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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

**THE NEW GENERATION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING
PROGRAMMES AFTER 2006**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Communication follows up the Commission's proposal for the budgetary means and policy priorities for the period 2007-2013. It describes the Commission's intentions for a new generation of Community programmes for mobility and co-operation in education and training to replace the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Tempus III programmes when they expire at the end of 2006. It shows how the new generation will contribute to the Commission's priorities for the period to 2013, in particular to achieving sustainable development within the European Union and stability and prosperity in the neighbouring countries.

The new generation will consist of:

- a new Integrated Programme for mobility and co-operation in lifelong learning for the EU Member States, the EEA/EFTA countries and the candidate countries, covering education and training together; and
- a new Tempus Plus programme for cooperation between Member States and countries bordering the Union and the existing Tempus countries, covering the whole spectrum of education and training.

The new programmes will respond to important policy developments in the field at European level that have taken place since the existing programme generation was created in the late 1990s. The Lisbon European Council of 2000 set the core goal of making Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, while nonetheless strengthening social cohesion, and accorded education and training a central role in reaching this aim. The intergovernmental processes launched at Bologna and Copenhagen seek to improve coherence, quality and transferability in higher education and in vocational training, and explicitly acknowledge the important role the Community programmes will play in making them a success. In 2003, the Commission launched a "New Neighbourhood" strategy to reinforce the prosperity, stability and security of the countries bordering the enlarged European Union. All these major policy developments, and the other factors set out in the body of the Communication, need to be reflected in the design of the new programmes.

In line with the growing importance of cooperation in education and training, and in response to massive unfulfilled demand, the new generation of internal and external programmes will be significantly more ambitious than at present, as the Commission's new financial perspectives proposal makes clear. The Integrated Programme for lifelong learning would see a very significant increase in decentralised mobility actions for individual citizens and in partnerships between institutions. Its targets would include:

- At least 10% of school pupils and teachers involved in Comenius 2007-13.
- At least 3 million Erasmus students by 2010.
- At least 150,000 Leonardo trainee placements per year by 2013.
- At least 50,000 adults learning and teaching abroad per year by 2013 and the participation of at least one in five structured adult education providers in European cooperation by the end of the programme.

The Integrated Programme will be divided into four sectoral programmes: Comenius for school education; Erasmus for all forms of learning at university level; Leonardo da Vinci for initial and continuing vocational education and training; and Grundtvig for adult education. In order to reinforce synergies between education and training, and to address policy priorities and dissemination needs better, the Integrated Programme will contain a transversal programme, focusing on policy development (including data collection and analysis), language learning, new information and communication technologies (ICT), and dissemination. This will permit a more strategic and coordinated approach than in the current programmes.

The Integrated Programme will also include a new Jean Monnet programme, focusing on European integration. It will encompass the current Jean Monnet Action, to promote university teaching of and research into European integration, as well as support to important European organisations and associations in the field of education and training.

The new Tempus Plus programme will build on the successful Tempus approach, which has hitherto been limited to higher education and has led to system development and reinforced cooperation between Member States and partner countries. Tempus Plus would extend such action across the spectrum of lifelong learning: to schools, to vocational education and training, and to adult education. The programme will consist of measures to support system modernisation, to fund the mobility of individuals, and to support multilateral projects. The programme target would be:

- To support the mobility of at least 100,000 individuals by 2013.

The Commission's detailed legislative proposal for the new programmes outlined in this Communication will be published in summer 2004, as part of a wide-ranging package of draft legislation for the next programming period.

INTRODUCTION

The existing Community programmes in the field of mobility and co-operation in education and training all come to an end in 2006¹. The Commission will later this year adopt its detailed legislative proposals for a new generation of programmes to run concurrently with the new financial perspective. This Communication sets out, in the light of the Commission's recently-published Communication *Building our Common Future: Policy challenges and Budgetary Means of the Enlarged Union 2007-2013*², the rationale behind the Commission's forthcoming legislative proposals, how they build on the experience of the past, their main features, and the broad use of the funds proposed in that Communication. This paper outlines the key contribution that organised European cooperation in education and training will make to achieving the Commission's priorities for the new expenditure period, in particular to sustainable development to bring the European Union to the leading edge in the knowledge economy and society, and to help reinforce stable and prosperous relations with our neighbouring countries. Nothing in this Communication prejudices the final content of the legislative proposals to be adopted by the Commission, including their financial aspects.

This Communication covers activities both within the European Union and candidate countries, and external activities involving the "New Neighbourhood" countries and other third countries currently covered by Tempus III. It is divided into six parts.

- The first part sets out the main political and policy developments that have taken place in co-operation in education and training since the adoption of the current generation of Community programmes in 1999/2000, which affect the design of the new generation of programmes.
- The second part outlines the continuing and growing need for Community action in the fields of education and training, both within and outside the EU.
- The third part covers the experience of the programmes as such, focusing on the interim evaluations of the current programmes and the public consultation on their future development.
- The fourth part describes the new internal programme proposal - an "Integrated Programme" for mobility and co-operation in lifelong learning bringing education and training activities together - and details its main features and planned outputs.
- The fifth part explains the new external programme proposal, the main orientations adopted by the Commission, and the key features of the new Tempus Plus programme and its planned outputs.
- The sixth part outlines how the new programme proposals contribute to the Commission's aim of simplifying instruments to improve delivery.

¹ Decision No 382/1999/EC of the Council (OJ L 146 of 11.6.1999) (Leonardo da Vinci); Decision No 253/2000/EC of the Parliament and the Council (OJ L 28 of 3.2.2000) (Socrates); Decision No 1999/311/EC of the Council (OJ L 120 of 8.5.1999) (Tempus).

² COM(2004) 101.

PART I – THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Lisbon process

- 1.1 Europe has accepted the challenges of the knowledge society. High-quality education and training systems are an essential and indispensable pre-requisite for a competitive knowledge-based society. Globalisation and technological and demographic change mean that skills must be constantly updated if the Community is to remain competitive on a world-wide level, and if citizens are to avoid unemployment and ensuing social exclusion. The modernisation of the Community's education and training systems has consequently been identified by the Lisbon European Council, and by subsequent European Councils, as a centrepiece of the Community strategy, most recently in Brussels in October 2003. From Lisbon onwards, Community education and training policy has gained a dynamic hitherto unknown: it has an essential contribution to make to achieving the goal of making Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010 with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.
- 1.2 The European Employment Strategy (EES) has a key role to play in this process, alongside research and innovation and the development of a more inclusive society and policies for sustainable growth. The contribution of the EES to the development of active labour market policies and to the employment-related aspects of education and training has been considerable. It is sustained in particular through the European Social Fund (ESF) which, as the third Cohesion Report³ points out, represented one third of Structural Fund expenditure during the period 1994-1999. During the 2000-2006 programming period, the link between the EES and the ESF has been strengthened, and the ESF, with a budget of EUR 60 billion, is the main means of supporting the policy framework which the EES provides.

The Objectives Process – improving European education and training systems

- 1.3 The period since the decisive Lisbon summit has seen a number of significant developments in education and training at EU level. For the first time, substantial political cooperation is taking place at European level in these areas, and there is an effort to integrate all initiatives into coherent education and training policies at European and national levels. Reforms are being made to policies and structures, leading to their convergence on the main EU goals. Serious attention is being paid not only to intra-European aspects of these policies, but also to the place of European education and training in the world.
- 1.4 The Council submitted a report in Spring 2001 on the concrete objectives of education and training systems, which identified three main goals for 2010: increasing the quality of education and training provided in Europe; improving access to education and training at all stages of life; and opening up the education and training systems to the wider world, so as to enable them better to prepare people for future life. These three main goals have been sub-divided into 13 more detailed objectives - ranging from improving teacher and trainer education to increasing the attractiveness of learning, and from making best use of resources to promoting cooperation and mobility. Linked to this is a new process to identify and collect

³ *A new partnership for cohesion: convergence, competitiveness, cooperation*, COM(2004) 107.

indicators in order to measure progress towards the various agreed objectives. The Commission has identified 29 such indicators, and the Council in May 2003 agreed five European benchmarks for progress towards the 2010 goals.

Lifelong learning

- 1.5 At the same time, the concept of lifelong learning itself has been highlighted and developed at European level, notably at the European Councils in Lisbon and Feira. Following extensive consultation on a Commission Memorandum, strong consensus was reached on a new paradigm of learning which places the learner at the centre of the learning process and emphasises the importance of equal opportunities and the quality and relevance of available learning. The definition extends from pre-school to post-retirement, and encompasses the spectrum of formal, non-formal and informal learning. Active citizenship, personal fulfilment and social inclusion, as well as the employment-related aspects of employability and adaptability, are mutually supporting aims.
- 1.6 The Joint Interim Report to the Spring 2004 European Council, which was agreed at the Education Council on 26 February 2004, invites all Member States to put in place coherent and comprehensive national lifelong learning strategies by 2006. These strategies should promote more effective partnerships between key actors including business, the social partners and education institutions at all levels; validation of prior learning in order to motivate people to learn; and the creation of learning environments that are open, attractive and accessible to everyone, especially to disadvantaged groups.

A changing world of higher education – the Bologna process

- 1.7 The university world is changing rapidly under the combined pressures of the new demands of the knowledge society in current and new Member States, an increasingly global research community and ever-rising national targets for participation in higher education. These targets are not generally matched by proportionate increases in resources for teaching or for research, and therefore imply changes in the organisation and balance of work done within universities. At the same time, Member States are increasingly concerned about ways of improving the quality and relevance of teaching and research within higher education, and with its efficiency and governance. Higher education systems and institutions are less and less “protected” behind national borders and increasingly open to competition and pressures from beyond them.⁴
- 1.8 The creation of a coherent, compatible and attractive European higher education area in accordance with the Bologna declaration of 1999 is the main structural means of meeting these challenges and has increasingly involved the Community in recent years. The goals of the Bologna declaration mirror in many ways the objectives of the Union’s own programmes in the field of higher education, including at doctoral level, so a closer association is natural and necessary. This is evident in fields such as quality assurance, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the promotion of mobility and the European dimension of education.

⁴ For a fuller analysis see the Communication from the Commission, *The role of universities in the Europe of Knowledge*, COM(2003) 58 final.

Enhancing the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training - the Copenhagen process

- 1.9 In response to a request from the Barcelona European Council for action in the field of vocational training similar to that under the Bologna declaration, the Council in November 2002 published a resolution on increased cooperation on vocational training. This led to the adoption by Ministers from 31 countries, the European social partners and the Commission, of the “Copenhagen Declaration”, an agreement to develop enhanced European cooperation in a number of areas of vocational education and training. These include transparency of qualifications and competences, quality assurance, credit transfer, common principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and lifelong guidance.
- 1.10 Significant progress has been made at European level in implementing the Copenhagen declaration. The Commission adopted a proposal for a new Europass single framework for transparency of qualifications and competences in December 2003⁵. A Common Quality Assurance Framework, including a common core of quality criteria and a coherent set of indicators has been developed. In addition, the foundations of a credit transfer system for vocational education and training have been laid.

A changing Union with new borders

- 1.11 Education and training policies do not operate in isolation. They also have a role to play in developing links with our neighbours. Relations with the countries bordering the enlarged Europe are crucial. In its Communication on Wider Europe the Commission stated, “The EU has a duty, not only towards its citizens and those of the new member states, but also towards its present and future neighbours to ensure continuing social cohesion and economic dynamism. The EU must act to promote the regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration that are preconditions for political stability, economic development and the reduction of poverty and social divisions in our shared environment”⁶. Deepening and widening cooperation in the fields of education and training are an essential part of that duty.

PART II – THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

- 2.1 It is in the light of these major policy ambitions and advances that the future need for Community action must be assessed. The largest single market in the world will never become the basis for the most competitive knowledge-based society if serious further efforts are not made to remove incompatibilities and incoherence between what, following enlargement, are 25 different education and training systems, where qualifications and skills are not recognised across borders and where methodological excellence in one country remains unknown in others. The necessary complement to the single market and the common currency is a workforce empowered to make use of professional and geographical mobility. What is needed is a coherent strategy, whereby Member States learn from each other. This does not imply that the Union

⁵ COM(2003) 796 final.

⁶ COM(2003) 104 final, p. 3. The countries covered by this policy are: in the Southern Mediterranean: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia; and Russia and the Western Newly Independent States (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus).

needs to take responsibility for running education and training systems; on the contrary, full responsibility for the organisation, content and financing of education and training must remain within the Member States. In this, they will have the full support of the Structural Funds, particularly in less-developed regions, which are the main Community financial instruments in this field. In this context, the ESF will provide support for improving the quality and responsiveness of education and training systems, as well as for investing in human capital. Member States will also be able to take advantage of the next generation of Community Initiatives.

- 2.2 The Structural Funds operate through authorities designated by Member States. However, action more directly supported by the EU can also complement activities throughout Member States in the field of education and training, and can achieve results only available through Community action and at Community level. Enabling the mobility not only of students, trainees, adult learners, teachers, trainers, and academics, but also of practices and ideas, is an important area where Member States' own actions will not produce the necessary results; and it is crucial to the development of the knowledge society, since it entails the direct transmission and experience of new approaches and skills and, equally importantly, promotes networks of institutions that co-operate at a European level.
- 2.3 The importance of mobility and of partnerships in this context is sometimes underestimated. Trans-national comparison at system level is a highly effective means of promoting change; the debate around the PISA results is a case in point. Exchange and mobility actions have a similar effect, but on individuals, and from the grass-roots upwards. Exchanges, mobility and trans-national partnerships bring participants to confront what others do, and can do, and to look at their own performance in a new light. In this respect, exchange and mobility provide a response to one of the key challenges facing education and training systems: how to motivate learning facilitators to review and up-grade their professional practice and to cope with the increasing demands made of them.
- 2.4 It is this trans-national and individual element which distinguishes the impact of the education and training programmes from the many actions to improve quality in the field undertaken nationally, some of which are also supported by the Union through the Structural Funds. These actions, often excellent in their design and delivery, generally remain within a national or regional context; so the element of outside and individual comparison often does not arise in the same way⁷. Research into the impact of transnational exchanges confirms this. Indeed, Erasmus students say overall that their exchange experience has been the most significant new experience in their lives. In this sense, the education and training programmes are agents of change and modernisation within the education and training systems of the Union.
- 2.5 Education and training cooperation is not just an internal matter for the EU. The external dimension, famously encapsulated in the Tempus programme and recently extended through Erasmus Mundus, addresses an equally important and distinct set of needs. Cooperation in education and training is a very powerful instrument at the

⁷ The Interreg Community initiative is a notable exception. It aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion throughout the Union by fostering the balanced development of the continent through cross-border, transnational and inter-regional cooperation. This cooperation can be in education and training, depending on the needs expressed by the regions concerned.

service of strengthening relations with third countries and for fostering mutual understanding between EU countries and those beyond our borders, particularly but not exclusively those forming the “new neighbourhood” countries adjoining the enlarged Union. For this reason alone it is essential to reinforce our activities in this sphere in the future. But the benefits extend further. The evaluations of Tempus have shown that cooperation in education and training is key for the transition of countries that may become candidate countries in the short term. And the benefits do not flow all in one direction. It is essential that our systems become more and more open to the rest of the world, that we are able to learn from and absorb excellent practice wherever it is found, if the EU is to achieve the goal set at the 2002 Barcelona European Council of becoming a world quality reference in education and training.

- 2.6 It is for these reasons that the Commission believes it is essential to continue with the internal and external Community cooperation programmes in education and training in the coming years, to integrate them under the unifying principle of lifelong learning, and indeed to expand their volume and scope significantly, as explained in Parts Four and Five of this Communication.
- 2.7 The new programme framework for Community action in education and training must also respond to a range of political, social, economic and cultural factors. These challenges are not specific to education and training; and in some cases other instruments – in particular those of the Employment and Cohesion policies – have the financial leadership. However, cooperation in the field of education and training at European level has a unique and valuable contribution to make.

Mobility

- 2.8 The transnational mobility of people is beneficial to Europe as a whole. It enriches national cultures, and enhances the cultural, educational and professional experience of those taking part. Such experience is increasingly necessary given current limited employment prospects and a labour market which requires more flexibility and greater adaptability to change. And, as outlined above, mobility is a significant factor leading to system change through direct shared experience. In recognition of its growing importance, the Parliament and Council adopted in 2001 a Recommendation on facilitating the mobility of all those in education and training⁸. The Commission considers that the new programme generation will be one of the most important instruments for enhancing the volume and quality of transnational mobility, and therefore will make the action a strong part of its legislative proposals.

Language Learning

- 2.9 Following the European Year of Languages in 2001, the Commission organised a public consultation “Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity”, on the basis of which it presented an action plan on language learning⁹. This concentrates on three main areas: extending the benefits of life-long language learning to all citizens, improving language teaching, and creating a more language-friendly environment. The Union, by its trans-national and multi-lingual nature, is looked to by its citizens as a promoter (and indeed guarantor) of linguistic diversity.

⁸ OJ L 215 of 9.8.2001.

⁹ COM(2003) 449 final.

Information and Communication Technologies

- 2.10 The Community has supported the development of pedagogy linked to information and communication technologies over many years and in a number of ways, most recently through the Minerva action of Socrates and the adoption of the eLearning programme¹⁰. As the effect of the information and communication revolution spreads across society, it will become increasingly important for all citizens, without exception, to be comfortable with the use of these technologies.

Social changes

The Commission's Third Cohesion Report has identified a number of challenges for the enlarged Union. As concerns investment in people and human capital in particular, the Report highlights the need to concentrate Cohesion interventions and other Community instruments - such as Community programmes for co-operation and mobility in the field of education and training - on the four main areas below

An ageing society means longer to learn

- 2.11 The ageing of society continues. The demographic pyramid of the European Union is increasingly top-heavy, as survival rates rise and pension and health-care burdens grow accordingly. This issue has been addressed in the 2003 Employment Guidelines¹¹, which invite Member States to develop policies for active ageing, as well as setting a specific target for the employment rate of older workers.

A rapidly evolving labour market

- 2.12 Globalisation and the new knowledge-driven economy have brought about dramatic and rapid changes in the European labour market. As the Employment Guidelines and the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines¹² recommend, our education and training systems must provide the European labour force with the necessary skills to cope with changes. European programmes can significantly contribute to this process, both by providing citizens with an opportunity to upgrade and acquire new skills through periods of study and training abroad, and by promoting quality and adaptation to the new requirements of education and training systems through a process of cooperation and exchange of good practice.

A more diverse society

- 2.13 Societies within the EU continue to become more culturally diverse and more interlinked with others, as a result of globalisation and new communication technologies on the one hand, and the impact of the European single market and migration on the other. This puts a premium on the development of intercultural understanding and respect, and on the inculcation and reinforcement of habits of active citizenship. At the same time, there is an increasing need to deepen understanding among our citizens of the nature of European identity.

¹⁰ Decision No 2318/2003/EC of the Parliament and the Council, OJ L 345 of 31.12.2003.

¹¹ COM(2003) 170 final.

¹² Decision No 578/2003/EC of the Council, OJ L 197 of 5.8.2003.

Contributing to social inclusion

- 2.14 Initial education is the gateway to future life chances. Special attention must be paid to making sure that negative initial experiences with formal education do not lead people to turn their backs on learning for the rest of their lives. On the contrary, every effort must be made to provide those who have left education without basic qualifications with alternative “second chance” opportunities for access to education and training suited to their needs. For this to be a success, innovative pedagogical approaches will be needed, as well as specialised guidance facilities, links with local enterprises and other measures designed to create a motivating learning environment within which second chance education can develop its full potential.

External developments in Education and Training

Higher education – Tempus and Erasmus Mundus

- 2.15 Community policy for countries outside the European Union has focused for more than a decade through the Tempus programme on higher education institutions and systems, on the grounds that they are of particular importance for the social and economic transition process as well as for cultural development. They are also pools of expertise and of human resources and provide for the training of new generations of political, administrative and business leaders. Initially designed for countries emerging from Communism (including most of the current accession countries), the programme has been extended at various stages to include the ex-Soviet Union countries, the Western Balkan countries, and the Mediterranean countries. It currently operates in 27 countries, stretching from Mongolia to Morocco.
- 2.16 Although the Tempus programme is fundamentally geared toward assisting partner countries, the programme also gives Member States better access to areas of knowledge where the highest level of development has been reached outside the Union and creates enduring and mutually-beneficial partnerships.
- 2.17 Tempus has been the flagship education programme for exchanges with countries outside the EU and its EFTA/EEA and candidate country partners. But it has not been the only one. In 1995, specific agreements for exchanges in higher education were made with the United States of America and with Canada, and the Commission itself has launched other programmes, based on the experience of the major internal programmes, with Latin America (ALFA and AlBan), and with Asian countries (Asia-Link), as well as pilots with Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.
- 2.18 There has recently been increasing recognition of the importance of higher education as a vector of internationalisation, and thereby of economic growth and development. Universities have found themselves in tougher competition for the best talent, particularly in research; and this competition is not limited to the EU but is world-wide. The Erasmus Mundus programme¹³ will promote European Masters’ courses, operated by multinational consortia of universities, with an associated programme of student scholarships aimed at the best students from the rest of the world. It represents a first response from the Union to this phenomenon.

¹³ Decision No 2317/2003/EC of the Parliament and the Council, OJ L 345 of 31.12.2003.

Future needs

- 2.19 The complex of factors underlying the Union's cooperation policy with its near neighbours (and the other countries associated in the Tempus programme) may be summarised as follows:
- Education and training are key developmental factors for our near neighbours and our partners. It is in Europe's interest to promote the democracy, prosperity and stability which growth alone can ensure. In this respect, cooperation in education and training has an important part to play in the Union's development assistance.
 - The "people-to-people" contacts forming part of the external dimension of education and training are increasingly understood as contributing to intercultural dialogue, and, through their influence on systems, have a greater impact than a simple head-count might suggest. They also provide the Union with a valuable instrument of cultural diplomacy which creates a wider understanding of the specificities of our own culture and heritage and is sought after by partner countries as a means of enriching their own education and training provision.
 - Contacts with education and training systems in partner countries through exchange and cooperation programmes develop synergies and convergence with systems within the Union, and thus increase their attractiveness to partner countries.
- 2.20 The Tempus programme has proved its value in contributing to the modernisation of the higher education systems in partner countries, in fostering closer links between EU countries and those outside the Union, and in preparing countries for candidate status. It is a powerful instrument that has great potential for expansion. It has shown that education systems in the EU (and those who run them) have both the capacity and the willingness to help their counterparts develop their own systems.
- 2.21 However, although the contribution of higher education to growth is significant, in countries with a lower overall level of economic development, improving basic education and vocational education and training are necessary complements. Higher education alone will not affect all citizens, and can only play a limited part in helping the overall development of a country and its people and in nurturing its constructive relationship with the Union. The enlargement of the EU fundamentally alters the political, geographic and economic weight of the EU in the world and in the surrounding regions, and correspondingly demands a policy towards Europe's new neighbours which deepens and widens cooperation in education and training. If the Union's ambitions are high, as the Commission believes they should be, then the Union must be prepared to go beyond higher education, and to reach out to the education and training systems overall, since it is only in this way that maximum impact can be achieved. This implies that we should develop Tempus beyond higher education so that it contributes to improving all the elements in the lifelong learning process – from schools through vocational education and training to university and adult education.

PART III – THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PROGRAMMES

Experience of Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci – Interim evaluations

- 3.1 The Commission has drawn on a substantial bank of experience of programmes in education and training. The most recent and most significant input is the interim evaluation reports on the current phases of Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci, which were published in March 2004¹⁴. The main messages are:
- The coverage and focus of the programme actions are generally regarded as valuable and appropriate.
 - The administrative and financial procedures have improved since the first phase, but are still perceived as disproportionately burdensome and slow. Similarly, some selection procedures¹⁵ need an overhaul.
 - There is a need for more synergy and coherence between actions and programmes.
 - Good results under the programmes are not well disseminated.
 - There is a need for stronger links between the programmes and policy developments.
 - Excessive detail in the current programme legislations causes problems of implementation.

Experience of Tempus III – Interim evaluation

- 3.2 The main messages to emerge from the Tempus interim evaluation report¹⁶ are the following:
- Tempus has been adapted well to changing geo-political and socio-economic conditions in Europe and in the Tempus partner countries over the past ten years.
 - Formidable socio-economic development challenges remain and reinforce the case for giving priority to training and higher education reforms.
 - More emphasis is needed on mobility, dissemination of outputs and outcomes, dialogue with national authorities, and more effective structural intervention in the field of higher education.
 - The programme's re-orientation towards a more strategic approach increased its impact on legislation in the partner countries and led to greater openness and preparedness for international cooperation in these countries.

¹⁴ COM(2004) 153 and COM(2004) 152.

¹⁵ In particular, the Leonardo da Vinci "B" procedure.

¹⁶ COM(2004) 157.

Public consultation on the future development of the programmes

3.3 In the light of the policy developments set out above, the Commission conducted between November 2002 and March 2003 a wide consultation of all those involved in or with an interest in the education, training and youth programmes. A detailed report has been compiled for the Commission by the *Pôle Universitaire de Nancy-Metz* and can be read on-line¹⁷. The main outcomes are:

- Great enthusiasm for the programmes, in particular for mobility measures.
- A belief that the programmes should contribute to the development of the European dimension and European citizenship and to the teaching of languages, and strong expressions of interest in the regional dimension of the actions of the programmes.
- A very strong feeling that the programmes are bureaucratic, inflexible, and over-complicated, particularly in regard to the very small amount of most grants.
- A view that decentralised procedures (those handled via National Agencies within the participating countries) are simpler and more user-friendly than those handled directly by the Commission.

PART IV – INTERNAL POLICY: THE INTEGRATED PROGRAMME FOR MOBILITY AND CO-OPERATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Orientations for the new generation of programmes

4.1 The Commission has considered the various elements set out above, in the light of the policy mandate given by successive European Councils, of its own policy reflections and of its experience of current and previous programmes, and proposes:

- To retain at this stage separate programmes targeting the EU¹⁸ on the one hand, and neighbouring countries on the other. This architecture is judged to take best account of the fact that the type and purpose of activities in education and training cooperation are, as analysed above, different in nature in these different contexts.
- In the light of the ever-increasing integration between education and training actions and institutions across the EU, and of the emergence of the lifelong learning paradigm, there are major benefits to be gained from bringing together the fields covered by the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes into a single structure. Such a combined programme could better support policy developments in the participating countries, respond more effectively to the needs of its users, and permit simplification and efficiency gains at the level of programme implementation, particularly in areas that currently cross the divide between education and training. The Commission will therefore propose an “Integrated Programme”, covering both education and training within the EU.

¹⁷ Available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture.

¹⁸ Including EEA/EFTA and candidate countries once the appropriate agreements are concluded.

- Within this Integrated Programme, the importance of education and training to the achievement of the Lisbon goal, the emergence of the Bologna and Copenhagen processes, the objectives process, and the related policy developments outlined earlier, all demonstrate the need for clearer instruments to support policy development. Other related policy initiatives at Community level (eg, the eLearning programme or the Europass initiative) should also be incorporated. Finally, the Commission sees advantage in bringing the Jean Monnet Action into the broad structure offered by the Integrated Programme, together with support for key European-level institutions in the field such as the European University Institute (Florence) and the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin), in order to place the funding of these activities and institutions on a firmer and more strategic footing than hitherto, and to permit synergies between these actions in the field of European integration and cooperation in education and training more generally.
- In order for European cooperation in education and training to play its full part, and to respond to the increasing importance of the field in every Member State and at European level, the Commission will propose a much more substantial programme for the next programming period. The bulk of the increase occurs in the decentralised actions of the programme, principally in the area of transnational mobility for individual citizens, where applications are made directly to designated National Agencies in each country, which have the detailed knowledge of the national circumstances and how best to meet the needs of the individual programme users.
- Over the next programming period, the annual budget for the proposed Integrated Programme could increase by four times compared to the current level. Funding at this level would permit the achievement of a set of ambitious but realistic targets, commensurate with the political importance of the new programme. These are explained in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.7 below.
- The programme should be simplified and made more flexible. The new programme legislation should limit itself to the fields of activity and the generic types of action to be supported, with much of the detailed implementation arrangements to be set out in the programme guidelines agreed with the programme Committee.
- There should also be as much commonality as possible between the constituent programmes. Every programme within the integrated framework will draw from the same set of generic actions (mobility, projects, networks, etc), which should allow for more consistency and transferability between them. In place of the current complex of programme committees and sub-committees, there will be a single programme Committee, which will meet in different formations (eg, schools, VET) as appropriate. Each formation will wield the full range of powers, which will eliminate the delay currently caused by the obligation to refer some matters to several committees successively.
- The Integrated Programme will be open to the participation of all those countries currently involved in Socrates and Leonardo, and may be extended to

Switzerland and the Western Balkans¹⁹. Further important flexibility will be the use of up to 1% of the programme budget to fund the involvement of institutions from non-participating countries, where this adds value to the activity in question. This is a major advance on the current generation, where a feeble EUR 250,000 is available in each programme to fund such action, and the procedures for implementing it are so burdensome that it has never been used in Leonardo.

The design of the programme

4.2 The Integrated Programme will contain four separate sectoral programmes: for school education (Comenius), for higher education (Erasmus), for initial and continuing vocational education and training (Leonardo da Vinci), and for adult education (Grundtvig). Their coverage will be based on the existing programmes, but with some adjustments. In addition to the four sectoral programmes, there will be two horizontal programmes. The “transversal programme” will cover the cross-cutting issues: support for policy development; language learning; new information and communication technologies; and dissemination and exploitation of results. The Jean Monnet Programme will support a range of institutions and activities focused on European integration: the Jean Monnet Action itself, provision of operating grants for a set of key institutions, and operating grants for European associations active in the fields of education and training.

Integrated Programme			
Comenius School education	Erasmus Higher education & advanced training	Leonardo da Vinci Initial and continuing vocational education and training	Grundtvig Adult education
Transversal programme 4 key activities – Policy development; Language learning; ICT; Dissemination			
Jean Monnet programme 3 key activities – Jean Monnet Action; European Institutions; European Associations			

4.3 A major difference between the current generation and the Integrated Programme would be the scale of the activity. The Commission would propose a very substantial increase in the decentralised actions, particularly mobility and partnerships, in order to reach a number of numerical objectives set out below. In all programmes this would represent a step-change from the current level of activity. Such a proposal would attribute a level of resource that is appropriate to the stated ambitions²⁰ and growing political importance of this type of action, and responds to massive

¹⁹ The Tempus Plus programme will contribute to preparing the countries of the Western Balkans for subsequent participation in the Integrated Programme.

²⁰ The existing Socrates Decision already includes the target of reaching 10% of university students and 10% of school pupils, but the resources allocated to the programme are far too low to permit these objectives to be achieved. The current level of activity represents some 2-3% of the school pupil population and 3-4% of the university student population.

unfulfilled demand among European citizens. It is clear that such a substantial increase in the decentralised actions would require reinforcement of the network of National Agencies charged with implementing them. The Commission would therefore plan to increase the level of support it grants to these agencies.

The four sectoral programmes – Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig

- 4.4 As far as the **Comenius** programme is concerned, the proposal is for the existing range of action to continue largely as at present. It will encompass individual mobility, school partnerships, multilateral projects, Comenius networks and accompanying measures. The decentralised mobility and partnership actions would increase in volume by a factor of four, so as to achieve the participation of 10% of pupils in joint educational activities (partnerships and mobility) and of 10% of teachers in mobility activities over the seven-year lifespan of the Integrated Programme.
- 4.5 The most visible proposed change to the **Erasmus** programme is a very substantial increase in student and teacher mobility. Currently just over 120,000 students participate in Erasmus mobility annually. Under the new programme, that rate would need to increase to some 375,000 per year, in order to reach the target of three million Erasmus students by 2010. At the same time, the average student grant has remained unchanged since 1993 at EUR 150 per month. This represents a 25% cut in value in real terms. Clearly the target cannot be achieved without a substantial increase in the level of the grant; under the Commission's proposal the monthly average would increase to EUR 250. Teacher mobility is planned to increase to 40,000 per year, from a level at present of some 18,000, with a similar boost in the grant level. Work placements for university students and staff will also be incorporated.
- 4.6 The new programme proposal envisages a number of changes to **Leonardo da Vinci**. Placements for trainees would see a substantial increase to 150,000 per year by the end of the programme, from their current level of some 45,000. A similar increase is envisaged for trainer mobility. The current pilot projects action will be re-cast to focus on the transfer of innovation from one or more countries to another, and the administration of these projects will be entirely decentralised to the National Agencies, rather than shared with the Commission as at present. Leonardo networks will be introduced in the new programme, to focus on issues of common European interest in a similar fashion to the Erasmus thematic networks. There will be a new Leonardo "Partnerships" action to promote exchange of expertise between training providers. Project activities and accompanying measures will also continue.
- 4.7 Under **Grundtvig**, new mobility actions are proposed to support the mobility of adult learners, staff exchanges, European assistantships, and an expansion of the training opportunities for adult educators addressed by the current Grundtvig action. Given the demographic changes forecast for the next decade, it is essential to make the European dimension of mobility available not only to younger citizens and those that teach or train them, but also to adults in lifelong learning more generally. The aim is that at least 50,000 adults should benefit from such mobility per year, and that by the end of the programme at least one in five structured adult education providers should have participated in European cooperation. The instruments to achieve these targets will be mobility grants and European learning partnerships. The centralised activities

of Grundtvig will include strategic as well as smaller-scale cooperation projects, networks, training courses and accompanying measures.

The transversal programme

- 4.8 The transversal programme represents one of the innovations of the Integrated Programme. It is designed to provide better support than has been possible up to now for cooperation on issues that do not fit easily into one of the sectoral programmes, or that have a potential interest and impact across the entire programme.
- 4.9 The **policy development** key activity will provide a more stable and comprehensive source of support for work at European level that is directly related to key policy priorities. This key activity will permit the Community to sustain the follow-up to the objectives process and the lifelong learning resolution at European level, to invest in an appropriate way in the collection and analysis of statistics and indicators, to support experimental projects to test cutting-edge policy ideas (in a similar way to the “Tuning” project), and to support the appropriate reference and analytical structures that underpin the actions of the programme at European level.
- 4.10 The **language learning** key activity is conceived as a complement to the high-volume language activity integrated into the sectoral programmes, such as some 30% of Comenius mobility and partnerships. It responds to a clear message from the public consultations on the future programmes and on the language action plan, that languages should be a high priority for visible, substantial and exemplary support at European level. The language learning key activity focuses on aspects of language learning that span more than one sector, such as the development of generic language learning materials, networks in the fields of language learning and linguistic diversity, and marketing, publicity and information. Similarly, the key action on **information and communication technologies (ICT)** will focus on cross-cutting activities aimed at the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning. It will be implemented through multilateral projects and networks, and through other action such as observation, benchmarking, and quality analysis.
- 4.11 The **dissemination and exploitation of results** key activity is entirely new as a dedicated part of the programme, and is designed to make the process of spreading and capitalising on the results and products of the programme more systematic and effective than before, building on experience gained in particular under Leonardo da Vinci. Both the public consultation and the evaluation reports point to dissemination/exploitation as a major weakness in the implementation of the existing programmes. To address this, the Commission will create a dedicated activity, with earmarked resources and clear objectives, which will permit the building-up of a solid body of expertise in the field and will provide the necessary continuity of funding to make the action effective in the longer term. The action will be implemented through multilateral projects and the collection and study of data, good practice and products resulting from the programme.

The Jean Monnet programme

- 4.12 The Jean Monnet programme will consist of three key activities, all focusing on aspects of European integration: the Jean Monnet Action itself, support for specific

European institutions, and support for European associations in education and training.

- 4.13 The **Jean Monnet Action** will carry forward the valuable work it has so far undertaken, and will encompass the support for research into European integration hitherto funded under budget line A-3022. It will continue to support Jean Monnet Chairs, associations of professors, other higher education teachers and researchers specialising in European integration, support for young researchers in the field, information activities, and the establishment of multilateral research groups.
- 4.14 The key activity to support **European institutions** will consist of the allocation of operating grants to organisations at European level. These should include the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin campuses); the European University Institute, Florence; the European Law Academy, Trier; and the European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht. In particular, the Commission will propose funding for the establishment of a European post-doctoral college at the European University Institute, to focus on advanced research in its fields of specialisation. Further operating grants for institutions will be awarded on a competitive basis following calls for proposals.
- 4.15 Under the third key activity, operating grants will be allocated to support the running costs of **European associations** active in the fields of education and training, which act as European groupings of national and regional associations, selected on a competitive basis following calls for proposals.

PART V – EXTERNAL POLICY: TEMPUS PLUS

- 5.1 The Commission believes that the Union should offer the current Tempus countries a programme with coverage parallel to the Integrated Programme for lifelong learning, even if its instruments and structure must be significantly different. The Commission therefore proposes not simply to renew the Tempus programme but to create “Tempus Plus” – a programme addressing these wider needs in a structured context which builds on the successes of Tempus, but adds the new dimensions which the evaluations and the new content require. It would therefore cover, in addition to the traditional Tempus area of higher education, the areas of school, vocational education and training and adult education. To resource such a major increase in scope would require a significant budgetary increase.
- 5.2 As regards geographical scope, the Commission believes that the ensemble of Tempus countries should continue to benefit from the cooperation and assistance that Tempus has provided. However, it may no longer be appropriate to treat them all on the same basis. Tempus Plus should enable sectors of cooperation to be chosen in the light of the needs and priorities of each of the partner countries. Thus, the full range of cooperation across all sectors might be appropriate for some, while for others vocational education and training might represent the highest priority. Using this modulated approach, it is envisaged that Tempus Plus should become a privileged instrument to develop the “New Neighbourhood” policy set out in the 2003 Commission Communication²¹.

²¹ COM(2003) 104 final.

- 5.3 Tempus Plus should also be open to the Western Balkan countries, whose prospect of eventual membership of the Union was confirmed by the Copenhagen Council in December 2002 and most recently at the Western Balkans summit in June 2003. Here, too, closer cooperation in the field of education and training is an important component of the overall development strategy. Just as the Tempus programme facilitated the transition of the current acceding countries into the mainstream Community education and training programmes, so the Western Balkans, which joined the current phase of Tempus only recently, should retain access to this type of support. Obviously, when individual countries transfer to the internal Integrated Programme, they would withdraw from Tempus Plus.

Tempus Plus – an assistance programme for Lifelong Learning

- 5.4 The proposed Tempus Plus programme should therefore be based, like Tempus, on cooperation between systems and institutions in the EU and their counterparts in the eligible countries. Its objectives will be:
- to foster the development of human resources and human capital, and in particular to promote the reform and development of lifelong learning systems in the partner countries;
 - to enhance the quality and the capacity of lifelong learning institutions and organisations in the partner countries.

The aim would be to support the mobility of 100,000 individuals over the lifetime of the Tempus Plus programme.

- 5.5 It would be divided into four strands, each of which would build on work already done in partner countries, and would seek to support them in development work as follows:
- A **Systems strand**. This would support partner countries' work in areas which affect the effectiveness of education and training systems as a whole, such as qualifications issues and frameworks; management and policy development; forecasting of needs and possible responses; promoting flexibility and permeability between different parts of the education and training systems. It would also promote convergence between the lifelong learning systems of partner countries and those within the European Union.
 - A **Schools strand**. This would support partner countries in areas such as content, curricula and qualifications; the acquisition of the basic skills - literacy, numeracy, languages - as well as skills in information technology, entrepreneurship, social and intercultural skills, learning skills; and teacher training.
 - A **Higher Education strand**. This would build on existing Tempus activity to support partner countries in reforms to higher education, including activities aimed at capacity building as well as measures leading to convergence, equality of access to higher education, better responsiveness to labour market needs; and enhancing the capacity of higher education to contribute to economic development generally

- **A Vocational Education and Training strand**, which would also embrace adult education. This would support partner countries in areas such as providing learning opportunities to meet the needs of adult learners; the mutual recognition and transmission of qualifications and of learning, in particular non-formal and informal learning; strengthening VET and adult education systems; the promotion of active citizenship, active ageing and social cohesion and inclusion; or improving occupational guidance and counselling.

5.6 The instruments available to support this will be of four types:

- **System measures:** these will contribute to the development and reform of education and training systems in partner countries, as well as to enhance their quality and increase their convergence with those of the European Union. They will operate on themes agreed with partner countries, and will cover issues such as support for policy development and reform, systems and capacity development (including through mobility), studies and research, provision of expert advice, conferences, seminars and training and development activities.
- **Joint Projects:** these will resemble the classic Tempus projects. They will enable institutions in the EU and in partner countries to join forces and work together on all areas of education and training. These include the joint teaching projects, but also other areas such as curriculum, teaching and learning materials, management issues, and in-service training. This type of action will also include student and staff mobility, which the Commission believes (and as the evaluations suggest) should be considerably increased. It will also include a network action, which could operate either independently or in association with networks supported under the Integrated Programme.
- **Mobility:** In addition to the mobility supported under Joint Projects, this action will provide further opportunities to improve cooperation and enhance mutual understanding between Europe and its neighbours. Mobility will take place between EU Member States and partner countries at every level of the programme. It will include individual mobility (along the lines of the current Tempus Individual Mobility Grants) as well as group mobility.
- **Accompanying Measures:** these will contribute to the development of common understanding and cooperation in lifelong learning. They may include exchanges of experience on policy issues; observation and analysis of policies and systems; the development of indicators and benchmarks and statistical surveys; and information and dissemination activities.

These four types of instrument form a package which offers both partner countries and the EU a variety of ways to interact and to effect reform. Their operation will require considerable expertise, and where appropriate, the Commission will draw on the experience of the European Training Foundation.

PART VI - SIMPLIFICATION

6.1 In its Communication on the Financial Perspectives, the Commission underlined the importance of using the revision of programme legislation which occurs in 2007 to simplify the conception and in the operation of Community instruments. The two

new programmes mentioned in this Communication will contribute significantly to this. From the formal perspective alone, they represent a reduction in the number of the legal bases in education and training from seven at present to three – the two programmes here and the Erasmus Mundus Programme, which has been so recently adopted that it would be inappropriate at this stage to amend it. Similarly, it represents a reduction from fifteen budget lines to three.

- 6.2 More importantly, however, the new programmes – particularly the integrated Lifelong Learning Programme – will be simpler for the user, for a number of reasons. First, a greater proportion of the actions will be managed in a decentralised manner through National Agencies – over 80% of the programme budget. The public consultation²² showed that users regard this management method as more user-friendly than direct management at Community level, since the Agencies are familiar with the circumstances in their country, and can respond at once with the appropriate knowledge and in the national language. Secondly, the legislative decisions will be written in a much less detailed manner, making it easier both to understand their content and to adapt it to future developments in the field. Thirdly, the Commission will include in the draft legislation a provision that beneficiaries' financial and administrative obligations must be proportionate to the size of the grant, for example through an increased use of lump sums and flat-rate grants, with the intention that this should lead to significant procedural simplification. The aim here is to respond to the demand in the public consultation to reduce the complexity which is widely seen as the most negative aspect of these programmes.
- 6.3 The Commission regards these measures as an important step towards simpler programmes, but certainly not the end of the road. The Commission is interested to receive suggestions how the programmes and their operation could be simplified, and will seek to include these in its draft proposals. These may indeed imply amendments to the Community's Financial Regulation or its Implementing Rules, for example; but no possible avenue should be excluded at this stage.

NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE FOR ADOPTION

The Commission is putting forward this paper in order to put its intentions for the next generation of programmes in the fields of education and training into the public arena as early as possible. Given the necessary length of debate around such proposals, which is mirrored by the time needed for completion of the co-decision process between the European Parliament and Council, it is necessary to start this discussion as soon as possible if there is to be a reasonable chance of adopting the final texts in early 2006, to leave as near a full year as possible before the implementation of the new programmes. The Commission expects to present its formal legislative proposals before the summer break 2004.

²² See paragraph 3.3 of this Communication.