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EVALUATION

OF TEMPUS ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

AND VIEWS ON

PARTNER COUNTRIES' REMAINING NEEDS

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EVALUATION OF TEMPUS ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE AND VIEWS ON PARTNER COUNTRIES' REMAINING NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with the Council Decision of 29 April 1993(OJ No L112/34, 6 May 1993) a second phase of the Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education (Tempus II) was adopted for a period of four years as of 1 July 1994. Article 11 of this Decision requires the submission of an interim report, including the results of the evaluation, before 30 April 1996, as well as possibly a proposal for the continuation or adaptation of Tempus II for the period beginning 1 July 1998.
2. This interim report therefore aims to give information as to the achievements of TEMPUS to date and examines the case for a possible further phase of Tempus beyond the end of Tempus II in the light of the impact which Tempus has so far achieved on the reform of higher education in the partner Phare and Tacis countries.

I. EVALUATION OF TEMPUS TO DATE

1. Evolution of the Programme

3. Since its adoption by the Council on 7 May 1990 and the start of the initial pilot phase from 1 July 1990, Tempus has proved to be a dynamic programme which has been continually adapting to the changing environment in which it has been operating. This environment has been shaped in part by developments in and links with Phare and Tacis strategies, the needs and capacities of the partner countries and the policy framework provided by Council and Tempus Committee decisions. In addition, modalities have been continually improved as experience in programme delivery is fed back to inform future implementation.

4. It is possible to identify three broad phases in the approach taken by the programme. The early phase of Tempus is characterised by the need to create, broaden and deepen links between those involved in higher education in the partner countries and the European Union. Here mobility is of primary importance as a means of creating a critical mass of academics and policy makers who will be willing and able to drive education reform in the partner countries. The next phase involves mobilising and channelling this potential for change into activities directed at concrete and sustainable reforms within higher education systems. This more structural approach encompasses reform or renewal of courses, curriculum development and innovation and the adoption of improved teaching methodologies. This phase tends to become progressively more challenging as the subject areas addressed increasingly reflect those skill needs of the labour market where there is little or no experience within the

academic community upon which to base project activity. The third phase involves elevating these reforms to a strategic level where they will have an impact on universities as a whole and on policy-making and implementation within ministries of education. This implies changing to a certain extent the targeting and modalities of the programme as a different set of 'clients' is addressed and as vertical subject-based priorities are increasingly replaced by horizontal systemic ones.

5. Against this general background, the phasing of which will vary according to the situation in the respective countries, it is possible to identify some key characteristics in the evolution of the Tempus programme. These may be summarised as follows :

- a shift from exchange and mobility as ends in themselves towards increasingly structural and strategic objectives.
- an increasing degree of *ownership* by the partner countries. This is demonstrated most clearly in the dramatic growth of eligible country coordinators and contractors which has had the desirable effect of making Tempus project design and management progressively more *demand driven* rather than supply driven by the Western partners. Also relevant to mention here is the growing professionalism and profile of the National Tempus Offices (NTOs) in the Phare partner countries which have acted as an increasingly effective intermediary in the process of elaborating and articulating the agenda for reform.
- projects increasingly determined according to national priorities. In turn these priorities are progressively being located within coherent national strategies for higher education reform where Tempus is positioned to address in particular those skill needs supporting overall Phare/Tacis country objectives.
- modalities which have reflected this more strategic approach by adding a 'top-down' dimension to the proven success of the traditional 'bottom-up' approach.
- increasing emphasis on those horizontal issues such as university/enterprise links, multidisciplinary and flexible course structures and quality of university management, which are aimed at improving the performance of the higher education sector in meeting changing demands in the labour market and from a variety of social partners.
- increasing focus on the sustainability and dissemination of the growing inventory of transferable outputs of Tempus projects.

2. TEMPUS impacts

6. When considering Tempus impacts it is necessary to assess these against the objectives set for the programme under the terms of the respective Council Decision. Those for Tempus I focused on encouraging cooperation with partners in the Community, on the mobility of students and teaching staff and on opportunities for teaching and learning Community languages. Only under Tempus II which commenced on 1 July 1994 was there an explicit link made in the Decision Text with the objectives of the Phare and Tacis programmes in the context of economic and social reform. Specific objectives became more structural in terms of curriculum development and overhaul, the reform of higher education structures and institutions and their management and the development of skill-related training to address advanced level skill shortages during economic reform.

7. Evidence for the impact of Tempus has been taken principally from an external Evaluation¹, supplemented by the series of Country Monographs based on site-visit investigations and published by the European Commission², the Report 'Strengthening East-West Inter-University Cooperation: From Assistance to Partnership' prepared by the CRE ("Conférence des Recteurs Européens") in collaboration with the Liaison Committee of Rectors' Conferences³ and Site Visit Reports involving external experts⁴.

8. Despite this diversity of sources there appears to be a considerable degree of consistency as to the assessment of Tempus impacts and the areas where further action is necessary. The Evaluation concludes that 'the projects supported by TEMPUS can be considered by and large as successful and important for the development of higher education in the CEE partner countries.Although a substantial contribution of TEMPUS I to the development of higher education in the CEE partner countries can be observed, further efforts will be necessary at least in some of the CEE partner countries to reach a level of achievement and progress in higher education renewal and restructuring which utilizes the potentials of the TEMPUS Programme to a fuller extent in order to reach the aims and objectives of the Programme'.

9. The CRE report is very clear in its overall assessment of the Tempus programme within the general framework of international assistance to higher education reform: 'Thus, East-West inter-university cooperation constitutes a highly complex and diversified scene and it would be wrong to view it as a scene determined by a single supporting agency however powerful and large it may be.

¹ (i) Evaluation of the First Phase of Tempus 1990-91 - 1993-94, Final Report, February 1996, (ii) Evaluation of the Second Phase of Tempus 1994-95 - 1995-96, Interim Report, April 1996, by: University of Kassel, Centre for Research on Higher Education, and GES Maiworm&Over, Gesellschaft für Empirische Studien bR, Kassel.

² Tempus Country Monograph: The Slovak Republic, 1994, by: Prof. R. Gwyn. Tempus Country Monographs for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia are currently in preparation.

³ September 1994.

⁴ A series of site visits were undertaken by the Commission in 1992-94 in order to carry out a quality audit of the Tempus programme and, in particular, of its Joint European Projects, from both an academic and financial point of view. For details: Tempus Site Visit Programme, Annual Report 1992-93.

It appeared nevertheless very clearly in the course of this project that one supporting programme, namely Tempus, played and plays an absolutely central role among the different past and present cooperation schemes. For many institutions this was by far the most important international programme of East-West cooperation, not only from the point of view of the amount of external resources involved but also in terms of thinking about outside assistance. In the opinion of many, Tempus has indeed opened and developed more than any other process the internationalisation of Central and Eastern European higher education and it can be safely argued that the overall assessment by its beneficiaries is highly positive.'

Similarly the Monographs state that Tempus 'has generated a high level of activity which has had a very positive impact on the process of innovation in Higher Education'.

10. This consensus broadly extends to the assessment of the more specific outcomes and impacts of Tempus. Both the Evaluation and Monographs distinguish in their different ways between what the latter calls *process* and *project outcomes*. With regard to process, the Evaluation specifies as the first and most significant outcome 'the integration of the CEE partners into an international community of scholars and in some cases of administrators. They became accustomed to and versatile in this framework, they were integrated into smaller and larger networks, and they received some training and general improvement to raise their competences and status'.

11. Looking to the future it can be argued that through these process benefits Tempus has and is creating a *platform for sustainable change and development* within the higher education sector in the partner countries. For the associated countries the networks, skills and attitudes engendered by Tempus should have the particular benefit of facilitating future active engagement by the academic community in European Union programmes of various kinds. For the other Phare and Tacis countries these benefits will contribute to embedding democratic values and new perspectives within their higher education systems and to providing those skills important for facilitating reform in other areas of society.

12. Perhaps the most important concrete *outcome* of Tempus projects has been in the area of innovations introduced into *university curricula including the development of new courses, teaching material and teaching methodologies*. Increasingly these activities have been subject to the framework provided by national priorities, the typical features of which have included:

- the promotion of multidisciplinary studies and the development of new course structures, particularly short cycle bachelor degrees and postgraduate courses.
- priority to subjects in certain academic areas linked to economic transition and democratic reform or more specifically to Phare and Tacis sector programmes, such as business management, public administration, environmental protection, agriculture and health.

13. However within the generally favourable assessment of Tempus impact in this area the level and scope of impact were initially limited and have been raised under Tempus II. Initially, under Tempus I, most development took place at the level of courses or units of teaching material, that achievements have been characterised by selective innovation or adaptation rather than by totally new programmes and that the focus of impact has typically been at departmental level. Even where a university has various departments involved in a number of different projects there was often little or no synergy between them as a means for institutional reform. The Tempus I Evaluation states:

‘In a substantial number of departments in CEE countries, far-reaching curricular innovations were achieved, and the development of new teaching material of a strategic nature was realised frequently. Curricular development and other educational activities, however, varied substantially in scope and achievement.’

14. Recalling the objectives set for Tempus I by the Council Decision it is indeed quite reasonable and understandable that the outcomes of the Tempus projects commencing in the first three or four years lacked the wider dimensions which are viewed as a clear priority for Tempus II. However the reasons for the initial lack of more strategic impact within institutions seem to go beyond the question of objectives and points to constraints which are likely to persist to a greater or lesser extent through Tempus II, and thus be relevant to a possible agenda to be addressed by a further phase of the programme. These constraints arise from the move towards internal fragmentation and the development of extreme forms of individual autonomy within higher education institutions following their release from centralised direction in 1989/90. Both the Evaluation and Monographs identify this lack of institutional cohesion and strategy as an important factor in limiting the broader impact of Tempus projects. For example the Evaluation refers to:

‘...achievements on selected islands of innovation privileged to be chosen in the framework of the TEMPUS Programme. Spin-offs within the respective institutions remained moderate or mostly marginal.’

Interestingly both qualify this view in respect of smaller universities where a greater degree of institutional identity and management has led to more structural reforms being initiated through Tempus projects. This topic of university management will be returned to later in the report.

15. The need to create impact on institutions as a whole was specifically addressed by Tempus II. A kick-off for attempts to use Tempus as an instrument to promote sustainable development at institutional level has been the newly introduced requirement that partner country universities demonstrate how a planned project fits with their institutional development strategies. Another fact having contributed to a stronger involvement of the central levels of institutions in Tempus projects is that local universities can act as project coordinators in all partner countries and as contractors in most of them.

The Tempus II Evaluation assesses the adaptations made as follows:

'The function of the central level of the higher education institutions has gradually changed within Tempus II. Special Joint European Projects and complementary measures were awarded support in order to improve the institutional management. Furthermore the attempts to integrate Tempus activities into an institutional strategy could be found more often.'

16. Although a means rather than an end in itself, the *provision of equipment, books and periodicals* appears to be a highly valued outcome of Tempus projects. The Evaluation speaks of new equipment being 'the pride of the respective departments in the Central Eastern European countries'. The acquisition of new equipment was of course only agreed to where it could be seen to be demonstrably supporting relevant educational activities and/or related infrastructure, for example PCs for management projects, language laboratories for languages projects or photocopying machines to facilitate the development of teaching materials and communications with partners. Both the Evaluation and Monographs confirm that such a linkage with educational activities in fact existed. The latter refers to the beneficial impact on teaching programmes of the acquisition of microcomputers and in a more general sense the important contribution to improved communications provided by photocopiers, telephones and fax machines.

The Evaluation puts it this way:

'While in some cases it (new equipment) was closely linked to the respective educational measures, it was in most cases viewed as an improvement useful anyway, ie. for the quality of educational activities in general, for easing future international cooperation, for supporting the research infrastructure, etc. Structural development met the highest consensus as being an important element of support.'

17. Many of the same considerations apply to the provision of books and periodicals. To quote from the Monographs:

'The quality of its library is an important indicator of the quality of the University as a whole. Tempus has made a major contribution: it has enabled institutions to replenish their book stocks with many titles, often from Western Europe and North America, which may not have been available under the previous regime and which would have been denied to them still, on cost grounds alone, without the Programme's support.'

As with equipment, benefits accrued to both the methods and content of teaching and learning but it is also necessary to add that once a significant part of this 'deficit' has been corrected, increasing emphasis has been put on the development of publications and other materials (particularly *case studies*) developed locally appropriate to national needs.

18. *Staff mobility* led as much to process benefits as to achieving specific project outcomes. Volumes have been substantial, with about 57,000 mobility grants for staff being granted under Tempus Joint European Projects (JEPs), 60% of which supported East to West visits. The Evaluation speaks of far-reaching benefits in terms of getting to know partners in other countries, their activities and ways of thinking, of establishing networks, of improving competences moderately and of adapting to other styles of communication and behaviour. The Monographs state that 'staff mobility

in JEPs (and for that matter, also student mobility) and all that it has brought in its wake, albeit a means rather than an end, is one of the great success stories of Tempus'. Some of the many associated benefits are the acquisition and up-dating of specialist knowledge, adoption of new teaching methodologies, experience of using modern curriculum development strategies and the skills to work within and manage projects. Project development and management skills have proved a particularly valuable 'enabling' tool as they have contributed significantly to partner countries assuming a greater degree of ownership of projects through progressively taking on the role of contractor. To these benefits should be added the no less important factor of the adoption of new perspectives and attitudes towards change and reform and the confidence to challenge existing structures and practices. Perhaps one caveat should be added to this positive analysis in that the full potential of newly-acquired skills was not always fully realised following return of staff to their partner country institutions. Once again this comes back to the consequences of institutional fragmentation which will be addressed later in the report.

19. There has also been a substantial volume of *student mobility* with almost 27,000 grants being awarded under Tempus JEPs. The Evaluation notes that 'student exchange tended to be viewed as very helpful for those actually going abroad, but altogether less intertwined with the other reform activities'. Certainly it has had less direct links with educational innovation and change although the indirect effects of students returning with new perspectives and attitudes, as well as with a strengthened confidence and ability to articulate their views and challenge the status quo should not be underestimated. One of the conclusions of a seminar of experts involved in the Tempus site visits programme was as follows :

' Student mobility is considered by all experts as a cost effective activity as the formation abroad can really contribute to speeding up the pedagogical changes, considered both as teaching methodologies and techniques, and as programmes.'

This *catalysing effect* of student mobility is explained by the role of returners influencing attitudes within departments, both among fellow students and staff members, often obliging the latter to consider changes to curriculum and teaching methods. In the context of Tempus I, perhaps the main criticism to be voiced regarding student mobility is that periods of study in the EU were too often not recognised by the parent institution, and this is an issue being addressed under Tempus II. Under Tempus II, student mobility projects have progressively played a smaller part in overall JEP activity and now are only considered within the context of establishing measures to facilitate future mobility and cooperation through systems of academic recognition and credit transfer.

20. Each of the above outcomes is to a larger or lesser extent subject to considerations of continued *sustainability* beyond the life of a Tempus project. The programme has been addressing this in three ways:

- Joint European Project (JEP) applicants are asked to propose plans for future sustainability as part of their project design and it is made clear that an assessment of the quality of these plans will be one of the criteria used in evaluating the overall quality of the application. Moreover, JEPs in the Tacis countries are only approved after successful completion of a one year preparatory phase which aims at analysing the precise needs to be

- addressed and preparing a viable project plan.
- the Joint European Network (JEN) action (i.e. limited funding for complementary activities after the conclusion of a JEP) has been introduced which specifically addresses the issue of sustainability.
- less directly but perhaps ultimately more important, encouragement within JEPs of developing links with and services for enterprises, particularly the provision of continuing education, is establishing the potential for institutions to generate future income and thus have their own resources not only to maintain equipment and stocks of publications but also to sustain national and international cooperation.

21. In conclusion the evidence points to a high degree of impact and success for JEP projects especially when measured against the objectives set for Tempus I. According to the Evaluation most observers 'seem to agree that the proportion of real success stories is remarkable and that useful changes could be observed in most cases'. According to the participants themselves, when asked how satisfied overall they were with the achievements accomplished with their particular JEP:

- over 90% of partner country respondents, and
- almost 80% of EU respondents,

expressed a high degree of satisfaction.

3. Tempus policy setting

22. Tempus policy decisions are taken at various levels. In each partner country, two major events shape the policy, namely the definition of national priorities and objectives for Tempus projects (in application of Article 5 of the Tempus II Council decision) and the allocation of funds to Tempus within the global envelope of Phare and Tacis funds. The main policy makers at national level are the ministries of education and the Phare/Tacis coordinators; other ministries may also be associated. In the Phare countries, the National Tempus Offices play an essential role in stimulating the whole process and coordinating the academic community's contribution. The relationships between the different actors are rather complex and were not easily understood in the first years. In this respect the Tempus II Evaluation notes 'a routinisation and stabilisation of the procedures of policy formation for Tempus. In contrast to Tempus I we found that decisions of key actors on the national policy level play a more important role in the shaping of the programme.'

23. Most Phare countries have set up Tempus supervisory boards or advisory boards in which all relevant actors are represented. The Tempus I Evaluation notes:

'The establishment of Tempus supervisory boards or advisory boards to serve as an arena for dialogue and cooperation of all key actors involved in Tempus policy decisions has turned out to be a good option for the necessary coordination processes. The functioning of these boards requires the willingness of all actors to cooperate with each other.'

24. In the first years of Tempus the key players' participation in policy forming was not always well balanced. The role of ministries of education was constrained by a number of factors. Universities and indeed faculties were exercising their new-found

autonomy without an effective legislative framework for higher education. There was also a high level of volatility within the structures and personnel of the ministries themselves. This situation has evolved over the years and the Tempus II Evaluation has found a more pro-active role of the ministries of education and a clear effort to better integrate the possibilities offered by Tempus in the overall national higher education policy.

25. The definition of priorities and objectives for Tempus has increasingly influenced the scope and profile of the projects supported. Priorities can be considered as adding a 'top-down' dimension to the traditional Tempus bottom-up approach, thus to a certain extent incorporating the partner countries educational, economic and social reform policies in the programme. Priorities have progressively been positioned with respect to the overall Phare and Tacis objectives and, to some extent, sectoral Phare and Tacis policies. Particularly in the Tacis countries, the scope and number of the priority areas selected were restricted by the limited resources allocated to Tempus.

26. The Evaluation of Tempus II notes that 'increasingly detailed specifications have been introduced into most of the national priorities framed by statements of further conditions and preferences beyond the priorities themselves', and that furthermore 'every year national priorities change to a certain degree. Changes in subject-related priorities are mostly due to considerations of balance and rotation. Changes in thematic or structural priorities are due to policy developments. Policy changes are also frequently reflected in the formulation of preferences.'

* * * *

27. Consideration of any continuation of the Tempus programme needs to be set in the appropriate financial and policy context. Financial provision for both the Phare and Tacis programmes has been made to 31 December 1999 and as funding for Tempus is contained within these programmes the perspective for any possible continuation of Tempus must be subject to this budgetary framework. Under Tempus II the last call for applications will be for 1997-98 to be covered by the budget 1997, with the final Joint European Projects (JEPs) commencing on 1 September 1997. Thus this interim report focuses on the two years 1998 and 1999 as a concrete timescale for a possible further phase of Tempus, while identifying the factors that may contribute to a case for certain Tempus activity continuing beyond 1999 should funding become available.

28. The policy and operational context leads to a certain differentiation between groups of partner countries when considering the future of Tempus and this differentiation is reflected in the structure of this interim report.

29. The first group are the associated countries of central and eastern Europe which are preparing for integration into the internal market of the European Union within the context of a pre-accession strategy which was adopted by the Essen European Council in December 1994. As set out in the subsequent White Paper of May 1995 the process of single market integration will *inter alia* generate new requirements in terms of skills and qualifications within the labour force of the associated countries and this in turn will have an impact on their education and training systems. The case for any continuation of Tempus in this group of countries must be positioned to add distinctive and demonstrable value to a Phare programme which through the multiannual indicative planning process is being reoriented directly to support the pre-accession process. In doing so it also needs to recognise that Tempus will have been operating

for up to eight years in certain of these partner countries by the end of Tempus II and that other programmes are also supporting the process of higher education reform.

30. The second group comprises the non-associated Phare countries which at present covers only Albania but which is likely soon to include also the countries of the former Yugoslavia provided that adequate progress is made in the areas of security and political development. Here Tempus will have been operating for a much shorter period by 1998 and consequently will have been able to make only a more limited impact on the reform of higher education. Rather than a context provided by a pre-accession strategy, these countries are likely to be facing to varying degrees continuing fundamental challenges in the reform of their higher education systems and more generally in the transition to full market economies.

31. The third group are the Newly Independent States and Mongolia covered by the Tacis programme. It has only been as recently as 1993 that these states started gradually to participate in the Tempus programme. This needs to be viewed within the perspective of the huge challenges facing these countries in terms of political and economic reform and the relatively limited scale of the Tempus Tacis budget available. Following the Cannes European Council in June 1995 European Union policy towards these countries will be based on the twin tracks of continuing support for economic and democratic reform and, particularly in the case of Russia, establishing a 'substantial relationship of partnership'. This policy is gradually being consolidated within a series of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements which will set a broad context for European Union activities in the future.

32. The case for a further phase of Tempus will address the distinctive operating contexts and needs of these three groups of countries.

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II. A FUTURE ROLE FOR TEMPUS

1. IN THE PHARE ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES

33. Despite the significant impact which Tempus has made and continues to make on the reform and improvement of higher education, the programme operates within a dynamic environment of changing needs and requirements. This environment is increasingly being shaped by the following factors:

- the demands of the pre-accession strategy and the 'acquis communautaire'.
- continued development of the legislative and structural framework for higher education and the need to implement policy at the operational level.
- increasing pressures on universities from a range of different stakeholders, and the need to demonstrate *institutional* quality, relevance and value for money within a more responsive relationship with the labour market and social partners.

34. To a certain extent these are areas already beginning to be addressed within Tempus II priorities. However it can be argued that because of the nature and size of the need, for example in relation to pre-accession requirements, or because certain areas such as reform of university management as identified by the Evaluation are proving slow to change and thus requiring a more sustained effort, these areas would remain priorities beyond Tempus II .

35. A further phase of Tempus should be targeted to complete and consolidate work in these important areas, being carefully positioned so as to complement and support relevant Phare sector programmes and other EU activity. Where this strategy requires flexibility in the traditional modalities of the Tempus programme these should be considered to achieve greatest effectiveness. Additionally, in order to maximise the value of past and current investments made through Tempus, attention should also be given to strengthening the dissemination of the increasing inventory of project outputs particularly where they are supportive of the above areas and where they are applicable outside the university sector.

36. While recognising the increasing contribution of Phare programmes within the education and training sector, it is felt that the platform skills and relationships developed under Tempus I and II can be a very cost-effective and efficient means of mobilising expertise to work in particular at the interface between policy formulation and practitioners in the higher education sector. Providing that they are set in a coherent and strategic context, carefully constructed and implemented institutional development projects, including pilot projects to test and demonstrate good practice, can support and add substance to the process of policy development and can deliver specific outcomes in terms of priority skill needs.

A. TEMPUS and pre-accession

The Essen European Council

37. The Essen European Council of December 1994 adopted a broad pre-accession strategy which envisaged a progressive strengthening of relations with the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe through a structured dialogue and invited the Commission to prepare a White Paper on preparatory steps necessary for the integration of these countries into the internal market. It also decided that the Phare programme should henceforth be reoriented to support this process.

38. The White Paper was issued in May 1995. There are of course many different aspects to the single market but in section 4 the White Paper makes a broad distinction between the process of legislative and regulatory approximation and the establishment of implementation and enforcement structures. In relation to the latter it states:

‘ The overall picture is that the process of establishing, staffing and making operational all the necessary administrative structures is lagging behind the legislative process itself. The situation varies between the associated countries and from sector to sector, but there is a widespread need for more effort in this respect.’

39. Even where the institutions themselves have been created the White Paper says that ‘the trained staff to run them cannot always be found. In general, they inevitably suffer from a lack of experience. In this context, assistance through Tempus, the activities of the European Training Foundation and participation by the CEECs in the Leonardo and Socrates programmes will help them develop the relevant skills.’

40. Adoption of certain EU internal market Directives into the national legislation will result in a requirement for staff which needs to get the adequate training at the level of universities. For example, the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of regulations on health and safety at work will require the creation of degrees in occupational medicine. As another example, the enforcement of Directives on animal and plant health calls for the creation of courses to train the future staff of inspectorates.

41. In the different Phare sector reform programmes there has been a growing concern over the shortage of qualified staff that are able to deal with the legal and economic aspects of the national policies of reform. The problem is becoming more prominent with the prospects of future accession. There is a need for development of courses with a multidisciplinary approach focusing on the intersection of legal/economic aspects and technical contents. Cases in point are for instance agriculture economics, agricultural and food trade mechanisms, transport economics, environmental policy and legislation, economics of health services, etc.

42. A more precise identification of the ‘new professional profiles’ required for each country will need to await the individual work programmes being developed by the associated countries within their pre-accession and approximation strategies. Once these are identified they should form an important focus for the setting of future national Tempus priorities. It is envisaged that the area of university activity most likely to be appropriate for Tempus support in this respect would be the development

or adaptation of postgraduate diplomas and/or continuing education courses at professional level.

43. Education and training provided by the faculties of law will have to reflect the changes brought about by the incorporation of the 'acquis communautaire' in the national legislation. Adaptation of existing courses and introduction of new courses or course modules will be required. Curriculum development activities in Tempus projects can typically address these needs.

44. Development of European studies and in particular European Law are obviously essential to support the pre-accession process. These academic areas have figured prominently amongst the priorities of Tempus since its inception in 1990 and many projects have been completed or are at different stages of operation. Some projects have led to the creation of centers or departments of European studies integrated in universities, sometimes as inter-faculty centers. It can be confidently stated that in most countries there is still need for new Tempus projects in these areas.

45. Another important strand of integration to which Tempus could make an effective contribution is in the area of measures to ensure the free movement of persons within the single market. Parts of the legislation concerning the free movement of persons are closely linked to the freedom to provide services, especially those services which require minimum professional qualifications which in the majority of cases are awarded following successful study at a higher education institution.

46. The Commission's seven sectoral Directives covering the *regulated* professions of doctors, nurses, dentists, mid-wives, veterinary surgeons, pharmacists and architects will have the most direct impact on the need to adapt university courses in the partner countries as mutual recognition depends on the previous coordination and harmonization of training. The White Paper sees a phased application of these Directives as the partner countries will need a period for adaptation during which curriculum reform under Tempus could certainly make a valuable contribution.

47. The sectoral Directives are complemented by two general systems Directives for the recognition of diplomas and professional education and training. These Directives of 1989 and 1992 cover a wide range of professions and activities and cover, *inter alia*, all diplomas which are not affected by sectoral Directives and which are awarded on completion of a course of higher education comprising at least three years' full-time study or the equivalent. Examples of possible beneficiaries include teachers, engineers, opticians and chartered accountants. Although the general Directives do not require coordination of training, they do require *mutual trust* between the different national authorities and a good knowledge of each other's functioning.

48. Institutional transparency and consistency as well as the operation of effective quality assessment systems greatly support the strengthening of mutual trust. The implications of such requirements within the broader context of improvements in aspects of university management are addressed later in this report but they are certainly areas where Tempus should continue, for a number of reasons, to make an important contribution. Additionally the process of gradually developing better knowledge regarding the general relationship between EU requirements and partner country diplomas as envisaged in the White Paper may illuminate areas where it would be desirable for some adaptation or enhancement to the said diplomas and again Tempus would have a role to play in this respect.

The relationship to Socrates

49. Another aspect of pre-accession which Tempus would be able to support is the gradual participation of the associated countries in intra-EU programmes. Negotiations are already well advanced regarding entry into Socrates (as well as Leonardo and Youth for Europe III) and although final decisions have yet to be taken it is likely that participation in the Erasmus strand of Socrates will be taking place in 1998/99.

50. In order to consider how Tempus and Socrates might most productively interface during this period it is first necessary to examine their different objectives and modalities. These can be summarised as follows :

- Tempus is fundamentally an *assistance* programme providing substantial funds for the transfer of skills and experience from the EU to partner country universities while Socrates is essentially a *cooperation* programme where little transfer of resources takes place.
- The principal objective of Tempus is to promote the development of the higher education systems in the partner countries in the context of economic and social reform while Socrates contributes to quality in education through encouraging trans-European cooperation with particular reference to promoting the 'European dimension'.
- While curriculum and structural development are at the centre of Tempus activities, student mobility retains a position of central importance within the Erasmus strand of Socrates. Although increased emphasis is being given to teaching staff exchanges and curriculum development under Socrates these are within a relationship where all partners use the new curriculum. Also the funds available for such work are considerably less than those provided under Tempus.

51. In terms of a possible future complementary relationship between the above programmes, the question posed by the above points is whether partner country universities are ready, in terms of their competences, to enter Socrates immediately or whether there are still 'gaps' when compared with EU universities that would constrain the cooperation summarised above. If so there may be a role for Tempus in addressing these areas as a contribution to facilitating entry into Socrates.

52. Assessments of partner country institutions point to structural and management weaknesses as the main areas of deficiency. The importance of these for Socrates is underlined by the introduction of the 'Institutional Contract'. An important feature of this contract is the requirement for a statement of the institution's European policy including measures for enhancing the quality of its European operations through appropriate arrangements for monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation. In the definition of plans and the selection of activities for future cooperation, institutions will be expected to make an analysis of the weak and strong points of their international cooperation so far in terms of quality of cooperation, types of activity, subject area participation and geographical spread of partner institutions. Decisions are required on which activities should be continued, extended or abolished and this overall planning process is likely to entail the orchestration and management of consultations with a broad range of actors, academic and non-academic, across and perhaps also outside the university.

53. In Socrates, arrangements for full academic recognition for study periods abroad form will also part of the institutional policy with increasingly wide use being made of the European Credit Transfer System as a means of achieving this. Finally, the high volume of student mobility under Socrates will require well-managed and efficient student services to provide effective support in the areas of welfare, counselling, accommodation etc.

54. All these factors will require a degree of quality and coherence in terms of university management which the Evaluation, CRE report, Monographs, and Site Visits all identify as an area of weakness in the partner countries' universities. Although Tempus II is beginning to address this issue, because it involves deeply- rooted vested interests and attitudes within institutions, the consensus points to it being somewhat resistant to change and requiring a more sustained reform effort which would extend into a further phase of Tempus.

55. Participation in Socrates(Erasmus) from 1998 on will need to take account of the progress of the Tempus programme which by its very nature is much more favourable to the beneficiary countries from a financial point of view. The above analysis identifies where Tempus needs to direct a more sustained effort in order to facilitate the cooperation envisaged under Socrates. Thus it is proposed that for a limited transition period there will be a requirement for both programmes to run in parallel and in a complementary manner which avoids overlap (for example student mobility should be the exclusive province of Socrates). The balance between them will vary from country to country and change over time as an increasing number of eligible universities are able to move from a position of beneficiary of assistance to cooperation as an equal partner.

B. Support for higher education policy initiatives

56. The early 90s saw much new legislation in the partner countries which redefined the relationship between the state and higher education institutions in a way which established a high degree of autonomy within the system. This period was characterised by a distancing of universities from government as the former exercised their new-found freedom. However as the decade progresses this is being increasingly recognised as an inadequate basis on which to build an *accountable, relevant and high-quality* higher education sector as it tended to leave in place to a large extent the existing, predominantly conservative old internal structures within universities.

57. Consequently there is currently underway in the partner countries what could be called a 'second phase' of reform which is seeking to rebalance the relationship between higher education institutions, government and society as a whole, to emphasise responsibilities as well as rights, and above all to address the key factors of accountability and relevance to social and economic needs. For example in 1995 legislation affecting the higher education sector was passed in Bulgaria and Rumania. This addressed such areas as the restructuring of university qualifications, the establishment of assessment and accreditation systems and institutional management obligations associated with autonomy.

58. There is of course by now a diversity of legislative frameworks for higher education amongst the partner countries and each is at a different stage in relation to this second stage of reform. For example the Czech Republic is still working on its

new higher education law. However certain common themes are discernable within the current agenda for reform as governments and institutions themselves seek to address the above issues. This will involve in various ways challenging existing structures and vested interests as well as changing deeply-rooted attitudes and practices and it is principally for these reasons that, even where new legislation and regulations have been developed, implementation will call for a sustained effort at the operational level which is something Tempus would be well designed to deliver in the remaining years of this decade.

59. A principal common theme is the need to establish effective *quality control systems* for autonomous higher education institutions. Much work, supported in part by Phare sector programmes, has and is being done on setting up or reforming accreditation systems and attention is also being given to the possibility of using institutional evaluation systems to inform future decisions on institutional funding levels. However even where legislation and structures are in place there is often a need to operationalise what otherwise may be in danger of remaining largely good intentions. Tempus can build on this work by providing a means of mobilising expertise at the operational level, by trialling pilot projects to optimise implementation strategies and by disseminating and embedding best practice within the system.

60. Similar considerations apply to another common theme likely to remain on the reform agenda for some time to come, namely the development of *short-cycle degree courses*. This covers both the trend towards shorter, often three-year, bachelor first degrees and also the establishment of new, short, professionally and vocationally oriented university-level courses delivered either by existing institutions or by separate institutions often modelled on the German 'Fachhochschulen'. These developments are aimed at increasing the diversity, flexibility and relevance of the higher education sector and again a start on reform at the policy and structural level has already been made. There remains however an important role for Tempus in terms of reinforcing this work through assisting with the restructuring of existing courses, developing new more practically oriented study programmes, introducing innovative teaching methods and disseminating and embedding best practice.

61. Higher education plays a pivotal role a country's higher education policy in the sense that via its teacher training institutions has a significant influence on the quality of primary and secondary education. Reform of those levels of education is underway and in some countries legislation is already in an implementation phase. The professional profiles of teachers are being reshaped and teacher training institutions are required to restructure their study programmes, for instance in order to train teachers able to deal with two subjects. Tempus can make a valuable contribution by funding cooperation projects that could act as examples of good practice.

62. The need for greater flexibility and diversity are themes commonly heard in the partner countries (as well as in western Europe) and in addition to work progressing on short-cycle courses there is also a focus on increasing the role of *interdisciplinary studies* as a way of responding to the evolving needs of the labour market. It is recognised that there is still a measure of overspecialisation even at first degree level which leads to a skills base which tends to be too narrow for the multi-skill needs of today's labour markets and which tends to inhibit labour mobility and/or to meet changing requirements. Responsibility for reform in this area rests largely with higher education institutions themselves. However systemic reform also has an important supporting role to play in terms of the establishment credit transfer and recognition

procedures within and between institutions to facilitate the movement of students between different disciplines as part of a course of study. Tempus can contribute to this process in a number of ways: for example by providing expertise to assist with the development and/or piloting of systems, by imposing conditionality within its structural projects to encourage the institutional adoption of credit transfer and recognition and by giving emphasis to interdisciplinary objectives in its curriculum development activities.

63. There are obviously many other issues of higher education policy where legislative reforms are being introduced in the different partner countries. Just to mention a few examples : restructuring of postgraduate education, setting up of interfaculty or interuniversity centers to overcome fragmentation, integration of universities and research institutes, creation of academic course credit transfer systems at national level, development of internal quality systems at universities, reform of overspecialised curricula, reduction of the teaching load and, in particular, the volume of contact hours, introduction of new teaching methodologies, etc. A variety of Tempus project profiles could be used to address these issues.

C. The need to manage change and demonstrate accountability: optimising university resources

64. The environment in which universities are operating is becoming increasingly demanding. As stated in the introduction to the CRE's Institutional Quality Audit programme:

‘ Now perhaps more than ever in their history, universities have to face a rapidly changing environment on which they are dependent for their organisational survival. Institutional planning processes to adapt to the changing environment and to make use of the opportunities it provides, are, by the same token, becoming more important for the governance of universities. Linking these two insights, we can conclude that management for quality is central to a university's strategic management.’

65. In the partner countries, central to this changing environment is the trend towards *greater university autonomy*. While originally conceived as a political measure to grant greater freedom and independence from earlier ideological direction, it is now becoming clear that autonomy brings with it responsibilities as well as rights. As an expert from the Center for Higher Education policy studies puts it: ‘More autonomy for universities requires more self-regulation, requires entirely different management structures, requires strong leadership, transparency and accountability’. He calls autonomy an ‘indispensable management tool in order to be able to respond to the changing environment and to grasp the many opportunities...’

66. If autonomy brings with it new obligations, these are being defined in ever clearer terms by a range of increasingly vocal stakeholders or constituencies which have an interest in the performance of the higher education sector. As well as governments which provide the majority of funding, there are students and their parents who increasingly have to pay fees, regional and local authorities, employers offering jobs to graduates and clients commissioning research projects or specific training courses.

67. Perhaps the two most important factors driving change within this landscape are:

- the progressive pressure on public funding available for higher education institutions, and
- the need for higher education institutions to develop closer links with external socioeconomic partners and to adapt more readily to changing labour market needs.

68. This situation in turn requires the universities to put in place the means to both establish and demonstrate to their various stakeholders efficiency, effectiveness, value for money and relevance and to manage relationships with them in a coherent way. They will have to decide on priorities and be selective within a clear analysis of institutional strengths and weaknesses. Their ability to manage change across the institution will become essential.

69. Reference has already been made in this report to the *internal fragmentation* that took place within partner country universities following the political changes of 1989/90. In the context of the limited impact of Tempus projects on institutional reform, the Evaluation notes a lack of policy and management at institutional level. It adds:

‘ Most persons involved and most external observers seem to agree that Tempus-supported activities during the first four years of the Tempus programme were more or less a matter of the respective faculties or departments in the partner countries. The university as an institution did not come into play.’

70. In their different ways, all the reviews used as sources for this report recognise the factor of institutional fragmentation. Linkage to the limited institutional impacts of Tempus offers a further advantage and rationale for developing improved management skills and a more strategic approach, in terms of providing a framework for internal dissemination, sharing of best practice and the embedding of reform measures by means of institutional policies.

71. Institutional fragmentation persists in many partner country higher education institutions, especially the larger ones, and it is becoming increasingly inconsistent with an environment of rising expectations, the requirements of which are summarised in paragraph 58 above. To quote from the report of an institutional site visit made in 1994:

‘ If the management skills at this university are in any way typical of Central and Eastern European institutions I think there is a strong case for diverting some of the TEMPUS funds to provide senior University managers with courses on strategic planning.’

This is seriously compromising the ability to project a coherent and distinctive institutional profile to external stakeholders. It constrains efforts to establish institution-wide norms and standards which should serve to define and assure institutional quality both internally and externally. Also it weakens the ability of the institution as a whole to reflect on its own strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and consequently to direct efforts and scarce resources to those areas where they are likely to have the greatest value within a shared sense of purpose defined by a commonly agreed overall mission for the institution.

72. However, while strategic management is a vital means for responding creatively to an increasingly demanding and changing environment, it is often linked to *systems which assure quality* within the institution. Progress towards the attainment of objectives and goals set by strategic plans can be most effectively measured and managed within a framework of clear and transparent performance standards defined through a quality assurance system which can serve as a unifying factor across the institution. As stated in the CRE's Institutional Quality Audit programme: '(European universities) need to respond to increasing demands by indicating their willingness to adapt to new environmental constraints. Developing and implementing quality management approaches is an effective way to do so'.

73. An OECD expert in a paper for an OECD/Phare seminar on quality assurance in higher education, says 'there is little doubt that quality assurance is seen in all of the countries concerned as a high priority for the successful transformation of higher education structures and practices'. He sees the following goals being addressed in CEE and other countries:

- to guarantee quality and standards;
- to improve quality and to raise standards;
- to provide public accountability of resources expended on higher education;
- to ensure consumer protection against inadequate or defaulting institutions.

He also emphasises the need for commitment to quality *at all levels* in these terms:

'A fundamental prerequisite to the successful implementation of any system of quality assurance is that there should be a dedication to quality on the part of all members of the institution. Formal participation by the Rector, Governing Body and Academic Council is not sufficient to ensure effective participation and cooperation by faculty heads and teaching and research staff. Likewise, enthusiastic support by the latter will not succeed unless the university's top management is also dedicated to the achievement of the goals of quality assurance.'

74. Thus the management needs of higher education institutions extend beyond the requirements of senior managers for strategic planning skills to others involved in *day-to-day operational management*, for example in the areas of finance, personnel, information technology and student services. Indeed it is often these non-academic staff who feel marginalised in comparison with the status and support given to their academic colleagues. However in the future success will depend not only on an institution's academic quality but also on the effectiveness of its internal systems for delivering and demonstrating value for money and high levels of efficiency in supporting academic activity. Put another way, there will be increasing pressure for these 'support services' to add demonstrable value to the operations of higher education institutions. This will not only involve providing the appropriate operational skills at various levels but also encouraging a more positive interface between the academic and non-academic staff in terms of greater involvement by the latter in institutional planning and development.

75. An improvement in the quality and coherence of university management would bring many benefits, not least in the area of maintaining institutions' relevance to the needs of society particularly through better links with and sensitivity to labour markets in partner countries. This is necessary not only to sustain public support for the higher

education sector but also to provide what is likely to become an increasingly important source of income as pressure continues to bear down on levels of public funding. The CRE report calls this the '*service function*' of universities including collaboration with industry, covering such areas as consultancy provided to regional or national industry in its restructuring, to local authorities in their administrative reforms, by organising special training courses or conducting various applied research projects. Special attention should be paid to the contribution that universities can make to the development of new small and medium-sized enterprises, for example in the training of scientists and technologists, and to the innovative provision of professional continuing education and training to provide for the changing skill needs of those already in employment.

D. Maximising the utilisation of Tempus outputs

76. The Tempus I evaluation notes : "Spin-offs of educational and curricular activities for the same subjects and departments at other higher education institutions in the country have been achieved within Tempus. A certain extent of dissemination and adoption can be noted, although it could be improved by increased support for dissemination, publication of material developed within JEPs and increased communication and exchange." Although limited support is currently given to disseminating project outputs it seems that giving this aspect greater attention in the future would capitalise most effectively on the considerable investment already made by Tempus and maximise the leverage of its effects on the process of reform and restructuring.

77. There are a number of different areas where benefits are likely to accrue from more effective dissemination, whether this be on a 'vertical' subject-related basis or a more 'horizontal' basis addressing perhaps teaching methodologies or the process-related skills of project implementation and management. One such area for better utilisation of outcomes is *within the partner country institutions* where the original Tempus project was located. This may be more relevant to non subject-specific aspects of dissemination but there seems to be a clear case for the better and more systematic sharing of the transferable aspects of 'good practice', whether this is in the area of management, interpersonal or didactic skills. Any improvements that can be introduced to the modalities for dissemination in this respect will clearly be made more effective if complemented by improved staff development systems within eligible universities which are designed to share and embed best practice across the whole institution.

78. Dissemination to *other higher education institutions* is equally important. Nationally this contributes to the *critical mass for reform*. It also provides an opportunity for those institutions or faculties which have not participated in Tempus to benefit from of its outputs. However, particular attention in the future should be given to the potential for sharing Tempus results *between partner countries*, as this dimension is identified in both the Evaluation and the Monographs. Experience has shown that regional cooperation will work effectively only if there are clearly defined common interests, a high level of commitment by all partners and appropriate supporting modalities. It is suggested that the common agenda defined by the pre-accession process as it affects the higher education sector may well provide an incentive and common framework for a new phase of regional cooperation, and future dissemination actions should take this dimension into account. It should also be added that the smaller partner countries have a particular interest in regional dissemination

as a means of benefiting from the experience of the larger number of projects in other partner countries.

79. Many Tempus projects have potential benefits outside the academic sector, for example those concerned with management or business skills or applied science and technology. In the context of what has already been said about maintaining the relevance of universities and improving links with external social and economic partners, it is important to encourage the use of Tempus outputs where appropriate for the benefit of local enterprises and local and regional authorities. Indeed such a role, especially if combined with harnessing the efforts of neighbouring universities, could be used to establish or strengthen the contribution of the higher education sector to regional development within individual countries. This should be part of a more focused strategy to support the skill needs of Phare sector projects where the role of universities in providing required human resource development on a sustainable basis should be better exploited.

80. In all the above aspects of dissemination, it is suggested that more effective utilisation of the considerable investment made under Tempus I and II can be made. Measures to make dissemination more effective in the future should include the provision of improved incentives and modalities in order to stimulate greater commitment and more productive activity by project participants. Perhaps more investment should be made in establishing the needs of beneficiaries and more attention given to the quality of the dissemination or implementation process which should reflect an active involvement of and ownership by recipients. This should be complemented by allowing the possibility of adapting the original outputs of projects in order to meet more precisely the requirements of target institutions or organisations, by encouraging more collective activity between consortia and by supporting innovative alliances between academic and non-academic institutions or organisations.

2. IN THE NON-ASSOCIATED PHARE COUNTRIES

81. At present this category comprises only Albania, but is likely also to include the republics of the *former Yugoslavia* (excluding Slovenia) in due course. Pending decisions on the form and content of EU assistance to these republics and an analysis of their needs it is only appropriate here to make some general comments about a possible role for Tempus. Even within this limited group of countries there are significant variations in the level of development and indeed infrastructure of the higher education systems which would need to be reflected in any Tempus programme. However there appears to be an equally strong case, if not stronger, for including a Tempus element within a Phare assistance package as there was for all the other countries of central and eastern Europe.

82. While in some of the countries of the former Yugoslavia there may historically have been somewhat more contact with the academic community of western Europe, recent events have to varying degrees widened the gulf with the rest of the continent. It is particularly important that universities in these countries not only establish open and democratic practices themselves but are also able through their future activities to help to project and instill such values within their societies. This and the need for universities to contribute to the skills necessary for economic reform and reconstruction makes a persuasive case for the extension of Tempus to these countries particularly if it is carefully coordinated with Phare sector programmes and other

assistance to the higher education sector. Experience shows that the programme will take some years to reach a critical mass and it is therefore recommended that JEPs, particularly addressing curriculum development and structural objectives, are initiated on an on-going annual basis over the full period of a possible future Phare financing commitment.

83. The origins of higher education needs in *Albania* are somewhat different but no less pressing. Unlike most other countries in the region there is no long tradition of higher education, with the first university being founded as recently as 1957. The country and its education system has also suffered from a long period of almost total isolation from the outside world, and cooperation even with other communist countries was very limited. The effects of this situation have been exacerbated by a weak economy and a very small budget for higher education which has been estimated at approximately half that of other countries in east and central Europe in relation to national GDP. This has resulted in a particularly large 'deficit' within their higher education system which suffers still from a poor physical infrastructure and a lack of basic resources such as books.

84. Against this challenging background Tempus made a relatively late start with the first projects being launched in 1992/93. At the time of writing only eight have been completed with a further four due to end in 1995/96. In these circumstances there seems to be a compelling case for continuing the launch of Tempus projects in each year within the Phare funding commitment. The Phare Multiannual Indicative Programme to 1999 envisages continued Tempus support to social and human resource development. The programme will need to address pressing needs in the areas of curriculum renewal, particularly where this supports Phare objectives, the upgrading of teaching skills, materials and facilities, and the modernisation and restructuring of the higher education system, including institutional management, to achieve greater diversity, flexibility and relevance to changing labour market needs. Moreover the contribution of Tempus in establishing and embedding the values of democracy and civil society should not be underestimated. Against this background it is considered that a sufficient number of JEPs to create and maintain a critical mass for change would need to be launched in each year that Phare funding is available to Albania.

3. TEMPUS IN THE TACIS COUNTRIES

85. The Council Decision of 29 April 1993 adopting Tempus II extended the programme to the Republics of the former Soviet Union. Preparatory activities commenced in 1993-94 for Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and the first JEPs were launched in these countries the following year. Eligibility has been progressively extended to other Republics, so that currently all 13 Tacis partner countries take part in Tempus. Of the MECU 565 allocated to date to the Tempus programme since its inception in 1990, approximately 8.5% has been devoted to the Tacis countries, funding 240 one-year preparatory projects and 59 three-year full-scale JEPs.

86. Thus it is clear that Tempus Tacis is in its early stages of development, especially when measured against the more than 1200 JEPs launched in the Phare countries since 1990. This factor is reinforced when set against the huge challenges faced by the Tacis countries in reforming their political, social, judicial and economic structures. Recently a report of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development stated:

'The magnitude of the task of creating the legal, institutional and human basis of the market economy has been generally underestimated'. With regard to higher education reform, the size of the task ahead is illustrated by the fact that in Russia alone 'the approximately 700 universities, institutes, colleges and other higher education institutions, many of which have century-old history and world prestige, unite around six million professors, teachers, researchers, students and postgraduates'⁵.

87. When considering the future of Tempus Tacis beyond the end of Tempus II, these factors need to be taken into account. The following sections look in more detail at the principal challenges facing the future restructuring and development of the higher education systems of the Tacis countries and the strategic considerations relevant to efficient and effective programme delivery, leading to a proposed approach for a further phase of Tempus Tacis which will continue to make a valuable and distinctive contribution to the reform process.

A. Key challenges for the future of higher education

88. Although each Tacis country has its own specific education reform agenda, certain common themes, largely stemming from their common Soviet legacy, can be recognised in the analysis of the challenges to be addressed. The balance of these of course vary, for example according to the size of the country concerned, but these key challenges form an important background to considering the future role of Tempus.

89. Broadly speaking, they can be divided into structural and didactic aspects, although it is of course important to recognise the close relationship between the two. Structurally, one of major items on the reform agenda is the implementation and management of the process of diversification, decentralisation and autonomy of higher education institutions. Diversification is being driven to a significant extent by the growing number of private-sector higher education institutions in several Tacis countries, although diversification is also apparent within the state sector as institutions seek to respond to legislative reform, financial constraints and the need to respond to a changing labour market. Diversification is also linked to the trend towards decentralisation of the financing and management of institutions. This is particularly relevant to the larger Tacis countries where central government is seeking to delegate a significantly larger role to regional and local authorities⁶. There is still much work to do in defining a satisfactory relationship between the various levels of competence within the new dispensation and in developing new supporting management structures and skills and financing mechanisms. The implications of this policy extends down to institutional level in the form of establishing institutional autonomy which is a common reform objective among the Tacis countries. However as has already been explained in respect of the Phare countries, although this is an essential tool to enable institutions to adapt to new demands and to exercise accountability to various stakeholders, it also requires new structures, skills and attitudes from both the academic and management staff of the institutions concerned.

⁵ 'Forward' of the Catalogue of Higher Education Institutions (December 1994).

⁶ For example in Russia the proportion of federal funding for education had declined to 3.8% by 1993.

90. This process of diversification and decentralisation is putting into particular focus the need to control quality and to maintain a certain degree of national cohesion in the future operation of higher education systems. Thus priority is being given to developing or overhauling national systems of standards and accreditation and this is likely to lead to an increasing emphasis on effective ways to operationalise the systems developed within the framework of the various levels of competence referred to above.

91. A major factor and constraint in this reform process is the dramatic overall reduction in the resources available for higher education. The shortage of funding is leading to staff demotivation, an internal 'brain drain' to other better paid professions, lack of basic teaching resources (such as textbooks, electronic/communication equipment and other material) and the inability to maintain the physical infrastructure (such as the repair and servicing of buildings). Living and study conditions for students have dramatically worsened, primarily due to lack of financial support. This can only put increased demands on the reform process and place even greater importance on skills to manage change in a proactive and cost-effective way.

92. One important aspect of this change, as stated above, is strengthening of the regional and local aspects of higher education. Where the regional dimension is important in a Tacis country, higher education institutions are being called upon to play a more active and distinctive role in economic and social activity, where appropriate within regional development plans, including contributing through retraining to the conversion of the military infrastructure to civilian uses. Greater local involvement is to a degree an objective common to all Tacis countries particularly in the context of developing closer links with enterprises through, for example, seeking opportunities for technology transfer, consultancy and continuing education. The establishment of what has been called a 'service function' to be provided by higher education institutions⁷, which should address the practical needs of various regional and local organisations and enterprises, will however only be possible with the appropriate structures, skills and attitudes to develop a closer relationship with 'external' partners. If through better and more productive links forged regionally and locally higher education institutions can establish greater relevance and added-value, this will open up the possibility of new or increased sources of funding to replace to a certain extent the reduced federal contribution.

93. Higher education institutions play an important role in the training of secondary school teachers, for example through the approximately 100 pedagogical institutes and universities in Russia, and reforms within the compulsory education sector are resulting in priority being given to restructuring the provision of (re)training for school teachers. The planned reforms in Russia⁸ foresee a move to a multi-level structure providing more differentiated training opportunities, including in-service continuing training, as well as the introduction of new teaching methodologies and new curricula, particularly in the humanities.

⁷ Report 'Strengthening East-West Inter-University Cooperation: From Assistance to Partnership' prepared by the CRE, pp. 16-17.

⁸ Ministry of Education/UNESCO: 'National School Development Project', 1995; Ministry of Education: 'The Development of Education - National Report of the Russian Federation', 1994.

94. Key challenges in the didactic field focus on the need to reform over-specialised and rigid curricula, making them more relevant to the requirements of the labour market, modern technology and social and democratic development, as well as the introduction of new teaching methods.

95. Under the rigid system of the command economy the curricula of higher education institutions were (and to a certain extent still are) narrowly defined by sectoral ministries who guaranteed a job on graduation. With the gradual disintegration of this system higher education institutions are left with overspecialised, often over-long and increasingly unneeded courses which are producing graduates with inappropriate skills for the new labour market (particularly in technical subjects). Moreover, because skill needs were formerly dictated to higher education institutions, they lack the mechanisms, skills and attitudes to adapt to this changing market-driven environment. However change is made all the more urgent by the acute financial predicament of the higher education sector which cannot afford to offer courses which are no longer relevant. Developing closer links with local socio-economic partners is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the modernisation of study programmes which also calls for the internal institutional changes referred to above.

96. The situation is especially critical in those disciplines which were particularly subject to ideological influence but which in their contemporary form make an important contribution to economic and social restructuring. Principal amongst these are law and economics, although more generally the social sciences and humanities suffer in varying degrees the 'deficits' resulting from the communist era.

97. Predominantly teacher-focused and fact-based teaching methods also need radical modernisation. Higher education institutions are seeking the know-how to replace the former by more participative and innovative methods offering greater variety to suit the different learning styles and preferences of a student-focused approach. The emphasis on factual teaching needs to be reformed to encourage and develop in students the ability for critical analysis and to equip them to explore different options and to take the sometimes complex decisions that will face them in their personal and working lives. This should be complemented by developing a readiness and ability to be adaptable and flexible as these will be qualities particularly required by the market economy. The acquisition of life-long learning capabilities will form a crucial step in making higher education more relevant for changing labour market demands.

B. Strategic Considerations

98. EU relations and cooperation with the Tacis countries are progressively being set within the framework of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements which focus on developing partnership relations of varying intensity within the context of supporting economic and democratic reform⁹. Each of these Agreements includes provisions relating to education and training and it is the implementation of these which should set the broad context for Tempus Tacis in the years ahead.

⁹ Partnership and Cooperation Agreements have been signed with Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and the Ukraine and are under negotiation with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Exploratory discussions are being held with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

99. The European Council of Cannes laid out the main political themes for the European Union's relations with Russia, envisaging in particular a 'substantial relationship of partnership'. The Commission has since communicated to the Council its detailed proposals for future relations with Russia, the Ukraine and the Transcaucasian Republics, and the policy framework set by the Council's eventual conclusions will subsequently have to be taken into account.

100. Tacis country programmes¹⁰ provide a more specific operational strategy for supporting economic and democratic reform objectives and it will be important to position future Tempus activity within this strategy in a way that ensures that the higher education sector is most effectively mobilised to contribute to these reform objectives.

101. In relation to the substantial reform needs of the Tacis countries, the financial resources for assistance are likely to remain limited which makes it all the more important to seek maximum cost-effectiveness in methods of programme delivery. The recent introduction of national priorities should make a significant contribution towards providing a sharper focus on country-specific priority areas and this trend to more precise targeting should be further strengthened in the future through the placing of these priorities within increasingly coherent national and perhaps regional policy frameworks. The initial phase of Tempus Tacis has also shown that the competitive approach towards project design, selection and implementation guarantees high quality and cost-effectiveness, particularly when set in the framework of targeted priorities.

102. Impact of the limited resources available can also be maximised through identifying key points of leverage to optimise the multiplier effect and by establishing the most productive synergy with other assistance activity in the higher education sector. This will involve continuing and further developing the policy of targeting centres of excellence and encouraging regional networking, while ensuring that these activities are carefully positioned to be complementary to and supportive of evolving local policy frameworks and development plans. Dissemination of project outputs will in general become increasingly important in the future, particularly in the context of creating stronger linkages with and addressing the needs of local industry and other non-academic organisations.

103. Change and modernisation within higher education systems are to a large extent dependent on significant improvements in the standard of management at all levels. This encompasses where appropriate the establishment of new management structures and will certainly involve the development of enhanced management skills and of more proactive and positive attitudes to implementing change. Not only will such measures facilitate restructuring and reform but, equally important, they will sustain it.

C. Future orientations for Tempus Tacis

104. The policy orientations for Tempus will continue to be set through targeted national priorities to be defined in the general context of European Union relations with the Tacis countries concerned and the more specific context of Tacis

¹⁰ The new Tacis Council regulation of 29 January 1996 provides for four-year Indicative Programmes 1996-99 and for more detailed Action Programmes of variable duration.

programming. Positioning future Tempus projects within a framework of strengthened links between the policy and operational levels will lead to more productive synergy between the two and will provide a clear complementary role for Tempus in those cases where Tacis sector programmes are supporting the process of policy development.

105. The same applies with regard to the development and implementation of higher education policy in the Tacis countries, and indeed new higher education policies are needed to provide a coherent framework to maximise the value of projects at the institutional level. Tempus is well placed to complement Tacis activities supporting this process through using projects selectively to pilot, implement and embed policy at the operational level, for example in areas such as new educational management structures and practices.

106. Support to strengthening university management will continue to be a priority in the future. The trend towards increasing the degree of institutional autonomy will put new demands on university staff, and these will be all the greater within an environment of greatly reduced resources. Structures and skills to manage change on an institutional basis will be essential as universities seek to adapt their activities to new labour markets, develop new relationships with local and regional authorities and enterprises and as they assume greater responsibility for making the most cost-effective use of the more limited budgets which are likely to remain the norm.

107. Although in the future Tempus is likely to be addressing a greater proportion of 'horizontal' issues by complementing Tacis activity as outlined above, there will be a continuous need to support in a focused way subject-specific curriculum development. Areas for support should principally be those emanating from the needs of establishing a market economy and building democracy, taking into account local requirements such as the existing capabilities and absorptive capacities of institutions and Tacis country objectives. Examples of those subjects where there is a convergence of 'academic deficit', reform-driven needs and Tacis-defined objectives are legal training, economics, science and technology, environmental protection and education for democracy (civic studies).

108. In those Tacis countries where increasing the regional dimension of higher education is a priority objective, Tempus projects should wherever possible reflect this aspect in their design and selection. Ways should be sought to enhance the regional ownership and identity of projects and their linkage where appropriate to regional development plans. This should not only increase the relevance of projects to regional needs but is also likely to increase impact as the commitment of regional stakeholders is mobilised.

109. Networking and outreach on either a regional or local basis is likely to enhance the critical mass of activity and contribute to consolidation and impact. Encouragement should thus continue to be given to cooperative activity between higher education institutions in the same area and with clear common goals. However particular emphasis in the future should be placed on increasing institutions' capacity to develop links with 'external' partners in the social and economic field, in particular industry, and to provide services for enterprises and local/regional authorities through for example technology transfer, consultancy and continuing education.

110. In the above context, continued support should be given to the dissemination of Tempus outputs, and as the inventory of project outputs grows over the coming years consideration should be given as to whether there is scope for increasing the return on Tempus investments made by strengthening support for this activity. In this context, priority should be given to establishing and deepening interaction with relevant Tacis-supported projects.

111. One potentially important vehicle that could effectively support networking, outreach and dissemination, especially where distances are large, is the use of electronic media which could for example facilitate wider access to project outputs, assist cooperative activity or offer new options for teaching methods and delivery when face-to-face meetings are not always possible or necessary. Russia, which could benefit most from this medium, is paying particular attention to providing university access to networked IT services.¹¹

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

112. In both the Phare and Tacis countries it is proposed that there will remain a valuable and distinctive role for Tempus beyond the conclusion of its second phase. In general this role should seek to capitalise on the Programme's strengths at the operational, institutional level and to use this substantial *platform for change* to:

- support and develop closer synergy with higher education policy development and implementation. The value of complementarity could, for example, be further realised through the trialling of policy innovations in the form of pilot projects, establishing more systematic mutual feedback between the policy and operational levels and using institutional development projects and dissemination to establish and embed best practice.
- mobilise and transfer, through well established networks and cooperative modalities, expertise within the higher education sector to address carefully-defined skill deficiencies in relation to Phare and Tacis reform objectives.
- develop institutional capacities to manage change and to respond effectively to challenges within the economic and social environment. By placing particular emphasis on creating, strengthening and managing links with enterprises and other regional/local organisations, Tempus can contribute to establishing the processes, attitudes and skills necessary to maintain a sustainable relevance to economic and social needs.
- capitalise on Tempus investments already made by using dissemination and networking to increase the critical mass for reform.

¹¹ For example last year a concept was elaborated for the creation of a 'National Academic System of Databases of Higher Education Institutions in Russia'. This will contain information on the main activities of higher education institutions and will be made internationally available through the Internet. Also the Higher Education Committee has sponsored the creation of centres of new information technology in 60 universities and other higher education institutions, all of them with access to electronic mail. In the future Tempus should make most effective use of this developing infrastructure in Russia and elsewhere to maximise impact in the ways outlined above.

113. Especially in the associated Phare countries, this more managed strategy will require some further modification to the traditional 'bottom-up' approach in favour of a more hands-on role in project design and monitoring. A possible scenario for the future is for a relatively small number of carefully positioned and negotiated projects increasingly addressing horizontal areas such as standards, quality, management and the structure of qualifications relative to the needs of changing labour markets. This is likely to have implications for the current policy of consortium-driven project design and for the degree of monitoring necessary to ensure compliance with increasingly demanding, specific and strategic outcomes. In the Tacis countries, the 'bottom-up' approach as developed under Tempus II will remain a crucial prerequisite for successful programme delivery.

114. It is also envisaged that as the Tempus programme matures, especially in the Phare associated countries, and the emphasis shifts away from basic curriculum development, the requirement for full three-year JEPs may change towards shorter and more compact actions of perhaps no more than two years duration. Moreover consideration should also be given to providing more flexibility at the margins of the programme to enable it to be more responsive to needs arising in the shorter term, such as support for events which would bring together those working at the policy and operational levels, activities designed to contribute particular expertise to a problematical item on the reform agenda or initiatives to increase the impact of key Tempus outputs.

115. As was stated at the outset, the timescale for a further phase of Tempus is limited to the period of the current Phare and Tacis financing commitments. However this of course does not necessarily mean that all the reform needs in higher education will be met by the end of the decade, especially in the Tacis countries. Even in the Phare associated countries, variable progress towards the requirements of accession might result in continuing education and training needs in certain countries beyond the end of 1999 to which Tempus may be able to make a valuable contribution. The size of the reform challenges in the Tacis countries certainly makes it likely that there will still be an important role for Tempus in the next decade.

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