of decision-making in their EPS is clearly lower among universities (17% scoring 4 or 5 on a scale of 5) than it is among non-university institutions of higher education (29%).

More than three quarters of the institutions expressed their commitment to European and international goals and activities in the EPS, often in the closing paragraph. Among them more than half expressed a strong commitment, while less than a tenth of them expressed at most a weak commitment. *The statements about institutional commitment were often issued in normative and contextual forms (40% and 41% respectively) and less frequently (25%) in terms of resources provided. For example, an Irish higher education institution stated: "The Institute appreciates the continuing activities of the European Community in fostering European harmony and relationships and wishes to be associated with all such developments in the interest of its members and public management in the country."

3 European Goals and Activities

3.1 Activities, Priorities and Consistency with Goals

The majority of European Policy Statements either formulated operational goals, i.e. to increase or expand certain SOCRATES-eligible activities, or named such activities as *instruments to achieve general European goals*. About three quarters of the EPSs explained how the goals stated relate to certain activities envisaged. In most of these cases, some *moderate* prioritisation can be observed. Only 9% of the institutions stated that the goals covered more or less equally all the activities to be undertaken, and 10% made explicit that their goals implied a high degree of prioritisation among the activities envisaged.

Quite a few institutions emphasised in their EPS that they *had prioritised their goals* with regard to the processes and impacts of student mobility in general, for example:

- to improve the quality of the student experience and provide an international study environment (43% of EPSs);
- to reduce obstacles for mobility and balance mobility flows (12% of EPSs);
- to increase the quantity while maintaining the quality of international activities (10% of EPSs).

We can note that the goals established in university EPSs were more often targeted to a broad range of SOCRATES activities showing only little selection and prioritisation. Non-university institutions of higher education tended to prioritise their
activities more often to some or even to a high degree. This difference can best be explained by the fact that the latter institutions are more often mono-disciplinary and smaller in size than the former institutions so that a higher degree of selectivity in the goals and activities of non-university institutions seems natural.

It can be noted that the traditional ERASMUS activities, in particular the organisation of student mobility and related recognition issues (ECTS), were emphasised in the institutions' EPSs as being important elements underscoring their European policies. Many institutions stated in their EPS that they wanted to provide mobility opportunities to as many students as possible because of the positive effects such opportunities had on the enrichment of the educational experience itself and for the preparation of students' future careers in Europe.

The increase in the number of outgoing and incoming students and staff so frequently envisaged in the EPSs of institutions applying for SOCRATES also serves another goal, namely to provide a European or international experience for those students who do not go abroad. From two thirds to three quarters of all SOCRATES applications included such an increase in student and staff mobility, both outgoing and incoming. The continued importance of mobility opportunities for not only students but for staff as well was confirmed by the participants in the three workshops during the third stage of the project.

The application of ECTS has clearly gained in importance. 62% of all institutions applying for SOCRATES envisaged implementing or expanding the scheme. In contrast to those activities well known from the previous ERASMUS programme, newly-eligible SOCRATES-activities or activities now being emphasised more strongly in the SOCRATES philosophy have been less frequently taken into consideration for an increase (cf. Chart 3). For example, an increase in continuing education, in-service training and European teaching fellowships of longer duration - all relatively high on the European policy agenda - are mentioned in only 1% of the EPSs. An exception to this trend is constituted by a high increase in applications for joint curriculum development, an activity which had been eligible for support in the previous ERASMUS programme but was redesigned and strongly promoted in SOCRATES.
Chart 3
Increase of Policy-Relevant SOCRATES Activities Envisaged – by Type of Institution (in %, multiple response possible)

Question 10.1.3b: For which SOCRATES programme activities serving to underscore or exemplify the European policy/strategy is an increase envisaged?
As regards the increase of other SOCRATES activities eligible for support, we note that 22% of the higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES plan to increase the number of new course programmes. 11% of the institutions want to increase courses taught in a foreign language, and around one in ten envisage a higher proportion of foreign students and staff as part of their internationalisation and Europeanisation policy.

As has been pointed out before, the more strategic approach of SOCRATES to the institutional management of European activities did not always lead to the proper distinction between overall goals and activities which one might have expected. In a number of cases the EPSs formulated goals in a rather operational way, i.e. SOCRATES-eligible activities were named as goals. However, two thirds of the EPSs (65%) provided information about the consistency between goals, managerial tools and activities. In 36% of these cases the consistency was rated to be strong by our experts, and in 47% it was rated to be medium. Weak consistency or none at all was noted in 10% of university EPSs and 20% of EPSs of non-university institutions returned.

In the EPSs of about two thirds of the institutions applying for SOCRATES support, SOCRATES activities in general play a strong role in underscoring or exemplifying the institution's European policy and strategy. SOCRATES activities still play a medium role for the institution's European policy in one third of the EPSs (cf. Chart 4).

The organisation of student and staff mobility or exchanges was frequently characterised as having an important multiplier effect, in particular for those students who - for whatever reasons - cannot go abroad themselves. The issue of providing a European experience for the 90% of non-mobile students seems to have gained in importance. In this context, cooperation of partner institutions in the field of open and distance learning (ODL), including flexible delivery, has become another policy-relevant means to provide a European dimension in the education of non-mobile students. Its strong policy relevance was stated in 13% of the university EPSs and 7% of the EPSs of non-university institutions.
Chart 4
Policy Relevance of SOCRATES Activities – by Type of Institution
(in %, multiple response possible)

Question 10.1.3a: Which SOCRATES programme activities serve to underscore or exemplify the European policy/strategy?
Cooperative activities with industry as well as continuing education and in-service training have a rather low policy relevance which was only stated in 9% (cooperation with industry) and 1% (continuing education and in-service training) of the EPSs respectively.

The introduction of new course programmes was mentioned in 10% of the EPSs as having a policy relevance, courses taught in a foreign language in 9%, and attracting or recruiting more foreign staff and students in 5% each of the EPSs. These proportions correspond to an equal proportion of EPSs in which an increase of the respective activities is envisaged. As a rule, the majority of institutions clearly preferred to stay with the typical ERASMUS activities of student and staff mobility. However, three activities seem to gained in emphasis and relevance: course programmes with a European dimension, implementation or extension of ECTS and also, to a lesser degree, open and distance learning.

Most references to common goals and activities pursued in the framework of SOCRATES and in other contexts were brief. Only in rare cases does the EPS contain an explicit statement that the creation of synergy between programmes and activities is intended and that similar activities in different programmes are linked administratively and strategically.

### 3.2 Target Areas for Activities

The European Policy Statements were viewed by many institutions of higher education as a means of describing and explaining the profile of their activities. This was undertaken notably in reference to areas of activities, to fields of study, the types of students and - though less frequently - to the choice of partner institutions.

We examined the European Policy Statements to ascertain whether there was a selective emphasis on types of students or whether criteria were stated for the selection of students to be sent abroad. Some institutions did not refer at all in their EPS to the composition of students. Most institutions stated in their EPS that one of their goals was to offer an opportunity for study abroad to as many students as possible. This notwithstanding, many institutions indicated some criteria or preferences for certain types of students to be sent abroad. Almost half of these institutions named those criteria which were also mentioned in past surveys on the selection of ERASMUS students, i.e. high academic proficiency, good foreign language proficiency and a strong motivation to study abroad. About 10% of the institutions emphasising priorities among students expressed the need to ensure a proper representation of women and of disabled students. References to mature students, graduate students, socially disadvantaged students, etc. remained an exception.
Typically, the target disciplines or fields to which the goals and activities are addressed are broad. For example, a frequently stated goal is to include all departments in SOCRATES activities and to encourage in particular those departments to participate which have not yet been involved in international activities. New departmental participation is often introduced into existing successful partnerships with institutions abroad.

About half of the institutions name certain fields or groups of fields to be addressed in their European policies, notably engineering (16%) and social sciences (14%). In most of these cases, however, institutions listed them as fields to be added or, as in the case of small institutions, as the major fields provided at the institution. The actual number of institutions giving priority to select fields is relatively small. In most institutions the fields in which activities are planned are widely scattered.

About half of the institutions described the criteria underlying the choice of partner institutions in SOCRATES-eligible countries in their EPS. In this context quality issues were more strongly expressed among universities than among non-university institutions.

The most frequently stated criteria (among those institutions stating criteria at all) are past cooperation (71%), a match in terms of fields or specialisations (41%; 30% of universities, 48% of non-university institutions) and intended expansion of partnerships (38%).

The criterion 'past cooperation' typically refers to successful partnerships in the framework of ERASMUS ICPs. In preparing their SOCRATES application, some institutions made a special effort to review their existing partnerships and to select the most successful ones in order to expand their cooperative activities with these partners. The criterion 'match in terms of fields or specialisations' is clearly more often stated in the EPSs of non-university institutions offering only a limited range of study programmes and subject areas or of specialised higher education institutions, for example, art academies, conservatories or agricultural colleges. Finally, the criterion 'intended expansion of partnerships' is clearly linked to the goal of achieving a better geographical balance of countries or of broadening the geographical range from which partner institutions are recruited.

Only a minority of the EPSs (18%) included a statement about criteria for the choice of partner institutions from non-EU countries. It is safe to assume that the dominating criterion here is 'past cooperation' with partner institutions known from cooperation in the framework of other EU programmes (e.g. TEMPUS) or through existing bilateral agreements.
3.3 Processes and Tools in the Management of Activities

With the Institutional Contract SOCRATES explicitly sought to initiate a higher degree of centralisation of management and administration of European activities in participating institutions. In analysing available information about the distribution of responsibilities we note, in contrast to the typical organisation of ERASMUS activities within ICPs, that many institutions established an *additional layer of bodies or key actors responsible for European policy and activities* in SOCRATES. Typically, these bodies are called "SOCRATES Committee" or "SOCRATES Task Force" and have been given the remit to coordinate decisions on policy, possible prioritisation of activities and to establish a communicative link between the central level, the international office and the departments or faculties. In some cases these committees or task forces also were given the responsibility to monitor the Institutional Contract and assure the quality of international activities. Frequently institutions also stated that *they had increased the number of staff in their international offices*. In some cases a department of the central administration was given the additional responsibility of organising a strategic approach and advising the head of the institution in SOCRATES-relevant decisions.

More than half of the EPSs (54 %) provided such information on management processes. Of these more than half (53 %) stated that responsibilities for European/international activities were more centralised, and 29 % stated that responsibilities were more decentralised. Seven percent stated that there was a division of responsibilities between decision-making on the one hand and coordination of activities on the other.

71 % of the EPSs (83 % of university EPSs and 62 % of EPSs from non-university institutions) contained a reference to units in charge of regular services for European activities. 4 % of the institutions had no special unit but its establishment was envisaged in the near future, i.e. with the actual beginning of SOCRATES activities. 7 % of the institutions planned an extension of the existing unit, and 7 % planned a change in structure or function of the existing unit.

Somewhat less than half of the institutions mentioned the existence of one central unit in their EPS. 8 % referred to two or more central units (for example, split campus institutions) and 8 % to units at the departmental level. 15 % of the institutions stated in their EPS that they did not have a special unit in charge of regular services for European activities. In these latter cases there was frequently a member of staff or a high-level administrator designated to coordinate the European activities. Some of the smaller institutions also mentioned in their EPS that they shared a unit with other (small) higher education institutions (or one bigger institution) in the region.
20% of all institutions (28% of universities, 15% of non-university institutions) made a reference in their EPS to the process of consultation and decision-making which had been undertaken to formulate the EPS and prepare the SOCRATES application. 60% of the institutions referring to such a process stated that a broad range of actors was included and 28% (37% of universities and 17% of non-university institutions) of these institutions indicated a rather elaborate process in their EPS. This might be a review of partnerships and existing administrative and support structures or even - as stated in some cases - an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of their international activities in order to arrive at a more targeted policy and a better coherence of activities. More than 30% of institutions making a reference to consultation and decision-making processes in preparation of their EPS followed a bottom-up approach. Apart from the central level (75%), faculty and/or departmental level were involved in 57% of these cases and special decision-making committees in 40% of them, and active individuals (students and/or staff) in almost one third of the cases.

For many institutions, the change in SOCRATES to an Institutional Contract and the requirement to include a statement regarding the organisation of student and staff mobility (i.e. preparation of outgoing students, support for incoming staff and students) in their application gave cause to include a reference to what are often called 'transversal issues' in their EPS or the relevant part of the application. These issues frequently include a commitment by the institution to improve the infrastructure and support for the organisation of mobility and exchanges. Support of incoming students in finding accommodation or guaranteed accommodation of incoming students in halls of residence is highly emphasised by 25% of the institutions (more often by universities (34%) than by non-university institutions (18%)), and is given medium importance by a further 37% of the institutions. Provision of guidance and counselling for incoming and outgoing students is given high importance by 23% of institutions and medium importance by 30% of institutions. High (28%) or medium (36%) importance is also accorded to the provision of relevant information about the host institution (to incoming students) or about mobility opportunities in general and potential host institutions (for outgoing students). The provision of language training for outgoing students and staff is given high importance by 41% of universities and 25% of non-university institutions, and medium importance by 21% of universities and 21% of non-university institutions alike. About one quarter of institutions also give high or medium importance in their EPS to the provision of language training for incoming students.

The existence of a system of review and crisis management regarding European/international activities was referred to in 16% of the EPSs (23% of university EPSs; 12% of EPSs by non-university institutions). Review and crisis management may take different forms. These could either be committees meeting regularly to discuss problems, a 'buddy system' to ease integration of incoming
students or an infrastructure of counselling services and pastoral care, learning agreements or contracts with outgoing students, or visits by staff from the home institutions to students studying abroad.

Arrangements for quality assessment and monitoring of activities were frequently mentioned in the European Policy Statements. 48% of the university EPSs and 33% of the EPSs by non-university institutions referred to arrangements for assessment, evaluation and monitoring of their European/international activities. The character of these arrangements tended to be stronger, applying to a broader range of activities and being given a higher priority in universities than in non-university institutions. Often other international activities are included in these arrangements. Target areas of these arrangements for assessment and evaluation were most often teaching and studying (67% of institutions stating the existence of such arrangements), overall institutional quality (52%), the range of course programmes (46%) and the international profile of the institution (37%).

Almost two thirds of the EPSs referred to cooperative activities within the framework of their SOCRATES activities, including actors, bodies or institutions in their local community or region. Most of the institutions stating the existence of such cooperation (55%) cooperate with local, regional or state agencies in their home country, and about half with enterprises in their home country. 47% of them cooperate with other higher education institutions in their home country. This cooperation frequently serves several purposes:

- raising complementary funds,
- providing work placements for incoming students (in-school placements for trainee teachers)
- knowledge and technology transfer,
- generating synergy effects for the economy of the region,
- pooling and sharing resources and information (including language centres, student accommodation or shared international offices).

4. Country Differences in Institutions' European Policies

Since there are considerably differences in the institutional profiles and higher education cultures of the 18 countries eligible for participation in SOCRATES, direct comparison will always be problematic and frequently open to legitimate criticism. However, in order to provide some information about the European policy of higher education institutions in the various countries participating in SOCRATES, we will present the results of the EPS analyses on a country basis, using the key variables discussed in the previous chapters of this report. All figures and percentages are related to the totals and averages across all institutional EPSs included in this analysis. In the framework of the following section, two countries
will be neglected in order to maintain anonymity for individual institutions: Liechtenstein from which only one institution applied for SOCRATES participation and Luxembourg from which only three institutions applied.

4.1 Character of Goals and Activities

It is certainly surprising to note that the European Policy Statements of institutions from countries in which mission (and vision) statements are customary are not consistently in the range of those EPSs with a high degree of clarity and coherence in their goal statement. *A certain amount of prioritisation of goals and activities as well as a mixture of continuity and change envisaged in European and international goals seems to support clarity and coherence of goals.*

The European Policy Statements of half or more institutions in Austria, Denmark, Great Britain, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as almost half of the EPSs submitted by Belgian and German institutions were rated to have a medium degree of clarity in their goal statement. A clear and targeted statement of goals was found in 45% of all EPSs submitted as part of the institutions' SOCRATES application. The proportions of Italian (94%), Greek (85%), French (57%) and Irish (55%) institutions which had a clear and targeted statement of goals were clearly above this average. A vague or diffuse statement of goals was identified in the EPSs of an above average proportion of Portuguese (25%), Spanish (24%) and Belgian (19%) institutions (average in this category: 12%). For one fifth of the Dutch EPSs no rating was possible.

*Clarity and coherence of goals expressed in the EPSs are strongly linked.* A strong coherence of goals was visible in a relatively large proportion of German, British, Greek, Irish and Italian EPSs, while an above average number of Belgian and Dutch EPSs showed a rather weak coherence. In the case of French and Portuguese EPSs a dichotomy was found: an above average number with a strong coherence of goals and an above average number with a weak coherence of goals.

An above average proportion of Norwegian (28%), Irish (23%) and Austrian (21%) EPSs favoured a high degree of prioritisation of their European goals and activities (average of high prioritisation among all institutions: 10%). Danish (23%) and Greek (52%) institutions preferred to target their goals to all SOCRATES activities more often than the average (9%). More than one third (34%) of all institutions applying for SOCRATES had prioritised their goals and activities to some extent and 22% had targeted their goals to a broad range of SOCRATES activities.

*A majority of institutions (53%) applying for SOCRATES emphasised a mixture of continuity and change in their statement of European and international goals.*
Only few institutions (7 %) put an emphasis on continuity and about one fifth (21 %) on change. Compared to these averages, Portugal clearly stands out in the proportion of institutions emphasising continuity in their goals (32 %) and equally in the proportion of institutions opting for change (46 %). An emphasis on change was also found in an above average number of Spanish (75 %), Icelandic (38 %) and Norwegian (40 %) EPSs.

4.2 Specific European and International Goals

Looking at some of the specific European and international goals formulated in the EPSs of higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES support, four frequently stated goals are particularly suitable in providing information about the ways in which institutions plan their further Europeanisation/internationalisation in the context of their European Policy Statement:

- internationalisation/Europeanisation of curricula,
- improvement of recognition of study abroad,
- coverage of EU countries through partnership agreements and
- coverage of non-EU countries through partnership agreements and possible inclusion in SOCRATES activities.

A consistently above average number of institutions from Germany and Austria expressed these goals in their EPSs and provided information about their preferences as regards coverage of countries.

On average, the internationalisation/Europeanisation of curricula was emphasised in the EPSs of about half (48 %) of the institutions applying for SOCRATES and the issue of improving recognition in about one third (31 %) of the EPSs. A majority of institutions (57 %) opted for a broad coverage of EU Member States in the framework of their partnership agreements, while 28 % were selective in their choice. Recruitment of partner institutions from non-EU Member States was broad in 13 % of institutions applying for SOCRATES and selective in 33 %. Coverage of non-EU countries was not mentioned in more than half of the EPSs (54 %).

A well above average proportion of Swedish (72 %) and Austrian institutions (70 %) specifically emphasised the goal of internationalising and/or Europeanising their curricula. Also more than half of German (66 %), Finnish (64 %), British (60 %), Italian (59 %) and Danish (55 %) institutions clearly emphasised this goal. The proportion of Spanish and Dutch institutions emphasising the goal of internationalising or Europeanising their curricula corresponds approximately to the average proportion of institutions emphasising this goal, while a below average proportion of Belgian (17 %), French (37 %), Greek (6 %), Irish (29 %), Icelandic (38 %), Norwegian (19 %) and Portuguese (27 %) institutions specifically underscored this goal in their EPSs.
Similarly, the goal of improving recognition was specifically emphasised in 68% of Austrian EPSs. An above average number of institutions in Iceland (63%), Germany (60%), the United Kingdom (56%) and Norway (53%) also stressed this goal in their EPSs, as opposed to a below average proportion of institutions from the Netherlands (1%), Belgium (3%), Greece (9%) and Denmark (10%). A possible explanation for these findings is that in those countries where institutions are putting a specific emphasis on recognition in their EPS the issue is still somewhat problematic, while in the others recognition does not present a problem.

A high proportion of Spanish (79%), Belgian (79%) and German (67%) institutions specifically emphasised the goal of ensuring SOCRATES partner institutions from a broad range of EU member states. However, an above average preference for a more selected range of partners was made by Icelandic (75%), Portuguese (52%), Norwegian (40%) and Austrian (38%) institutions. In addition, a number of Portuguese institutions also specified geographic proximity as an important criterion for their choice of partner countries. It must also be pointed out that a rather high proportion of institutions from Greece (91%), Denmark (55%) and Italy (36%) did not make any statement at all in their EPS about their choice of partner countries and possible selection criteria.

Those institutions which specifically emphasised in their EPS that they sought some kind of complementarity or synergy between their SOCRATES activities and other international cooperation activities frequently also stated that they had partners from a range of non-EU countries. For example, an above average number of German (34%) and Austrian (28%) institutions plan to include partners from a broad range of such countries in their European/international activities. This does not only refer to Central and Eastern European countries to which there is a relatively close geographical proximity, but to other industrialised countries as well. Dutch, Norwegian and Swedish institutions frequently emphasised the inclusion of partners from Central and Eastern Europe. In addition, an above average number of Dutch institutions mentioned plans in their EPS to include partners from Cyprus and Malta and from developing countries.

In a number of SOCRATES-eligible countries (e.g. Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Iceland and Italy) a majority of institutions did not provide any information about the inclusion of partners from non-EU countries in their international activities.
4.3 Institutional Profile and Goals

The emphasis in the EPSs on institutional profile and goals varies to a considerable extent, and is not visibly related to the culture of mission statements, as the examples of EPSs from Greek and Italian institutions show. On average, 28% of all institutions applying for SOCRATES support put a strong emphasis on their institutional profile and goals, among these an above average proportion of Greek (64%), Irish (55%), Italian (44%) and Norwegian (43%) institutions. Greek (58%) and Italian (44%) institutions also stated considerably more often than institutions from other countries (average: 25%) that European/international goals were central to their institutional goals. However, it is noteworthy that for more than one third of all EPSs (34%) a rating as regards the emphasis on institutional profile or goals was not possible. This was the case in particular for a high proportion of Danish (58%), Italian (56%) and Spanish (49%) EPSs (cf. Table 6).

European Policy Statements expressing that institutional mission or goals and profile were somewhat related to the respective institution's European/international goals came most often from Irish (68%), Icelandic (63%), Austrian (62%), German (54%) and British (50%) institutions. Greek (58%) and Italian (44%) institutions stated in above average numbers that their European goals were central to their institutional goals, while a relatively high proportion of Icelandic (25%) and Norwegian (11%) institutions regarded their European goals as only marginally related to their mission or institutional goals. A rating on the coherence between institutional and European goals was not possible for more than a third of the EPSs altogether, among them more than half of Belgian, Danish, Spanish, French, Italian and Dutch institutions (cf. Table 7).

More than two thirds of all institutions applying for SOCRATES support stated in their EPSs that European/international activities are regarded to some extent as an instrument to change or enhance their institutional profile. One third of all EPSs (31%) did not include a statement to this effect, among them a high proportion of Portuguese (54%), Spanish (51%), Greek (45%), German (44%) and Belgian (41%) EPSs. A change or enhancement of the institutional profile through European/international activities is seen to a large extent by a majority of institutions from Italy (82%), Iceland (63%), the United Kingdom and Ireland (58% each), Norway (57%) and Greece (55%) and to a medium extent by an above average proportion of institutions from the Netherlands (46%), the United Kingdom and Ireland (39% each), Austria (36%) and Sweden (34%).
Table 6
Emphasis on Institutional Mission/Profile in the EPS – by Country (in %)

<table>
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<th>Country</th>
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Total: 11, 17, 26, 11, 0, 34 (n = 1,578)

Question 2.1.c: Is there a profil emphasis on institutional mission in the EPS?
Table 7
Coherence Between European Goals and Institutional Goals/Mission – by Country (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Marginally related to mission</th>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total          | 25                 | 34                         | 4                            | 37             |
(n = 1,578)

Question 2.2: Is there a coherence between European goals and institutional goals/mission?

4.4 Strategy

A majority or at least a clearly above average proportion of higher education institutions showing a highly elaborated strategic reasoning in their EPSs can only be found in three countries: Norway, Ireland and the United Kingdom. In six
other SOCRATES-eligible countries, an above average proportion of institutions formulated EPSs that were selective and geared to specific issues in their strategic reasoning: Austria, Germany, Spain, Finland, Iceland and Portugal. For a large majority (often two thirds or more) of EPSs from other countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands), experts could not discern any strategic reasoning or stated that there was no rating possible on this issue.

However, these ratings are not overly reflected in the assessment of overall strategic thinking. Although many EPSs did not include a detailed and elaborate strategic reasoning, they still showed a considerable degree of overall strategic thinking. On average, a high degree of strategic thinking was visible in 44% of all EPSs, a medium to low degree in 45% and none in 11%, the latter figure including those EPSs for which a rating on this issue was not possible. An above average proportion of institutions from Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy and Sweden showed a high degree of overall strategic thinking in their EPSs. Institutions from Austria, Denmark, Spain, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal tended to be in the middle range as regards the degree of overall strategic thinking. Belgium stands out as a country with more than half of the institutional EPSs showing no overall strategic thinking or making a rating on this issue not possible (cf. Table 8).

In recent debates, more centralised structures of institutional decision-making have been deemed to create favourable conditions for improved strategic thinking and planning in higher education institutions. An average of 57% of all EPSs showed rather centralised structures of institutional decision-making, while slightly less than one third (32%) tended to be in the middle range between centralisation and decentralisation. Only 9% of all EPSs came from institutions with a clearly decentralised structure (no rating possible for one percent). Interestingly, the EPSs of Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish higher education institutions correspond to these overall averages most closely. A rather decentralised structure of institutional decision-making was visible in an above average proportion of Belgian and Dutch EPSs, while a more than average number of institutions from Denmark, Spain, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy and Portugal tended towards centralised structures.

Although the expression of institutional commitment to European/international goals and activities in the EPSs tended to be rather emphatic in many cases, it can still serve as an indicator for what is deemed to be part of good policy and strategy in the context of a SOCRATES application. No rating was possible on this issue for an above average number of EPSs from Belgian, Danish and Dutch institutions. A strong commitment was visible in a majority of EPSs from Spanish, British, Greek, Irish, Icelandic and Italian institutions, while a medium degree of commitment was found in the EPSs of many Austrian, Finnish, Norwegian and Portuguese institutions and also again in those of Spanish institutions. The various
degrees of commitment expressed in the EPSs of German institutions correspond most closely to the overall averages.

**Table 8**
**Overall Strategic Thinking in Policy and Management – by Country (in %)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Very strong</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>None at all</th>
<th>No rating possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>41</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>33</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n = 1,578)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 10.4c: Where would you locate the institution on the following scale with regard to strategic thinking in policy and management?
4.5 Increase of European and International Activities

As the goals are frequently stated in a rather operational way, plans to increase various SOCRATES-eligible activities constitute an important element of the goal statement in the EPSs of higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES support. It is safe to assume that such increases are also an indicator of the policy relevance of the respective activities in the framework of a further Europeanisation or internationalisation of the institutions (cf. 4.6). If we compare the patterns of planned increases of SOCRATES activities by country, we arrive at the following results:

- Course programmes with a European dimension: increase envisaged by 57% of all institutions, but by three quarters or more of Irish (97%), British (94%), Austrian (89%), Norwegian (81%), German (78%) and Finnish (75%) institutions.
- Outgoing students: no increase envisaged by only 10% of all institutions, but by an above average number of Dutch (32%), Spanish (25%) and Austrian (19%) institutions.
- Incoming students: no increase envisaged by only 16% of all institutions, but by an above average number of Irish (55%), British and Dutch (39% each) as well as Spanish (25%) institutions.
- Outgoing teachers: no increase envisaged by 14% of all institutions, but by 35% of Dutch, 31% of Spanish and 24% of German institutions.
- Incoming teachers: no increase envisaged by 20% of all institutions, but by 42% of Irish, 41% of Dutch, 34% of British and 31% of Spanish institutions.
- Intensive programmes: an increase is envisaged by 43% of all institutions, among them a high proportion of Belgian (71%), Dutch (70%), Swedish (66%) and British (57%) institutions.
- Application of ECTS: an increase is envisaged by 62% of all institutions, but by three quarters or more of Irish (90%), Norwegian (81%), Dutch (80%), British (76%) and Austrian (74%) institutions.
- Open and distance learning activities: about one quarter (24%) of all institutions envisage an increase in these activities, among them an above average number of institutions in Iceland (63%), Finland (46%), Norway (43%), Sweden (42%) and the United Kingdom (41%).
- Cooperation with industry: an increase in such activities is planned by 19% of all institutions, among them especially institutions in the Netherlands (46%), Ireland and Finland (39% each), the United Kingdom (38%) and Norway (32%).
- Thematic networks: 10% of all institutions applying for SOCRATES support plan to participate in this new activity, among them a high proportion of institut-
tions from Austria (21%), Belgium and Ireland (19% each) and the United Kingdom (18%).

- Continuing education and in-service training: an increase is envisaged by only one percent of all institutions, but by 4% of Austrian and by 3% of Greek institutions.

- Introduction of new course programmes: on average, an increase is envisaged by 22% of all institutions, but by 39% of Irish, 38% of Norwegian and 35% of British institutions. An above average proportion of German (33%) and Austrian (32%) institutions also plan to introduce new course programmes.

- Proportion of foreign staff and students: an above average proportion of Norwegian, German and British institutions are making plans to increase their proportion of foreign staff and students.

- Courses taught in a foreign language: an increase is envisaged by 11% of all institutions, in particular by Finnish (41%), Swedish (40%), Icelandic and Norwegian (38% each) institutions.

- Foreign language training: whereas only 2% of all institutions plan an increase in their offers of foreign language training, this issue was mentioned in the EPSs of 26% of Irish institutions applying for SOCRATES.

*Most countries show quite a distinctive pattern with regard to the SOCRATES activities for which an increase is envisaged or not. For example:*

- A below average number of German higher education institutions plan an increase in intensive programmes, open and distance learning activities and courses taught in a foreign language.

- A considerably above average number of institutions from the Nordic countries plan increases in open and distance learning activities, as well as in cooperative activities with industry, with the exception of Denmark.

- British and Irish institutions clearly do not intend for the most part to increase their courses taught in a foreign language, but many Irish institutions are making plans to increase the foreign language training of their own students. Institutions in these two countries also plan less frequently than institutions from other countries to increase the number of incoming students.

- French, Spanish and Portuguese institutions plan to increase the number of course programmes offered with a European dimension to a lesser degree than institutions from other countries.

- The proportion of Dutch institutions planning to increase the number of outgoing and incoming students and staff is visibly below average.
If we look for envisaged increases of various SOCRATES-eligible activities in the EPSs of Greek institutions, practically all of these activities are stated with below, sometimes considerably below average frequency. However, it must also be noted that the vast majority of Greek EPSs did not provide any information on the issue of envisaged increases in the various activities. Therefore it might be inferred that most Greek institutions possibly thought this information should not be part of the EPS but rather belonged to other parts of the SOCRATES application. The lack of information regarding envisaged increases in SOCRATES activities is also typical for the EPSs of a large majority of Portuguese institutions.

4.6 Consistency of Policy, Management and Activities in the Context of SOCRATES

An important correlation can be made between the activities proposed by SOCRATES and the Europeanisation/internationalisation policy relevance of these activities as presented by applicants in their European Policy Statements. This correlation can be regarded as an important element in creating a vertical consistency between European policy and activities and their management within an institution. It must also be kept in mind that a low policy relevance of certain SOCRATES activities in some countries may indicate that this activity is already widely integrated and carried out in many institutions so that institutions see no need for further special emphasis, for example, exchanging students and internationalising curricula in the Netherlands and Belgium. The following patterns of policy relevance of the various SOCRATES activities according to country can be found:

- Course programmes with a European dimension: high policy relevance stated in 37% of all EPSs, but by 84% of Irish, 80% of British, 75% of Icelandic, 55% of Austrian and 53% of Finnish institutions. Low policy relevance stated in 10% of all EPSs, but by 41% of Dutch and 40% of Belgian institutions.
- Outgoing students: high policy relevance stated in 65% of all EPSs, but by 97% of Irish, 95% of Italian, 88% of Icelandic, 85% of Greek, 83% of British and 81% of German institutions. Low policy relevance stated in 8% of all EPSs, but by 43% of Belgian and 29% of Dutch institutions.
- Incoming students: high policy relevance stated in 57% of all EPSs, but by 95% of Italian, 82% of Greek and 72% of Spanish institutions. Low policy relevance stated in 9% of all EPSs, but by 45% of Belgian and 29% of Dutch institutions.
- Outgoing teachers: high policy relevance stated in 55% of all EPSs, but by an above average proportion of institutions in the United Kingdom and Ireland.
(90 % each), in Italy (88 %), Norway (83 %), Greece (79 %), Iceland (75 %) and Austria (70 %). Low policy relevance stated in 12 % of all EPSs but 55 % of Belgian, 35 % of Dutch and 22 % of French institutions.

- Incoming teachers: high policy relevance stated in 49 % of all EPSs, but by 88 % of institutions in Italy, 85 % of institutions in Greece, 75 % of institutions in Iceland and by 60 % of institutions each from Austria and Germany. Again we have an above average proportion of institutions from Belgium, the Netherlands and also to a certain extent from France stating a low policy relevance of this activity in their EPS.

- Intensive programmes: high policy relevance stated in 28 % of all EPSs, but by 55 % each of Italian and Greek institutions and by 42 % of British institutions. An above average number of Belgian and Dutch institutions stated a low policy relevance of intensive programmes.

- Application of ECTS: high policy relevance stated in 42 % of all EPSs. An above average proportion of Icelandic (88 %), Greek (79 %), Norwegian (77 %), Italian (73 %), Irish and British (65 % each) institutions stated a high policy relevance of ECTS in their EPS. For a considerable number of Belgian and Dutch institutions other recognition arrangements have a certain policy relevance.

- Open and distance learning activities: high and medium policy relevance stated by 10 % and 13 % of all EPSs respectively. An above average proportion of institutions from Greece (30 %), Finland (27 %), Norway (23 %) and the United Kingdom (21 %) stated a high policy relevance of open and distance learning activities. Also an above average proportion of institutions from Ireland, Iceland and Sweden stated a medium policy relevance of these activities.

- Cooperation with industry: three quarters of all EPSs did not refer to the policy relevance of cooperation with industry, but 9 % each gave it a high or medium policy relevance, among them a high proportion of institutions in Finland, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Norway.

- Thematic networks: 83 % of all EPSs did not refer to the policy relevance of thematic networks, while 6 % gave them a high and 5 % a medium policy relevance. Austrian (15 %), Irish and Norwegian (13 % each) as well as British and Greek (12 % each) institutions saw a high policy relevance for thematic networks with above average frequency.

- Continuing education and in-service training: high policy relevance stated in only 1 % of all EPSs, but in 4 % of Austrian and 3 % of Greek EPSs.

- Introduction of new course programmes: although three quarters of all EPSs did not refer to the policy relevance of new course programmes, still 10 % gave it a high and 13 % a medium policy relevance, in particular Icelandic, Norwegian, British and German institutions.
- Proportion of foreign staff and students: an above average proportion of Norwegian institutions see a high and medium policy relevance of increases in the proportion of foreign staff and students.

- Courses taught in a foreign language: high (average: 9%) and medium (average: 5%) policy relevance stated in the EPSs of an above average number of institutions in Denmark (18% and 7% respectively), Finland (39% and 16%), Greece (18% stating a high policy relevance), Iceland (38% stating a high policy relevance), Norway (30% and 13%) and Sweden (38% and 14%).

- Foreign language training: a high policy relevance is particularly seen by Irish institutions (26%; average in this category: 3%).

On average, the overall vertical consistency between policy, management and European/international activities was rated by the experts to be strong in 24%, to be medium in 31% and to be weak in 10% of all EPSs. For 36% of the EPSs no rating was possible (cf. Table 9).

These findings certainly indicate some scope for an improvement of consistency between policy, management and activities in general. If we compare the consistency ratings according to country, the following pattern can be found:

- An above average proportion of EPSs from institutions in Italy (56%), Greece (45%) and Ireland (39%) showed a strong vertical consistency between policy, management and European/international activities, whereas only few Belgian (5%) and Dutch (7%) EPSs were rated to be strong in this respect. For 83% of Belgian and 86% of Dutch institution an assessment of this consistency was not possible at all.

- A medium degree of vertical consistency between policy, management and activities is visible in the EPSs of an above average number of British (52%), Icelandic (50%) and Norwegian (45%) institutions.

- An above average proportion of Austrian (28%), Finnish (21%), British (20%), Icelandic (38%) and Norwegian (23%) institutions were rated to have a weak consistency of policy, management and activities in their EPSs. However, for all of these countries we also find a considerably higher proportion of institutions with a medium degree of consistency.

- Apart from Belgian and Dutch institutions, a rating with respect to the degree of vertical consistency between policy, management and activities was not possible for 59% of Portuguese institutions as well.
Table 9
Vertical Consistency Between Policy, Management and Activities – by Country (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>No rating possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 1,578)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 6.2:** Is there a vertical coherence between goals and institutional goals/mission?

In looking at the most distinctive country patterns, three issues can be found which are noteworthy. Firstly, *strategic reasoning as well as coherence between policy, management and activities tend to be still weakly developed* in a majority of institutions. Higher education institutions used to formulate mission statements did not generally succeed in creating a better coherence of policy, management and activities than institutions in those countries in which mission statements are not the
rule. Nevertheless, there have been visible efforts in the EPSs of a majority of institutions to demonstrate a certain degree of overall strategic thinking.

Secondly, we find quite distinctive patterns in the various SOCRATES-eligible countries to focus on a set of certain activities. This does not necessarily mean that the others are neglected but they are less in the foreground of institutional policies, either because they are already well developed or because they are more marginal for the European policy of the institutions concerned. For example, institutions in the Nordic countries tend to emphasise cooperation with industry and the development of open and distance learning, those in Southern European countries mobility of staff and students, institutions located in English speaking countries foreign language training of their own students and institutions in countries like Germany, Austria and France a further internationalisation of their curricula.

Thirdly, a majority of institutions from all countries has made serious efforts to improve the institutional infrastructure for the support of SOCRATES activities. This is expressed in the European Policy Statements by demonstrating a stronger involvement of the central level in developing a European policy and the management of activities, by increasing staff and resources of international offices and frequently by establishing an additional arena for the discussion and interaction of key actors involved in SOCRATES in the form of SOCRATES Committees or Task Forces.

5 Relationships between Goals, Strategies and Activities

The aim of this chapter is to explore the extent to which the European Policy Statements indicate links among the strategic approaches of the institutions of higher education in general, the various goals stated (both general and specifically European and international) and the activities envisaged, both with the support of SOCRATES funds and otherwise (cf. Chart 5 for a graphic overview of the possible links examined). It is based on a quantitative analysis of the ratings of the European Policy Statements by the members of the project team.

Table 10 shows that those institutions of higher education which pointed out that they emphasise an institutional "mission", are more likely to state targeted and clear European and international goals. A similar link could be noted between an emphasis of institutional goals and the coherence of European and international goals stated. It is obviously easier to agree on and to state clear international goals if an institution is accustomed to reflect on and state its goals anyway.
This does not mean, however, that an emphasis on an institutional "mission" favours more ambitious European goals. If we look at the European and international goals in detail (cf. also Table 10), such as Europeanising or internationalising curricula, improving recognition or covering a broad range of countries in the cooperation activity and the mobility of the staff and students, we observe no less ambitious goals by those institutions not emphasising an institutional mission than by those accustomed to presenting an institutional mission.

The European Policy Statements also were rated, as discussed above, according to the extent they expose a strategic thinking prevailing in the higher education institutions awarded SOCRATES grants. Table 11 shows that institutions inclined to think strategically do not only state European and international goals in a clearer and more targeted manner than institutions less inclined to think strategically, but also harbour, in contrast to the finding of the previous paragraph, somewhat more
ambitious detailed aims as far the Europeanisation and internationalisation of their institution is concerned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Emphasis on an institutional mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 + 5 (Not at all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Clarity of European/ international goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted/clear</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Percentage of institutions emphasising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation/Europeanisation of curricula</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
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<td></td>
<td>58</td>
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<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving recognition</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It is also true that institutions which seem to favour more centralised decision-making actually express European and international goals in a more targeted manner. These institutions also pursue more ambitious specific goals in the context of their SOCRATES activities than institutions favouring decentralised decision-making. These relationships, however, are less pronounced than those between strategic thinking and European goals.

The general goal- and strategy-mindedness of institutions of higher education, thus, seems to be relevant to the extent to which an institution harbours clear and specific European and international goals. The linkage is not so pronounced, however, that a targeted Europeanisation and internationalisation policy seems to be
more or less dependent on a generally strong emphasis on "missions" and strategic orientation.

Table 11
Relationships between Strategic Thinking and Centralisation of Decision-Making and the Pursuit of Various European Goals (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Strategic thinking</th>
<th>Centralisation of decision-making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Clarity of European/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>international goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted/clear</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat targeted</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vague/diffuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No rating possible</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) % of institutions emphasising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of curricula</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving recognition</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As one might expect, we observe links between the various dimensions of European and international goals surveyed. For example, institutions of higher education which consider European and international activities as an instrument of changing their institutional profile are more likely to present clear European and international goals and are more likely to emphasise specific European and international goals, such as internationalising curricula and improving recognition, than institutions which do not consider international activities as an important instrument in shaping their profile.
Table 12
Relationships between Specific European/International Goals and Envisaged Increase of Activities in Select Areas (in % of institutions stating respective goals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of activities</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationalisation/Europeanisation of curricula</td>
<td>Improving recognition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasised</td>
<td>Not emphasised</td>
<td>Emphasised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of SOCRATES-supported activities envisaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course programmes with European dimension</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing students</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing teachers</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECTS</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open and distance learning</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of other activities envisaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New course programmes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of foreign students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of foreign teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses taught in a foreign language</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The key question in this context remains, however, whether all the statements regarding strategy and general goals, as well as European and international goals do in fact guide the activities for which support in the SOCRATES programme is requested or the other European and international activities envisaged. Do the European Policy Statements indicate that strategic thinking and goals have an impact on the detailed plans regarding the European and international activities? It should be noted that in the context of an analysis of the European Policy Statement, we can only examine whether strategic emphasis and goals matter for the activities envisaged, not however for the activities actually undertaken.
The available information suggests that the extent of strategic thinking, the emphasis on a mission and the clarity of goals have no significant bearing on the increase of the number of activities envisaged with the support of SOCRATES or on other European and international activities. We do not find that strategy-mindedness, mission-orientation or the clarity or consistency of goals as such are associated with a high level of envisaged European and international activities.

In contrast, we note that specific goals such as that of Europeanising or internationalising curricula or of improving recognition are clearly linked to the intention of increasing various SOCRATES-supported as well as other European and international activities (see Table 12).

Altogether, the findings suggest that a strategic attitude and a clear set of goals might have some impact on the European and international goals of the institution. The intentions of undertaking or increasing specific European and international activities, however, are at most loosely linked to those general orientations. The European and international activities, both in the framework of SOCRATES and beyond, are more likely to be reflected in or stimulated by European and international goals on a more operational nature, such as the goal of improving recognition.

6 Conclusions

(1) There is a medium degree of clarity of goals expressed in the EPSs of a majority of higher education institutions applying for SOCRATES support, however goal coherence leaves some scope for improvement. A certain amount of prioritisation of goals and activities tends to produce more coherence and clarity, as opposed to general plans to include all or a broad range of activities.

(2) A majority of institutions included a mixture of continuity and change in their goal statements. The traditional ERASMUS activities (e.g. mobility) and bilateral agreements with former ICP partners form an element of continuity which is complemented by new activities (e.g. participation in thematic networks) or the further development of previously marginal activities (e.g. use of ECTS, internationalisation of curricula). It is also noteworthy that some activities (e.g. open and distance learning, continuing education, cooperation with industry) which are high on the agenda of EU policy for higher education are not generally in the foreground of institutional policies and activities. The general trend is to formulate goals in a rather operational way, i.e. as an increase of individual activities or as a broadening of the range of activities. However, any kind of reasoning relating these plans to an explicit strategy and policy remains rather vague in a majority of EPSs.
(3) In a considerable number of EPSs, the relationship between institutional goals in the framework of mission statements, descriptions of profile and plans for institutional development, and international/European goals remains to some extent unclear. Institutional development is however frequently regarded as being closely linked to or even dependent on further internationalisation/Europeanisation. Even in those countries in which higher education institutions are used to formulating mission (and vision) statements many EPSs did not succeed in providing convincing statements about the relationship between institutional and international goals.

(4) Typically, two types of goals are stated frequently and emphasised strongly: goals related to an improvement of teaching and learning through European/international activities and goals related to an improvement of institutional infrastructures and services for the support of international/European activities. In contrast to this, goals relating to the choice of partner institutions and countries are less dominant. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that a considerable number of institutions plan to include partners from non-EU-countries in their SOCRATES activities. This holds particularly true for partners from Central and Eastern Europe whose future eligibility for participation in SOCRATES is often anticipated in the EPSs with the development of TEMPUS partnerships into SOCRATES partnerships.

(5) One of the goals which is named most frequently in the European Policy Statements is to improve the "European dimension" of teaching and learning and in the profile of the institution as such. The main SOCRATES-activities with which this goal is to be achieved are a further internationalisation of curricula and - to a lesser extent - a broader coverage of EU countries from which partner institutions are recruited so that a better geographical balance can be established.

(6) The modalities of bilateral cooperation influence strategies for cooperation and expectations of reciprocity, the latter being emphasised more strongly than before. The requirement of bilateral cooperation agreements with partner institutions abroad has led some institutions to review their existing (ERASMUS) partnerships from previous ICP networks, dropping some and intensifying cooperation with others. Another effect of bilateral cooperation agreements became visible in a number (though not a majority) of EPSs: institutions have sought to achieve a broader coverage of countries from which SOCRATES-partners are recruited, while the choice of partners has tended to become more selective. Partners have often been chosen with whom a multitude of SOCRATES-activities involving more than one department are possible.

(7) European/international activities are frequently seen as instruments to change or enhance the profile of the institutions. In this context some institutions have made far-reaching decisions as regards changes in institutional policy, re-
source allocations and changes in their infrastructure. However, the main purpose of such changes often appears to be profiling and self-marketing in a European context rather than reforms within the institution.

(8) Strategic reasoning with regard to individual institutional priorities and emphases is not highly developed in many EPSs, as is evident from the relatively low proportion of EPSs discussing opportunities and constraints (including opportunity costs other than those relating to limited financial resources). It is therefore somewhat surprising that our experts rated the evidence of overall strategic thinking as good, much better than their assessment of strategic reasoning would lead one to expect. There is a visible tendency that institutions which are more centralised in their institutional decision-making structures also receive better ratings on strategic reasoning and overall strategic thinking.

(9) Institutional commitment to European/international goals and activities is rather high and - beyond emphatic rhetorical expressions - is closely connected to normative and contextual reasoning.

(10) As a rule, those SOCRATES-activities for which an increase is envisaged also have a high policy relevance in the EPSs. However, the relationship between planned increase and policy relevance is often not established to such an extent that a vertical consistency between policy, management and activities becomes evident. The lack of such consistency is probably one of the weakest issues in the majority of EPSs. Plans to increase certain activities while others are continued as before or not taken up at all indicate a certain degree of prioritisation of SOCRATES-activities and goals. A high degree of prioritisation as well as a take-up of all SOCRATES-activities are rather rare.

(11) In the institutional processes and tools which have been developed to support European/international activities, one element clearly stands out. In addition to increasing the staff of international offices or providing complementary institutional funding to carry out SOCRATES activities, many institutions have established SOCRATES Committees or Task Forces. These Committees typically have two tasks: (a) to establish a communicative link between the central institutional level, the international office and key actors in faculties and departments; (b) to discuss further developments and directions of European policies and advise the central institutional level on this issue. With these Committees, intra-institutional communication about European policy and strategy has become more wide-spread and intense, and more people are becoming involved in a more organised way in joint reflections on policy and strategy.

(12) The central institutional level has clearly become more involved in the development of European policy and strategy than before. Its actual role however can not properly be inferred from the EPSs. The responsibilities and work-load of
international offices seem to have increased considerably in the process of the SOCRATES application and preparation for activities. International officers were often also involved in discussions about policy and strategy.

(13) Arrangements for monitoring, assessment and evaluation of European/inter-
national policy and activities seem to be well developed in only a minority of in-
stitutions, although the issue seems to play a role in more institutions. A majority of EPSs did not include a statement with regard to such arrangements and many of those mentioning them, did so only in passing. For the remaining few in which a certain emphasis on monitoring, assessment and evaluation could be found, guar-
anteeing the "quality of the student experience" seems to be highest on the agenda.

(14) If we look at the patterns of SOCRATES-activities which become relevant for institutional policies according to the country in which the respective institu-
tions are located, the following characteristics stand out most clearly:

– In the EPSs of institutions from the Nordic countries and the Netherlands, an emphasis is often put on increasing courses taught in a foreign language, improving cooperative activities with industry and, particularly in the Nordic countries, on further developing open and distance learning activities.

– Institutions from English speaking countries (Great Britain and Ireland) have almost no plans to develop the teaching of courses in a foreign language, but put an emphasis on improving foreign language training for their own students. These two countries are also preoccupied with quality issues more frequently than other SOCRATES applicants.

– Institutions in Southern European countries tend to emphasise more strongly mobility and exchanges of staff and students as well as preparatory visits. The use of ECTS is less often emphasised in these countries than in others.

– German, Austrian and French institutions stand out to a certain degree in their emphasis on internationalising curricula.

– Norwegian institutions seem to have made a special effort in their EPSs to jus-
tify and legitimise their SOCRATES eligibility and express a rather strong commitment to European goals and activities. Norwegian EPSs also show an above average degree of strategic thinking and overall strategic reasoning.
Formulating European Policies: Reports from the Universities

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In cooperation with:
Claudio Borri, Alison Browning, Christian Delporte, Hans de Wit,
Julia Gonzalez, Ulrich Teichler, Jeroen Torenbeek

1 Introduction: The Site Visits - Process and Methodology

The second stage of this project pursued the investigation of strategic management and policy development at European universities further by undertaking and analysing 18 site visits to a range of different types of institutions in all Member States with the exception of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg. The aim of this second phase was to see the European Policy Statements (EPS), which had been analysed in the first part of the project, in the light of the institutional structures, processes and attitudes which led to their formulation and served their implementation. It was intended that a detailed examination of a number of different kinds of institutions in Europe would help us understand under what institutional conditions policies and strategic reasoning had or had not developed.

The site visits were undertaken by a team of 8 experts from 6 different Member States, all of whom had ample experience with the development and management of European university cooperation and ERASMUS and SOCRATES in particular. Each expert was responsible for two or three visits, each of which was undertaken by one expert only for reasons of budget limitations.

At an induction seminar the experts were introduced to the project, its central concerns, the questions and first answers of the analysis of the EPS, the list of selected institutions to be visited (see comments under section 2) as well as with a list of suggested issues which the project organisers believed to constitute useful questions to be addressed during the site visit interviews. The experts helped to refine this latter list which then served as the uniform guideline for all site visit
interviews (see appendix) and which helped to structure their reports in a compatible manner. The list comprised the following themes:

- institutional processes of consultation and decision-making with respect to the SOCRATES Institutional Contract application;
- the institution's general goals and their configuration;
- strategic ends and means;
- human resources and other costs involved in planning and implementing SOCRATES cooperation;
- medium and long-term development;
- criticisms and recommendations for change in the SOCRATES programme.

It was agreed as planned that different kinds of institutional representatives at all levels should be addressed and that enough time should be given to each interlocutor, i.e. 45 minutes to an hour per interviewee or group of interviewees. If possible interviews should be carried out in a one-on-one manner, unless there was a particular reason for not doing so. Thus the site visits usually comprised 6 to 8 interviews with individuals of different backgrounds and roles. For the sake of allowing different voices to be heard and perspectives to be seen, it was regarded as important to ensure that at each site visit the following types of institutional representatives were interviewed:

- the highest representative responsible for the SOCRATES application,
- the director of international relations or other administrator chiefly involved with the implementation of the SOCRATES institutional contract,
- a chief financial administrator,
- a representative of the main consultation and/or decision-making body responsible for SOCRATES matters and the EPS,
- a faculty or departmental academic representative involved in the SOCRATES application,
- an academic, formerly active in ERASMUS or not, who would be considered a "sceptic" either of changes under SOCRATES or even of any form of centrally organised European cooperation
- a group of incoming and outgoing students.

In general, the actual site visits followed this structure of interviews. The list formed part of the letter sent to the universities and other higher education institution which were "invited to be visited", thus serving as a guideline for the organisation of the visit by the contact person of each institution which had agreed to participate. In some cases, interviewers had to insist on meeting one or two of the above-mentioned representatives, in general with success. Only the financial director was more rarely addressed. In some cases no "sceptic" could be found, only those who were both supportive of European cooperation schemes and sceptical of
some of the details of recent managerial developments. But in so far as different roles and perspectives were covered in each site visit, this part of the organisation was successful.

In all but one case, there were no problems in contacting the institutions. At first a letter was sent to the head of the institution by the European Association of Universities (CRE), describing the project, the function and confidentiality of the site visit and asking them to designate a contact person if they agreed to the visit. Shortly thereafter, the expert responsible for undertaking the site visit to that institution called the rectorate and was usually passed on to the contact person. In five cases it proved to be rather time-consuming to get through to the contact person initially.

In three cases, however, site visits could not take place in the end:

In a first case, the head of institution agreed to the visit, but no cooperative efforts followed the decision so that the visit had to be cancelled last minute because no organisation had taken place on the part of the institution. This was explained by the complete restructuring of the institution’s international cooperation management which resulted in none of the previous coordinators being available for the organisation of the visit.

In another case in another country, the institution was successfully contacted and cooperative in principle, but was also going through such extensive restructuring of the international cooperation management that it preferred not to participate in the project at that time while expressing great interest in its results. As this decision was made before the summer, enough time remained to select another institution from the same country which agreed promptly to participate.

One last case should be mentioned of an institution in yet another Member State which agreed to the visit, was very cooperative in its organisation but cancelled the visit one week before it was to take place due to the sudden and unexpected work over-load and frustration with the amount of detail required in the second SOCRATES Institutional Contract application round, the modalities of which had just been published and which had differed greatly from the institution’s expectations of a simple up-dating of the first application.

Because of the above-mentioned late cancellation in two cases, the originally planned number of 20 site visits could not be upheld and only 18 visits could actually take place.

Before most visits, the experts received, as had been asked, some material on the institution and its international cooperation and/or policy in advance. Typically, this consisted in the meeting schedule, a university brochure or information package (e.g. for visiting students) and, in a few cases, a paper on the institution’s international policy. In addition, the experts had at their disposal the EPS of the institution and its evaluation by the experts of the research team of the project’s first phase (i.e. the so-called “EPS analysis sheet”).
After each visit, which covered one to two days, the experts composed a report of seven to eleven pages each of which followed the structure of the interview guidelines, i.e. the list of central themes, and which was then sent to the site visit coordinator for analysis. Together with the names of the institutions, these reports will remain confidential in accordance with the promise given to the institutions involved. Such confidentiality was held to be important to ensure that all interviewees could speak as freely as possible without fearing that any of this information would be identifiable, which could result in a change of attitude to their institution on the part of the grant giver. While this confidentiality was generally appreciated and successful since most interviews were reported to have taken place in a noticeably open “atmosphere”, there was one institution at which the rector still believed that the expert was an “under-cover Commission spy”.

The timing of the visits proved to be more complicated than expected. While it had been planned to complete the majority of the visits before the summer break, the academic calendars of most institutions and the availability of the experts did not allow for this, especially since most institutions agreed to participate only some time around early May of this year. Thus most visits had to wait till the resumption of the term/semester after summer, which in many cases occurred only in autumn. One visit even had to be postponed to the beginning of December. The disadvantage of this timing was that participants could not reconstruct their experiences from the time of preparing the application and its EPS without taking their reaction to the award into consideration. The advantage of the mentioned timing, however, was that institutions were not only familiar with the modalities of applying for a SOCRATES institutional contract but also with the European Union funds involved, which in all cases necessitated considerable readjustments on the part of the institution, sometimes merely financial sometimes also in terms of the setting of priorities. Since only four visits occurred before the publication of the SOCRATES Institutional Contract awards and at all institutions great surprise was expressed at the low level of funding, the other 14 site visits allowed the experts to witness even more sharply or sur le vif how the institutions, with their own priorities and conditions, adapted to unexpected exterior conditions.

With respect to the timing of the visits and the overall project it should also be pointed out that at this early stage, at which only the application process had been completed and the actual activities were only beginning to be carried out, information on the realisation of institutional plans could not be gathered. Thus the site visits are more valuable in so far as they explore the impact of the SOCRATES mechanisms on institutional processes of communication, information, coordination and consultation than in their reflections on the implementation of the activities. Only hopes, expectations and fears as the prospective outcomes can be reported.
Another methodological limitation concerns the varied amount of detail which the interviews produced and the reports offered on the list of central themes. Thus the information provided does not allow for as many moments of comparison as the total number of visits and the common list of themes may suggest. Nevertheless, it allowed for sufficient points of comparisons to achieve the central purpose, namely to sketch the range of different responses to the managerial changes and the opportunity for developing a European policy and to ascertain where there are moments of general consensus, frequent similarities and divergences between institutional responses to the SOCRATES modalities.

A last limitation concerns the different voices and roles which were witnessed at the site visit interviews. While these clearly achieved their aim of covering a whole range of different perspectives, the information gathered at the interviews was not and could not always be related back to the original interviewee so that the relation of institutional roles to the various details of and attitudes to institutional processes could be analysed only in those cases where the attribution of statements had been referred to in the site visit reports.

With this last caveat, we may turn to the criteria which governed the selection of institutions and which should be considered before presenting the analysis.

2 The Selected Institutions

The selection of the 20 institutions followed the criterion of covering as wide a range of different types of institutions in the various Member States as possible. This meant including not just institutions of different sizes of almost all Member States but also some non-university institutions of higher education, some technical universities, institutions with a wide range of disciplines and those with a smaller one, institutions in big metropolitan areas and those in more peripheral regional environments, well-known prestigious institutions and less widely known ones, institutions with more or less experience with ERASMUS cooperation, institutions with more central or more decentral decision-making and managerial structures. The choice resulted in the following distribution of characteristics:

Out of 18 cases,
- 7 institutions have under 10 000 students, 8 between 10 000 and 20 000, and 3 over 20 000.
- 9 are multidisciplinary universities, 2 universities with a wide range of disciplines but only in Natural Sciences and Engineering, 4 technical or very professionally oriented universities, and 3 are non-university institutions of higher education.
- 6 institutions are more than a 100 years old, 3 between 100 and 30 years old, and 7 were founded in the last 30 years.
- 7 institutions are located in major metropolitan areas (of more than a million inhabitants), 11 in larger and smaller regional towns.

Actually, all institutions have some experience with ERASMUS but some have very little or have become involved only recently. Two institutions which were recently constituted through mergers of different professional schools include some schools with no ERASMUS experience. All institutions have some international experience, some of such an extent that ERASMUS/SOCRATES is regarded as only of marginal concern (4 institutions). For 10 institutions ERASMUS/SOCRATES is regarded as an important part of such international involvement (although more structurally than in terms of financial income) while for 3 institutions ERASMUS/SOCRATES constitutes a very important, vital part of international involvement. These last statements are of course not to be regarded as facts but judgements of institutional representatives, mostly at central level, and should thus be treated with caution. They may nevertheless give a hint as to the position the programme occupies in the different institutional contexts.

3 Institutional Processes of Consultation and Decision-making with Respect to the EPS and Application

Centralisation and increased coordination

The most noteworthy feature of the institutional processes of consultation and decision-making which prepared the SOCRATES Institutional Contract application at the analysed institutions is the fact that 16 of 18 either used special procedures and/or managerial constructions for SOCRATES, rather than simply integrating acts of consultation or decision-making into already existing university structures and procedures. Furthermore, the changes which occurred because of, or simultaneous with the new SOCRATES application mechanism (in 16 of 18 cases), always involved some form of centralisation and increased coordination at central and faculty/departmental level (see appendix, Tables 2 and 4).

In 10 cases increased coordination consisted of setting up a new consultative or decision-making body which was called "committee", "task force", "working group", "steering group" or such like, and which usually brought together faculty or departmental representatives, sometimes of all the faculties and/or departments, sometimes only of those parts of the institution which had been involved in ERASMUS. These committees coordinated the input from the faculties and/or departments both with respect to the activity proposals and in many cases also with respect to the EPS.

While 8 institutions used their existing structures and procedures for consultation and decision-making, only 3 of these did not expand their central structures of management to deal with the new SOCRATES application modalities. Of the 3
Institutions which did not introduce any managerial changes, one explicitly stated that their central coordination and consultation bodies were well developed already and had also already been used for ERASMUS, while the other regarded SOCRATES/ERASMUS as too marginal a part of its international activities to warrant any adaptation of the sort.

However, one should not too easily jump to the conclusion that institutions adapted to SOCRATES instead of SOCRATES adapting to them: in many cases it was mentioned that the creation of these structures or procedures was felt to be necessary anyway because the number and scope of international cooperation activities had reached such a high level, or passed a certain threshold at which more coordination had become necessary. In 3 cases, centralisation of SOCRATES management structures had occurred not because of but only coincidentally with SOCRATES. In several other cases, SOCRATES was used as an occasion to introduce a change which was felt to be due sooner or later. SOCRATES made it sooner.

Increased coordination had become necessary not just at central level, bringing together representatives of faculties, but also at faculty and departmental level. At most institutions, coordinators were appointed at all levels, i.e. central, faculty (if such a level existed), and departmental. They were responsible for collecting proposals and ideas as well as for passing on information, sometimes also for mobilisation. Quite often former Interuniversity Cooperation Programme (ICP)-coordinators or other ERASMUS activists were nominated for these tasks (at 9 institutions their involvement was explicitly mentioned).

It should be added that an example also occurred in which centralisation, regarded as advantageous for the implementation of SOCRATES, went against the grain of institutional development and governmental policy in one country, where there was a governmentally-imposed and university-supported tendency toward decentralisation and increased financial responsibility of the faculties. Allowable general costs of central administration were severely cut with the result that many central functions were transferred to the faculties, including international relations offices.

The extended role of the international relations offices

In 12 of the 16 cases in which centralisation and coordination of European cooperation increased, it also involved setting up, expanding or centralising the international office (see appendix, Tables 1 and 2). In many cases additional personnel was hired or there were plans to do so as soon as financial conditions allowed.

The extended role of the international relations offices comprised:
- The additional coordination tasks of student and or teaching staff mobility.
- In most cases, coordination of other activity proposals.
- At the 7 institutions at which input from the faculties and departments concerning the European policy statement (EPS) was organised, it was the international office together with the newly established or already existing committees which coordinated such input. At the other 11 institutions at which decisions on European policy were made in a top-down procedure, it was typically the director of international relations who cooperated with the vice-rector for international relations or rector's SOCRATES delegate on the formulation of the EPS.
- At most institutions, no matter whether their procedures were bottom-up or top-down, it was the international relations director who produced the first draft of the EPS.
- Often it was also the international relations officer who organised or coordinated the consultation process concerning the rest of the IC-application, i.e. the activity proposals.
- In addition, he or she was the key actor in central mobilising efforts concerning SOCRATES activities where such mobilisation occurred (at 11 institutions).
- Last not least, one of his or her most time-consuming tasks was managing the contacts with partner institutions, involving the preparation of bilateral agreements which often took the form of inter-institutional contracts. In 3 cases, it was mentioned that a whole new system of bilateral contracts was set up.

Consultation and decision-making at different institutional levels

The role of the other institutional representatives at central and faculty/departmental level presented a more variegated picture and has to be clearly differentiated according to involvement in consultation on the EPS and consultation on the rest of the proposal.

With respect to the activity proposals, a great majority of institutions (16 of 18) preferred the bottom-up approach (see appendix, Tables 2 and 4): proposals were made and collected at departmental level, forwarded without filter to faculty level and from there without filter to central level, passing and obtaining in the process the approval of the SOCRATES committee with faculty and/or departmental representatives. Even the two institutions taking a top-down approach, presented a scenario of proposals collected at departmental and forwarded to central level; only here the final decisions lay clearly and only in the hands of the central administration.

With respect to the EPS, only 7 institutions chose a bottom-up approach (see appendix, Tables 2 and 4). This always involved the approval of the EPS draft, for which input had also been provided by faculties and/or departments, by the committee or working group at which faculties and/or departments were represented. 11 institutions preferred a top-down procedure for the EPS. Of these, 6 seemed not
even to have organised any form of input from faculties and/or departments to precede the formulation of the EPS. Interestingly, however, the lack of consultation regarding the EPS had not created any conflict between central and departmental levels. The academics who admitted to little or no knowledge of the EPS and reported that no consultation regarding its content had taken place did not mind this fact. At all of the institutions at which a top-down procedure was used for the EPS, individual academics were often reported to see the need for policy development as a way of providing more sense of direction, more uniform impact on students, more systematic implementation, leaving less up to individual enthusiasm, but generally academics did not seem to view such policy development as their own task. Moreover, in the vast majority of cases, the policy statement was based mostly on previous and ongoing activities and activity plans, formulated in operational terms with immediate relevance to the proposed activities so that even the top-down scenario offered little cause for conflict. In two cases some scepticism was voiced regarding central planning in general. Here the interviewed academics believed in pure "grass-rootsism" and mistrusted strategies as being statements formulated for the occasion, i.e. an opportunistic attempt to please grant-awardeders who were perceived to ‘like’ strategies. It should be noted that students, groups of whom were interviewed at most site visits, were only once involved in SOCRATES discussions, but did not seem to mind this lack of consultation either.

The central level always played a crucial role in the formulation of the EPS. Only at one institution was the EPS voted on only by the faculty boards without any addition made by the central level. This institution is a recent merger of separate institutions which have essentially retained their independence as far as setting and developing priorities and policies is concerned. The central level involvement usually, as already mentioned above, comprised the international relations or his/her European delegate as a key actor. The final decisions and often also a significant part of the input concerning the content of the EPS lay mostly with the rectorate. Only rarely, however, was it the rector him- or herself who became involved, more often the relevant vice-rector (usually vice-rector for international relations) or a specially nominated SOCRATES-delegate played the crucial role.

The amount of consultation and level of involvement of different institutional levels is of immediate relevance to the revelatory value of the EPS. As one expert noted with respect to an institution where no consultation had taken place on the EPS or on the final content of the Institutional Contract application: "Here, the centralised approach to the policy formulation resulted in an EPS which makes one believe the entire institution to be strongly committed to internationalisation. Yet there is no reason to believe that there is such wide-spread commitment to the European dimension within the institution in general. The commitment seems to be limited to the very top-level of the institution."
4 Institutional Attitudes to SOCRATES/ERASMUS in Terms of Communication, Commitment and Motivation

No tensions between administrators and academics

There were no reports of any internal tensions between different institutional levels or between administrators and academics. Instead of animosity between administrative and academic staff, which had been feared by some, academics at departmental level often reported very favourably on the support they received from central level administrators who seemed to be regarded generally as performing positive services rather than being threatening power-mongers. Likewise the central and faculty/departmental levels seemed to have cooperated without any visible conflicts and to the satisfaction of both. Fears were voiced at departmental level, however, that the distribution of the limited funds would result in some such tensions. Hence another reason for the current lack of tensions might be the early timing of the site visits which took place before funds had actually been distributed, travel grants for meetings awarded etc.

The only other fear regarding the relation between the administrative and the academic dimensions of university cooperation which was reported at several site visits concerned the SOCRATES mechanism itself which in about half of the cases was viewed as shifting the attention away from academic matters to administrative aspects of ERASMUS cooperation. Hence, according to this fear, not only the EPS would be an administrative affair but also, and this was viewed with disappointment, the actual SOCRATES/ERASMUS activities would be addressed only with respect to their administrative concerns.

Increased transversal communication, greater transparency, more attempts to mobilise

As already implied above, the preparation of the Institutional Contract application also occasioned more communication between faculties and departments. Such strengthening of transversal communication was mentioned at 12 institutions while 2 institutions found such communication already so well developed that no strengthening had to occur. An increase of transversal communication was not generally regarded as an increase in bureaucracy, but in most cases was welcomed. More contacts between faculties and departments were found to lead to better intra-institutional cooperation, greater readiness to make compromises when needed, sometimes even paving the way for interdisciplinary/cross-faculty programmes (the latter advantage was mentioned twice).

Moreover, the increase in coordination also resulted in greater transparency regarding the level of activity of the various parts of the institution. Four large institutions mentioned that it was already a major achievement to obtain a complete
overview of all ERASMUS flows, activities and current ICPs. The increase of transparency was reported by representatives of central and faculty level and was greatly appreciated since it would allow for more targeted support and mobilisation in future.

While targeted support would only become an issue once funds were distributed at the time of the visits, attempts to mobilise had already been made by central and/ or faculty coordinators: at 12 institutions, such attempts were mentioned. For the most part, they concerned particular departments which had not previously been active enough. There were few details in the reports as to the kinds of incentives used to mobilise. Apart from the simple transmission of information on opportunities to cooperate within the framework of the programme, some financial incentives were mentioned at one institution and 3 institutions mentioned that they tried to mobilise teaching staff to become involved in SOCRATES mobility by pointing to the opportunities for research that such visits could entail. There were also some reports of attempts to mobilise in terms of activities, namely curriculum development projects and intensive programmes which were underrepresented at the institutions in question. However, at three of the four institutions which mentioned such attempts, the submitted proposals did not receive funding, with the result that those who devoted more time and effort to mobilising in terms of curriculum development projects may not do so any longer due to disappointing awards. The experience of these institutions (1 big university, 2 small non-university higher education institution) had been mainly in mobility; they believed they would now revert to their more routine and familiar mobility approach.

None of the reports mentioned institutional sanctions because of lack of European or international involvement. Only one institution had plans to penalise departments where imbalances between incoming students and outgoing students had become too great, which constitutes a sanction against a particular kind of involvement rather than against a lack thereof.

It should also be noted that at all of the institutions which mentioned mobilisation efforts and which were visited after the publication of the SOCRATES awards, such efforts were felt to have been pointless or even detrimental to the cause of SOCRATES cooperation. Since in all cases the level of funding was significantly lower than expected, the expectation of an increase of levels of activities resulted often in an increase of disappointment. While the conviction remained that additional mobilisation would be needed to enhance equity and quality of Europeanisation at the institution, it was concluded that the programme’s funds were not commensurate with this approach.
The effect of the EPS and the IC-mechanism on institutional self-awareness

At 8 out of 18 institutions the necessity to formulate an institutional European policy statement seems to have entailed some changes in the ways the institutions conceived of their own international and European profile as well as in their attitudes towards implementing European cooperation activities. The most frequently mentioned change seems to have concerned the status of international cooperation in institutional self-awareness: European cooperation, and with it international cooperation with which it was always inextricably associated, had become a more prominent issue in institutional and top-level debates at 7 of the 8 institutions. Sometimes this went hand in hand with a new awareness of institutional needs, either the need to develop a European policy which went beyond a statement of current activities and plans (4 cases) and which was embedded in strategic thinking (2 cases), or the need to develop appropriate institutional mechanisms to enhance the functioning of international cooperation (2 cases). It should be noted that 5 out of these 8 mentioned institutions had not been asked to produce any policy statements before SOCRATES, neither by their governments nor by other agencies. At 3 institutions, all of which were in the British Isles and Ireland where non-EU overseas students pay tuition fees while students from the European Union do not, there was an increased awareness of the opportunity casts of student mobility, i.e. of the loss of income incurred by allowing places to be occupied by ERASMUS students that could have been occupied by paying students.

The increase of such institutional self-awareness seems to have been brought about largely by the occasion SOCRATES offered to debate European policy on central level and (in 5 out of the 8 cases) across the institution. But it may be assumed that the increase of communication, coordination and transparency noted above also played its part.

A last note on this issue should concern the evolution of self-awareness since the publication of the SOCRATES award. The latter event opened the eyes of some central level representatives who had been involved in the processes leading to the formulation of the EPS and who now realised fully that the European policy has to be developed at institution’s own initiative and not in reaction to SOCRATES funding since European Union funds can only be small added funds for student and teaching staff mobility, and that even other cooperation initiatives should not rely on SOCRATES to subsist.

Greater commitment at central and faculty level

Another noteworthy result of the processes of preparing and implementing the SOCRATES institutional approach is the remarkable increase of institutional commitment, particularly at central level. Such commitment is not just reflected in
the considerable amount of human resources involved but also in the financial resources which have been or will be mobilised for SOCRATES/ERASMUS.

The institutional adjustments to the low SOCRATES awards also reflect their commitment to Europeanisation, or at least to intra-European mobility. Institutions seemed to be planning, as far as possible, to carry out their SOCRATES/ERASMUS plans despite the low level of outside support, because this was regarded by most as an important part of their project of internationalisation. For the most part, this was intended to be achieved by allocating extra funds from the institution's own resources. Five institutions were going to receive extra government support while two mentioned additional support from other outside sources. The great majority of institutions mentioned great efforts at trying to realise student mobility numbers as planned. While the level of teaching staff mobility seemed to have to be cut at most institutions, the readiness to top-up the available resources was nevertheless great. Several institutions intended to top-up the student mobility grants and 8 mentioned their intention to top-up teaching staff mobility grants through institutional or faculty funds. (In only one case were top-up grants by departments mentioned.)

Additional examples of institutional commitment at central level consisted of reducing the teaching load for those who professors who were particularly active in European cooperation activities. Substantial efforts were also made to increase language teaching provision and course offerings in English to increase mobility in both directions. In most cases it was explained that such far-reaching support had not been provided before SOCRATES.

These measures were mentioned more in passing during the site visits since "institutional commitment" did not figure as a central theme. It may thus be assumed that more and different kinds of commitment exist.

More bureaucracy

There were also just as many complaints about the increased of administrative burden for central offices, especially the international office. In a few cases, especially when no additional personnel could be hired, such increased bureaucracy was described as hardly bearable. As mentioned above, a significant number of institutions chose to hire additional personnel to deal with the additional tasks of coordinating and implementing the various components of the Institutional Contract application. But it was not just at central level where an increase in bureaucracy was noted. While individual academics and many former ICP-coordinators report work, departmental and faculty coordinators report more.

In very decentralised institutions, the noticeable increase of bureaucracy could also hardly be dealt with because of lack of administrative personnel.
There is a large amount of consensus on the following summary comment given by an institutional representative of one of the visited institutions: "SOCRATES increases bureaucratic workload for universities, requires time-consuming multitude of bilateral contacts, enforces improved book-keeping, but also offers the opportunity of extending measures and activities across the institution." This wide perception of a significant increase of bureaucracy may be regarded as surprising: an explanation may be that the work is now concentrated on the shoulders of a smaller number of intra-institutional coordinators. Another perhaps simpler explanation would be that there is a net increase of necessary acts of communication and coordination because of the addition of the institutional and faculty level to the functioning of the programme.

One of the most time-consuming tasks, either of the international office or of the departments or of both, seems to have consisted in reaching bi-lateral agreements which involved a multitude of phone calls and faxes back and forth between the partner institutions. 4 institutions mentioned particularly time-consuming systems of bilateral agreements/contracts, 2 even mentioned rather fixed, rigid agreements on numbers. This task seems to have proven to be particularly time-consuming for the more peripheral institutions who tend to have many partner institutions but with very few students going to/coming from each. One international office director asked: "Will it not be more effective for the institution to devote the attention to bi-lateral agreements on double-diploma and seek funding by some public or private partner, without much bureaucratic effort?"

In general, a deep concern was voiced by all institutions about what was perceived as a growing discrepancy between institutional input (financial and personnel) and output in terms of funds received from the SOCRATES programme. On rector commented: "We do not know whether we can afford receiving SOCRATES funds in the future!" For the moment, however, the heavy demands in terms of costs and time investment for SOCRATES application and reporting seemed to still be seen by many as part of the transition to a new way of functioning but in future, especially in light of increased transparency of level of activities and costs involved, the balance between input and output was believed by many to be leading to a more selective use of the programme. The growing pressure for evaluation and accountability also makes SOCRATES more time-consuming according to many institutional representatives, and by implication less attractive. Some interviewers commented that one can raise more funds or funds for more prestigious purposes for the same or less amount of work load. Nevertheless, there was a large amount of consensus that considerable efforts were still worthwhile for the sake of the students, though not for the university itself.
Decreased motivation of individual academics

At all institutions except two where this issue was not mentioned in the reports, the increase of commitment at central and faculty level seemed to go hand in hand with a decrease of motivation of a number of academics. The de-motivation was not necessarily embedded in a general rejection of the SOCRATES institutional approach. Instead many academics, whether former ICP-coordinators or not, appreciated the institutional approach as such, welcoming the decrease of administrative burden for individual academics, and the opportunity for more reflection on European cooperation and policy and for more mobilisation. The main demotivating factors were two-fold:

- The considerably reduced opportunities to meet colleagues in networks and thus to guarantee that the academic issues were still central to ERASMUS cooperation. At 6 institutions, academics explicitly voiced the fear that mutual knowledge of the educational provisions would fade away with less opportunity for academics to meet. The involvement in thematic networks was not wide-spread enough to compensate for this loss and was also not seen as responding to the same needs, namely those which consisted in linking student mobility support and recognition issues, to the preparation of teaching staff mobility and to the planning of curriculum development, as well as to the opportunity to meet new colleagues who could become partners in cooperation. Furthermore, the multilateral nature of these meetings contributed to many problems being solved and questions being answered more quickly and efficiently without multiple contacts having to go back and forth between all the partners concerned. Furthermore, the regular occurrence of these meetings ensured that given organisational problems which would always occur in the course of student exchange would be solved quickly since they were dealt with by people who knew and trusted each other. Many academics claimed that it was impossible to obtain a comparable number of meetings in the new regime. They felt that regular meetings at least once a year were vital for the maintenance of a given interdepartmental transnational exchange partnership.
The other major de-motivating factor consisted in the high rejection rate for project proposals and funding levels for mobility too low in comparison with the demand and preceding mobilisation campaign. In particular, the low success-rate of curriculum development and intensive programme proposals, whose preparation involved considerable time and effort, was experienced as a great disappointment, probably resulting in less effort being invested in future given that chances of success and funding awarded were now expected to be significantly lower than in other cooperation programmes. The disappointment was all the greater where it was felt that much publicity had been made for the new emphasis on European dimension in "virtual mobility," but the rhetoric was not matched with the adequate funds.

Some de-motivation also resulted from the fear, which was mentioned more rarely however (in 3 cases), that centralisation would grow and there would be more and more uncertainty as to the allocation of SOCRATES funds within the institution, especially if central mobilisation efforts increased and programme and top-up funds did not. Another factor was also mentioned but not linked to SOCRATES as such, was the fact that not enough recognition was given for international cooperation involvement with regard to career advancement. At two institutions it was also mentioned that teaching load was continuously increasing because of staff (budget) cuts, which made international involvement of academics even more difficult.

In general, there seemed to be a loss of a feeling of ownership of the programme despite the wide-spread conviction that the addition of institutional support to the system of ERASMUS cooperation had been greatly needed. However, some academics also questioned the sustainability and usefulness of substantial investment at central level, believing that the main strength and experience in international cooperation existed at faculty and departmental rather than at central level.

5 Institutional and SOCRATES Goals and their Configuration

European policy goals and their links to strategic ends

With respect to the European policy goals as described during the site visits one should note, first of all, that they were always associated with the institution's international policy or activities. While not all institutions had formulated an international policy as such, those who had did not see any reason to distinguish the European or SOCRATES/ERASMUS policy from the rest of the institution's internationalisation project. Nevertheless the exact form of its integration was not always clear and in some cases was reported to be rather a loose association than a proper integration.
On internationalisation, which seemed to constitute a central project of every institution in some form or another, one may note that it was generally associated with the enhancement of quality in teaching, learning and research and that it tended to shift from being a cluster of interesting (extra) activities to being viewed as part of the essential goals of the institution or as a vital tool for achieving these. Within this context, SOCRATES/ERASMUS played a more or less important role, often depending on the proportion it represented within the entire scope of international activities: at two of the three institutions the programme constituted the overwhelming proportion of incoming funds for cooperation, whereas the other institution which regarded SOCRATES/ERASMUS as very important seemed to obtain more significant income for cooperation from other schemes. Similarly, the 10 institutions which regarded SOCRATES/ERASMUS as important presented a rather variegated picture as to the proportion it represented of their income through cooperation schemes. However, of the four institutions which classed SOCRATES/ERASMUS as marginal it can be said that they all derived significantly higher income for internationalisation from other sources.

Returning to the actual European policy goals, it should be pointed out, first and foremost, that, in confirmation of the findings of phase 1, they were mainly formulated in operational terms and based largely on ongoing activities and project proposals. (One expert appropriately called this an indirect mechanism of influence in the development of the EPS at those institutions where no organised consultation occurred with respect to the EPS.) This may well be one of the reasons why European policy was as yet regarded mostly as an administrative matter with no impact on academics’ initiatives.

Most often it was mentioned that current activities would be intensified and established measures would be taken a few steps further, rather than new activities or approaches pursued. 11 institutions also intended to increase the level and distribution of such activities across the institutions. Four institutions wanted to push curriculum development and intensive programmes as less familiar cooperation activities within their institutional context.

Turning now to these operational, activity-related goals, the omnipresent wish to increase student and teaching staff mobility should be noted:

- The wish to attract more incoming students was mentioned explicitly by 7 institutions where particular strategic ends were associated with these goals, such as targeting particular student groups (from less well represented countries of origin, disciplines and levels of advancement), offering more study programmes in English to overcome the language barrier, ensure adequate welcome, social integration and accommodation, and marketing unusual, attractive features of the institution in a more targeted way. At 4 institutions it was noticed that SOCRATES/ ERASMUS was leading to moderate growth of incoming students
from EU countries anyway but this did not reduce the will to pursue this goal actively.

- The increase of outgoing students was associated with a target percentage threshold in 6 cases. Such a figure, which was not restricted to ERASMUS outgoing students but included any destination, could, some institutional representatives believed, serve as a clear indicator of the institution's international profile to the outside world. In two cases particular groups of outgoing students were to be targeted, in another case some minimum support would not be guaranteed in order to achieve a wide enough spread of student mobility.

- The latter goal was thus associated with the issue of reciprocity, which constituted mainly a cost issue for these above-mentioned 3 institutions. (One institution with more incoming than outgoing students made it explicit policy to reach reciprocity by an increase of outgoing students rather than a decrease of incoming ones.) But reciprocity was also a goal for a one other institutions less concerned with its financial implications. In general, however, there were frequent mentions of excessive stress on reciprocity, especially by institutions which had more trouble attracting incoming students due to language barriers.

- At 9 institutions, representatives especially stressed teaching staff mobility as a way of internationalising the institutional context, in particular for those students who were unable to go abroad. For the same reason, one institution also wanted to internationalise the hiring of teaching staff.

The same strategic end of internationalising course provision for all students, even for those who cannot go abroad, was associated also with curriculum development, which was mentioned at four institutions. The fact that three of these institutions abandoned this goal as soon as funding was not provided by the Commission might be attributed to their lack of independent commitment to this goal, i.e. as being pursued mainly in response to the SOCRATES incentive, although it might also have resulted from their and their partners' lack of sufficient institutional resources.

The goal of systematically extending the use of ECTS across the institution was emphasised more often (by representatives of seven different institutions) and when mentioned it was always associated with strategic ends, such as providing a tool for the quality assurance process which was regarded as a general institutional goal, facilitating all mobility ventures by providing an international standard for the description of contents and duration of courses, common scales of grading and of workload, as well as improved advance information for students. Finally, it was also seen by one institution as a first step to Europeanise the less European-minded.

Cooperation in ODL (open and distance learning) seemed to be of minor importance since it was raised only by representatives of one institution. These also
costs of their European and other international cooperation activities might soon be history.

- Behind the absence of prioritisation and strategic development of European cooperation activities, there seemed to nevertheless be some suggestions of strategic thinking with respect to intra-institutional communication: at many institutions, much attention was devoted to the relation between central and faculty levels, and to the need for well-established consensus to obtain lasting results. The comparative trouble to which institutions went to coordinate the input to the SOCRATES application may be regarded as part of that picture.

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

A striking feature of the site visit stage of this project which should be mentioned first is the extensive consensus which existed regarding the central innovations of SOCRATES/ERASMUS and the advantages and disadvantages of its implementation.

The reports of the site visits have revealed, most importantly, that the SOCRATES institutional approach, while criticised in some of the details of its current implementation, is widely appreciated in principle, not only by central level administrators but also by most academics. However, some of the details of its implementation are seen as in tension with advantages and opportunities it offers:

The institutional contract mechanism has resulted in widespread changes with respect to the implementation of European and international cooperation at EU institutions of higher education. In particular, it has increased the need for coordination at all levels and has entailed centralisation of the institutional structures for implementing SOCRATES (and often also other European and international cooperation activities). More coordination and transversal communication between faculties, particularly at larger decentralised institutions, has led to greater transparency, which in turn has offered more opportunities for mobilisation of hitherto less active areas of a given institution. All of these effects have been appreciated and are seen as leading to an actual or potential increase in the quality of cooperation.

- In order to realise the potential of the above-mentioned effects, however, some other SOCRATES modalities should support these positive effects. The increased communication and coordination which could be witnessed at most of the visited institutions could only result in “responsibilising” all institutional levels in the long run if such increase of responsibility were also reflected in a greater increase of flexibility in disposing of the very limited SOCRATES funds.
The above-mentioned increase of transparency and opportunities for mobilisation, both in terms of less active departments as well as in terms of less well-established activities such as curriculum development, is regarded as potentially extremely beneficial but only if it is matched by appropriate, i.e. considerably increased funds. As ongoing activities tend to continue and even increase slightly as far as number of mobile individuals are concerned, additional activities would imply additional costs so that efforts to mobilise new participants or to encourage new ways of cooperating should be undertaken only if additional funds were added to the existing ones. Otherwise, the wide-spread disappointment or raised expectations which were reported at the visited institutions could result in lasting resignation and loss of innovative potential. Already now, the site visits bore witness to consequent policy changes toward concentration on basic activities such as student and teaching staff mobility to the detriment of the will to Europeanise curriculum development and design more intensive programmes. A fair number of institutional representatives have begun to recognise the strategic importance of joint curriculum development for their institutional development and internationalisation, and feel this should be reflected in an appropriate increase of European Union funds for this purpose.

An increase of institutional support of and commitment to cooperation activities could be witnessed at most visited institutions. Moreover, at institutions at which European or international policies were not developed in the past, the need to do so and to establish the appropriate procedures for this task (if none of the existing ones lend themselves to this end) seems to be felt more and more widely. The fact that SOCRATES supports this development is held to be very positive not just by administrators but also by many academics. It again implies increased responsibility and accountability at all institutional levels. As this greatly appreciated effect of the SOCRATES mechanism seems to have been intended by the Commission, it is not understood by many of the interviewed representatives why such “responsibilisation” is not matched by “an attitude of trust” of the Commission toward the universities which would be reflected in relaxed rather than increased details of accounting being required at the end of each contract duration. Of course, this wide-spread criticism is based on the assumption that the Commission can design its specific policies rather freely and does not take into account that tighter financial controls are often the result of Member State policies and general financial control imperatives. It should be retained, however, that university representatives regard less restrictive requirements and a simplification of procedures as vital complements of the new institutional procedures which are as yet missing.

If strategic planning can help to make institutions more responsible, proactive, and accountable – as most interviewed people seem to agree it would – some of
the needed changes and the development of less improvisational, more strategic procedures would be greatly facilitated if the Commission likewise became more calculable and transparent in its strategic choices, in the selection process and regarding the distribution of the available funds. Continuity, some interviewed representatives felt, should be ensured most of all to the strengths and successes of the programme, be it, e.g., that very successful intensive programmes should continue to receive support (against SOCRATES seed philosophy) or that the widely appreciated practice of networking should continue to be encouraged with appropriate resources.

- While the support for strategic planning and policy development is generally appreciated, many institutional representatives have voiced concerns that some of the opportunities for strategic or even simple planning are lost because of the difficult timing of SOCRATES application and award procedures: E.g., while the application and bilateral agreements, have to be concluded so early that predictions of the numbers of students and teaching staff exchanged are subject to change, the publication of available money is so late that contribution of foreign teaching staff cannot be embedded into normal curricula, that ERASMUS students end up being able to decide on their courses long after home students have had their chance so that many previously agreed programmes of studies cannot be realised. A full-fledged integration of ERASMUS activities into the normal institutional life is often prevented by late award decisions and publications.

- SOCRATES has taken away administrative tasks from individual academics, which has been generally appreciated by those concerned, but it has also greatly increased the administrative burden of departmental, faculty and institutional coordinators (perhaps not proportionally in comparison to the decrease of work for former ICP-coordinators but considerably enough to be often experienced as too much for the new coordinators involved). Such increase could be greatly moderated if fewer details, which are often merely speculative at the moment at which they have to be given, were required in the application. This would help to counter the current impression of SOCRATES implying a disproportionate amount of bureaucratic work for low awards.
– The new emphasis on institutional support and commitment has begun to take root in the institutional landscape and is widely appreciated by institutional representatives at all levels, including individual academics who have been active in ICPs and others who have been most affected by the changes of implementation. However, the benefits of the widely appreciated increase of commitment on the part of institutional instances, which SOCRATES has greatly helped to bring about, should not be, according to most persons interviewed, undermined by a lack of encouragement of the commitment and motivation of individuals. Many of the individual academics interviewed seem to show such signs of demotivation, which worried central administrators and academic administrators alike. It seemed that such de-motivation did not derive from any lack of consultation regarding the application and its EPS but can be attributed mainly to two factors, the lack of sufficient opportunities to meet in transnational cooperation networks, and the low success-rate and funding levels for curriculum development and intensive programmes which made the extensive efforts involved in their application appear disproportionate. The care taken to add to past ERASMUS achievements the much-needed asset of embedding cooperation activities in a context of institutional commitment and support makes sense only if the initiatives which generate the activities in the first place were recognised and rewarded. Otherwise “SOCRATES would become a luxury sportscar without an engine” as one interviewee formulated.

The decrease of opportunities to meet in multilateral meetings deserves an additional separate mention since it was also often commented on by other types of interviewees. Such multilateral meetings are not only motivating occasions for academics but, according to many academics, offer advantages of efficiency and stimulating potential which, they argue, could not be equalled by the sum of bilateral meetings between all its participants. Often problems which occur in cooperation activities are apparently solved more easily in such wider form where partnerships are also extended and plans for future cooperation forged between groups of partners. Such networks are seen as performing an entirely different function from the Thematic Networks, which are widely appreciated as offering the opportunity of reflecting on current practice and future development of education and cooperation in a given field, but do not address the particular needs and concerns of a given smaller group of cooperating partners. While most academics admit that former ICPs had a tendency to meet more often than necessary it was now felt that the correction had gone too far. Multilateral partnerships between whole institutions were also mentioned as providing advantages which the sum of bilateral contacts could not offer. In general, the frequent references to multilateral forms of cooperation for various purposes and on different levels suggest that the latter deserve to be given closer attention than the context of this project has allowed.
### Table 1: Role of Different Institutional Levels in Preparing SOCRATES Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Rector/highest institutional level (acad. and adminis.)</th>
<th>International office</th>
<th>Faculty/group of dep.</th>
<th>Departments and individual academeces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 (P) | • Rector responsible, represented by vice-rector who takes initiatives and is actively interested, involved in drafting EPS  
• Decisions are voted on by senate and amply prepared by senate-appointed Task Force | • Key actor, general coordinator, mobilising function especially regarding inactive dep., facilitates communication between faculties, information and promotion of progr., preparation of contract  
• Main role in drafting EPS | • Faculty represented at Senate and in SOC Task Force which is resp. for drafting EPS  
• Faculties draft their own respective policies on the basis of past activities and proposals  
• Coordinate departmental activities | • Faculty nominates department coordinators who are responsible for passing on information on SOC, collecting, co-ordinating proposed activities, selecting partners and students, controlling compatib. of programmes of study at partner institutions  
• Coordination work shifted from individual academics to departmental to faculty coordinators  
• Individual academics with experience with particular partners and or countries are nominated to act as advisor for all students interested in going to this institution/country  
Individual academics can and do frequently contact central offices for information and advice directly too |
| FIN | • Rector makes final decision on funding distribution of SOC award after vice-rector's and int. office's proposal  
• ERASMUS Committee (comprising representatives of each faculty, students, fin. admin. and int. office) already established in past; was transformed into SOC com without any change |
| --- | --- |
| • International education services part of student office at central level, dealing with student and staff exchange; expected to provide more advice and guidance with respect to applications for teaching mobility, intensive programmes etc.  
• Teaching staff mobility which is not linked to student mobility is dealt with by financial office which also deals with all research cooperation  
• Financial office became more involved in SOC than in ERASMUS, made member of SOC committee |
| • Key role in ensuring academic substance, institutional policy to keep main responsibility with faculties and departments  
• 5 faculties have one staff position for international cooperation, two departments have half a staff person deal with international coop. |
| • Departments deal with a lot of the administrative burden, e.g. the bilateral contracts, most of the administrative procedures regarding student grants |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DK</th>
<th>• Rector perceived by academics as having a strong hand in international policies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Key actor, information and promotion of programme, preparation of contract, coordination of all activities, tutoring of students, takes over administrative burden from academic activists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Wishes of faculties, departments directly taken up in application (without changes)  
• Faculties and dep. provide top-up funds for teaching staff mobility  
• Some international officers remain at faculty level but these also have general func- |
| • Coordination work shifted from individual academics to departmental to faculty coordinators (even curricular coordination)  
• Formerly active individual academics often given tasks by deans or heads of departments |
| 5 (GR) | Rector's tasks delegated to secretary general and vice-rector for financial planning and development who wrote the EPS  
- Decisions made by highest academic body (senate) after preparation by SOC committee | International office just established (for SOCRATES) but staffed with someone unfamiliar with European Union programmes and history or recent changes of ERASMUS, i.e. needing help more than providing it | SOCRATES committee representing faculty interests, composed of one representative from each department and more active ERASMUS activists, nominated by senate; discussing key issues  
- Senate makes financial and other decisions | EPS (written by vice-rector) circulated but not well-known to academics apart from representatives on SOC committee  
- Otherwise ECTS departmental and coordinators significant in application process |
| 6 (F) | Vice-president for int. rel. chairs committee of international relations in which all departments are represented and which decides on IC application | Director of Int. Rel. prepared EPS and, as part of committee for Int. Rel., also the IC application which was discussed and approved by this committee.  
- International Relations Office also responsible for coordinating the departmental proposals (no filtering) and motivating less enthusiastic | No grouping of departments mentioned, only the committee of international relations in which all departments are represented | Each department named a SOC coordinator (often, not always member of the committee of int. rel.) as relay between committee and each department  
- Proposals were initiated by individual academics of the departments  
- Departments are responsible for contact with and selection of outgoing students, welcome and integration of |
| 7 (IRL) | Vice-president for development and external affairs decided on EPS upon guidance of Int. Rel. Office. External affairs committee and body of governors consulted | Director of Int. Rel. and European Affairs Officer drafted the EPS, consulting the vice-president and committee for development and external affairs. Also responsible for information and advice to staff. European office (part of International Relations Office) coordinates information and documents, stimulates and facilitates participation in European programmes. International office closely linked with industrial liaison office (also responsible for student placements and careers). | No grouping of departments mentioned. | Departmental SOC coordinators select students, prepare proposals for int. office. Proposals were initiated by individual academics of the departments. Departments are responsible for contact with and selection of outgoing students, contacts, partners, study programmes, recognition. Overseas students' officer welcome and integration of incoming students. |
| 8 (GB) | Vice-chancellor represented by deputy for | International office just created (not for but | Some very active departments are represented on SOC. | Departments collect proposals of individual academ- |
### academic affairs

- Vice- chancellor is advised but not controlled by the academic board composed of representatives of all faculties, also in close touch with head of European development

### coincidental with SOC

- Key actor: head of European development, second person in Int. Office, facilitates, mobilises, cases contact between faculties
- International office cooperates with and coordinates the SOC working group which submits proposals and ideas to the international committee which have to then pass the academic board and be decided upon by the deputy vice-chancellor for academic affairs

### working group which submits proposals and ideas to the international committee where there are representatives from all faculties (grouping of departments). Proposals then have to pass the academic board and be decided upon by the deputy vice-chancellor for academic affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9 (E)</th>
<th>Rector represented by and relying on vice-rector for international relations on whose shoulders most of the SOC coordination rests</th>
<th>Central office for SM just created</th>
<th>Senate, highest academic governing body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plans to create SOC committee with faculty delegates to define policy, co-financing plan, distribution of funds</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Academic staff involved and responsible at all levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10 (NL) | • Rector not involved and unaware of SOC matters (include IC result), advised by board of advisors of his trust  
• Decisions on overall SOC application and EPS only made on top, central level | • International office will be transferred to faculties in line with new national university law; current international officer left position due to insecurity  
• Management of membership in some networks | • Faculties will become more autonomous than in past, also in their policy-making, will have their own funds and international relations  
• Represented in university council over which rector formally presides though consultation on SOCRATES practically non-existent  
• Faculty student advisors have key role in implementation of SOCRATES  
• Faculties decide on choice of partners | • Academic staff considered SOCRATES an administrative affair, not engaged, neutral to SOCRATES matters |
| 11 (I) | • Rector, represented by his SOCRATES (new) delegate, chairs the SOCRATES committee; together with the vice-rector for international relations, they | • International relations office has been set up with 5 staff persons and is key in the process of coordination and implementation of SOCRATES. It also deals with research & development  
• Every faculty nominates 2 SOCRATES delegates who meet regularly every month as the SOCRATES committee  
• Faculty exam committee deals with recognition whereas this was up to individuals | • Individual academics make proposals, which get passed on to the SOCRATES committee where no proposals are cancelled |
| 12 (I) | • Rector represented by vice-rector for international relations who is responsible for SOCRATES who in turn is appointed a SOCRATES delegate in charge for the programme’s coordination  
  • SOCRATES delegate wrote EPS in consultation with faculty delegates and in concordance with rector | • Head of int. rel. responsible for logistics; cooperates closely with SOCRATES delegate and rector (vice-rector often by-passed)  
  • Additional personnel hired for SOCRATES | • Two SOCRATES delegates per faculty nominated  
  • Faculties set their own priorities in research and education while international relations policy originates more from central level | • All ideas and initiatives for activities generated by individual academics; their proposals are collected and integrated into the Institutional Contract application without filtering on any level |
| 13 (F) | • Directing Committee responsible  
  • Institutional policy also influenced on Chamber of Commerce | • Recently established Intern. Director, entrusted by Dir. Com. with SOC process, manages the networks, communicates with partners, organises student mobility, etc. More staff will be employed | • One faculty, EPS circulated to all professors, but de facto little known to anybody | • Content of EPS hardly known to individual academics |
| 14 (GB) | - Vice-chancellor responsible, represented by pro-vice-chancellor for teaching, makes final decision  
- Some attempts to define policy centrally (e.g. key partners) given up; despite knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of different departments, central level did not try to influence departments' requests  
- Institutional SOC. coordinator (assistant registrar) drafted EPS, which was discussed and approved by the SOCRATES steering group | - No details mentioned in report | - SOCRATES steering group set up representing faculties and European Studies department and reporting to vice-chancellor; this consulted departments, collected their proposals without change; also discussed and approved EPS | - Departments select partners, students, focus on student mobility  
- Work done mainly by a few Euroenthusiasts |

| 15 (D) | - Rector decides on policy in close cooperation with int. director  
- EPS not presented to senate for approval | - International office only 3 years old with only one staff person; disposes over only inst. internationalisation funds that the Inst. has  
- Intern. director prepared EPS in minimal consultation with different rep- | - No groups of departments mentioned, senate at which departments are presented were not consulted on European policy | - Input from departments in EPS process minimal; active ERASMUS teachers claim not to have seen the statement  
- Departments presented proposals  
- Intern. contact persons of depart. and international director meet bilaterally on need |
| 16 (S) | EPS prepared, written and approved at faculty level but finally approved by university management committee  
- Rest of application: unfiltered collection of faculty proposals | Not mentioned in report | EPS prepared by international coordinators of each faculty ("school") after input of special ad-hoc int. Committees reflecting on faculty's internat. policy; put together (written) by SOC and int. coordinator of one of the 3 faculties  
- EPS approval by boards of the 3 faculties (schools), then passed on to university management committee  
- International coordinators of each faculty central in IC process, also mobilising  
- Activities prepared by each | Departments collect academics' activity proposals |
| 17 (B) | • The financial and administrative director decides on final proposal and EPS prepared by international office  
• While the International Office Director, the central coordinator, works with departmental coordinators on the details of the IC proposal,  
• The board of institution only discusses strategic internationalisation issues in very general terms; did not have to approve the EPS. | • International Relations Director (as yet only staff member of the office) drafted the EPS in consultation with the departments active in ERASMUS (departmental coordinators and steering committees) and on the basis of their activity proposals  
• He also advises, guides and cooperates with the departments in the development of activities and helps prepare the final proposal for the director of the institution | • No grouping of departments mentioned, only the departmental council which is the decision making body representing the departmental interests  
• departmental coordinators and steering groups prepare proposals which have to be decided on by departmental council and the director. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18 (A) | • Rector responsible for EPS and application but delegates to vice-rector who drafts EPS, coord. the rest of the application and oversees International Relations Gremium of rector and vice-rectors decides on EPS | • International Relations Office (2 and a half staff positions) helps vice-rector in coordinating application  
• Local branch of National Grant Awarding Agency deals with student grant applications, formalities | • No grouping of departments plays a role in SOCRATES application process  
• Former ICP coordinators are still the main actors and decisive in the selection of partners, cooperation initiatives and implementation of EPS (de facto control) |
Table 2: Institutional Structures and Procedures of Consultation and Decision-Making Concerning SOCRATES Application and EPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Central/decentral</th>
<th>Centralisation due to or coincidental to SOCRATES</th>
<th>Procedures/structures introduced because of SOCRATES</th>
<th>Decisions on SOCRATES top-down (t)/bottom-up (b) (e.g. t/b = top-down for EPS, bottom-up for rest of application)</th>
<th>Implication of former ICP-activists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 (P)| Decentral        | Yes,                                              | Yes,                                              | • B/B = bottom-up for identifying activities, fields, partners for coop., selecting, monitoring students, decisions on overall application and policy ideas;  
• Initiatives (projects) come from dep., policy ideas and mobilisation efforts from top;  
• Consultation regarded as sufficient, procedures regarded as efficient and democratic | Yes, former ICP-coordinators became departmental or fac-coordinators |
|      | • (Great faculty autonomy)  
• Cohesion between different levels regarded as well-functioning | • Strengthening of role of Int. Office, and of coordinating functions at central level (creation of SOCRATES Task Force) | • SOCRATES Task Force created (faculty co-ordinators, vice-rector and international director) | | |
| 2 (D)| Decentral        | Yes,                                              | Yes,                                              | • B/B = bottom-up for identifying activities, fields, partners for coop., selecting, monitoring students, decisions on overall application and policy ideas;  
• Top-down for decisions on manag. + organ.; | Yes, former ICP-coordinators became departmental coordinators represented at decision-making body (= SOCRATES board) |
|      | • (Faculties represented in Advisory Board take final decision);  
• Cohesion between different | • Strengthening of role of Int. Office, and of coordinating functions at central level (creation of SOCRATES board) | • SOCRATES advisory board created representing departments | | |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>levels regarded as well-functioning</th>
<th>Consultation regarded as sufficient, procedures regarded as efficient and democratic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Decentral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Central coordination with</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SOCRATES committee but strong</td>
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<td></td>
<td>faculty autonomy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Central level viewed as</td>
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<td></td>
<td>facilitator and soft coordinator</td>
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<td></td>
<td>but not as prime mover</td>
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<td>No,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Since central coordinating and</td>
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<td>decision-making structures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>already in place; no changes</td>
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<td>deemed necessary</td>
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<td>• Hope that in the long run</td>
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<td>internationalisation would be</td>
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<td>embedded in institutional policy</td>
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<td>• Not necessary, since committee</td>
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<td>already in place</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Coincidentally, a committee</td>
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<td>on internationalisation was</td>
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<td>created which suggested that I.</td>
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<td>be one of the institution’s</td>
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<td>priorities</td>
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<td>• B/B = bottom-up for identifying</td>
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<td>activities, fields, partners for</td>
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<td>cooperation, selecting, monitoring</td>
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<td></td>
<td>students, decisions on overall</td>
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<td>application; bottom-up, but with</td>
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<td>more input from top, for EPS which</td>
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<td></td>
<td>was formulated by SOC committee</td>
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<td>with strategic committee and head</td>
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<td>of int. services, draft</td>
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<td>circulated to faculties for</td>
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<td>changes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Decentral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• With strong central coordination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(faculty deans have offices in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>cent. administration building)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Faculties autonomous</td>
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<td>Yes,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prior to SOC faculties had their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>own int. office and int. educ.</td>
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<td>committee, now int. office was</td>
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<td></td>
<td>centralised (some SM and TS</td>
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<td>support already dealt with</td>
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<td></td>
<td>centrally before)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Coord. functions at central</td>
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<td></td>
<td>level also strengthened</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yes,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Central SOC committee was</td>
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<td></td>
<td>established, chaired by rector</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• B/B = bottom-up for identifying</td>
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<td>activities, fields, partners for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>coop., selecting, monitoring</td>
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<td></td>
<td>students, decisions on overall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>application; proposals from dep.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and fac. Collected and put into</td>
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<td></td>
<td>application by SOC Committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>without any changes; bottom-up also</td>
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<td></td>
<td>for input on policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>former ICP-active academics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>involved, no details as to how</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | Decentral, | Yes, | Yes, | • T/B = top-down for EPS but based on consultation and ideas of most active academics, some meetings called but not well attended; for rest of application proposals collected and integrated into application without filter  
• Know-how regarding international cooperation exists only here, i.e. at faculty/departmental level  
• Not clear, most academics neither familiar with process of EPS drafting nor with content, but not worried about it, though convinced that having an EPS was good |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5  (GR) | With strong central coordination for SOC and strong input from rector;  
• But central structures weak so far though first attempts are made to remedy this | A new office for international relations was created for SOCRATES functions but the definition of its role, of the necessary training of staff etc. was unclear | Central SOCRATES committee was established, representatives nominated by the senate |
| 6  (F) | Decentral | additional staff for International Relations Office hired (English native speaker) to prepare ECTS brochure | No special procedures |
| 7  (IRL) | Decentral | European officer recently employed (coincidental with SOC)  
• Task force for | No special procedures |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| GB | 8 | Mixed:  
- Until recently decentral but more centralised now: decisions not made on the collegiate model any longer but in a more corporate hierarchy, however, upon consultation of academic board of the institution | Strategic planning set up (coincidental to but not because of SOC) to make proposals for strategic initiatives from central administration |
| GB | 8 | Yes,  
- An international office was set up at central level and a head of European development appointed as part of that office; these changes occurred simultaneously to SOC and while not initiated by SOC were helped by the IC mechanism | Yes,  
- A SOCRATES working group was established with former ERASMUS activists |
| GB | 8 | • T/B = top-down for EPS decision, although input of ideas from active ERASMUS academics of SOCRATES working group and departmental representatives of international committee; bottom-up for rest of application with proposals being integrated without filter into the IC application  
• But some filtering may be applied in future by central level (Int. Off. And deputy vice-chancellor) due to limited funds | • Former ICP-activists were involved in the SOCRATES working group |
| E | 9 | Decentral  
- Institution is a group of several technical schools (25 years ago) which have re- | Yes,  
- Central student office set up, centralised student flow management and overview of activities |
| E | 9 | Yes,  
- Intention of setting up SOCRATES committee for coordination and | • T/B = top-down for EPS with input of ideas from faculties but decision only at level of rector and vice-rector ("a one-person task without any involve- |
| 10 (NL) | Mixed, in transition  
- Decisions on SOC central with no SOC committee but with input from faculties  
While currently still centralised, the institution will become more decentralised: managerially faculties will have more autonomy, with their own international relations staff | No,  
- Decentralisation because of national law | No special procedures |  
- T/T = top-down for EPS with no input of ideas from faculties mentioned; bottom-up for identifying activities, fields, partners for coop., selecting, monitoring students but top-down for final decision on overall application and EPS: proposals from dep. and faculties collected and submitted for approval to rector’s board of advisors where final decision is made without feed-back to faculties | Not visible, SOCRATES seen more and more as administrative affair of little relevance to academics; no knowledge of EPS among interviewed academics |
| 11 | Decentral | Yes,  
- The management and implementation of mobility has been centralised (selection of students, set of criteria, decision by committees not by individuals), an international office has been set up, coordinating SOC and other international cooperation tasks | Yes,  
- A committee with faculty delegates has been formed to deal with SOCRATES issues |  
- T/B = top-down for formulation of EPS (in the hands of the vice-rector or his delegate) with no input from faculties; bottom-up for rest of application: proposals are collected at departmental level and forwarded to the committee which does not apply a filter. |  
- Former ICP coordinators act as SOCRATES promoters at departmental level |
| 12 | Decentral | Yes,  
- Change to SOC brought the programme closer to the rectorate, more directly under his attention but while SOC management has been centralised, the programme was not yet integrated with the overall planning at central level, not even in the area of international relations | Yes,  
- A committee with faculty delegates has been formed to deal with SOC issues |  
- T/B = top-down for formulation of EPS (in the hands of the vice-rector or his delegate) with no input from faculties; bottom-up for rest of application: proposals are collected at departmental level and forwarded to the committee which does not apply a filter. |  
- Former ICP activists have often become faculty delegates  
- Almost all departmental contributions to the application came from former ICP coordinators |
| 13 (F) | Central | Yes,  
- Creation of an international directorate not for / but coincidental with SOCRATES (formerly only one member of directing committee responsible for int. affairs) as a result of expansionist internat. strategy | No special procedures mentioned | - T/B = top-down for EPS (no input from faculties mentioned), more bottom-up for proposals for which no central level filter is mentioned but financial incentives may serve to initiate activities at departmental level |
| 14 (GB) | Mixed, decentral becoming more central  
- Pro-vice-chancellor for teaching makes final decision upon advice of SOCRATES steering group or European operations group which represents the faculties, external relations office, bursar, academic secretary | Yes,  
- Through the European operations group which (more than the SOCRATES steering group) monitors the formerly bottom-up approach | Yes,  
- SOCRATES steering group set up reporting to the vice-chancellor, with representatives from each Faculty, member of European Studies department, representatives of financial administrators and SOCRATES coordinator;  
- Since then, SOCRATES | - B/B = until now bottom-up for EPS which ended up being mostly activity-based; bottom-up for activities  
- Since establishment of European operations group more top-down, i.e. becoming T/B |

- Former activists are still the driving force behind activity proposals but mainly interested in student and teaching staff mobility |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>steering group has been replaced by European operations group, now main policy actor</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 15 (D) | Central | Yes,  
- Plans for establishing an institutional budget for internationalisation | No | • T/T = top-down for EPS and rest of application  
- Former activists are still current activists as far as initiatives for proposals are concerned, although very disappointed by results; however, in general they were not consulted on policy |
| 16 (S) | Decentral  
- Recent merger of three schools which have retained independent identities with different priorities and policies and very decentralised | Yes, but only slightly  
- Some additional coordination and communication between faculties | Yes,  
- Some faculty committees formed ad hoc for SOCRATES purposes | • B/B = bottom-up for EPS and rest of application  
- Established ERASMUS structures used for SOC |
| 17 (B) | Decentral  
- With plans to have more central coordination | Yes,  
- International Relations Office recently created simultaneously with the recent merger of the ingredient institution | No,  
- Established ERASMUS structures used for SOC | • T/B = top-down for EPS (although EPS mainly statement of ongoing activities) with a very centralised decision-making process, in the sense that the General Director has  
- Former ICP-activists particularly from one school still central in the process |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Decentral</th>
<th>Yes, with strong central coordination and planning</th>
<th>Yes and No, with the EPS being decided upon at the centre. The rest of the application is coordinated at the centre.</th>
<th>Most decision-power, but in reality, departments are still rather autonomous since central policy is not more than the sum of departmental proposals; bottom-up for activity proposals.</th>
<th>T/B or B/B = top-down as far as writing and deciding on EPS is concerned; however, implementation depends entirely upon individual actors and their initiatives.</th>
<th>Former activists are still the main actors upon whose initiative SOCRATES depends (some have dropped out, others have joined).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 (A)</td>
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</table>
Table 3: Perceived Effect of SOCRATES Application on Institutional Attitudes Towards Communication and Mobilisation, and in Terms of Self-Awareness, Commitment and Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Internal communication</th>
<th>Self-awareness</th>
<th>Mobilisation</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 (P) | - Transversal commun- ication strengthened  
       - Better coordination possible  
       - Increase of transparency appreciated  
       - Consultation and comm. on SOCRATES matters generally regarded as collegial and consensus-oriented | - Yes, SOCRATES preparation contributed substantially to better definition of European policy perspectives  
       | - General mobilising effect upon initiative of centre (especially International Office) | - Substantial funds and human resources provided by institution for SOCRATES activities  
       | - More bureaucracy at central and faculty level  
       - But less organisation and bureaucratic work for individual academics who are not departmental coordinators  
       | - Despite greater institutional commitment, commitment of individual academics still regarded as vital for maintaining academic quality of cooperation and level of initiative  
       | - Reduction of funds for regular meetings, i.e. personal contact among teachers and partner institutions perceived as de-motivating |

| 2 (D) | - Transversal communication strengthened and  
       - Better coordination of development strategy made possible  
       - Transparency appreciated  
       - Consultation and comm. on SOCRATES matters generally regarded as collegial and consensus-oriented | - Yes, SOCRATES preparation contributed substantially to better definition of European policy perspectives and  
       | - Faculty of medicine mobilised  
       - No institutionalised incentives  
       - For TS: too much work with lack of recognition in terms of career advancement | - Substantial funds and human resources provided by institution for SOC activities  
       | - More bureaucracy at central and faculty level  
       - Less organisation and bureaucratic work for individual academics who are not departmental coordinators  
       | - Commitment to European dimension well-spread, seen as contribution to institutional development  
       | - Reduction of funds for regular meetings, i.e. personal contact among teachers and partner institutions perceived as de-motivating |

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Emerging European Policy Profiles of Higher Education Institutions

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</table>
| 3 | • Hope that more joint action and communication would be taken in future across faculties  
  • Some coordination across departments is welcomed but not viewed as essential | • Yes, Institutional Contract process sharpened institutional profile in social sciences more strongly  
  • Hope that in the long run internationalisation and SOCRATES policy would be embedded in insti. policy  
  • EPS viewed at central level as helpful frame of future activities  
  • Despite SOCRATES, intention of increasing international activities without a strong role of the centre and without strong strategic emphasis; based on the assumption that the departments are the prime movers and guarantors of aca- | • Institutional support for teaching staff mobility given to programmes newly developing international components | • Substantial funds and human resources provided by institution for SOCRATES activities  
  • Substantial efforts in foreign language provision including tough language requirements for home students and wide offer of courses in English  
  • Elaborate system of support for incoming students  
  • Some departmental top-up for teaching staff | • Strong fear that the discrepancy between substantial efforts and low awards may result in great frustration regarding SOCRATES and reduce the number of academics investing time, energy and imagination into SOCRATES activities  
  • Certain, however, that the intention to further internationalise the institution would not be overshadowed by this |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 (DK)</th>
<th>Demic quality of cooperation</th>
<th>5 (GR)</th>
<th>6 (F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Coordination between faculties already common before but strengthened through SOCRATES</td>
<td>• Yes, greater awareness of internal dimension in all central decision-making</td>
<td>• Communication about SOC intense at top-level but hardly filters down to the rest of the institution</td>
<td>• More transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Developmental plans already required by national law</td>
<td>• No noticeable changes in self-definition or awareness</td>
<td>• No, no mentioned changes of self-definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No mention of particular mobilisation attempts apart from general increase of level of incoming student mobility</td>
<td>• No mention of particular mobilisation attempts but hopes that with stronger central structures these will follow</td>
<td>• SOCRATES application seen as a tool to mobilise European dimension even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Costly and far-reaching measures to make institution attractive to foreign students and teachers, including wide course offer in English</td>
<td>• Institutional funds provided for additional support to outgoing students, incoming teachers, improving infrastructure of international office</td>
<td>• Very positive attitude to internationalisation on all levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong commitment to quality of cooperation</td>
<td>• Special crash courses in home language and increased social integration for incoming students</td>
<td>• Departmental cooperation initiatives easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Fear that the discrepancy between high expectations and low awards may result in demotivation</td>
<td>• After efforts to mobilise, hopes were raised and disappointment and consequent de-motivation according greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Further in already active department and start Europeanising hitherto inactive ones</td>
<td>Receive institutional support</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (IRL)</td>
<td>- Enhanced communication between administrative support services and departments</td>
<td>- Yes, internationalisation principles and issues have become more prominent in 'normal' structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Level of information about SOCRATES very diverse</td>
<td>- Great change in institutional awareness at central level: need felt to develop international coop. Strategies (reflected in May 1997 Report of Task Force of Strategic Planning)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Greater awareness of opportunity costs regarding places of incoming students from the EU which could otherwise be filled</td>
<td>- Mobilisation as yet minimal but significant increase in subsequent years foreseen upon strategic initiatives of central administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Great commitment, moral and financial, at central and departmental level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (GB)</td>
<td>by paying overseas students</td>
<td>9 (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</table>
| • More communication between faculties on European cooperation matters  
• More prominent European policy, especially if it resulted in more success with SOC awards, may lead to more leverage with vice-chancellor | • No, change in self-definition, but opportunity to make the already existing European orientation explicit is appreciated  
• Greater awareness that European partners with compatible profile (stress on access mission and socially student body) should be actively sought after  
• Greater awareness of opportunity costs in terms of lost tuition fees | • Some mobilisation of less active departm. upon initiative of head of European development  
• Great commitment in terms of financial support, infrastructure and human resources as well as top-up for teaching staff mobility  
• Great commitment (time etc.) by some Euro-enthusiast academics | • Additional institutional support and coordination not felt to be a distancing layer  
• Less funds for regular networking meetings felt to demotivating and dangerous because knowledge of partners’ provisions, opportunities to make new ties and trust necessary for solving of little operational problems will disappear  
• SOCRATES preparation contributed to cohesion of institution  
• Some additional communicative channels set up but not yet functioning as designed | • Yes, awareness of the importance of setting up a more transparent and efficient decision-making structure  
• Previously mobilised involvement of new people, activities and proposals, but low award will im- | • Contributes infrastructure of central offices  
• Commitment of academics beginning to wane | • Generally affirmed belief in sense of SOC activities and central ideas of institutional approach but  
• Beginning loss of motivation if academic dimension of cooperation not |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>pose sticking to established already successfully running activities</th>
<th>suitably recognised or supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>Little coordination of and no consultation on SOCRATES policy</td>
<td>No, if anything, SOCRATES serves as confirmation of international profile of institution</td>
<td>None mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>Considerable institutional contribution to SOC costs both in terms of infrastructure and top-up own funds, 200% governmental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>Institutional commitment mainly understood as c. to institution's competitive profile; high commitment to this also by academic body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>Academic staff considered SOCRATES an administrative affair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>More inter-faculty committee communication on SOCRATES matters which were entirely up to individuals before, resulting in more institutional support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>No, no impact yet, internationalisation has become a more prominent issue but has not yet been integrated into the institutional policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>With significant centralisation of SOCRATES mobilisation is quite possible but as yet initiatives come from departmental level and there is no system of incentives (or sanctions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>Strong commitment of central level, including rector, providing substantial support for all physical mobility, incl. top-up funds for staff mobility, hiring lecturer in home language for incoming students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>The old activists are still the ones to make the proposals; some are relieved to have less administrative work others feel they are &quot;losing grip of their babies&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (I)</td>
<td>• More coordination and transparency for central level, notably rector; hence more opportunity for support from institution</td>
<td>• No, self-definition un-changed: widespread awareness of institutional profile and its international dimension and targets of which SOCRATES just forms part</td>
<td>• No explicit policy of mobilisation; activities happen upon initiative of faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (F)</td>
<td>• No mention of effect on institutional communication</td>
<td>• No, Institution has a policy anyway (SOCRATES EPS just administrative issue). But though marginal, SOCRATES supports institution’s definition as international</td>
<td>• Mobilisation of teachers (encouraged to develop joint projects with ICP partner institutions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Institution regards itself as strategic in its development</td>
<td>• Particular programmes mobilised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14 (GB) | • Created more transparency as to key partner institutions, level of involvement in different parts of the institution and extent of imbalances  
• Heightened awareness, at central level of importance of networking between faculty members | • Yes, full extent of imbalance between incoming and outgoing students only now obvious, there is a new feeling that the institution is "subsidising European education"  
• Greater awareness of opportunity costs regarding places of EU incoming students which could otherwise be filled by paying overseas students  
• Heightened awareness, at departmental level, as to work to be done on the international scene | • Faculty of engineering has produced a booklet to promote SOCRA-TES activities  
• "Institutional commitment" is the cost of financing the imbalance of European Union students exchanged without fee which the Financial Administration finds too costly and the central authorities find important enough for the reputation of the institution | • Hopes were high regarding Europeanisation of teaching staff and regular students; with low level of funding, especially for teaching staff mobility, departments and their Euroenthusiasts will be less ambitious in future  
• Discouragement because of low level of outgoing students |
| 15 (D) | • For central level: more overview, more integration, more possibilities to guide initiatives, though as yet more in theory than in practice  
• For academics, no changes mentioned, only the perception that SOCRATES imposes more bureaucratic layers between academics and cooperation opportunities, though no concrete experience of this was mentioned | • No, no noticeable changes in self-definition | • Mobilisation in terms of activities (intensive programme, curriculum development) (which turned out to be unsuccessful with the Commission)  
• No mobilisation of inactive departments not even of the most prominent department (engineering) where there is hardly any ERASMUS activity; instead reinforcement of already strong areas of cooperation | • Strong implicit institutional commitment at central level with plans to match this with some institutional funds as well as a staff recruitment policy in which international experience played a major role  
• Teaching time reduction given to internationally active staff  
• Small group of highly motivated academics mainly in languages, also business and insurance | • After strong efforts to propose intensive programmes, curriculum development, with none of the proposals having been funded, great disappointment among academics involved  
• General view that SOCRATES required a lot of idealism, personal commitment, dedication and free time without respect from other colleagues for it  
• SOCRATES active teachers prefer to get teaching time reduction than departmental administrative unit  
• Some departments had chosen not to become active in SOCRATES because of the perception of too much bureaucracy |

| 16 (S) | • Transversal communication on policy between the "schools" (which are very inde- | • Not mentioned | • Mobilisation of less internationally active faculties and | • Commitment at faculty and central level with human resources and substantial institu- |
| 17 (B) | Major changes in transversal communication occurred not because of SOC but due to recent merger of 3 institutions into one with still problematic inter-departmental relations and a newly established central administration still trying to define itself. | Yes, feeling that the institution should develop a European policy, that it cannot continue operating on ad hoc level but as yet the recent merger of its composite departments makes it too early to make a serious attempt. | Some mobilisation in terms of CD and IP, but no success with COM funding. Special support given to Health Care dep. to become involved in SOC. Fear that the considerable time investment in SOC SM and TS part of application prevents development of participation in other more innovative activities. | Commitment to strengthening international relations at central level with generous ad hoc funding but no institutional budget for int. activities (including top-up for SM and TS grants, and taking over of ICP coordination fees). Central commitment also reflected in giving teaching staff a reduction in teaching load to be involved in activities and coordination. Strong commitment among a small group of highly motivated academic activists. | Due to increase of teaching load (regional policy) there is less time to invest in International activities. Some de-motivation through failed attempts to obtain funding for proposed CDs and IIs. Still strong motivation concerning physical mobility. |
| 18 (A) | • Transversal communication slightly enhanced, transparency considerably increased, better coordination | • Yes, though only slightly: opportunity to mobilise inactive areas seen as well as policy coherence with other programmes | • Some efforts to mobilise inactive departments or suggest partners from the centre; but only very limited response; activities continue to derive from individual’s initiatives | • Considerable financial institutional support (all activities proposed in application will be pulled through, including some payments to partners of intensive programme) | • Motivation still present; no other comments |
Table 4: Major Effects of SOCRATES Application Process on Institutional Structures and Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of effects mentioned</th>
<th>Number of explicit mentions (Yes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centralisation of SOCRATES management structures</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(usually setting up or expanding international office; in 3 cases, centralisation occurred only coincidentally but not for the purpose of SOC)</td>
<td>2 No (1 because central coordinating and decision-making structures already in place for ERASMUS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of new decision-making procedures or body</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(usually a &quot;committee&quot;, &quot;task force&quot; or &quot;working group&quot; was set up with representatives of the faculties or departments)</td>
<td>8 No (existing procedures and bodies used for the purpose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transversal communication strengthened</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 No (one because already strong before)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More coordination at all levels</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 No (one because already well developed before)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of transparency regarding level and distribution of activities, especially at central level</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More communication on policy at top level</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in institutional self-awareness: contributed to more reflection on, definition of European policy and/or institutional profile regarding internationalisation, or acted as tool for self-evaluation regarding international activities and management</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5 of which had not been asked to produce any such policy by any governmental or other agency before)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment at central level strengthened</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped to mobilise</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration regarding discrepancy between input and award at central level</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created more bureaucracy at central and faculty level</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less administrative burden for individual academics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less commitment or less motivation of academics</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Classification of Consultation Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation on EPS</th>
<th>Consultation on rest of IC-application (activity proposals)</th>
<th>Number of institutions which favoured this combination of approaches</th>
<th>Number of cases in which input of ideas was provided by departments/faculties or indiv. academics on EPS</th>
<th>Number of cases on rest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b = bottom-up  
t = top-down
University Responsibility for European Cooperation and Mobility

Andris Barblan
Ulrich Teichler

Preamble

Over the last few years, Europeanization has become a key concept for the development of higher education institutions not only in the European Union but also in other European countries. Academics had always believed that their activities should be judged according to international standards of excellence; however, it is only recently that universities have set up specific institutional structures to support their European activities.

Since 1987, when ERASMUS was launched, higher education institutions have accepted that international exchange — of people and of ideas — leading to joint ventures and common references in teaching and learning is an essential tool in adapting to demands for access to knowledge and relevance of education being made by students, staff and external partners (public authorities or private firms). As a result, ERASMUS became the symbol of mobility, that of a society in which people as well as goods and capital could move freely through and beyond frontiers.

To build on this success, the European Commission institutionalized the cooperation process by asking universities to take conscious account of their growing European visibility in their strategic development. The universities were asked to subsume most educational activities supported by the European Union into one institutional contract, which was to become part of the institution’s general Euro-

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1 The item „universities“ is here used generically for all institutions of higher education.
pean policy. The contract was the key to SOCRATES, the new EU educational exchange and mobility programme addressing secondary education (the COMEN-IUS strand) as well as higher education (the ERASMUS strand).

Institutions were thus encouraged to develop a comprehensive understanding of the tools available to them for increased European visibility, not only in terms of student mobility but also in terms of curriculum development, recognition issues, new communication technologies or thematic networks.

This had important managerial consequences. When requesting SOCRATES funding, higher education institutions had to submit an application bringing together all their exchange and cooperation activities, and supported by a coherent European Policy Statement, a document outlining the planned development of the European dimension of their activities. In operational terms, it also implied that related coordination and monitoring functions would lie with the institutional centre, even if the implementation of activities would take place at departmental level.

The Association of European Universities (CRE) proposed to the Commission in late 1996 to make a detailed analysis of the some 1600 European Policy Statements received for the first round of SOCRATES applications. This would allow for identification of the opportunities and constraints that shape the development of a European policy at university level:

- were higher education institutions able to select coherent objectives in order to propose projects converging into an institutional sense of common purpose?
- were they incited to set up procedures to define institutional priorities, to design support structures, to allocate and share resources for European activities?
- was SOCRATES perceived as an opportunity to develop strategy, was the opportunity seized, and did it improve cooperation and mobility?

This type of analysis would echo CRE's reflection on interuniversity collaboration as expressed earlier by its 1996 aide-mémoire to higher education institutions wishing to prepare a European strategy. The study would also draw on the expertise in evaluation accumulated by the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work in Kassel, whose Director, Ulrich Teichler, would act as academic coordinator for the project.

The European Commission accepted a project that would be developed in three stages during the year 1997:

- an analysis of all European Policy Statements (EPS) submitted by higher education institutions as part of their first application for SOCRATES funding in

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2 This document entitled Universities' European Strategies was first drafted by Andris Barblan, CRE's Secretary General, and published by the European Commission in March 1996.

3 Ulrich Teichler had been asked by the Commission to evaluate The ERASMUS Experience, which is also the title of the report on the subject.
1996. This analysis was carried out by Barbara Kehm, from Halle-Wittenberg University, the coordinator of a five-member research team; site visits to some twenty higher education institutions in EU Member States. This would be an opportunity to validate the results of their EPS analysis and also to explore the potential of strategic action at the central level of higher education institutions. These visits were carried out by a team coordinated by Sybille Reichert, from Constance, who also examined the visit results;

three workshops mobilizing SOCRATES actors at different levels of responsibility within higher education institutions: rectors, international relations officers and academic staff involved in cooperation. They were able to comment on their experiences with the first round of SOCRATES, in the light of the preliminary results from the EPS analysis and from site visits. These workshops were organized by the CRE Secretariat in Geneva.

We would like to express our gratitude to all these collaborators and experts. They participated fully in the development of the project and, without their impressive dedication, we would not have been able to write this report. CRE would also like to thank the members of the project's Advisory Board, representatives of other organizations interested in interuniversity cooperation in Europe, for the critical support brought to the study and to the workshops. Finally, we appreciated the assistance of the SOCRATES team at DGXXII during the project's implementation.

1 The Report

The ensuing remarks are divided into four main parts:

research;

an analysis of the processes of adaptation engineered by institutions facing the managerial challenge of a global European policy;

a discussion of the European strategies prevailing among institutions of higher education, and of their strengths and weaknesses;

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4 The team members were: Manuel Assuncao (Aveiro, Portugal), Lieve Bracke (Ghent, Belgium), Jochen Hellmann (Hamburg, Germany), Zoe Miariti (Thessaloniki, Greece) and Outi Snellman (Rovaniemi, Finland).

5 The team members were: Alison Browning (Warwick, United Kingdom), Claudio Borri (Florence, Italy), Christian Delporte (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium) Julia Gonzalez Ferreras (Bilbao, Spain), Jeroen Torenbeek (Utrecht, The Netherlands) and Hans de Wit (Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

6 Advisory Board members were: Hilary Callan (European Association for International Education - EAIE), Edward Dhondt (European Association of Higher Education - EURASHE), Inge Knudsen (Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences), Pieter de Meijer and Nadine Burquel (European Centre for the Strategic Management of Universities - ESMU) and Marijke van der Wende (Academic Cooperation Association - ACA).
– a summary and a series of recommendations to the European Union, the Member States and to the universities for improving the conditions of institutional strategic thinking about European cooperation.

This report focuses on the European Policy Statements and the working processes set up for European activities by institutions requiring SOCRATES support; its conclusions relate to these points only and do not refer to the way universities face global institutional challenges – financial, pedagogical, or otherwise – even if a European strategy, in each specific institution, must take into account the structures and culture of the university. Moreover, the EPS might not reflect fully the institution’s intentions and envisaged activities, since its preparation was often made independently from that of the SOCRATES work programme. Furthermore, the institutions selected for the visits, or the participation in the workshops – events that involved many experts – cannot be perfectly representative from a statistical point of view. The unavoidable subjectivity of the actors presenting their views of the programme, the normal biases of the experts analyzing the EPSs, undertaking the site visits or summarizing the results of the conferences should be kept in mind.

These methodological limitations notwithstanding, we believe that this report provides a valid account of SOCRATES in its initial state, as well as well-founded recommendations. In spite of the diversity of European higher education institutions and the broad spectrum of actors’ points of view, many common observations came to the fore, indicating profound convergences about the challenges and achievements of SOCRATES and its potential as a tool for European policy in higher education, if it were to be improved.

2 The Character and Content of the European Policy Statements

1,583 institutions of higher education applied for SOCRATES support in the academic year 1997/98 and formulated a European Policy Statement as a mandatory part of the application. The number of institutions applying was somewhat smaller than the total number of institutions involved in ERASMUS Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) in the preceding year, but not so much smaller that it would indicate a negative impact from the EPS requirement. In fact, representatives of institutions which formulated European Policy Statements would admit only reluctantly that ERASMUS student mobility has become so much a regular part of institutional life that it would be considered unacceptable not to file an application – for bureaucratic reasons, in particular.

Although institutions were formulating European Policy Statements for the first time and no standardized model had been suggested by the Commission, the majority of EPSs showed great similarities in their design. After presenting the insti-
tution and possibly its goals and profile, information was provided about previous international and European activities. The next part typically explained the goals the institution wished to pursue within the SOCRATES framework, a section in which institutions greatly differed in their strategic reasoning. The activities envisaged might already be discussed in this part, notably if the goals had been phrased in operational terms; they might also form the next part of the presentation in which the institution would usually describe various operations aimed at supporting European mobility and cooperation. Frequently, the EPS would end with an emphatic statement concerning the institution's commitment to internationalization, Europeanization and SOCRATES.

The majority of higher education institutions stated clear goals for Europeanization and for internationalization, linked them somewhat to the specific conditions and goals of the institution, and explained the implications of their European and international goals for regular activities of mobility and cooperation within SOCRATES. Unexpectedly, institutions in countries that, traditionally, do not emphasize strongly specific institutional "missions", do not differ very much in the way they describe their European and international goals from institutions in countries where institutional "mission" statements are customary. True, there are some differences according to country in this respect, but they are smaller than expected. The multitude of preparatory discussions and consultations, notably the advice given by national SOCRATES agencies, seems to have played a significant role in the harmonization of the EPS.

It should be noted, though, that the observations made above refer to the "average", the "modal", or the "majority" institutions. There is also a small but significant number of institutions that propose highly targeted and highly consistent European policies; in others, however, a "policy" is barely more than an enumeration of extremely varied activities.

For a substantial proportion of institutions, no need seems to exist for a very targeted formulation of a European policy in terms of linking general institutional goals and fundamental objectives for European and international policy, and no need for "vertical consistency" between goals stated and activities to be undertaken. A substantial number of universities prefer to state their goals in operational terms, for example by pointing to increasing numbers of mobile students, to spreading mobility to previously non-active fields of study, or to increasing the provision of foreign language teaching.

Altogether, institutions of higher education seldom distinguish clearly European from international goals or activities. Here and there, they offer references to a European dimension, citizenship and culture as well as to the European Union, and they also point to many activities which, notably for pragmatic reasons, address partners within Europe exclusively; most institutions, however, use indifferently the terms "European" and "international" or just refer to the term "European" in
response to the potential sponsor's vocabulary. As a rule, higher education institutions do not seem to have a specific European policy, but rather favour a synergy of all international activities in which they are involved. This basically aggregative international approach has as a consequence that many institutions want to include countries not eligible for SOCRATES support into cooperation activities, such as student mobility, teaching staff exchange, curriculum development (for instance, with TEMPUS partners in Central and Eastern Europe).

In most cases, as a result, institutional policies in favour of Europeanization and internationalization do not tend to be very selective and prioritized. Rather, they are all-encompassing and comprehensive, also in terms of content: for instance, institutions are concerned not only to improve the academic experiences of students, but also to provide them with cultural experiences. Cooperation activities should not only be intrinsically valuable for graduates, but also help their future careers. They should not only be valuable in the domain of teaching and learning, but also be closely intertwinined with research and services. They should not only enhance quality, but also provide opportunities for the many. They should not only serve the fields of study in which the institutions had been involved already when benefiting from ERASMUS support, but also include other fields. They should not only focus on well-established ERASMUS traditions, but also address the most recent areas of SOCRATES support. In brief, they should enhance the quality, the profile and reputation of the institution in general.

A detailed analysis of the arguments stated in the EPS, confirmed by the visits and the workshop discussions, shows that one clear priority dominates: most institutions of higher education continue to consider the physical mobility of students as the core element of ERASMUS, also within the new framework of SOCRATES. The support of this activity cannot be replaced by national support; nor made superfluous by reduced scholarship amounts per students; nor compensated by assistance coming from higher education institutions, the students' parents or other sources of income; nor can it be made obsolete by virtual mobility either. The decline of financial support to individual students is not only perceived as a setback for the programme's credibility; it also questions the symbolic importance of European funding, a financial incentive for cross-border exchanges that is also highly regarded for its non-monetary value.

Linked to physical mobility, there is a concern to preserve its academic, social and administrative support, now that departmental networking has been phased out under SOCRATES. Most partners believe that the indispensable minimum quality for organized support, curricular coordination, mutual understanding and trust will collapse if no functional equivalent is found to revitalize the communication among academics that existed in earlier networks. For example, many institutions decided to provide complementary funding for the support of student mobility and
related activities, but refused to allocate funds to other activities promoted by SOCRATES.

The increase of applications for teaching staff exchange, intensive programmes, ECTS, and curricular design can be partly explained then by a will to make up for those communication modalities previously stimulated by grants for the Inter-University Cooperation Programme networks – and no longer available. As mentioned, the view prevails that constant communication between academic partners remains indispensable for guaranteeing the academic quality of study abroad, and for providing a basis of understanding and confidence which makes likely the subsequent recognition of study achievements during the period spent in another European country. According to the institutions, regular SOCRATES support for this purpose is also needed to avoid the erosion of established cooperation and to provide a basis for newly emerging collaboration. Typical of this way of thinking is, for example, a proposal to concentrate teaching staff exchange on younger personnel, thus rejuvenating the core group of key academics who are the real motor of student exchange.

Most institutions do not place in opposition continued support of face-to-face cooperation and the development of a broader range of activities funded by SOCRATES. Thus, they would welcome substantial SOCRATES support for teaching staff exchange aiming to benefit the non-mobile student. Also, the design of specific intensive programmes and curricula is often seen as the natural result of changes provoked earlier in the academic environment by student mobility. Furthermore, SOCRATES support to open and distance learning and to thematic networks meets with positive responses. There seems to be a widespread impression, though, that the SOCRATES programme might become overstretched, running the risk of endangering its core activities for the sake of achieving prominent success in new areas where additional funding would, in fact, be most necessary.

In some cases, however, EPS explanations of activities needing SOCRATES funding are very clearly linked to statements previously made about the European and international goals as well as the institutional objectives of the university. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases, we observe a weak "vertical consistency" between the goals and strategies, on the one hand, and the activities envisaged to implement them, on the other. Often the activities of mobility and cooperation have traditions, dynamics and idiosyncratic causes, which cannot be fully explained or embraced by strategic thought.

Only a minority of institutions embark in elaborate strategic reasoning about the framework of their European Policy Statements, i.e. discussing in detail the strengths and weaknesses of certain options, the costs and benefits expected, the value and the limits of other options, etc. These findings will be addressed again below.
During the site visits and the workshops, the authors of this analysis were often asked whether the European Policy Statements could really be considered valid expressions of universities’ strategic thinking. Frequently, reference was made to debates within the institutions during which the Commission’s supposed strategic intentions, its criteria for decision-making and the way to meet both in order to receive support, were discussed. That so many higher education institutions had given as an objective the widening of ECTS was mentioned most often as an example of opportunistic behaviour. By and large, however, the majority of the EPSs does not give the impression of being sufficiently well formulated – from a tactical viewpoint – to impress those involved in the award process.

3 The Process of Formulating the Policy Statement and the Application

Most institutions of higher education felt the need to restructure their consultative and decision-making processes in response to SOCRATES. Many of them established "committees", "task forces", "working" or "steering groups" – bodies with an "international", "European" or "SOCRATES" label – to consider their international and European activities in a more systematic way. The general awareness within the institution about the role of European and international activities in overall policy and activities of the university was thus raised. In many cases, this was not viewed as a mere response to the need to manage SOCRATES but as a timely stimulus for providing an appropriate institutional platform that could take into account the growing importance of the international dimension in most higher education activities.

Collective reflection was deemed helpful in cataloguing existing achievements as well as identifying imbalances across departments or other units as far as European activities were concerned. It stimulated ideas on common areas for action, or possible cross-fertilization between different parts of the university. It suggested possible moves towards creating synergies between various activities. Many interviewees and workshop participants expected that the impulse given by SOCRATES to institution-wide deliberations on international and European activities would lead to more targeted policies in the future. This should raise the quality of European and international activities by integrating them more fully into the overall profile of the institution while making them an integral part of all major activities.

The key coordinator of the activities undertaken for the SOCRATES application or of the newly established consultative and decision-making committee was not the rector, as a rule, but rather a vice-rector, a dean or an academic designated for that purpose. If the European and international dimension of various activities
rose in strategic status with the advent of SOCRATES, with some exceptions, it has not, as a rule, entered the highest ranks of institutional leadership.

The development of new processes for deliberation and decision-making was also frequent at departmental level. Whereas in the past, the "local ERASMUS directors" had often not been formally recognized as facilitators of international activities, many departments have now appointed coordinators, in view of the fact that international activities have been given higher visibility at the centre. Thus, both at departmental and institutional level, SOCRATES initiated a shift from European and international activities being considered as the hobby of the few to a regular university task.

In most higher education institutions, separate processes were set up to prepare the application for SOCRATES financial support, on the one hand, and to draft the European Policy Statement, on the other. As a rule, the application procedure started off with a call for suggestions on the part of the departments. In this predominantly "bottom-up" process, proposals by sector formed the basis of the application. Additional communication was initiated to define the administrative support required, to entice further applications from less active departments, and to stimulate action in SOCRATES areas forgotten in initial proposals. The final applications largely reflected established activities, somewhat supplemented by projects in areas for which support was newly provided. In contrast, the European Policy Statement, often drafted by the person in charge of the international relations office, frequently showed a visible input from key decision-makers at the centre of the institution. A "top-down" approach was widespread, even though the EPS tended to be discussed in relevant committees, when not widely circulated for discussion before being formally finalized in its official version.

Whatever procedures chosen, and whatever consultation and decision-making bodies established, those responsible at the central level have tried, however, not to give the impression that SOCRATES was a "top-down" affair steered from the centre. Thus, the aggregation of bottom-up suggestions was usually the rule, and clear priority decisions were generally avoided. Of course, detailed procedures differed widely throughout the European Union. Small institutions, monodisciplinary and non-university institutions of higher education, have always tended to handle ERASMUS matters at central level. In contrast, large multidisciplinary universities, whose institutional culture reflects different traditions concerning the roles of the rector and the central administration, tend to consult university-wide committees and to decide action in function of funding decisions, either at the centre or in the departments.

Most interviewees and workshop participants stressed that open clashes about the distribution of power regarding SOCRATES-related activities were successfully avoided. The shift of responsibility from departments situated in different universities to the centre of individual higher education institutions did not evoke
substantial mistrust among academics. However, a loss of enthusiasm and sense of "ownership" on the part of the teaching staff has been felt widely. This has been reinforced by general disappointment about the enormous discrepancy between the financial support requested and the funds actually granted. Those in charge at the centre of the institution, who had often stimulated interest in SOCRATES from less active departments or in new fields open to funding, were sometimes blamed, once the award decision became known, for the energy wasted in planning new activities and in filing complex applications.

SOCRATES clearly demands an increased commitment from international relations offices, which have sometimes been reinforced with specific European desks or administrators in charge of European cooperation. These administrative offices took over the coordination and the formulation of the application, and carried most of the workload resulting from communication with partner institutions. In addition, they often played a role in servicing SOCRATES committees, or in drafting European Policy Statements. This remains true even in those institutions of higher education where part of these functions had been entrusted to departmental administrators. Thus, by supporting institutional policy-making, by coordinating European activities, and by offering administrative services, international relations offices enlarged their institutional responsibilities. This has resulted in a more professional management of SOCRATES matters. Some interviewees pointed out that a nostalgic look back to the old network approach tends to overlook many administrative lapses in the past. On the other hand, the lack of knowledge of the specific academic implications of mobility by international officers was perceived as a danger, if contact with partners were to become simple administrative routine. Professional responsibility could be increased, however, as some observers noted, because the professional competences required from international relations officers have substantially grown over the years; this does not reduce the importance of further professional development for international relations officers, and many suggested that the European Commission should consider supporting such training.

The move from ERASMUS to SOCRATES was perceived as bringing about a substantial increase in the general administrative burden on higher education institutions. In fact, the workload shifted from the academics in the departments to the international offices at the centre – or sometimes to sub-unit administrators. As a result, the amount of administrative tasks required by international programmes became more visible than in the past. However, some of those administrative tasks that were dispersed in the institution are still needed in the framework of SOCRATES: international relations offices cannot settle procedural issues, or even general policy matters, without drawing information from staff in departments, i.e., those people who really know their academic partners and the academic rationale sustaining the cooperation. Because of this additional intra-institutional communica-
tion, the overall administrative load seems to have grown. However, many interviewees and workshop participants agreed that many of the administrative activities were not bureaucratic routine, but valuable processes for increasing the institution’s international and European awareness.

Indeed, SOCRATES requirements concerning evidence of cooperation arrangements with European partners through bilateral contracts were deemed useful in terms of transparency. Thus, the shift from multilateral to bilateral arrangements provided opportunities of severing ties with "sleeping partners", of striving for synergies across different departments, and of steering partnerships in a more strategic manner, i.e., as possible contributions to the quality and reputation of the institution as a whole. Some problems between partners can also be solved more efficiently through direct bilateral communication than through transnational cooperation networks.

However, in some respects, the emphasis on bilateral contracts represents, in the eyes of many interviewees and participants of the conferences, a step backwards as it makes it difficult for all partners to develop common views on the quality of their academic and administrative services and hence to take joint action. The shift of attention away from multilateral organization and the apparent decrease of regular multilateral meetings also seem to weaken the contacts helping the network partners to strengthen the synergies between various types of cooperation activities such as mobility and curriculum development or potential new partnerships. With multilateralism, institutions lost the benefits of multilateral compensation, i.e., the possibility of unbalanced exchanges. Indeed, bilateral negotiations seem to increase moral pressures for bilateral reciprocity. Some interviewees and workshop participants suspect that the bilateral approach could concentrate on mutual collaboration, thus reducing the chances of peripheral higher education institutions or of less prestigious universities to cooperate with strong partners in Europe or to be deeply involved in cooperation and mobility at all.

It should be noted, though, that many interviewees and conference participants did not consider the administrative requirements of institutional applications and bilateral contracts as a suitable approach for reinforcing curriculum development and intensive programmes: if the partners place different emphases on such activities in the framework of their own institutional policy, the activities could suffer from or even be endangered by lack of matching interests.

Whereas some of the problems that surfaced during the first stage of implementation of the SOCRATES programme are adjustment difficulties that will disappear with administrative routine, some dysfunctions, on the contrary, might grow as a combination of disenchantment and routinized central bureaucratic procedures could endanger the academic quality of study abroad.
4 The Strategic Approach

As already expressed in the preceding chapters, European institutions of higher education vary substantially in their strategic practice, in general, or vis-à-vis SOCRATES, in particular. Some institutions had already experienced ERASMUS as a programme of crucial strategic relevance: for them, the new strategic emphasis proposed by SOCRATES was hardly provocative. Others found in SOCRATES a welcomed opportunity to embark on a targeted European and international policy. Yet others did not react to SOCRATES in a strategic manner at all. The potentials and limits of stimulating European policy-making via SOCRATES are more appropriately described by focusing on the majority of institutions, those which responded to the SOCRATES challenge through "soft policies".

Most universities maintained a low profile during the SOCRATES debate and tried to avoid any major targeted decision, i.e., they did not define clear priorities, in order to prevent conflict among the various actors involved in the institution. As a result, they continued to

- encourage renewed applications for all past ERASMUS activities;
- set up extensive modes of communication within the institution in order to discuss and decide on the European Policy Statement and the application for SOCRATES support – if possible in the context of general European and international activities;
- postpone conflicts concerning resource allocation until the moment when the institution would be notified of award decisions by the European Commission;
- mobilize all departments to file applications in as many areas as possible.

This does not mean, however, that these institutions did not respond to SOCRATES in a strategic manner at all. Apart from the fact that a policy of avoidance of major targeted decisions is a strategy in its own right, they took cautious strategic steps that were obvious from the outset.

Firstly, many institutions set the stage for a permanent process of strategic reflection and decision-making. They formally entrusted specific persons with coordination functions at the central level and, sometimes, at departmental level as well. They formed committees and working groups not only to increase transparency, to formalize deliberations and decision-making regarding SOCRATES, but also to elicit synergies between different European and international activities, thus creating an awareness of the role of European and international issues in all activities of the institution. As a result, they often extended the responsibilities of the international relations offices, allocating additional resources so that these offices could act as coordinating agencies of communication and decision-making, as key actors in the preparation of bilateral contracts and the formulation of the application, and as service centres for the growing range of SOCRATES-supported ac-
tivities. In sum, they institutionalized reflection processes, improved infrastructure, established transparency and regulated responsibilities. Thus, in many respects, they increased their potential for strategic action. Through these measures, European awareness has already grown during the first application round for SOCRATES.

Secondly, most institutions made the strategic choice, explicitly or implicitly, of preserving the continuity of what had been achieved under ERASMUS while adapting to the new conditions set within SOCRATES. They reinforced, therefore, activities previously launched, and filed numerous applications for projects in areas of prospective growth or in new fields of interest to SOCRATES.

Thirdly, institutions often decided to utilize resources, both SOCRATES and their own means, in an equitable manner, thus enlargeting the impact of the programme, as well as developing synergies with other European and international activities. Some institutions provided additional scholarships for students when the number of ERASMUS grants was deemed insufficient. Others decided, for example, that an academic could be supported only once for travel abroad; or that funds awarded would be distributed proportionally to the funds applied for; or that the funds allocated to teaching staff would be distributed between departments in accordance with the number of mobile students, etc. This search for equilibrium was also manifest when the people responsible for SOCRATES at the central level decided to stimulate activities in those departments which hitherto had been weakly involved in ERASMUS.

The single area in which a clear and targeted strategic option prevailed was the preservation of the core element of ERASMUS, student mobility; this did require concerted efforts to ensure that student exchange received active administrative and academic support, support built on curricular reflection and on the recognition of study achievements abroad upon return to home institutions. As a consequence, institutions now tried to find a functional equivalent in SOCRATES to the administrative and academic provisions previously embedded in academic networks and site visits. The compensatory measures actually taken by the institutions themselves bear testimony to this concern: they often consist in linking closely with student mobility the resources available for the exchange of teaching staff, for intensive programmes, or for curriculum development.

A similar strategic option could have been chosen to remedy the perceived weakness of multilateral cooperation within SOCRATES. If some steps have been taken by individual academics or departments in order to preserve multilateral cooperation within the context of multiple bilateral contracting, institutions as such have not developed concerted policies at the centre to deal with the problem. They have been overwhelmed by the many administrative tasks required by bilateral contracting, and have lacked the time and imagination needed to reinstate system-
atic and concerted cooperation among many partners, especially when they had been asked simply to produce evidence of bilateral willingness to collaborate.

This does not imply that institutions backed away from those SOCRATES activities extending beyond the traditional core of ERASMUS student mobility. However, while institutions may have sympathised with the Commission’s intentions, they were clearly reluctant to embark on innovative plans without having first consolidated earlier achievements.

Thus, teaching staff mobility was widely viewed as an opportunity to offer a European dimension to those non-mobile students unable to experience other academic cultures. At present, however, the number of teaching staff exchanges tends to decrease. As already mentioned, when institutions emphasize physical mobility as the ERASMUS core that must be maintained, mobile staff primarily serves to reinforce the academic support for mobile rather than non-mobile students, at least as long as no other equivalent measure has been taken to ensure the academic quality of student mobility. Moreover, the overall support for teaching mobility is considered insufficient to meet the challenge of a European dimension for non-mobile students. Finally, the conditions and incentives for the mobility of teaching staff are too precarious to turn such exchanges into a viable programme.

Many institutions of higher education welcomed new and more extensive SOCRATES support for activities like curriculum development and the improvement of teaching and learning. Pilot activities in curricula were a natural spin-off of European student mobility, as students can clearly benefit from innovative course structures and from innovative teaching and learning experiments. Changes in curricula and in teaching and learning modalities can also improve the academic quality of student exchanges, since didactic transformation is usually stimulated by the presence of foreign students who will report on their experiences abroad, thereby disseminating practices linked to educational reform. Therefore, ample potential seems to exist for those embarking on educational pilot experiments, many of which could fit into the operational categories open to SOCRATES support, i.e., intensive programmes, curriculum development, open and distance learning, thematic networks, etc. Most institutions, however, were only willing to take an active part in such projects if the support provided by the Commission were substantial. That is why they preferred selective awards of substance to a thin spread of subsidies over many activities.

The question remains as to why the majority of European higher education institutions did not respond to the challenges inherent in the SOCRATES programme by defining clear operational targets resulting from well-founded strategic priorities. Some reasons seem to rest with the higher education institutions themselves: in terms of self-understanding, many, until now, have not considered themselves as strategic actors; thus, they are challenged when SOCRATES for the first time offers them an opportunity to enter such a role. This also explains why basic
strategic reasoning – i.e., an evaluation by the institution of its strengths and weaknesses, of costs and benefits, of the opportunities and threats shaping its potential for action – is seldom demonstrated in European Policy Statements. It remains to be seen whether the institutions’ views concerning SOCRATES-related activities will become more strategic in the future, despite the fact that, while usually serving a broad range of disciplines, while stimulating innovation in research and preparing students for indeterminate job tasks, universities rightly tend to be cautious when asked to commit their future to specific priority areas. Finally, university management reforms have been frequently advocated in recent years on the assumption that traditional patterns of management and decision-making in higher education really prevent institutions from assuming their responsibilities. Considering these divergent trends, interviewees and workshop participants were unsure about their institutions’ inclination to determine major targets and priorities as far as their European and international activities were concerned.

Most participants nevertheless agreed that large parts of the SOCRATES programme do not really call for major targeted decisions. The view was also that many elements of the SOCRATES scheme, as well as management routines of the European Commission, contradicted deeply the strategic potential inherent in SOCRATES. Five points were referred to most frequently.

(1) The provision of academic education, of foreign language training and of cultural experiences in another European country as well as the strengthening of the European dimension in higher education policies should not be for a select group of students or for chosen sectors of the higher education system only, as they are potentially beneficial to all. Therefore, just as the Commission tries to ensure that student grants are equitably distributed, for instance across countries, across types of higher education institutions, or across fields of study and social categories of students, institutions tend to favour the widest possible dispersion of support rather than allocating funds according to strategic priorities, at least when these funds directly or indirectly address student mobility needs.

(2) SOCRATES funds are awarded to institutions of higher education for the development of European activities. However, the strategy of offering seed-money to incite institutions to find substantial matching resources has lost much of its potential over the years and is likely to become even weaker as higher education institutions are exposed increasingly to severe financial constraints. It is becoming more and more difficult for universities to re-allocate scarce resources to match external grants.

(3) Many interviewees and workshop participants expressed irritation about the way the Commission presents and explains the SOCRATES programme. They point to the contradiction between the rhetoric employed to mobilize the universities’ support for the launching phase of the programme and the limited in-
crease in funds. Calls for action led to growing numbers of applications, so that the relative support of activities in fact decreased. Final awards were much smaller than had been expected and disappointment spread, so much so that key actors fear strong demotivation effects in the near future. Moreover, institutions have difficulties understanding mixed Commission stances about SOCRATES priorities: they observe varied policy statements, hints about preferential treatments accorded to specific institutional policies – a strong allegiance to ECTS for instance –, as well as suggestions for convincing European strategies that would all be most welcome. Whatever the causes of this obscure communication process, it led to wild speculations about the Commission's intentions and selection criteria, speculations that overshadowed the formulation of European policies by the institutions. A substantial proportion of the interviewees and conference participants mentioned that clearly stated and focused strategies by the Commission would reinforce the individual institutions' development of sound European strategies. Thus, too cautious a mix of statements is bound to reinforce rumours, speculations and opportunistic tactics, whereas firm strategies on the part of the Commission should bring about sound and diverse innovation strategies in universities.

(4) Most institutions of higher education deplored what they called the rigidities of the SOCRATES programme. The short-term period for which support is awarded, the minute division of funds allotted to prescribed activities, and the need to determine well in advance of implementation the numbers of students and staff who are to move to each possible partner actually discourage any strategic foresight in function of long-term horizons. Whereas many national governments in Europe try to modernize higher education through substituting itemized funding by yearly financial "envelopes", short-term funding by midterm resource provision, bureaucratic control by a combination of prior targeting and post hoc evaluation, tight prescriptions by empowerment, the European Commission preserves traditional modes of short-term funding, detailed earmarking, limited resource transfer capacity, etc... – all the accounting modalities that discourage responsibility and strategic thinking.

(5) Most representatives of higher education believed that they would develop sounder European policies, in general, or for SOCRATES in particular, if such an effort were recognized and rewarded. As it turned out, the European Commission's grant policy for the first year of SOCRATES was based on separate assessment of applications in function of the different strands of support: the aggregation of resulting decisions could not reflect any encouragement of a global institutional commitment to European strategies, as this was not taken into account. This is in clear contradiction with the claimed desire of SOCRATES to encourage institutions to develop innovative strategies, and to become
clearly responsible for all their activities, thus creating synergies between those activities.

To sum up, one could imagine that, in the future, many European institutions of higher education will consider SOCRATES as a challenge calling for strategic action. Indeed, many universities have already established regular deliberation and decision-making mechanisms. Some even reallocated their own resources in order to multiply the effect of SOCRATES awards. Thus, after initial disappointment, the new opportunities might be seized in a more targeted manner. And this seems all the more likely if the problems deemed inherent to the SOCRATES approach are being redressed and provided funding for new areas of action is forthcoming.

5 Overall Assessment and Recommendations

The transition from ten years of ERASMUS – the old way – to a new ERASMUS within SOCRATES was expected to foster innovative institutional understanding of the process and substance of interuniversity cooperation and exchange activities in Europe. SOCRATES not only pressed for a shift in the content of European activities from a clear focus on academically and administratively organized student mobility to a broad range of educational innovation, but it also aimed to modify substantially the modus operandi of interuniversity exchanges by moving

- from cooperation in networks to bilateral cooperation,
- from predominantly academic support to administrative management,
- from the departments to the institutional centre as the normal level for decision-making, and
- from incremental decision-making to targeted strategies.

Both in terms of substance and procedure, a shift was expected from an ERASMUS student mobility-focused policy toward a comprehensive European strategy.

This important structural shift triggered off controversies in the European higher education community. Some placed high hope in the innovations suggested, whereas others feared substantial setbacks that could even bring the "success story ERASMUS" to an end. After the institutions did their best to explore the potential of SOCRATES and filed complex applications, disappointment set in when the discrepancy between the grants and the funds hoped for finally became clear, a disappointment fuelled by anger at petty bureaucratic regulations.

The present study took some distance from this public debate in order to explore how institutions have actually met the SOCRATES challenge when they prepared for the first year of the programme. At first glance, our results show that most institutions of higher education did not consider the old and the new ERASMUS as an "either-or" proposal, but tried rather to find middle-of-the-road solu-
tions: central decisions combined with strong bottom-up consultations; a European policy, however with relatively weak explicit links between stated policies and suggested activities; an implicit option for "soft" strategies, focusing on student mobility but also willing to embark on additional activities if SOCRATES could provide the necessary resources.

Views might vary on whether this stance should be called "conservatism", "pragmatism", "incremental change" or a predominant and "wise compromise between consolidating achievements and striving for innovation". This study did not only address the ways the institutions have formulated their policies and activities, but also elicited explanations of the options chosen. To the surprise of the analysts, the dominant middle-of-the-road approach between the old and the new was often based on a relatively consensual view of the potential and possible future directions of the SOCRATES programme.

Seven conclusions express this shared understanding:

1. Most institutions of higher education experienced the first application round of SOCRATES as a helpful exercise to develop transparency in their European and international projects; to reflect on the institution's potential and options for action; to consider lines of improvement particularly vis-à-vis neglected areas; to create synergies; and to increase institutional awareness of the relevance of European and international objectives for all the major policies and activities of the institution. Both the increased role of the university centre in the application and management of SOCRATES and the need to formulate a European Policy Statement were usually regarded as essential ingredients of institutional transparency, itself a key to the realization of the potential value of targeted policies.

2. Most institutions of higher education continued to consider student mobility, when embedded in substantial academic and administrative support, as the core of ERASMUS, also within the framework of SOCRATES. They are convinced that the quality of educational and administrative assistance to students will only be preserved if support and incentives are made available for personal and active communication and cooperation among the academics from partner institutions and departments. The support of collaboration with academics from various partner institutions is considered essential, particularly if universities are to reach agreement on curricular issues; to provide academic advice prior to and during the study period; to know the teaching and learning conditions in corresponding de-
partments, if the quality of academic provision in partner countries is the basis for the recognition of student achievements.

Strong involvement of academic staff should be encouraged by universities in order to motivate teaching personnel for European and international education. As a functional equivalent to the old network organization, the European Union is highly recommended to reinstate support for communication and cooperation among academics.

3. Many institutions of higher education would welcome an extension of teaching staff exchange. This could serve not only the traditional mobility of students but also have a purpose in its own right: develop European processes of academic reform and enhancing the European dimension for the non-mobile student.

Universities and national governments should cooperate in lowering existing barriers to teaching staff exchanges while universities, together with the European Union, should provide improved incentives and a sound financial basis for staff exchange. It is also the universities' responsibility to devise policies targeting the most promising areas of European learning for non-mobile students.

4. Widespread consensus indicated that SOCRATES, in addition to support for student mobility and staff mobility serving the non-mobile students, should foster educational innovation based on European and international aspects of academic action, such as avant-garde experiments relevant to European higher education institutions in general. Support for the search of the European "added value" in education would be more efficient, however, if the means were not spread too thinly across the system and if the innovative range of initiatives was not curtailed by minute and segmented categories of eligible activities. Thus, the universities continue to plead for higher financial support. This is not merely a stereotyped claim, but a demand that reflects the changed conditions within SOCRATES as the present programme is perceived by the higher education community in Europe to be overstretched, given the overall amount of resources available and the many activities it wants to encourage.

The European Commission is requested to envisage support to a wide framework programme of activities, that would encourage synergies, and to provide substantial means, based on highly selective screening and award procedures - somewhat along the lines of the Framework Programme for Research. The components of LEONARDO relating to higher education ought also to be integrated in such an extended SOCRATES.
5. There was a widespread view, however, that activities eligible for SOCRATES support do not all require a framework of targeted strategic action. The need for student mobility, integrated in its academic and administrative environment, is no major strategic option since it is already widely recognized as deserving committed support in order to allow for equitable participation. The same might be true for teaching staff exchange as far as it reinforces student mobility among partner institutions. In contrast, staff mobility aiming to serve the academic quality offered to non-mobile students as well as educational innovation (curriculum development, open and distance learning, etc.) are obvious targets for highly prioritized institutional strategies.

The assessment of the applications for SOCRATES support on the part of the European Commission and other involved actors should balance two opposed rationales – equity and selectivity – in function of the areas of support.

6. In the specifications for SOCRATES support and in the procedures of award and control, the European Commission, in the eyes of most universities, does not provide real room for strategic and responsible action on the part of higher education institutions. It is likely that the latter would become more responsible strategic actors if the European Union visibly rewarded the strategic options decided upon. This is all the more important as the shift from the old to the new ERASMUS made visible the amount of administrative tasks higher education institutions have to develop for mobility activities; as a result, SOCRATES is widely believed to have caused an increase in paper work.

The European Commission should recognize the global quality and consistency of the strategic approaches made explicit in the European Policy Statement and the SOCRATES applications by a comprehensive assessment of the application package, taking into account the coherence and synergies of the activities proposed by the institutions of higher education.

Moreover, the Commission should encourage strategic awareness by replacing the currently prevailing mode of minute itemization, strong ex-ante bureaucratic surveillance, little adjustment capacity and short-term support by broad funding categories, pluri-annual contracts, progress reports assessing the overall rationale of innovative strategies for the institution, possibly complemented by ex-post evaluation. The proposal for increasing institutional capacity for strategic thinking should imply procedural reforms that might really lead to a reduction of the administrative load for the universities.
Finally, it is suggested that the Commission outline more clearly its own strategic objectives and the role they play in award criteria, because transparency on both sides would help develop the necessary trust on which strategic alliances between responsible partners, working together towards the long-term goal of European integration, might be built.

7. Some higher education institutions considered the move towards bilateral contracts between many partner institutions, in spite of some visible achievements, as detrimental to the valuable multilateral perspective that used to structure collective activity. The pressure emerging for bilateral reciprocity could, for example, endanger the overall balance of involvement of higher education institutions from all countries, regions and profiles, thus underutilizing the cooperation potential of many partners.

All partners were recommended to seek innovative ways to develop institutional contracts that would reinforce multilateral cooperation among institutions and departments, while strengthening bilateral links coordinated from the centre of the university.

In contrast to the controversial debates that accompanied the launch of the programme, and contrary to the mood of disappointment that followed the first award decisions, our analysis of the European Policy Statements and the views expressed by the representatives of higher education involved in the study suggest that the majority of the SOCRATES actors in higher education institutions are well aware of the substantial potential of the programme. They believe that this potential could be best realized if some of the past achievements of ERASMUS were kept alive for the future, and if the European Commission were to stimulate strategic approaches and responsibilities that they could then further promote with the institutions of higher education. The universities’ capacity to manage change would develop in a coherent way, if their ability to act as full partners of Member States, the Commission and other institutions of higher education were to be recognised as the key to the success of academic integration in Europe.
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With the inauguration of the SOCRATES programme, institutions of higher education in the member states of the European Union have been challenged to take a global view of the activities needing support from the European Commission. Indeed, they were asked to formulate a European policy and to integrate the activities made possible by the SOCRATES programme in this general framework - each institution now taking full responsibility for European activities developed within its walls rather than leaving it to cooperating networks as was the case in the past.

In 1997, a team established by the Association of European Universities (CRE) in cooperation with the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work analysed the European policies emerging from this first application process, searching for similarities and convergences. The study shows that most institutions accept these changes as a valuable challenge to take stock of their current European and international activities. Institutions have also used this opportunity to consolidate their decision-making processes and regular activities, moving from coincidental patterns born out of the work of pioneers in international cooperation to integrating these activities as normal tasks of the institution. Many universities have done so without leaping to targeted European strategies. In fact, most institutions want to keep student mobility at the core of ERASMUS within SOCRATES, using such activity as a springboard to further action in European exchanges of people and ideas. They appreciate the support promised for these other activities, as these new resources might foster their strategic development; they also hope that additional funds will create wider flexibility in the design of new activities such as teaching staff exchange and curricular innovation. But their full expectations still need to be met: the development of Europeanization and internationalization for non-mobile students remains a major task for the future.

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pointed to their problems at finding partners in other countries, where they had the impression ODL was considerably less advanced and less well-spread.

The promotion of language learning was widely mentioned and seen as one of the most obvious ways of overcoming obstacles to mobility. For institutions in countries with lesser spoken languages, enhanced language courses for incoming students were linked with the goal of providing more courses in English (or other foreign languages). This latter goal was regarded by these institutions as crucial for increasing the attractiveness of the institution to potential incoming students and teachers and was supported with significant institutional efforts. These institutions regarded it as extremely important for the survival of their educational cooperation activities to pursue a flexible language policy, in which support for home and host country language courses was coupled with change of curricula toward lingua-franca instruction. (They even felt that for countries with lesser spoken languages, compensatory support should be given for such lingua franca course provision as well as for the enormous number of additional translations into English which these countries needed to operate their cooperation contacts. The funding provision for short intensive language programmes (in action 2) was here regarded as too restrictive a channel for support. It was even suggested that the Commission should support science teaching in English in all European countries to enhance access to international science.)

The other operational goals which did not immediately relate to SOCRATES activities or funding opportunities could all be associated with the overall aim of enhancing the quality of cooperation although this link was only made explicit in 3 cases:

- At 7 institutions the operational goal of weeding out unsuccessful partnerships and fostering successful ones was mentioned. In several cases, teachers asked which partners they would like to keep or drop on the basis of past experience and responses to bilateral agreements. It was pointed out by several representatives that the pursuit of this goal had been made possible or greatly facilitated by the increase of transparency which had been brought about by the institutional approach.

- Likewise at 8 institutions representatives felt they were now in a better position to target particular types of partner institutions, either in order to enhance the geographic spread of their European cooperation activities, or to make use of institutional similarities of profile in order to cooperate most effectively, optimise trust and exchange experience on institutional questions. 7 institutions mentioned particular institutional networks and pursued targeted goals with these structures of partnerships, such as strengthening the European voice of an international network or enhancing the manageability of a given network.
- Maintenance or extension of services and existing structures for cooperation, mentioned at 9 institutions, were also seen as a way of supporting the efficiency and raising the level of cooperation activities. At three institutions particular programmes regarded as particularly attractive to incoming students were to be strengthened.

- Links with other programmes or other outside organisations were also mentioned occasionally. Synergy between cooperation activities in teaching and learning, on the one hand, and research cooperation, on the other, was seen as a strategic tool by some, since possibility of cooperating in research was regarded as an incentive for professors to cooperate in teaching. Synergy with other EU cooperation programmes was also seen as a way of improving the efficiency of cooperation.

The goal of enhancing links with outside organisations was mentioned several times. European professional associations, regional companies or authorities, and industrial or other corporations were regarded as potentially helpful for the employment opportunities of the institution's graduates and, in some cases, also for mobilising extra income for the institution. Links with industry for the purpose of technology transfer was also seen as important for the research interests of some fields, which in turn would enhance the reputation of the institution.

There were less immediately operationally formulated goals: the ubiquitous one was to enhance or consolidate the profile and reputation of the institution through internationalisation. Indirectly many other goals were linked to this one so that one may conclude that a certain market spirit of competition between institutions of higher education was quite wide-spread. 5 institutions actually mentioned competition explicitly, seeking to increase their shares of the international education and research market. This seemed to be either of immediate financial relevance to those institutions who obtained a considerable part of their income through tuition fees paid by foreign, non-European Union students, or was understood in terms of the reputation and future of the research and technological innovation. In one case, the marketing of developed curricula was mentioned. 5 institutions also aimed to internationalise the profile of their graduates, as an essential condition of their employability and adaptability.

Prioritisation of goals

As mentioned before, institutions generally pursued the policy to support as many activities as suggested by the faculties or departments. Apart from pursuing those priorities which past experience in ERASMUS cooperation had generated, namely the general preference for mobility cooperation.

However, at all institutions some form of prioritisation was foreseen for the time after the award publication. Details as to how this was intended to be
achieved differed. At 8 institutions representatives explained they would aim at the most equitable distribution, covering as many departments as possible by restricting the number of visits per teacher and the number of teachers travelling on SOCRATES grants per department. One institution intended to distribute the limited resources according to percentages of demand.

But more selective approaches were also mentioned. Many institutions intended to focus even more on mobility activities in future, in view of the restricted funds. One institution mentioned that it would probably prioritise those programmes which are newly developing international components and favour TS especially in areas in which the presence of foreign staff was essential for the international content of the course. Reciprocity was also mentioned as a criterion for prioritisation, i.e. those areas where mobility would result in improved reciprocity with the partners would be favoured. Another institution made plans to prioritise those teaching grants linked to other institutional development tasks, such as monitoring students, even of other departments, or of exploring new partnerships for other departments.

Nevertheless most institutions had not yet developed policies to set priorities in the light of limited funds. The only area of general consensus seemed to be to favour mobility over curriculum development activities, mainly, according to many of the interviewed academics, because of the disproportionate amount of effort involved in curriculum development compared with success-rates or the level of grants.

A difficulty which quite a number of representatives mentioned regarding prioritisation concerned matching their own priorities with those of partner institutions. An example that was given related to the targeted increase of teaching staff mobility which would only be possible if the relevant partner institutions did the same. Otherwise reciprocity, which was of particular importance with respect to replacing lost teaching time of outgoing teachers by gaining that of incoming ones, would be endangered.

Priorities can also clash with governmental policies, representatives from 2 institutions from 2 different countries pointed out. So whereas SOCRATES often promoted shorter stays abroad for teachers, this would be contrary to their governments policies to encourage longer teaching assignments.

6 Strategic Reasoning

The above section already pointed to the ways in which some of the mentioned goals were associated with what could be regarded as strategic ends, i.e. to link goals and the means of their achievement. In general it can be stated, however, that the site visit reports only rarely bore witness to ideas of real vertical consistency, i.e. of any clear consistency between the various levels of goals and the mechanisms by which they were supposed to be realised. The interviewed institutions did
seem to conceive of goals of different orders, from the more philosophical to the more operational, although with great limitations, since most goals were clearly of an operational nature. But the mentioned goals and the managerial details which were revealed in the interviews were only rarely indicative of strategic thinking, of incorporating European goals in managerial scenarios, distinguishing various steps and targets and defining the managerial tools with which each was supposed to be realised. Only four institutions may be regarded as having shown strategic thinking in the preparation and implementation of their SOCRATES application and contract. All of these are located in countries which strategic development in higher education has already been fostered if not required by governmental agencies.

It should be added that the mostly operational nature of the European policy goals and the frequently mentioned fact that they grew directly out of past and present activities and activity plans may be regarded as de facto short cuts to strategic development. But the following facts suggest that a more fundamentally strategic approach to international cooperation activities may develop in the near future:

- Especially at institutions in countries where there are no governmentally-imposed requirements for strategic development, the effect of SOCRATES on what has been called "institutional self-awareness", seems to have been significant in that there is a growing perception of a need to develop policy and appropriate mechanisms in order to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of cooperation activities.

- The new bodies, procedures and communication structures which have been established in order to prepare and implement SOCRATES have enabled institutions to obtain an overview of ongoing activities and to coordinate them so that targeted efforts of mobilisation and prioritisation are being or will be facilitated.

- There seems to be a steadily growing number of governments requiring strategic planning from their higher education institution and which foster internationalisation through targeted measures. Two examples of recently established requirements were mentioned in the reports, e.g. by Finland where the national government is promoting among its institutions in the direction of strategic planning, priority-setting and mid-term planning, providing funds on contract basis, with some funds on the basis of priorities, performance indicators, and prizes for 10 most successful institutions in certain areas.

- There were some reports of a growing business mentality in university management which led administrators to take into account factors such as efficient management, opportunity costs etc. more than they were hitherto used to. The surprising fact that only one institution could account for the actual institutional
Table 6: Goals Related to European Policy (part of international policy and/or mentioned in the EPS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals related to European policy</th>
<th>Number of institutions which mention goal</th>
<th>Examples of formulations of these goals in terms of strategic ends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhance quality of education and research</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>• EU programmes seen as fostering quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create international type of professional / graduate ready for 21st century</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>• Employability of graduates raises reputation of institution and interest of corporate sponsors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance profile of institution or consolidate international reputation</td>
<td>all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be competitive on international education and research market (particularly in view of US, Asia)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>• Obtain more paying students from overseas and thereby increase institutional income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create wider market for developed courses and material, increasing reputation and income of individual programmes/ academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance quality of cooperation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>• Enhance quality of cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend (weed out un-)successful partnerships</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>• target EU countries with less spoken languages,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target particular types of partner institutions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>• southern EU,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• institutions with similar profile, target groups, problems,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• mission and student body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• either to enhance to geographical spread of activities, with an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• eye to COM policy and thus to funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• or to exchange experience with similar institutions in order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to cooperate most effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance or extension of services and structures for cooperation activities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>• Support efficiency and level of cooperation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering of particular programme, or of relation between parts of the institution</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>• Create unique programme to increase attractiveness of institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Networking, support of particular institutional networks | 7 | • Keep networks manageable  
• Strengthen European voice in an international network  
• Safeguard quality of cooperation |
| Develop participation and synergy with other EU programmes | 5 | • Create a more efficient and proactive management of cooperation activities |
| Reinforce presence in European association | 2 | • Ensure international presence and reputation of institution, especially in view of professional world |
| Enhance involvement of external bodies (legal authorities, professional entities, corporations); support regional development (e.g. SMEs) | 5 | • Be a player in local or regional community and gain more financial and other support in return,  
• Do something to make the region a better world |
| Enhance links with industry, also in view of technology transfer | 4 | • Ensure employability of graduates through good placements and career contacts  
• Mobilise support by sponsors |
| Enhance links with research cooperation, or between TS and research | 4 | • With respect to research cooperation proper strat. choices are regarded as impossible, i.e. contrary to the nature of research progress  
• But links between teaching staff mobility and research activities are presented as a strategic choice by some, namely as an incentive for participation in TS |
| Increase SM | all | 
• Attract more incoming students (also non EU: European label helps attractiveness for overseas students) |
| • Reach reciprocity of overall numbers | 4 | • Target particular student groups (origins, disciplines, levels)  
• Offer studies progr./ courses in English  
• Ensure adequate welcome and accommodation  
• Market special, attractive features of institution |
<p>| • Limit costs (no tuition for incoming EU students) and | 7 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>of students exchanged</th>
<th></th>
<th>loss of opportunity costs for places which could have been taken up by paying non-EU overseas students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reach percentage threshold of outgoing student mobility</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>• Use percentage as a clear indicator of international profile of the institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guarantee some minimum support for every outgoing student without grant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>• Create equality of opportunity among home students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Target particular group of outgoing students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>• Counterbalance lower levels of participation among particular groups of students (e.g. at more/less advanced levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special promotion of teaching cooperation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>• Internationalise course provision and exposure for all students, even those who cannot go abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalise hiring of teaching staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>• same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special promotion of curriculum development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>• Internationalise course provision and exposure for all students, even those who cannot go abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic extension of ECTS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>• Use ECTS as a first step to Europeanise the not-yet-so-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Introduce some flexibility with respect to recognition schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use ECTS as a tool for quality assurance process, providing international standard for description, contents and duration of courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of courses taught in English or other foreign languages</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>• Enhance attractiveness of institution against language barrier, (use incoming teaching staff mobility for this purpose);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internationalise course provision and exposure for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further promotion of language learning</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>• Overcome obstacles to mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create more employable graduates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>