

INTEGRATION THROUGH EDUCATION: THE TEMPUS PROGRAMME

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An historical look upon things is often interesting as well as revealing. During the 1947 Conference of The Hague, which was organized by the European Movement, and where the most eminent thinkers and politicians of that time were gathered to shape the face of the Europe to come, it was a widely spread belief that education was ultimately one of the most important ways of integration. Accordingly, it shouldn't surprise us if eventually the only immediate result of that Conference was the creation of the *European Council* on the one hand and the *College of Europe*, where I am presently employed, on the other hand; two institutions which were, right from the start, mainly concerned with cultural and educational matters in relation to European integration.

One of the first recommendations of the Council of Europe, for instance, stated that : "The Committee of Ministers should invite the Ministers of Education to meet with a view to drawing up a European plan for cultural cooperation"¹. And it went further on, saying that this plan of cooperation should provide, amongst others, for "the methods to be adopted for stimulating popular interest in the cause of European unity by adult education, university extension lectures, *etc.*"². At the same time, in the presentation brochure of the College of Europe, one could read the following statement: "It is incumbent upon the new generation to put responsible men, who instinctively act and think in function of European unity, in command of associations, institutions and organs of public opinion. It is undoubtedly good and laudable that statesmen, diplomats and administrators, formed at national schools, make substantial efforts to elevate themselves above traditional contingencies. But in order to produce a novel and lasting work, Europe is entitled to require that its future leaders have

¹ Council of Europe-Consultative Assembly, First Ordinary Session (10th August-8th September 1949). Texts adopted by the Assembly, Strasbourg, 1949, p.34, Recommendation n°28.

² *Ibid.*

received a European formation, right from the start ³.

In view of this concern for education and cultural cooperation as a means to achieve a kind of European consciousness and integration, it is rather strange to realize that only a few years later, by the end of the fifties, this very concern had completely disappeared from the mind of those who were in charge of building and creating the institutions of the European Community as we came to know them today. Quite clearly, education was not recognized as one of the policy areas which the EEC Treaty attributed to the Community institutions and, as a result, education could safely remain within the very sovereignty of the Member States.

Indeed, a mere look at the 1957 Treaty of Rome is particularly enlightening for the way its conceivers apprehended - or rather ignored - any educational approach. Even the most careful reader couldn't find in the Treaty a single mention of the words *higher education* or *education*, not even the word *student*. The only element which could be relevant in this matter, is art. 57 where - with respect to the Right of Establishment - provisions are made for the issue of "directives for the mutual recognition of *diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications*". And then, there is also art. 128 concerned with the implementation of "a *common vocational training policy* capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market". Quite surprisingly, it was this very art. 128, as innocuous and restrictive as it may have seem at the time of its redaction, which provided the institutions of the European Community with the necessary legal base to initiate various initiatives in the educational field. It even lead the Court of Justice of the European Community in *Gravier vs. City of Liège* (Case 293/83, [1985] ⁴ to such a wide definition of the terms *vocational training* that they came to include almost every form of education which, in turn, proved to be an important precedent as far as it could give a sufficient legal power to the Community Institutions: "any form of education which prepares for a qualification for a particular profession, trade or employment or which provides the necessary training and skills for such a profession, skill or employment is vocational training, whatever the age and the level of the training of the pupils or students,

³ College of Europe - Bruges, Brugge, s.d. [1950].

⁴ in *European Court Reports*, 1985, I, p. 593 *et seq.*

and even if the training programme includes an element of general education" ⁵. In any case, this art. 128 gave already in 1963 a sufficient legal base to the Council Decision 63/266 of 2 April 1963, by which general principles were laid down for the implementation of a common vocational training policy.

On the other hand, Community policy areas as *Research* and *Technology* which are undoubtedly most closely related to education received already quite early a never ceasing growing attention. Since research and technology as well as training programmes were originally linked to the agricultural and nuclear energy policies of the Community, their possible impact on general education was initially severely limited. However, with the gradual extension of these programmes to other fields, the scope of training activities was extended accordingly. As early as in 1973, Henri Janne wrote a report to the EC Commission entitled A Community Policy of Education ⁶ where he "emphasized the need to draw conclusions from the objective relationship between education and training, culture and research" ⁷. Since then, the various policy segments in the areas of education, training, technology and research were finally consolidated in the *Single European Act* of 1986 which introduced a new TITLE VI into the Treaty provisions on the common policies of the Community, called *Research and Technological Development*. As Roland Bieber wrote: "With this Treaty amendment, effective from 1 July 1987, the EEC Treaty established a general power of the Community to adopt measures for promoting *the training and mobility of researchers in the Community* (Art.130 G)" ⁸.

In this sense, one could say that although the 1957 Treaty indeed made no explicit mention of an European education policy whatsoever, the Treaty itself gave enough room for interpretation, by which various important initiatives in the field of education could be taken. Even more, when it was felt that, for instance, art. 128 could not provide a sufficient legal base - as it was most clearly the case with respect to the launching of the famous ERASMUS

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 10/1973

⁷ Roland BIEBER, *Educational Aspects of Research and Technology Policies* in European Community Law of Education, ed. by Bruno DE WITTE, Nomos Verlag, Baden-Baden, 1989

⁸ *Ibid.*

Programme, in 1987 (the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) - Community legislators could always make use of Art. 235 of the Treaty, which says: "If action by the Community should prove necessary to attain (...) one of the objectives of the Community and this Treaty has not provided the necessary powers, the Council shall, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, take the appropriate measures".

It is true, there were all kinds of actions in the educational field, almost from the start of the Community, and this notwithstanding the formal absence of any declared political will to do so in a coherent and structured way. Nevertheless, the ERASMUS Programme - and the same could be said, by the way, of other related programmes, as LINGUA, PETRA or COMETT - will go down in the history of the Community as a milestone in its development because, as wrote Alan Smith, Director of the Office for Cooperation in Education, it "not only created the basis for giving a significant boost to the level of student mobility within the Community, but also laid one of the main foundation blocks in the edifice which has come to be known as the People's Europe" or, as it was said by Commission Vice-President Manuel Marin: "ERASMUS is a programme of hope for the young people of Europe". Incidentally, both Alan Smith and Manuel Marin are former students of the College of Europe.

And thus the circle is completed. The so-called "dreamers" of the European Movement in the forties and the fifties who believed that, ultimately, education could do more for the unity of Europe than any economic or legal construction, seem to receive - after more than 30 years - some kind of rightful recognition. Indeed, as one can read in the Introduction to the Higher Education Guide of the European Community: "If the 12 Member States of the European Community are to blend into a people's Europe, if the European internal market is to be fully established by 1992 in accordance with the decision made by the European Parliament, then it is especially the young European who will have to plan their education and training along European lines. The graduates of tomorrow who will take executive posts in business, who will become doctors, lawyers, engineers or teachers, should spend at least some of their studies in another European country, should know that country's language in order to better understand the history and culture, the politics and mentality of its people" ⁹.

⁹ Higher Education in the European Community. A Student Handbook, ed. by B. MOHR & I. LIEBIG, 1988, p.5.

As of today, one could say that ERASMUS is a success. ERASMUS has now an estimated budget of ECU 58.8 million for 1990-1991. An additional ECU 2.1 million is available under Action II of the LINGUA Programme. All in all, there is support for 1.748 inter-university cooperation programmes of which 1.592 will involve student exchanges and 277 exchanges of university teachers. Over 40.000 students are expected to spend periods of study of between three months and a full year in another Member State. Nearly 700 study visit projects are scheduled, which will enable higher education staff to prepare cooperation programmes, study aspects of higher education systems or carry out lecturing assignments. University associations and consortia have launched 23 European projects. ERASMUS provided also the necessary funding for 12 publications on university cooperation and mobility in Europe and will support over 800 students undertaking a period of study within the framework of the European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

In the 1991 Budget of the Community, Youth, Education, Vocational Training and Youth Policy stood for no less than ECU 289.519.253, which is nearly 350.000.000 \$. This may seem much, and *in se* it is, but let's not forget it only amounts to 0.5 % of the overall Budget of the Community. As you can see, even if education is taken more seriously nowadays by Community officials, it has still a long way to go. Fortunately, there is a positive evolution and, what's more, it seems that the last years we have witnessed a tremendous acceleration of the processus, a deepening and, above all, a widening of the actions involved.

Indeed, all the programmes and initiatives which we described before, were solely for the benefit of the Member-States. In other words, only nationals from the Member-States could participate in these programmes. Nowadays, things are changing. Negotiations are underway between the Community and the European Free Trade Association countries (Austria, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) along with Liechtenstein to enable them to participate in the ERASMUS programme. The Commission hopes to conclude bilateral agreements with individual EFTA countries in the first half of 1991. This would enable EC and EFTA universities to submit applications for the 1992-1993 programme. On the other hand, there is also a growing cooperation between the Community and the Council of Europe. Several Council of Europe activities in the fields of culture and education offer opportunities for increased cooperation with the European Community. In this

connection, the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CDCC) has approved the launching of a major project on the *European Dimension in Secondary Education* for which close contacts have been established with the relevant Commission departments. The Commission, for its part, has reiterated its willingness to cooperate, particularly as regards *distance learning*. It also referred to a possible overlap with various Community programmes and the importance of developing a multimedia approach and a coherent and competitive market in this field, in particular for the transfer of educational methods.

Quite clearly, things are on the move. But to me, the most significant step of all was taken with the implementation of the TEMPUS Programme in 1990, both in the sense of a deepening and a widening of the educational concern of the Community.

This last programme is truly remarkable in more than one way. Not in the least because it is not, strictly speaking, a mere Community programme. For the first time indeed we are witnessing a Community action which is at the same time focused on third countries, established in cooperation with non-Community partners and coordinated within an overall multilateral framework.

The peaceful revolution which swept Eastern Europe in 1989 is probably the most significant event in global terms of the past 45 years. It happened on the very doorsteps of the European Community and represents a challenge and an opportunity to which the EC has given an immediate response. Accordingly, the Community has taken a key role in coordinating the Western aid efforts for Central and Eastern Europe. These efforts are centred on the PHARE Programme and the creation of a European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The PHARE Programme was set up by the Group of Seven (G-7) Summit in Paris in July 1989, the so-called Arche Summit, where the Commission was entrusted with the coordination of the assistance of the group of 24 Western countries (the 12 EC countries, plus Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the USA), so as to facilitate the political, economic and social transition of Poland and Hungary first, the other Central and Eastern European countries afterwards.

In this respect, it must be said that the Commission of the European Community was enabled, for the first time in its existence, to take on a new and important international role. For besides coordinating Western aid, it has increasingly taken the lead in framing PHARE's policy and strategy. The policy areas identified by the Commission, in consultation with the

IMF, the World Bank and the OECD, are now the objects of substantial programmes. These areas are agriculture and rural development, enterprise restructuring, banking and finance, investment and economic reconstruction, protection of the environment and, last but not least, professional training and technical assistance since, as it is said in the Preamble of the Council Decision of 7 May 1990 (90/233), "Training has been identified as one of the priority areas for cooperation, particularly in providing the opportunities for mobility and exchange with Member States as an immediate response to identified training needs in Central and Eastern Europe"¹⁰. Subsequently, and this responds to what was said before about the possible role of education with respect to the emergence of a European consciousness and identity in the first place, this programme is also said to have been designed "to promote closer understanding and mutually beneficial contacts"¹¹. In this way educational actions in a more general economic and political context were, albeit in very cautious terms still, recognized as an important factor in integration - in my opinion for the first time ever.

Furthermore, this particular Programme is also very important in the sense that it is not only linked to a whole set of other measures within the framework of the PHARE Programme, but also to other previous Community actions in the educational field. Hence, Art. 8 of the Council Decision on TEMPUS states explicitly that "The Commission (...) shall ensure consistency and, where necessary, complementarity between Tempus and other actions at Community level". Moreover, Art.9 provides that "The Commission shall ensure the appropriate coordination with actions developed by countries which are not members of the Community or by universities and enterprises or other institutions or bodies in these countries which relate to the same field of action as Tempus".

In other words, by its scope and by its linkage to coordinated programmes in other fields, by its connection to previous educational Community programmes and to actions initiated by third parties, TEMPUS could well be on the way to become a major incentive for what eventually could become a real Community education policy aiming at the integration of Europe's youth.

Today, we are beginning to see the first results of TEMPUS. In 1990-1991, ECU

¹⁰ OJ, L 131/21, 23.5.90.

¹¹ *ibid.*

20.000.000 were awarded by the Commission to TEMPUS. The Commission decided, in close consultation with the countries concerned (which were, in 1990, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the former DDR), to support a total of 153 projects, corresponding to 11.3 % of all the applications submitted. Those 153 projects received an average of more than ECU 100.000 each. However, the total of proposals which were received amounts to 1338, requesting over ECU 200.000.000 in financial support, which demonstrates both the immediate needs of the eligible countries in the area of higher education development and the enormous interest among universities Community-wide and beyond (universities from non-EC G24 countries already participate in some 10 % of the accepted projects). With regard to the representation of the eligible countries, Poland participated in 55.6 %, Hungary in 41.2 %, Czechoslovakia in 25.5 % and the former DDR in 7.8 % of the accepted projects.

However, all is not as simple as one would wish it to be. The very multiplicity of partners in this Programme results, to say the least, in a certain form of administrative complexity. And I am not only speaking about the 15 pages of the application form which have to be filled in. It is a simple fact that the structure itself of the decision process in this Programme makes it nearly impossible to know why a Project was rejected and another accepted. Who is responsible, or indeed, is someone really responsible for the rejection or the acceptance of a certain project? DG 1 at the Commission ? PHARE ? The Commission "Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth" ? The TEMPUS Bureau ? The TEMPUS Committee ? The "experts" of the British Council, NUFFIC or the Fondation Européenne de la Culture ? Could it be due to this complex administration that the final decision concerning the applications for the academic year 1990-1991 could only be made known in December 1990 ? Fortunately, these are but minor problems which time will certainly heal.

There is, however a more important problem, more important since it has something to do with the very strategy of the TEMPUS Programme. According to the statistics given by the Tempus Office, nearly 30 % of the accepted projects for 1990-1991 are in the fields of *Applied Sciences* and *Engineering*, both of those areas where university exchanges between East and West were already important and well organized. On the other hand, projects pertaining to *Applied Economics*, *Law*, *continuing education and retraining of teachers* - we all know how urgent this is - represent less than 10 %. Another priority area of the TEMPUS

Programme - *Social and Economic Restructuration Sciences* related to the process of economic and social change in the eligible countries, including *European Studies* - represents only 7.2 % of all the projects; and the same is true for projects concerned with *Modern Language Studies*. It is not my intention to blame the organizing agencies for this situation, especially since the same statistics show that important corrections have been made and that in those domains which were clearly understood as being priority areas, a special effort has been made. For instance, Social and Economic Restructuration Sciences represented only 4.9 % of the applications and Language Studies 5.9 % whereas, as I said before, they account both for 7.2 % of the 153 accepted projects. Nevertheless, one can only hope that this trend is to be continued. Actually, if I may judge by our own experience this year, that trend definitely is present. This could be explained by the fact that now the initiative has clearly being taken by the East. Which is undoubtedly a positive evolution.

In any case, those are only minor flaws. The TEMPUS Programme is running. Having succeeded in setting up in a minimum of time such an important organisation involving a multiplicity of partners, inside and outside the Community, the European Institutions have proved, once again, their flexibility, their dynamism and their capacity to respond to new challenges, even in a field which in fact doesn't even pertain to the policy areas which the EEC Treaty formally attributes them.



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