

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

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1377th meeting of the Council
and the Ministers for Education

Brussels, 14 December 1989

President: Mr Lionel JOSPIN

Ministre d'Etat,
Minister for Education,
Youth and Sport
of the French Republic

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The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Yvan YLIEFF

Minister for Education of the
French-speaking Community

Denmark:

Mr Bertel HAARDER

Minister for Education and Research

Germany:

Mr Jürgen MÖLLEMAN

Federal Minister for Education and Science

Mr Georg GOELTER

Chairman of the Conference of the
Ministers for Cultural Affairs
of the "Länder"

Greece:

Mr Constantin SIMITIS

Minister for Education

Spain:

Mr Javier SOLANA MADARIAGA

Minister for Education and Science

France:

Mr Lionel JOSPIN

Ministre d'Etat, Minister for Education,
Youth and Sport

Mr Robert CHAPUIS

State Secretary for Technical Education
(Ministry of Education)

Ireland:

Mrs Mary O'ROURKE Minister for Education

Italy:

Mr Antonio RUBERTI Minister for Scientific Research and
Technology

Luxembourg:

Mr Marc FISCHBACH Minister for Education

Netherlands:

Mr Jo RITZEN Minister for Education and Science

Portugal:

Mr Roberto CARNEIRO Minister For Education

United Kingdom:

Mr John MacGREGOR Secretary of State for Education and Science

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Commission:

Mrs Vasso PAPANDEOU Member

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ERASMUS PROGRAMME

The Council adopted the Decision amending the ERASMUS programme for 1990 to 1994.

The programme includes four types of action:

- Establishment and operation of a European University Network;
- ERASMUS student grants scheme;
- Measures to promote mobility through the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;
- Complementary measures to promote student mobility in the Community.

The Council welcomed the success of the first phase of the programme, launched in 1987, whose main aim was to increase the mobility of university students through inter-university co-operation.

It made a number of changes based on experience, particularly as regards extending the programme to students engaged in doctoral studies, preparing students in the language of the host country and the criteria for allocating money for grants between Member States. It was stipulated that the ERASMUS programme did not cover research and technological development activities, since exchanges between researchers were covered by the recently-adopted SCIENCE and SPES programmes.

The Council set the amount deemed necessary for the first three years at ECU 192 million.

The Council was also favourably disposed to opening up the ERASMUS programme to the EFTA countries, without prejudice to a Community initiative directed towards the Eastern European countries in the field of education and training.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND INITIAL TRAINING

The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, adopted the following conclusions:

CONCLUSIONS
OF THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION
MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL
ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND INITIAL TRAINING

"THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

convinced that the scale of technological change, developments in vocational qualifications and acute employment problems place technical and vocational education and training at the centre of the Member States' education policies;

aware that the completion of the internal market as a result of the Single Act signed in 1986 will inevitably accentuate the interdependence of the Member States' economies and increase the need for young people with high-quality vocational training who are capable of meeting developments on the labour market;

concerned to encourage professional success, to assist the integration of young people into society and to promote genuinely equal opportunities for students of both sexes in vocational training and employment;

persuaded that better quality technical and vocational education in the Member States will help to reduce regional disparities in the European Community;

observing that to meet common concerns such as the place to be given to general training in technical and vocational education, the need to provide all young people of a given age-group with a minimum of qualifications required for entry into working life, the necessity for broad-based training to encourage professional mobility among young people, and the desire to strengthen links between teaching establishments and companies, the Member States have drawn up national policies suited to their individual education systems;

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aware that existing Community programmes do not necessarily offer all the forms of mobility which would be sufficient to take account of the specific situation and needs of young people in relation to technical and vocational education and training;

convinced that, while respecting the cultural and linguistic diversities of each Member State and on the basis of the principle of the subsidiary nature of European Community action, Community co-operation can help the Member States to adapt technical and vocational education and training to new economic, social and cultural challenges;

having taken note of the Commission communication on guidelines for the medium term (1989-1992), and in particular sections II (initial and continuing vocational training) and IV (education and training for technological change);

having, at their meeting on 6 October 1989, held a first exchange of views,

I. STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUES AT STAKE IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

. On the eve of the completion of the internal market, in the context of their respective educational and training policies and their constitutional structures, the Member States are pursuing the following common objectives:

- . to provide each individual with a basic qualification giving him or her an entry into the world of work;
- . to provide all young people who so wish with one or, if possible, two years or more of vocational training in addition to their compulsory full-time schooling;
- . to ensure that education and training systems are constantly kept up to date so as to prepare young people for tomorrow's occupations;
- . to ensure that these new skills confer on the future protagonists in the economy a polyvalence which will facilitate their professional adaptation, whatever their level of responsibility in the firm or whatever their sector of activity (goods, services, administration, industry);
- . to prepare the wage-earners of the future for greater mobility within companies, between companies, between countries.

Examination of the policies adopted by the Member States highlights the diversity of the methods of action which may be employed:

- . the establishment of pre-apprenticeship measures or additional schemes for solving the difficulties impeding entry into working life;

- . the implementation of training strategies enabling the level of qualification to be raised and the degree of adaptability to future developments to be increased, and preparing individuals to "learn how to learn";
- . the quest for a close link between initial and continuing training notably as regards content, establishments, persons trained (young people and adults), teachers and instructors;
- . the strengthening of collaboration between teachers, instructors, parents and local authorities and the development of a genuine partnership with technical and vocational training institutions, and employers' and trade-union bodies.

For its part, the EEC, in co-operation with the various competent national bodies, has for some years been implementing co-operation on technical and vocational education.

This co-operation took more substantial shape with the programme on the transition of young people from school to working life, the main achievement of which was to set up pilot projects on topics connected with vocational training, co-financed by the Community.

It was supplemented by programmes such as PETRA, ARION, EUROTECHNET and IRIS programmes on vocational training.

The COMETT and LINGUA programmes also enable exchanges to be financed in technical and vocational education. Finally, for its part, CEDEFOP is organizing study visits for specialists in vocational training.

Nonetheless, although much has been done, co-operation still requires further development.

It does not genuinely promote the mobility of a large section of young people in technical and vocational education and training. In particular, measures could be proposed by the Commission in an endeavour to increase the mobility of young people who:

- . are in initial training;
- . are receiving technical and vocational training in a specialized branch;
- . are following a course of study in a teaching establishment and/or with a company.

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II. THEREFORE ASK THE COMMISSION TO PROPOSE WAYS IN WHICH CO-OPERATION CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THIS AREA

The Commission should as soon as possible make an inventory evaluating all current Community programmes with a direct or indirect bearing on technical and vocational education and training.

On the basis of this evaluation, in the interests of sound management and respecting the principle of subsidiarity, the Commission is asked to prepare proposals within the budgetary resources of the Community for measures to adapt and reinforce existing programmes and to implement a package of specific measures.

These new forms of closer co-operation should rely on the support of networks of establishments in the different Member States which, in collaboration with the various partners involved, would determine the practical shape of their co-operation, which could be geared to different groups or institutions:

(a) young people:

They could be given the opportunity to acquire practical experience in other Member States through:

- promotion of training periods abroad during which young people would attend an establishment of an equivalent level in another Member State,
- organization of periods of employment with other young people in the same field for the purposes of studying specific topics or carrying out joint technical projects,
- inclusion in their training of industrial and commercial training courses in foreign firms.

(b) teachers and instructors:

Their expectations in initial and continuing training could be met by organizing:

- scientific and technical training courses;
- teacher-training schemes;
- exchanges of experience.

(c) educational administrators:

Co-operation activities could:

- promote better knowledge of education systems and of current major reforms by means of study trips, exchanges of experience, drafting of joint discussion papers, assessment of experimental projects carried out jointly or the production and distribution of teaching materials;
- develop at European level existing national co-operation between management and labour and research bodies;
- organize joint campaigns to promote technical and vocational education channels, in particular to achieve better treatment for female students.

(d) training establishments and management and labour and trade-union bodies:

To enable them to play their full part in such co-operation,

- links could be facilitated between establishments or between establishments and firms at European level by drawing up and circulating clear information concerning training and qualifications;
- encouragement could be given to the setting up of European technological transfer networks between teaching establishments and firms with a view to developing the regional and European economy.

By thus promoting mutual information on the various education systems, by facilitating comparability of qualifications and better mutual knowledge of professional qualifications while respecting the individuality of each country, by developing contacts between the various partners in the education system, by promoting a Europe with geographical and professional mobility, these measures could help prepare future workers, employees, technicians and managerial staff for the new requirements of the Europe of 1993."

RELATIONS WITH EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Council and the Ministers for Education adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Community and its Member States expressed their desire to strengthen co-operation with Central and Eastern European countries which intend to base themselves on the principles of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law.
2. The fields of education and training are of particular importance in this respect, both in order to develop closer links between the Community and those countries and in order to assist them in implementing the reforms initiated.
3. The Council and the Ministers for Education took note of the conclusions of the Strasbourg European Council in which the Council of Ministers was instructed to:
 - take the appropriate decisions to allow nationals of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to take part in a number of educational and training programmes similar to Community programmes,
 - take, at the beginning of 1990, the requisite decisions for the setting up of a European Vocational Training Foundation.
4. The Ministers welcomed the meeting they had already had with the Hungarian and Polish Ministers for Education.

5. They took note of the Commission's intentions in this area. They stressed that the detailed arrangements to be adopted, on the basis of Commission proposals, would have to take the utmost account of the needs expressed by those involved, of the bilateral action already undertaken and of the aim of ensuring that the Community's effort had the greatest possible effect.
6. They emphasized that decisions should be taken as a matter of extreme urgency so that specific measures might be initiated as soon as possible.
7. The Council and the Ministers for Education will continue to monitor the introduction of these measures with the greatest attention."

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Measures to combat failure at school

The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, adopted the following Resolution on measures to combat failure at school:

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION,
MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,**

on measures to combat failure at school

"THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Convinced that the raising of the general level of education is one of the principal preconditions for economic, social and cultural development and for the true operation of a democracy, and that proper education should enable every individual to achieve independence, become a good citizen and find a place in society and in the world of work;

Noting that failure at school is still affecting too many pupils in Europe, particularly children from socially and culturally under-privileged groups; that this is a serious problem, both for the individual and collectively; that it leads to an individual failure in psychological and social terms and results in a high economic cost for Member States and for the Community;

Convinced of the need for reinforcement of the means employed to combat failure at school, by aiming for the best possible development of each child's capabilities;

Aware that the development of the multicultural dimension in educational systems would allow failure at school to be combated more effectively;

Taking account of:

- the Resolution of 9 February 1976 comprising an action programme in the field of education and more particularly the section concerning the achievement of equal opportunity for free access to all forms of education;
- the conclusions of the Council and of the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, of 14 May 1987 on failure at school and the fight against illiteracy;
- the results of the pilot projects conducted as part of the programmes on young people's transition from education to working life;

Noting:

- the Commission communication on Education and Training in the European Community - Medium-Term Guidelines (1989-1992);
- the study made at the request of the Commission on success and failure at school in Europe, highlighting the links between social and cultural background and educational success as well as the multi-dimensional aspect of action to be taken to reduce failure at school,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS RESOLUTION:

1. The Member States, in the framework of their educational policies and constitutional structures, will make every effort to combat failure at school intensively and to develop their action in one or other of the following directions:
 - 1.1. gaining greater knowledge of the phenomenon and of its causes, whether or not these are related to the educational system;
 - 1.2. diversifying the strategies and methods proposed;
 - 1.3. strengthening of pre-primary education, which contributes to a better subsequent performance at school, particularly in the case of children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
 - 1.4. adapting the working of school systems, in particular by:
 - renewing content, back-up and methods of teaching and assessment;
 - implementing differentiated education;
 - improvement and diversification of timetabling;
 - reducing structural or functional breakdowns, by:
 - . decompartmentalization and interdisciplinary teaching,
 - . educational continuity from one class to another and from one cycle to another,
 - . better guidance of pupils depending on their wishes and aptitudes,
 - . organization of "bridges" between different courses;

- introduction of possibilities of individual assistance (support, tutoring);
 - diversification of forms of excellence, of equivalent level, at the end of compulsory schooling or at the end of the secondary cycle and of paths leading to the corresponding certificates;
 - staff working in teams;
 - better initial and continuing training of staff, as well as general support in their task as teachers;
 - improving the administration of schools;
 - development of teaching of the languages and cultures of children of Community and foreign origin;
- 1.5. increasing
- the attention paid by schools to the cultural, social and economic context;
 - the receptiveness of schools to their environments;
 - the points of contact with society and working life;
- 1.6. arranging for curricular and extra-curricular activities to complement each other, taking particularly into account factors influencing school results (health, family, sports, leisure activities);
- 1.7. selectively increasing educational resources (curricular and extra-curricular) aimed at the least-favoured sections of the public by means of:
- better qualified staff,
 - greater material resources;
- 1.8. mobilizing education managers and all those with responsibility at local level in a collective effort;
- 1.9. circulating information on methods of action and practical achievements;
- 1.10. initiating or intensifying specific training of those concerned, whether or not they belong within the educational system.

2. The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, hereby take note that the Commission will:

- give wide circulation to the study on success and failure at school in Europe once its final form has been decided on;
- submit as soon as possible the complete report on failure at school in the Community requested by the Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, in their conclusions of 14 May 1987;
- give all necessary assistance and play its full part as a catalyst in co-operation.
The Commission's proposals in this respect will be examined by the Education Committee.

In this connection, so as to contribute to Member States' action on the question of failure at school, measures could be envisaged at Community level in the following areas:

- Organization of exchanges of information between Member States on current policies and practices:
 - . those responsible for education should be more familiar with the policies applied in the Member States. They could usefully, at colloquia and working meetings, compare experiments conducted in the twelve countries with a view to benefiting from them at the individual national level;
 - . teachers, researchers and others concerned might also take part in field-study visits to gain knowledge of innovative methods used in the various countries.
- Conducting of detailed studies by experts:
 - . case studies concerning situations representative of the typical trends of educational policies of the Member States,
 - . thematic studies across the Member States."

European Schools

The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, then adopted conclusions on a possible change in the Statute of the European Schools and on the utilization of their pedagogical experience.

Bruxelles, le 13 décembre 1989

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NOTE BIO(89) 384 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

PREPARATION DU CONSEIL EDUCATION DU 14 DECEMBRE 1989

Le plat de résistance de ce Conseil sera la proposition concernant la deuxième phase du programme ERASMUS. La Commission a saisi le Conseil en avril 1989 d'une proposition portant modification du programme ERASMUS en prévoyant notamment une enveloppe financière de 192 Mécus pour les trois premières années du programme (1990-1992) (voir aussi P-22 du 26.4.89). La proposition évite toute ambiguïté quant au fait que la recherche n'est plus couverte par le programme, ce qui justifie le recours au seul art. 128 du Traité.

Les principales questions qui seront discutées demain sont les suivantes :

- financement : la grande majorité des délégations sont d'accord avec l'enveloppe financière proposée par la Commission (192 Mécus pour les trois premières années). Seule la délégation DE a maintenu une réserve sans indiquer un chiffre alternatif. Les délégations DE et UK ont demandé cependant la fixation d'un montant estimé nécessaire pour les cinq ans du programme (alors que la Commission n'a prévu que trois ans pour lesquels le financement est couvert par les perspectives financières pluriannuelles).
- base juridique : la proposition de la Commission basée sur l'Art. 128 est acceptable par neuf Etats membres. La délégation DE, avec l'appui de UK, demande la double base juridique des Arts. 128 et 235.
- ouverture de ERASMUS aux pays AELE : la plupart des délégations semblent favorables à cette ouverture (demandée par DE et DK) sans préjudice d'une initiative de la Communauté à l'égard des pays de l'Est.

Le Conseil approuvera aussi :

Une résolution concernant la lutte contre l'échec scolaire. Suite aux conclusions du Conseil "Education" du 14 mai 1987, la Commission a élaboré une étude et un rapport concernant "la réussite et l'échec scolaire" qui a servi de base à la Présidence française pour présenter un projet de résolution sur la lutte contre l'échec scolaire. Ce projet de résolution prévoit des actions pour combattre l'échec scolaire à mener, d'une part, par les Etats membres, et d'autre part, au niveau communautaire.

Des conclusions sur les Ecoles européennes. Lors du dernier Conseil "Education", Madame PAPANDREOU a présenté deux communications de la Commission relatives aux Ecoles européennes, concernant l'une le volet statutaire (participation de la Communauté au Statut des Ecoles européennes et modification des règles de vote au conseil d'administration) et l'autre le volet pédagogique (projet d'extension de l'expérience des Ecoles européennes à certaines écoles nationales).

Les Ministres seront également saisis d'un projet de conclusions sur l'enseignement et la formation initiale dans le domaine technique et professionnel. La Commission y est invitée, après un bilan évaluatif de tous les programmes communautaires en cours, à élaborer, dans le respect du principe de subsidiarité, des propositions d'actions pour adapter et renforcer les programmes existants et mettre en oeuvre un ensemble de mesures spécifiques (renforcement de l'expérience professionnelle des jeunes travailleurs; amélioration de la formation initiale et continue des formateurs; développement au niveau européen des actions de concertation des responsables de l'éducation dans les Etats membres; renforcement des relations entre les établissements de formation et les partenaires économiques et sociaux, etc.

Les Ministres examineront enfin les relations de la Communauté avec les pays de l'Est dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la formation.

Amitiés,

 C. STATHOPOULOS

Bruxelles, le 14 décembre 1989

NOTE BIO(89) 384 (suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

CONSEIL EDUCATION DU 14 DECEMBRE 1989

LE PROGRAMME ERASMUS PASSE DANS SA DEUXIEME PHASE (IP(89)958)

"Les profonds changements qui se produisent actuellement en Europe exigent le renforcement de la coopération, tout particulièrement dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la formation. Le Conseil a su se montrer à la hauteur de l'occasion. Sa décision répond aux vœux des étudiants et des universités. Elle représente un pas en avant vers la réalisation des objectifs du programme ERASMUS; plus que jamais l'Europe de 1992 a besoin d'une force de travail mobile et hautement qualifiée".

C'est ainsi que Madame Vasso PAPANDREOU a commenté l'approbation par le Conseil Education du 14 décembre de la proposition de la Commission portant sur la deuxième phase du programme ERASMUS.

Les amendements apportés à la Décision du Conseil du 15 juin 1987, portant adoption du programme, tiennent compte de l'expérience acquise en deux années d'opération. ERASMUS a donné une impulsion capitale à la coopération interuniversitaire européenne, grâce au développement d'un solide réseau de partenariats au sein duquel les régions périphériques de la Communauté sont de mieux en mieux représentées.

La croissance de la mobilité étudiante, élément-clé du programme, a été impressionnante : on estime à 2 500 le nombre d'étudiants qui se déplaçaient avant ERASMUS avec le soutien de la CEE. Ils seront 25 000 en 1989/1990. 1 000 établissements supérieurs environ bénéficieront du soutien de la Commission pour des actions de partenariat. 8 000 enseignants universitaires participeront à des visites d'études ou d'enseignement dans d'autres Etats membres.

La décision permettra d'amplifier les effets du programme tout en assurant un meilleur équilibre géographique des échanges, grâce aux changements apportés dans la répartition des sommes destinées aux bourses d'étudiants.

La dotation budgétaire a été largement doublé. Elle sera de 192 mio écus pour les trois premières années de la période quinquennale couverte par la nouvelle décision.

Il faut souligner le soutien enthousiaste apporté au programme par le Parlement européen, qui a joué un rôle très actif dans la négociation.

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Les changements essentiels introduits par la nouvelle décision sont les suivants :

- deux paramètres supplémentaires ont donc été introduits pour la répartition entre Etats membres des sommes destinées aux bourses d'étudiants : distance entre Etats membres et coût de la vie. En outre, un minimum de 200 000 écus sera attribué à chaque Etat membre et 5 % du budget des bourses seront mis en réserve ce qui permettra de corriger les déséquilibres dus aux variations annuelles de la demande ;
- un financement pluriannuel (3 ans) pour les programmes interuniversitaires de coopération sera introduit, afin de favoriser l'engagement à long terme des universités ;
- le programme sera ouvert à certaines catégories d'étudiants jusque-là exclus. Il s'agit essentiellement des étudiants ayant achevé un cycle d'études dans leur pays d'origine et qui souhaitent en entamer un autre ailleurs dans la Communauté ;
- divers ajustements administratifs permettront une plus grande souplesse de fonctionnement et une meilleure adaptation aux besoins des universités.
- l'ouverture de ERASMUS aux pays AELE est aussi prévue.

Les nouvelles dispositions prises par le Conseil seront appliquées à partir de l'année universitaire 1991/1992.

Par ailleurs, le Conseil a adopté la résolution concernant la lutte contre l'échec scolaire, les conclusions sur les Ecoles européennes et les conclusions sur l'enseignement et la formation initiale dans le domaine technique et professionnel.

Les Ministres ont eu pendant le déjeuner un débat sur les relations avec les pays de l'Est. La veille ils avaient tous dîné en la présence de Madame PAPANDREOU, avec les Ministres Hongrois et Polonais de l'Education. Les conclusions du Conseil qui ont été adoptées à ce sujet soulignent entre autre la volonté de la Communauté et de ses Etats membres de renforcer leur coopération vis-à-vis des pays d'Europe centrale et orientale qui comptent se fonder sur les principes de la démocratie, du pluralisme et de l'état de droit.

Le Conseil et les Ministres de l'Education ont pris acte des conclusions du Conseil européen de Strasbourg dans lesquelles le Conseil de Ministres a été chargé :

- de prendre les décisions appropriées pour permettre la participation de ressortissants des pays d'Europe Centrale et Orientale à certains programmes à vocation éducative et de formation semblables aux programmes communautaires;
- de prendre dès le début de 1990 les décisions nécessaires à l'établissement d'une fondation européenne pour la formation professionnelle.

Les Ministres ont pris note des intentions de la Commission en cette matière. Ils ont souligné que les modalités précises à retenir, sur la base de propositions de la Commission, devront tenir le plus grand compte des besoins exprimés par les intéressés, des actions bilatérales déjà engagées et de l'objectif d'assurer le plus grand impact à l'effort communautaire.

Ils ont insisté enfin sur l'extrême urgence des décisions à prendre, afin que des actions concrètes puissent être engagées le plus tôt possible.

Amitiés,



C.D. EHLERMANN