

PROMOTING MOBILITY

a study on the obstacles to student mobility



ESIB—The National Unions of Students in Europe

Imprint

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1. Mobility—the heartbeat of the EHEA

Mobility just may be one of the most complex processes we face in higher education. It affects us on all levels from individual, institutional to societal level. It is a driving force for changes, it pushes our development further and it breaks down obstacles that stand in our way.

Mobility opens doors to one of key features of European society—that is its diversity. To a student it brings a valuable experience of academic, cultural and social diversity. It shapes a student into a European citizen with the enhanced possibility for employment on the international labour market. Mobile individuals contribute to an internationalised environment at the Higher Education Institution, which supports cooperation and networking between Higher Education Institution necessary for development of the quality of higher education and research. This diversity is a source of enrichment for everyone and offers fertile ground for innovation and the quest for quality.

The reaches of Europe are however not yet in range of many students, researchers, teachers and other staff. Funding of mobility does not reach the average student who cannot afford to be mobile. Recognition of studies is a problem. There are non-mobile groups without adequate support measures. Language tuition is inadequate. These obstacles in general affect free movers more intensely than programme students and are more virulent for students from Non-EU than from EU countries, keeping in mind the generally stronger deviation of living conditions between EU and Non-EU countries. Furthermore there are additional problems specific to students from new EU member states and Non-EU countries. Therefore it remains crucial to identify the obstacles to student mobility and ways to overcome them.

1.1. Definitions

When discussing student mobility one encounters different aspects or types of mobility. In general student mobility can be classified by the length of the study period abroad:

- *Horizontal mobility* or *non-degree mobility* refers to studying abroad mainly for a short period as an exchange student, whereby

students only complete some modules or courses, but not whole degrees.

- *Vertical mobility* or *degree mobility* means studying abroad for a full degree.

Mobility can also be classified by the mode of organisation of the study period abroad:

- *Programme students* are mobile students on the one hand are taking part in an organised mobility programme.
- *Free movers* on the other hand are not taking part in an organised mobility programme or are benefiting from any kind of agreements between institutions.

Other terms are also frequently used:

- *Mobility window* or *window of opportunity* is a relatively new term. It is referring to the development of a curriculum both regarding the possible time/semester and flexibility of courses in order that it allows for horizontal mobility of students in the programme. The window is referring to the opportune time for horizontal mobility during the programme.
- Finally *brain drain* and *brain gain* is the process whereby a country loses its most talented and educated people to other countries because there is a lack of opportunities in their own.

2. Under the surface

2.1. Reasons for student mobility

Student mobility in higher education has a long history; however reasons for being mobile have changed substantially in the past decades. In the past universities in Europe were few and studying required students to be mobile. Today mobility offers a great range of academic opportunities and gives access to a great variety of possibilities to study and research. More than ever students have the possibility to study a desired field and to develop their knowledge at centres of excellence in their study field.

Experiencing a study period abroad might enhance the employability of an individual or increase his or her opportunities for employment on the international labour market. However for mobility to be meaningful to the individual the specific skills and competences developed during the study period abroad need to be recognised and valued by the labour market.

Furthermore student mobility offers the experience of a different study environment, which forms new cultural, social and academic values and creates opportunities for personal growth. Experience of cultural and academic diversity promotes tolerance and reduces discrimination. Mobility plays an important role in developing and maintaining a democratic culture and creating the global society in a multicultural context.

2.2. Mobility as a building block for internationalisation

Changes in the operational environment, in all fields of society and also in the labour market mean that students need to obtain new skills to be able to successfully participate in today's society after graduation. These skills can only be achieved in a learning environment, where teachers, students and administrative staff are aware of the international developments and are prepared to take in new information and have academic discussions also in international forums.

2.2.1. Internationalisation of Higher Education

The presence of foreign teachers, students and staff supports the international atmosphere of Higher Education Institutions and gives students possibilities to learn to act in a multicultural environment. More and more Higher Education Institutions see internationalisation as a strategic choice they are willing to or feel they have to make in order to keep their education attractive.

Increasing internationalisation of higher education challenges established traditions and practices and brings opportunity for comparison between systems. Mobile individuals in higher education are carriers of new contacts and ideas, crucial for development of international cooperation and networking. Mobility provides possibility to exchange scientific findings, to spread innovation and best practice. In an international environment the awareness of international developments is raised as well as the preparedness to take in new information. Furthermore it enhances the ability to bring international elements to methods and content of teaching and studying. International atmosphere has become one of prerequisites for development of the quality of higher education and research of today.

Student mobility however is not the only way to increase internationalisation of higher education even though it may well be the most visible and effective way of doing it. Higher Education Institutions can be very international taking into consideration the amount of foreign students studying at their institution. But the courses can still be taught just the way they have always been taught with just a few extra students in the room. Internationalisation is not only about mobility. It's about having an institution that recognises its place in the global environment of higher education. It's about attracting students and teachers from around the world and also encouraging students and teachers to study and work abroad. The institution needs to fully meet the needs of the international students both in services and through the curricula to ensure that the course is relevant when they return to their home country.

Another approach is more concentrated on the institution itself and its structures, such as links on research projects bringing together clusters of excellence, and this then leading to transnational education with e.g. branch campuses, distance and e-learning.

2.2.2. Internationalisation at home

After 20 years of European student mobility programmes like Erasmus, it is still only between every fifth to every tenth student, who goes abroad to study (see Fig. 43 cont.). This fact raises many questions. How can the non-mobile majority of students be given a European and international dimension? Can intercultural education as a mainstream in all educational programmes increase the students' interest for studies abroad?

The concept of Internationalisation at home was introduced in the end of the 1990's. According to some interpretations, Internationalisation at home means the knowledge and attitudes about international relations gained at the home university by the majority of students who are not able to study abroad. The goal is for European and global perspectives to be considered in all programmes and courses and to be visible in the curricula. Some means to achieve the goal are providing further training of teachers on international issues, making use of foreign researchers and teachers as well as exchange students and making use of the international community of the town/part of town where the Higher Education Institution is situated.

Students require skills necessary in living and working in international surroundings, but also a possibility for an academically and culturally meaningful period abroad. This process should be made flexible in such a way that a student could make genuine choices: whether to study abroad or to find the desirable international skills from the home institution. These new skills can only be achieved in a learning environment, where teachers, students and administrative staff are aware of the international developments and are prepared to take in new information and have academic discussions also in international forums.

2.3. Mobility embedded in the Bologna Process

Political decision-makers are becoming more and more aware of the importance of mobility, not only for the individual but also for the higher education community and society in general. It is one of the core issues in the Bologna Process. The way mobility has been addressed in the different phases of the Bologna Process is interesting. In the Sorbonne declaration before the Bologna Process started, promotion of mobility was mentioned in rather general terms. In Bologna (1999), mobility was given a clearer status: a goal was set to pro-

mote mobility by overcoming obstacles. In Prague (2001) the goal was elaborated to say that all obstacles to the free movement of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff should be removed. The social dimension of mobility was also introduced. In Berlin (2003) it was said that mobility is seen as the basis for establishing the European Higher Education Area. Portability of grants and loans was stated as a new focus. In Bergen (2005) the ministers stated that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process. The ministers also confirmed their commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans. They also emphasised that facilitating the delivery of visa and work permits is needed in order to remove obstacles to mobility. Full recognition of study periods abroad was also stressed as one of the basic prerequisite for meaningful mobility.

Students as the most important stakeholder group have a lot of practical but also policy-related input to give. Despite the significant amount of time and effort politicians and officials have used to ponder over mobility issues, several problems still remain. Students need to work on these mobility issues; actively provide input and perspectives and keep reminding other stakeholders to work on resolving these problems.

2.4. Academically meaningful mobility

One of the major obstacles for people wanting to work or study in another country or move between different parts of the labour market is that their qualifications and competences may not be recognized. This is further complicated by the proliferation of qualifications worldwide, the diversity of national qualification systems and education and training structures, and constant changes in these systems.

The academic value is one of the most significant incentives for deciding to study abroad. Full recognition must be secured in order to make the study period academically meaningful. Recognition problems in horizontal mobility need to be addressed by implementing credit transfer systems properly. Recognition problems in vertical mobility, mostly related to recognition of qualifications, need to be resolved by a proper implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement.

2.4.1. Recognition and comparability in European context

Recognition is a key to ensure greater student and worker mobility by ensuring that a degree taken in one country is recognised in another country. A Degree is perhaps the largest element that can be recognised, but not the most problematic one. If we think in quantitative terms, students probably encounter more problems with recognition of study periods than whole degrees. Even though the structures and tools for handling the mobility period smoothly are by and large available to Higher Education Institutions, too often the student is left without credits that can be fully, and more important, meaningfully included in his/her degree. To put it shortly, three main levels of recognition can be considered:

- recognition of qualifications, including prior learning and professional experience, allowing entry or re-entry into higher education
- recognition of short study periods in relation with student mobility
- recognition of full degrees

Comparability of programs is a fair demand to understand the content and meaning of the studies before starting the recognition process. It is important to be able to understand the level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed in a different country, with different methods and different cultural background.

At European level, education in general and higher education in particular are not subjects of a ›common European policy‹. Competence for the content and the organisation of studies remains at national level. However, according to Article 149 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Community »shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States«, through a wide range of actions, such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching languages of the European Union.

2.4.2. Tools for recognition and comparability

There are different tools that the Union can use to fulfil its complementary role in education policy. Cooperation in the field of recognition between EU member states and EEA countries started already in

1984 when NARIC (Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres) was established. The Council of Europe and UNESCO established the ENIC Network (European Network of National Information Centres) in 1994 in order to develop joint policy and practice in all European countries for the recognition of qualifications. Nowadays we often talk of the ENIC/NARIC network as the two networks cooperate so closely together.

ENIC and NARIC aim at improving academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in the participating countries. All of them have designated national centres. While the size and specific competence of them may vary, they provide authoritative information on: the recognition of foreign diplomas, degrees and other qualifications, education systems in both foreign countries and their own country, opportunities for studying abroad, including information on loans and scholarships, as well as advice on practical questions related to mobility and equivalence. Their principal target groups are: students, parents, employers, universities and other higher education institutions, ministries responsible for higher education, other interested persons and organisations.

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region

The basic rights of students concerning recognition of diplomas are the right to a fair recognition of their qualifications using transparent, coherent and reliable recognition procedures considered within a reasonable time limit. Recognition should be granted unless the competent recognition authority can prove there is substantial difference between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification of the host country. In case of rejection, clear reasons for denial should be stated. Applicants also should have the right to appeal the recognition decision.

The basic rights described are stated in the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region adopted in Lisbon in 1997. The Convention is the key legal instrument for recognition of qualifications across Europe.

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Other instruments aiming at transparency of qualifications consist of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), introduced as a common basis for recognising students' study periods abroad. ECTS was introduced as a tool within the framework of the ERASMUS/SOCRATES

programme between 1988 and 1995. It was aimed that this would facilitate the recognition of the courses for these exchange students when returning home to their own institution. However, under the framework of the Bologna Process it became a tool that should be used for all students, and not only for the purposes of recognition. It should however be noted that the implementation of ECTS has been fairly problematic in most countries. The use of ECTS can only enhance the transparency and facilitate recognition, if the ECTS is understood as one system which is used in a consistent way in all HEIs in the countries.

Europass

The Europass consists of five documents that aim to help students and workers demonstrate their skills elsewhere in Europe. The format of the documents is the same in all EU/EEA countries. The core document of the Europass is the *Europass CV*, to which students or workers can attach other Europass documents according to their choice. The other Europass documents are *Europass Certificate Supplement*, *Europass Diploma Supplement*, *Europass Language Passport* and *Europass Mobility*. The Europass is based on the Council decision on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences.

Three cycle system

Three study cycle structure, undergraduate, graduate and doctoral, is not a tool for increasing mobility in the same sense as the above-mentioned tools. Harmonisation of the architecture of studies in Europe was not introduced only to enhance mobility, but it has had a positive effect on it. The introduction of the same higher education system across Europe increased transparency, compatibility and comparability of systems. However with the structural harmonisation a threat of harmonisation of contents and/or teaching methods has arisen. If we allow content harmonisation to happen, we lose the national and cultural diversity of Europe and with it the very reason for a student to study abroad.

So far horizontal mobility has been the major means of mobility for a large number of students all around Europe (see chart 23). After the currently ongoing introduction of the two-tier degree structure within the Bologna-process, the emphasis between these two modes may change.

The earlier mentioned traditional form of creating possibilities for horizontal mobility (cooperation and networks) is still there, and will not change in the near future. But what may change is the way Higher

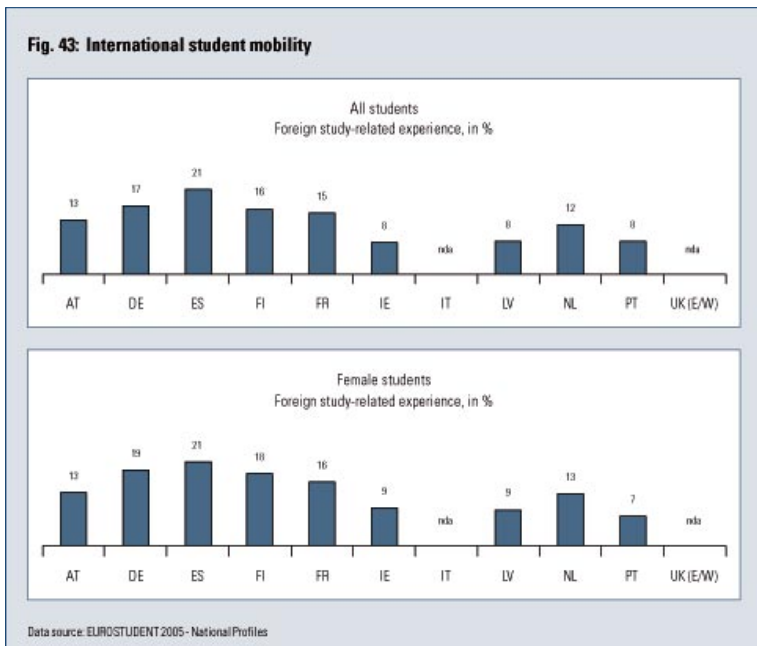
Education Institutions want to cooperate. In the Bologna Process the element of competitiveness is rather strongly visible, but it is mostly intended to mean competition between Europe, the United States and Asia. What has perhaps been overlooked is the element of internal, European competition that has arisen even when it was not the initial idea of the Process. This internal element of competition will inevitably have influence on mobility and its forms, and probably in the way that vertical mobility becomes more and more popular—for Higher Education Institutions, not necessarily individual students.

Degree structures and changes that are happening in them all around Europe are posing both threats and possibilities to mobility. The most visible threat concerning horizontal mobility and the introduction of the two-tier structure is the timing of a short study period abroad. Mobility should be possible both during first and second cycle and it should not automatically lengthen the duration of studies. Study periods abroad could offer general academic competencies but also strengthen the specialisation of the student in their own field of study. Degree structures should be flexible enough to encompass different skills learnt through different methods as long as they are relevant to the field of study. By bringing new theories and new knowledge back home and by asking questions we also give input to the subject. However mobility should be regarded as an opportunity, not as a requirement in order to get a high-quality degree.

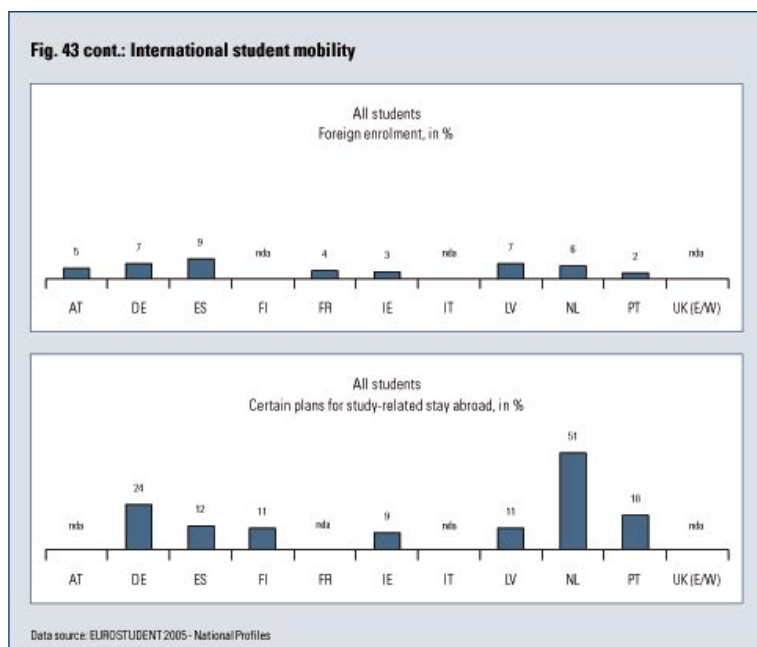
Vertical mobility might increase after the introduction of the two-tier degree system. The new degree system may also initiate a development of various second cycle programmes and joint/double degree programmes. ESIB feels that even though some of the obstacles and problems traditionally connected with mobility might be somewhat solved by the introduction of various second cycle programmes, the ideal of free mobility should be maintained. ESIB also believes that the three cycle system does not solve all of the problems connected to student mobility.

3. “The Sky is the limit...”? – Obstacles to student mobility

Students and their representatives have continuously welcomed student mobility as a means for cultural and academic exchange and cooperation, for personal growth and to obtain new skills to be able to successfully participate in today’s society after graduation. However what are the real numbers of student mobility in the European Higher Education Area? How many students do actually have the possibility to draw on these benefits? The Eurostudent Surveys of 2000¹ and 2005 (see Fig. 43)² show that international student mobility ranges from 8 percent in Portugal or Latvia to 21 percent in Spain. That means that every fifth to every 10th student in Europe has been mobile in relation to his or her studies.



But this does not necessarily mean, that they have also studied during this period and experienced a different educational system altogether. In fact less than half of these students do actually enrol in a Higher Education Institution while abroad, i.e. 2 percent of Portuguese students and 9 percent of Spanish students (see Fig. 43 cont.).³ So actually genuine student mobility, the experience of a different system of Higher Education is rather rare among students in Europe. For this reason it remains crucial to identify the obstacles to student mobility and ways to overcome them.



3.1. Obstacles to student mobility

The reasons preventing students to be mobile are numerous and complex. Effectively those students facing discrimination in the education system of their home country are also more likely to be excluded from student mobility. This relates to students with disabilities and chronic diseases, students with children⁴ or students from lower socio-cultural classes⁵ and socio-economic background.⁶ Apart from these factors there are a number of other obstacles to student mobility, which are largely shared throughout all Bologna countries. Those are amongst others the financing of the mobility period, the language proficiency, the availability of information on all matters concerning the mobility period, the recognition of study periods and degrees, the suitability of a mobility period in the respective curriculum structure and the field of study of the respective student. This list is surely not exclusive, but rather outlining the most common and pressing obstacles experienced by mobile students.

Furthermore there are additional problems specific to students from new EU member states and from Non-EU countries.

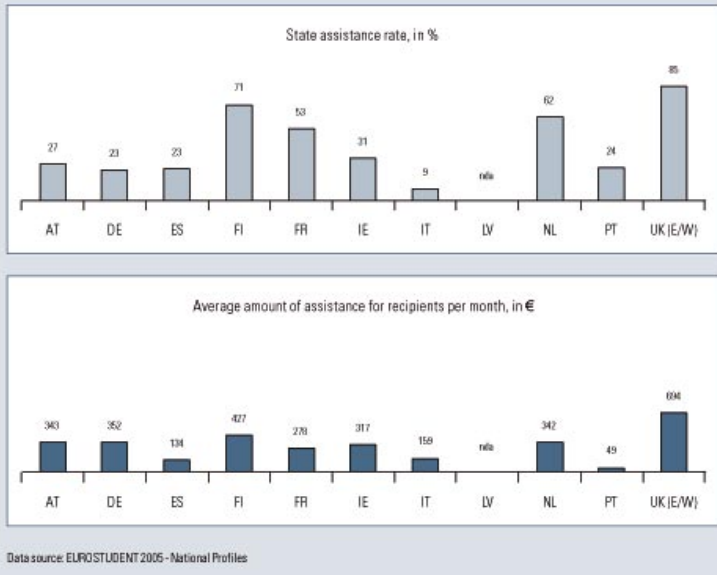
3.1.1. General obstacles to student mobility

Financing of the mobility period

Problems connected to financing of student mobility are founded first and foremost on the financing scheme in the home country, i.e. the system of state support with grants and loans schemes and the availability of such state support to the general student population (see Fig. 24).⁷ The data in the Eurostudent 2005 show, that in the majority of countries participating in the study, only about a quarter of the student population or even less do receive financial support through state assistance. Only in the Netherlands and France more than half of the student population, in Finland a little less than three quarters of the students and in the United Kingdom more than 4 out of 5 receive state assistance.

The sufficiency of the financial support provided by these schemes compared to the general living expenses in the home country is another obstacle not only for taking up studies in the home country, but also when considering a study period abroad. The take-up rate of employment during studies and during the term of between 20 percent in Portugal and 30 percent in Italy at the lower margin and 69 percent in Ireland as well as 91 percent in the Netherlands at the upper end are

Fig. 24: State assistance for all students



good indicators for the general need of students to cover their living expenses on their own throughout all Bologna countries.⁸

The portability of state support as agreed upon by Educational Ministers in the Berlin Communiqué 2003, i.e. the possibility to benefit from state support of the home country also during studies in the host country, was intended to promote mobility of students both in organised programmes as well as for so called free-movers, who organise their mobility period wholly by themselves. However in a number of countries portability of grants and loans to the host country remains problematic⁹ limiting the available financial resources of mobile students, especially again for free movers not funded by EU programmes. While EU mobility grants undeniable are a means to promote student mobility, data shows that they provide for only a small margin of the financial resources needed during the mobility period (see Fig. 53)¹⁰ and only to a minority of all mobile students, since in the majority of students are organising their mobility periods outside of any programme.¹¹ Thus in Germany, Ireland and Italy about three quarters to 85 percent of the funding are covered by private sources. Only in Finland public support makes up the majority of the funding of mobile

students. The exclusion of students from Non-EU Bologna countries from EU mobility programmes, since TEMPUS is insignificant for the funding of student mobility, results in a divide in mobility opportunities between Bologna member states on the expense of Non-EU countries. This problem needs special attention and action from all Bologna members keeping in mind the deviation of living expenses between Non-EU countries and countries in Western and Northern Europe.

However insufficiencies in portability of grants and loans and insufficiencies in the amount of public support to students are not the only obstacles in connection to funding of student mobility. Sufficient funding for the mobility period abroad also needs to take into account the diversity in living standards between the Bologna countries. This is especially relevant for students from Eastern and South-Eastern European countries studying in Western and also Northern European countries, as the deviation between living standards is especially great among these. Data on the monthly student expenditure in different EU member countries already show the diversity in living standards (see Fig. 30),¹² for example between Latvia with a monthly student expenditure of between 193 to 276 Euro, Spain with a monthly expenditure of between 360 to 434 Euro, Austria with a monthly expenditure of between 848 to 861 Euro and the United Kingdom with a monthly expenditure of between 1.030 to 1.136 Euro.

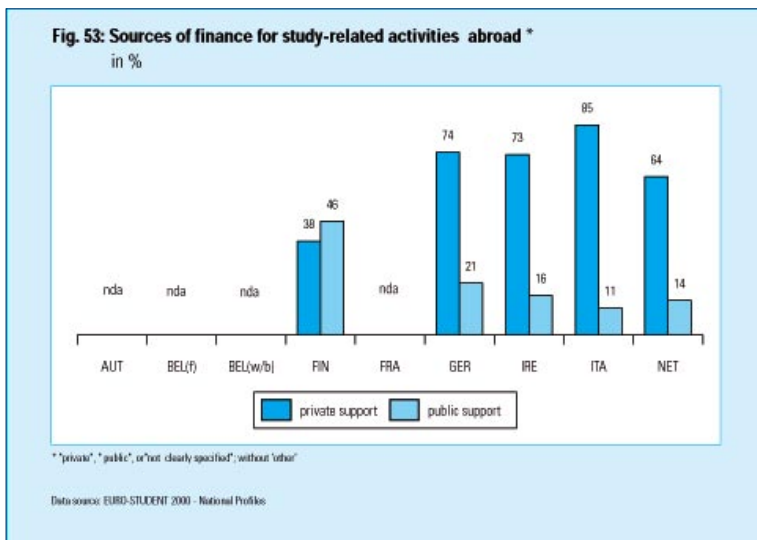
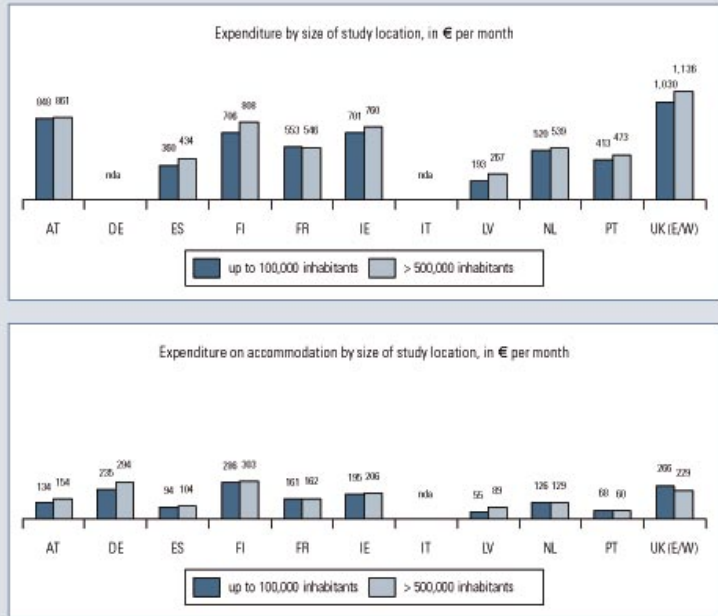


Fig. 30: Student expenditure by size of study location



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 2005 - National Profiles

Student representatives have pointed out this problem and called for measures to fund according to the living conditions in the host country or change mobility support to be provided not by the home, but the host country as it is done in the framework of the CEEPUS Programme.¹³

Language proficiency

Mobility throughout Europe is not balanced. Several European countries experience higher rates of incoming than outgoing students and vice versa. The following table on mobile students in 2003¹⁴ shows that the countries with the highest intake of students, i.e. more incoming students than students going abroad, are Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Austria. The countries with the highest rates of outgoing students compared to incoming are Iceland, Slovakia, Greece and Ireland.

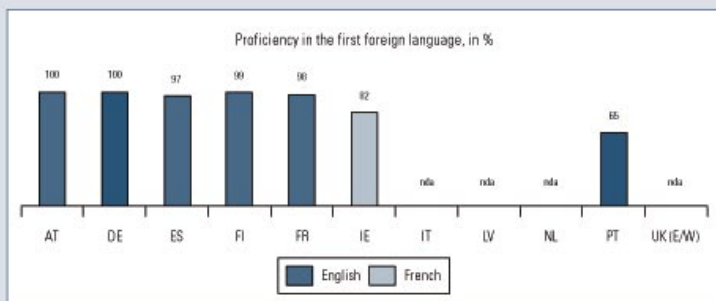
The reasons for these imbalances in mobility are also founded in the language proficiency of the mobile students. This is not only connected to the language provisions in secondary education, but also due to the fact that language learning in less widely spoken European languages is not always promoted or even free of charge at Higher Education Institutions or even the difficulty of learning certain languages. The languages most commonly spoken in Europe, according to data from the Eurostudent 2005, are English followed by German, French and Spanish (see Fig. 41),¹⁵ which already hints at the high intake rates of the abovementioned countries.

Data in the Eurostudent survey further suggests the close linkage between language proficiency and student mobility. While 26 percent of French students with very good command of at least one foreign language study abroad only 7 percent of French students with little command decide to do so. The correlation is even stronger for Portuguese students. Only 1 percent of the students in Portugal with poor

mobile students total 2003, incoming and outgoing, according to available data of all countries concerned; number and percentage of students per country					
country	students total	outgoing students		incoming students	
	number	number	in %	number	in %
1 Russian Federation	8.671.052	28.263	0,3	68.602	0,8
2 United Kingdom/ Northern Ireland	2.287.833	28.469	1,2	255.233	11,2
3 Germany	2.242.397	62.459	2,8	240.619	10,7
4 France	2.119.149	53.159	2,5	221.567	10,5
5 Poland	1.983.360	26.219	1,3	7.617	0,4
6 Turkey	1.918.483	47.561	2,5	15.719	0,8
7 Italy	1.913.352	42.904	2,2	36.137	1,9
8 Spain	1.840.607	27.629	1,5	53.639	2,9
9 Greece	561.468	46.918	8,4	12.456	2,2
10 Netherlands	526.767	12.465	2,4	20.531	3,9
11 Sweden	414.657	14.770	3,6	25.523	6,2
12 Portugal	400.831	12.081	3	15.483	3,9
13 Hungary	390.453	8.059	2,1	12.226	3,1
14 Belgium	374.532	11.481	3,1	41.856	11,2
15 Finland	291.664	10.115	3,5	7.361	2,5
16 Czech Republic	287.001	6.802	2,4	12.474	4,3
17 Austria	229.802	12.613	5,5	31.101	13,5
18 Norway	212.395	15.185	7,1	8.247	3,9
19 Denmark	201.746	6.637	3,3	18.120	9
20 Switzerland	185.965	8.796	4,7	32.847	17,7
21 Ireland	181.557	15.817	8,7	10.201	5,6
22 Slovakia	158.089	14.436	9,1	1.651	1
23 Iceland	13.347	2.978	22,3	580	4,3
24 Luxembourg	3.077	6.512	211,6	m	-

m= no data available
data source: OECD

Fig. 41: Student language proficiency



		Language, in %		
		First	Second	Third
AT	English	100	French 57	Italian 36
DE	English	100	French 73	Spanish 37
ES	English	97	French 38	German 10
FI	English	99	Swedish 92	German 41
FR	English	98	Spanish 63	German 60
IE	French	82	German 40	Spanish 22
IT	nda		nda	nda
LV	English	nda	Russian nda	German nda
NL	nda		nda	nda
PT	English	65	French 22	Spanish 17
UK (E/W)	nda		nda	nda

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 2005 - National Profiles

language proficiency are mobile, while 60 percent of the students with very good foreign language skills study abroad (see Fig. 44).¹⁶

Student representatives have responded to these connections between language and student mobility by demanding the increase and financial support of language learning in Higher Education Institutions of the home country as well as the support of language learning during the mobility period in the host country.

Suitability of a mobility period in the curriculum structure

There is very little data available on the impact of reform of degree structures to a three-cycle system or curriculum reform on student

mobility. The comparability and compatibility of degrees has been one means in the Bologna Process with the aim to improve student mobility. However the diversity of degree structures with Bachelor degrees varying between 180 to 240 ECTS and the Master degree between 60 to 120 ECTS might impact on the possibility of horizontal mobility.

The official Erasmus statistics indicate that the average duration of the mobility period abroad has been 6,5 months in 2004/2005 for all EU member states and candidate countries (see table 3).¹⁷ However students from the EU 18 have stayed abroad considerably longer (6,7 months) than students from the new member states and candidate countries (5,4 months). A study by Teichler from 1996 indicated, that the mobility periods were usually taking place in the third year of studies (see chart 23).¹⁸ Eurostudent 2005 shows that this timing still remains predominant, with most students organising their study period towards the middle or the end of their studies.¹⁹

Determining factors for timing the study period abroad might include gaining academic experience at the home institution, the criteria for allocation of mobility grants, the cooperation of a Higher Education Institution and a particular department with institutions abroad.

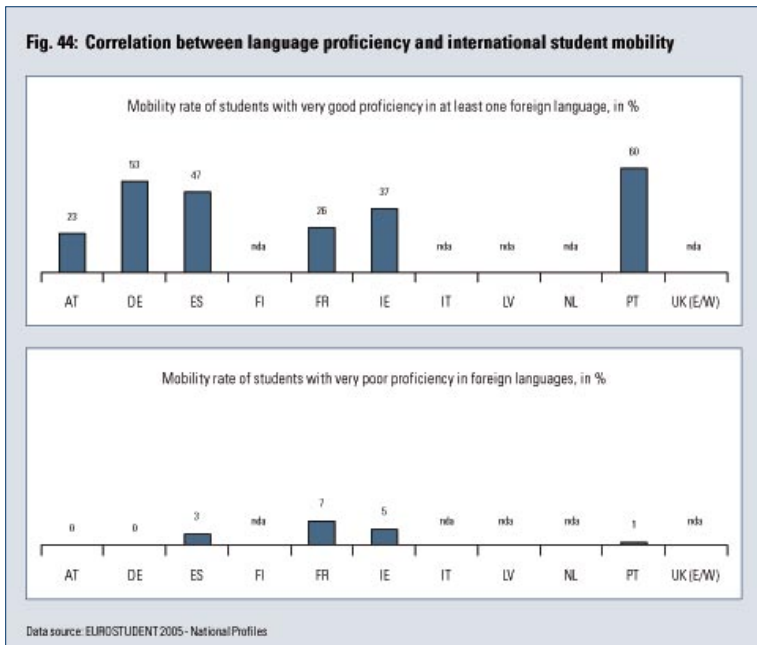


Table 3: Erasmus student mobility: Average duration 1994/95 to 2004/05

Home country	Average duration per student										
	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
	Months										
BE	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.2
DK	5.4	4.8	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.6
DE	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.1	6.9	6.8	6.7
GR	5.8	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.1
ES	6.9	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.4	7.4	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.6
FR	7.1	7.4	7.2	7.3	7.3	7.4	7.8	7.9	7.2	7.2	7.3
IE	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.4	7.3	7.5	7.3	7.4
IT	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	6.9	6.9
LU	7.1	5.7	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.8	5.9	6.2	5.9	5.4
NL	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.0
AT	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.2	6.0
PT	6.0	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.1		6.2
FI	6.2	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.6
SE	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.3	6.2	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.1
UK	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.7	7.0	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9
LI	4.0	8.0		8.0	8.0	6.7	8.9	4.7	6.1	5.7	6.1
IS	8.6	7.1	7.1	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.4	6	6.0	5.8
NO	6.2	6.2	5.8	5.8	5.8	6.0	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2
EUR 18	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.7
BG						3.9	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.8
CZ					4.7	4.8	5.2	5.7	5.8	6.0	6.1
EE						4.9	5.6	5.5	5.7	5.8	6.0
CY					4.8	4.8		5.2	4.7	4.5	5.2
LV						4.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.8
LT						5.6	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.7
HU					4.8	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.7	5.0
MT						4.7	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.1
PL					6.0	6.0	5.7	5.7	5.9	6.0	6.1
RO					4.8	5.3	5.4	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
SI						5.2	5.5	2.8	5.7	6.0	6.2
SK					4.9	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.4	4.7
TR											6.1
NMS/CC					5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.5	5.8	5.4
Total	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.5

the size of a particular department, the curriculum design allowing for or restricting student mobility and the time effort required for preparing the study period abroad.²⁰

While there is no data showing the impact of reforms in degree structure on student mobility, i.e. changes in student mobility within Bachelor and Master programmes, horizontal mobility in 1 and 2 year Master programmes require certainly more planning regarding the appropriate timing within the curriculum or might be shorter than the 6 months period common at present. It might also be possible that one of the impacts of the reform in degree structures is the increase in vertical mobility.

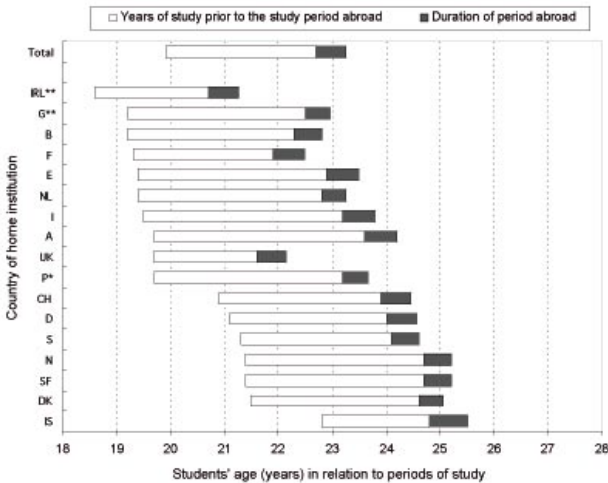
Field of study

In general more students from humanities are mobile than students from engineering.²¹ More in detail the subject area, where most students are mobile, are business studies followed by languages and philological studies, social sciences and engineering (see table 2).²² In comparison to that agriculture, geography, math as well as communications and informatics are the subject areas with the least students to go abroad. This is true for both old and new EU member states and candidate countries.

Teichler shows that these preferences in mobility result from the intensity and number of Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICP), which have been strongest and most numerous amongst business studies, languages, social sciences and engineering. While these co-operations have grown over time, other subject areas were still building up cooperation programmes.²³ Consequently students from study fields with fewer cooperation programmes are faced with more challenges regarding available mobility grants, cooperating institutions, information or recognition.

Another imbalance may be witnessed in relation to student mobility in a certain field of study and gender. While women make up for the majority of mobile students in nearly all of the countries (see Fig. 43), this is not true in all subject areas. Teichler shows in his study, that while women are in the vast majority of mobile students in the humanities (73 percent in 1993/94), they are above the average in social sciences (57 percent in 1993/94) and thus corresponding to their overall overrepresentation amongst mobile students. However in natural sciences and engineering they make up

Chart 23: Timing, Age and Duration of the Study Period Abroad of ERASMUS Students 1993/94, by Country of Home Institution of Higher Education (mean years)



* Data for Portugal refer to 1990/91
 ** Data for Greece and Ireland refer to 1992/93
 Source: Actual ERASMUS statistics 1993/94

TABLE 2: Erasmus student mobility 2004/2005: Subject areas

Home country	Agricultural Sciences	Architecture, Planning	Art & Design	Business Studies	Education, Teacher Training	Engineering, Technology	Geography, Geology	Humanities	Languages and Philological Sci.	Law	Mathematics, Informatics	Medical Sciences	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Communic. & Information Sci.	Other areas	Total
BE fr	65	94	60	613	88	135	16	42	274	170	46	89	35	278	89	11	2105
BE fl	64	96	128	530	293	231	14	90	368	172	72	244	29	252	114	31	2728
BE	129	190	188	1143	381	366	30	132	642	342	118	333	64	530	203	42	4833
DK	17	47	46	405	83	115	29	141	391	133	14	94	31	179	61	7	1793
DE	228	763	963	5212	648	1449	496	1126	3917	1486	912	964	999	2523	466	275	22427
GR	72	163	148	338	95	195	41	105	316	209	131	146	89	331	77	35	2491
ES	596	834	885	3290	730	3469	457	629	2372	1343	784	1328	1063	1876	931	232	20819
FR	440	616	668	6735	285	3110	225	600	3430	1444	574	391	795	1783	294	171	21561
IE	5	19	74	504	26	54	25	44	362	126	13	22	50	190	42	16	1572
IT	291	916	777	1764	270	1627	219	1028	3282	1226	396	1113	465	2171	771	124	16440
LU	1	5	1	11	43	4	2	4	18	1	1	11	2	8	2	2	116
NL	61	88	127	1201	299	226	85	96	236	362	44	242	87	1251	302	36	4743
AT	36	124	220	1067	330	265	44	120	450	261	185	135	144	274	108	46	3809
PT	56	220	240	464	176	516	63	46	221	153	123	492	199	538	181	157	3845
FI	76	29	304	1337	128	518	29	130	297	150	100	261	74	327	112	60	3932
SE	9	86	69	856	53	357	25	60	144	218	46	193	83	395	68	36	2698
UK	19	81	476	1091	145	258	71	162	2965	744	71	271	207	556	85	12	7214
EUI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
IS	0	1	17	34	15	26	4	14	29	19	2	11	4	12	8	3	199
LI	0	14	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26
NO	11	43	78	284	67	57	14	69	69	77	69	156	41	223	15	6	1279
EUR18	2047	4239	5281	25748	3774	12612	1859	4509	19141	8295	3583	6163	4397	13168	3726	1260	119802
BG	34	24	42	106	19	126	20	26	80	24	92	47	38	73	13	15	779
CY	0	0	1	18	32	5	0	4	11	0	1	14	0	7	0	0	93
CZ	197	139	238	665	277	519	126	224	506	225	120	265	152	366	41	118	4178
EE	8	21	75	61	12	27	14	15	64	33	10	22	10	47	16	9	444
HU	110	87	139	520	102	150	60	71	285	187	99	165	44	233	33	31	2316
LV	18	6	45	211	48	24	19	36	60	20	19	19	9	56	10	7	607
LT	47	43	87	314	65	183	38	47	108	137	82	82	35	155	21	29	1473
MT	0	0	0	7	6	7	0	0	16	51	1	34	0	3	5	0	130
PL	106	349	320	1665	165	1125	237	268	1020	462	375	338	450	1345	100	65	8390
RO	77	65	98	349	23	555	188	112	433	101	168	204	166	317	55	51	2962
SI	15	36	43	188	16	50	17	19	141	63	24	14	9	89	13	5	742
SK	53	37	70	237	26	136	8	27	110	39	52	93	36	37	1	17	979
TR	73	58	33	223	61	179	22	35	41	64	26	76	35	181	26	9	1142
NMS/C	738	865	1191	4564	852	3086	749	884	2875	1406	1069	1373	984	2909	334	356	24235
TOTAL	2785	5104	6472	30312	4626	15698	2608	5393	22016	9701	4652	7536	5381	16077	4060	1616	144037

only above 1/3 of all mobile students (38 percent in 1993/94).²⁴ Certainly this imbalance is reflecting the overall representation of women in these fields of study. However such imbalances need to be addressed both in the representation of women in these fields of study in general as well as in their participation in student mobility in particular.

3.1.2. Obstacles to new EU member states and Non-EU countries

The regulation of working permits poses an obstacle for new EU member states and Non-EU countries alike. The situation regarding working permits for 10 out of the 12 new EU member states since 1st May 2004 or 1st January 2007 (for Romania and Bulgaria) remains similar to the situation of those to individuals from Non-EU countries. Exempted from this intermediate regulation are citizens from Malta and Cyprus. The regulation is that the old EU-member states shall apply national working regulation after 2 years of accession (i.e. 1st May 2006 or 1st January 2009). However if serious doubts on the effects on the national labour market persist they may prolong this term twice—for 3 years (i.e. 1st May 2009 or 1st January 2012) and then further 2 years (i.e. 1st May 2011 or 1st January 2014). After which date all citizens of the 10 new EU member states have to be treated according to national working regulations in the old EU member states. So the intermediate regulation may last a maximum duration of 7 years.²⁵

The obstacle in connection to this refers clearly to the possibility of students from the new EU member states as well as Non-EU students to be able to sustain their living expenses based on regular employment while studying abroad. Especially keeping in mind the strong deviation of living expenses between the new EU member states and Non-EU Bologna countries and countries in Western and Northern Europe the possibility for students from these countries to work like their colleagues from EU countries is paramount to prevent double discrimination—based on economic situation and country of origin.

3.1.3. Obstacles specific to Non-EU countries

With EU membership as well as granting of candidate status to the EU, students from these countries receive more beneficial treatment regarding visa. This is leading to an isolation of countries outside of the EU, which is especially relevant for countries in South-Eastern Europe, keeping in mind the political, economical and also educational links between these countries.²⁶ This situation is also effectively limiting the opportunities of students and (academic) staff from these

countries to participate in one of the central aims of the Bologna Process—the promotion of student and staff mobility. To solve this situation should therefore be at the heart of the debate of the Bologna Process.

Footnotes

- 1) see Eurostudent 2000, p. 106
- 2) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 144-145
- 3) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 146-147
- 4) see: Teichler (1996), p. 43
- 5) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 156-157
- 6) see Eurostudent 2000, p. 115
- 7) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 98-99
- 8) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 126-127
- 9) see ESIB Bologna with Student Eyes 2005, p. 37-38
- 10) see Eurostudent 2000, p. 114; see also Eurostudent 2005, p. 154-155
- 11) see Eurostudent 2000, p. 118 and Eurostudent 2005, p. 160-161
- 12) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 114-115
- 13) see http://www.ceepus.info/files/CEEPUSII_At_a_glance.pdf
- 14) see selected data from data report published by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in cooperation with Higher Education Information System (HIS) in 2006:
<http://www.wissenschaft-weltoffen.de/2006/1/4/1/1/>; see also Eurostudent 2005, p. 158-159
- 15) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 140-141
- 16) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 148-149
- 17) see Erasmus Statistics 2004/2005:
<http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/erasmus/statisti/table3.pdf>
- 18) see Teichler (1996), p. 80
- 19) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 152-153
- 20) see Teichler (1996), p. 78-81
- 21) see Eurostudent 2005, p. 150-151
- 22) see Erasmus Statistics 2004/2005:
<http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/erasmus/statisti/table2.pdf>
- 23) see Teichler (1996), p. 28
- 24) see Teichler (1996), p. 42
- 25) see: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/free_movement/docs/transition_en.pdf—Information on the application of transition regulations regarding working permits for new EU member states for public administrations;
<http://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?acro=lw&lang=en&catId=2648&parentId=0>—Information regarding working and living conditions in the 25 EU member states, EEA and EFTA states

²⁶⁾ see for example the educational cooperation in the framework of the CEEPUS programme: <http://www.ceepus.info/>

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