

COMMON POSITION (EC) No 33/94

adopted by the Council on 18 July 1994

with a view to adopting European Parliament and Council Decision 94/.../EC of ...
establishing the Community action programme 'Socrates'

(94/C 244/05)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European
Community, and in particular Articles 126 and 127
thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission ⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social
Committee ⁽²⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the
Regions ⁽³⁾,

Acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in
Article 189b of the Treaty ⁽⁴⁾,

- (1) Whereas Article 3p of the Treaty stipulates that
Community action should include a contribution to
education and training of quality; whereas the
Treaty includes a Chapter 3, Title VIII, devoted
specifically to education, vocational training and
youth;
- (2) Whereas pursuant to Article 126 (1) of the Treaty,
the Community is to contribute to the development
of quality education by encouraging cooperation
between Member States and, if necessary, by
supporting and supplementing their action, while
fully respecting the responsibility of the Member
States for the content of teaching and the
organization of education systems and their cultural
and linguistic diversity;
- (3) Whereas in accordance with the principle of
subsidiarity referred to in Article 3b of the Treaty,
the Community is to take action only if and in so far

as the objectives of the Socrates action programme
cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States
and can, therefore, by reason of the scale or effects
of the said programme, be better achieved by the
Community;

- (4) Whereas pursuant to Article 127 (1) of the Treaty,
the Community is to implement a vocational
training policy which supports and supplements the
action of the Member States, while fully respecting
the responsibility of the Member States for the
content and organization of vocational training;
- (5) Whereas the Council, by its Decision
87/327/EEC ⁽⁵⁾, adopted the Erasmus programme to
promote the mobility of university students and, by
its Decision 89/489/EEC ⁽⁶⁾ adopted Lingua
programme to promote foreign language competence
in the Community;
- (6) Whereas the Council, by its Decision 94/.../EC ⁽⁷⁾,
adopted, on the basis of Article 127 of the Treaty, a
Decision establishing an action programme for the
implementation of a European Community
vocational training policy (Leonardo da Vinci);
whereas a programme should also be drawn up for
education; whereas the two programmes are
complementary;
- (7) Whereas a part of the measures provided for in this
Decision concern vocational training and therefore
go beyond general education (including higher
education) as covered by Article 126; whereas
reference should also therefore be made to Article
127 of the Treaty for the said measures, without
thereby implying that the Socrates programme can
be considered as one of the measures for
implementing vocational training policy within the
meaning of Article 127;
- (8) Whereas the reports evaluating the Erasmus and
Lingua programmes, the conclusions of which are
set out in the Commission report on the results and
achievements of these programmes, point out that
cooperation in the field of education significantly

(1) OJ No C 66, 3. 3. 1994, p. 3 and OJ No C 164, 16. 6.
1994, p. 8.

(2) Opinion delivered on 27 April 1994 (not yet published in the
Official Journal).

(3) Opinion delivered on 31 May 1994 (not yet published in the
Official Journal).

(4) Opinion of the European Parliament of 22 April 1994 (not
yet published in the Official Journal, Council common
position of ... (not yet published in the Official Journal) and
Decision of the European Parliament of ... (not yet
published in the Official Journal).

(5) OJ No L 166, 25. 6. 1987, p. 20. Decision as amended by
Decision 89/663/EEC (OJ No L 395, 30. 12. 1989, p. 23).

(6) OJ No L 239, 16. 8. 1989, p. 24.

(7) OJ No L ...

enhances the value of measures taken by Member States, and whereas Community action in this field is therefore of major importance;

- (9) Whereas the Commission memorandum on higher education and the summary report of discussions within the Member States, together with the European Parliament resolution on this subject ⁽¹⁾, place particular emphasis on the need for a Community strategy to promote the European dimension in courses followed by all students, whether in their own country or abroad, and on the catalytic role of the Community in this connection;
- (10) Whereas the Council and the Ministers for Education have agreed guidelines for the introduction of the European dimension into educational studies, particularly through the resolution on the European dimension in education ⁽²⁾; whereas, according to that resolution, the European dimension in education, based on the cultural heritage of the Member States, should contribute to strengthening in pupils and students a sense of European identity, preparing them to take part in the economic and social development of the Union, making them aware of the advantages and challenges which the Union represents, improving their knowledge of the Union and its Member States and bringing home to them the significance of the cooperation of the Member States with other countries of Europe and the world;
- (11) Whereas the Commission's Green Paper on the European Dimension of Education in School as well as the comments received from the Member States on the same subject, aim to introduce the European dimension in primary and secondary teaching;
- (12) Whereas the European Parliament has adopted a resolution on the European dimension in education at university level, with the emphasis on mobility of students and teaching staff ⁽³⁾, and a resolution on education and training policy in the run-up to 1993 ⁽⁴⁾;
- (13) Whereas the Commission memorandum on open and distance learning and the European Parliament's various resolutions on the subject pointed out that this subject offers considerable new opportunities for enriching education and for economies of scale, with an increased impact especially on the promotion of a European dimension in studies at all levels; whereas the conclusions of the Council and Ministers for Education on the development of open and distance learning in the European Community ⁽⁵⁾ and as criteria for actions in open and distance learning ⁽⁶⁾ clarified the role of and criteria for Community action in this field;
- (14) Whereas the European Council, meeting in Brussels on 10 and 11 December 1993, adopted, in the light of the White Paper presented by the Commission, an action plan on growth, competitiveness and employment, inviting the Member States in particular to pay specific attention to the improvement of education and training systems;
- (15) Whereas it is necessary to reinforce those aspects which are most promising as regards, cooperation on education; whereas it is appropriate, in this matter, to encourage transnational projects linking partners from different Member States who are involved in the transfer of innovation through exchanges, while fully respecting the diversity of the educational systems and the responsibility of the Member States;
- (16) Whereas it is necessary in the Socrates programme to ensure equal opportunities for boys and girls, men and women;
- (17) Whereas it is necessary to ensure that children and adolescents with disabilities are able to participate as fully as possible in the Socrates programme;
- (18) Whereas the European Parliament, adopted, from the standpoint of 1993, a resolution on cultural diversity and the problems of school education for children of immigrants in the European Community ⁽⁷⁾;
- (19) Whereas specific measures need to be taken in favour of the education of children of migrant workers, occupational travellers, Travellers and Gypsies;
- (20) Whereas appropriate measures should be taken in order to combat racism and xenophobia;
- (21) Whereas the Eurydice network should be developed and diversified in order to be able to respond to the Community's qualitative and quantitative requirements as regards information in the field of education;
- (22) Whereas the European dimension of education extends beyond the frontiers of the European Union and whereas cooperation should be developed with the associated European countries, in particular the central and eastern European countries, Cyprus and Malta;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 255, 20. 9. 1993, p. 161.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 177, 6. 7. 1988, p. 5.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 48, 25. 2. 1991, p. 216.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 150, 15. 6. 1992, p. 366.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ No C 151, 16. 6. 1992, p. 3.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ No C 336, 19. 12. 1992, p. 6.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ No C 42, 15. 2. 1993, p. 187.

(23) Whereas the Commission and the Member States should ensure cooperation with the relevant international organizations, and in particular the Council of Europe;

(24) Whereas the Agreement of the European Economic Area ⁽¹⁾ provides for broader cooperation in the field of education, training and youth between the European Community and its Member States on the one hand and the EFTA-EEA States on the other hand and whereas Article 4 of Protocol 31 states that the EFTA-EEA States are, as from 1 January 1995, to participate in all programmes of the Community in the field of education, training and youth then in force or adopted,

HAVE DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Establishment of the Community action programme 'Socrates'

1. This Decision establishes the action programme 'Socrates', hereinafter referred to as 'this programme', for the period 1 January 1995 to 31 December 1999.

This programme is intended to contribute to the development of quality education and training and the creation of an open European area for cooperation in education.

2. This programme shall comprise the following three areas of action which are set out in the Annex:

- Chapter I: Higher education (Erasmus)
- Chapter II: School education (Comenius)
- Chapter III: Horizontal activities in the areas of:
 - language skills in the Community (Lingua),
 - open and distance education,
 - promotion of the exchange of information and experience (including Eurydice and Arion).

Article 2

Definitions

1. For the purposes of this programme,
 - the term 'university' covers all types of higher education institutions which offer qualifications or diplomas at that level, whatever such establishments may be called in the Member States,

- the term 'school' covers all types of institutions whether providing general, vocational or technical education and exceptionally, non-school institutions providing apprenticeship training for the purpose of promoting measures in the framework of language training, particularly exchanges of pupils,

- the term 'teacher'/'teaching staff' covers persons who through their duties are involved directly in the educational process in the Member States, in accordance with the organization of their educational system,

- the term 'student' is used for persons registered in universities, whatever their field of study, in order to follow higher education studies leading to a degree or diploma (or equivalent), up to and including the level of doctorate,

- the term 'pupil' covers persons enrolled in that capacity at a school,

- the term 'open and distance education' is used to describe all forms of flexible education, whether or not involving the use of technologies and advanced facilities in information and communication,

2. Each Member State shall specify the types of universities, schools and other educational institutions covered by this programme.

Article 3

Objectives

This programme shall encourage cooperation between Member States in the field of education; it shall support and supplement their action while fully respecting their responsibility for the content of teaching and the organization of educational systems, and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

In accordance with that aim, and to help to improve the quality of education, the specific objectives of the programme shall be:

- (a) to develop the European dimension in education at all levels so as to strengthen the spirit of European citizenship, drawing on the cultural heritage of each Member State;
- (b) to promote a quantitative and qualitative improvement of the knowledge of the languages of the European Union, and in particular those which are least widely used and least taught, leading to greater understanding and solidarity between the peoples of the European Union;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 1, 3. 1. 1994, p. 3.

- (c) to promote wide-ranging and intensive cooperation between institutions in the Member States at all levels of education, enhancing their intellectual and teaching potential;
- (d) to encourage the mobility of teachers, so as to promote a European dimension in studies and to contribute to the qualitative improvement of their skills;
- (e) to encourage mobility for students, enabling them to complete part of their studies in another Member State, so as to contribute to the consolidation of the European dimension in education;
- (f) to encourage contacts among pupils in the European Union, and to promote the European dimension in their education;
- (g) to encourage the academic recognition of diplomas, periods of study and other qualifications, with the aim of facilitating the development of an open European area for cooperation in education;
- (h) to encourage open and distance education in the context of the activities of this programme;
- (i) to foster exchanges of information and experience so that the diversity and specificity of the educational systems in the Member States become a source of enrichment and of mutual stimulation.

Article 4

Committee

1. The Commission shall be assisted by a committee composed of two members designated by each Member State and chaired by the Commission representative, hereafter referred to as 'the Committee'. The members of the Committee may be assisted by experts or advisers.
2. (a) The Committee shall be assisted by two subcommittees in the areas of higher education and school education. They shall be composed of two representatives per Member State according to the subject under discussion.

The Committee shall ensure coordination between the subcommittees. Specific questions may be referred to the subcommittees for final decision.

(b) The Committee may also establish working groups for certain specific issues, and in particular for language learning.
3. The Commission representative shall submit to the Committee a draft of the measures concerning:
 - (a) priorities and general guidelines for the Community measures described in the Annex and the relevant annual work programme, as well as the internal breakdown of the programme;

- (b) the financial support to be provided by the Community (amounts, duration, distribution and beneficiaries);
- (c) the procedures for monitoring, evaluation, dissemination and transfer of results;
- (d) the criteria for selecting the various types of project described in the Annex, including partnership projects.

4. The Committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft measures referred to in paragraph 3 within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter. The opinion shall be delivered by the majority laid down in Article 148 (2) of the Treaty in the case of decisions which the Council is required to adopt on a proposal from the Commission. The votes of the representatives of the Member States within the Committee shall be weighted in the manner set out in that Article. The chairman shall not vote.

The Commission shall adopt measures which shall apply immediately. However, if these measures are not in accordance with the opinion of the Committee, they shall be communicated by the Commission to the Council forthwith.

In that event, the Commission may defer application of the measures which it has decided upon for a period of two months from the date of such communication.

The Council, acting by a qualified majority, may take a different decision within the time limit referred to in the previous subparagraph.

5. In addition, the Commission may consult the Committee on any other matter concerning the implementation of this programme, in particular those cases provided for in Article 5.

The representative of the Commission shall submit to the Committee a draft of the measures to be taken. The Committee shall deliver its opinion on this draft, within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the opinion delivered by the Committee. It shall inform the Committee of the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.

6. The Committee shall draw up its rules of procedure.

7. The Committee shall establish regular and structured cooperation with the Committee established in the context of the action programme for the implementation of a European Community vocational training programme (Leonardo da Vinci).

8. To ensure the consistency of this programme with other measures referred to in Article 6, the Commission shall keep the Committee regularly informed about Community initiatives in the field of education and vocational training.

Article 5

Implementation and selection procedure

1. The Commission shall ensure the implementation of the programme in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Annex. It shall consult the social partners and the competent associations in the field of education at European level and shall inform the Committee of their opinions. It shall also ensure that the European Parliament is fully informed on the operation of the programme.

2. It shall take measures to ensure appropriate transition between those actions already developed in the framework of the Erasmus and Lingua programmes and other current actions and those to be implemented under this programme.

3. The Member States shall take the necessary steps to coordinate and organize the implementation of this programme at national level, in particular, by providing for the appropriate structures and mechanisms at national level.

4. The methods for proposing and selecting the projects referred to in the Annex are as follows:

(a) Requests for financial assistance for projects under Chapter I, Action 1 of the Annex shall be sent to the Commission. The Commission shall inform the structures designated by the Member States of these requests. Before taking a final decision, the Commission shall submit the proposal based on the results of the selection to the Committee referred to in Article 4 for its opinion.

The national agencies provided for in Chapter I, Action 2 shall award the mobility grants provided for in Action 2 to students participating in the projects accepted in the context of Action 1.

(b) Requests for financial assistance for projects mentioned in actions considered to be decentralized in Chapters II and III (Chapter II, Action 1 and Action 3; Chapter III, Action 1.2 (b), (c), (e) and Action 3.3) shall be submitted to the structures designated by the Member States. These structures shall select and give Community financial assistance to the selected

projects in accordance with the general guidelines established in accordance with Article 4.

(c) Requests for financial assistance for projects in actions considered to be centralized in Chapter II (Action 2) shall be submitted by the project coordinators to the structures designated by Member States. Those structures shall forward the approved requests to the Commission for a final decision, to be taken after receiving the opinion of the Committee.

(d) Requests for financial assistance for projects in actions considered to be centralized in Chapter III (Action 1.2 (a) and (d), Action 2 and Action 3 except point 3) shall be submitted by the project coordinators to the Commission and the structures designated by the Member States. Those structures shall inform the Commission of their opinion. Decisions on financial assistance for projects shall be taken by the Commission after consulting the Member States concerned and receiving the opinion of the Committee.

Article 6

Consistency

1. The Commission in partnership with the Member States shall ensure overall consistency between this programme and other Community actions, and in particular the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

2. The Commission, in conjunction with the Member States, shall encourage the coordination of activities between this programme and the Fourth Research and Development Framework Programme ⁽¹⁾.

Article 7

Budget

1. The funds estimated as necessary for the execution of this programme during the period referred to in Article 1 amount to ECU 760 million.

2. The annual appropriations necessary to cover the Community contribution to the measures provided for in this programme shall be established in the annual budgetary procedure in accordance with the current financial perspective.

Article 8

Monitoring and evaluation

1. The Commission, in partnership with the Member States, shall ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of this programme with the objective, if necessary, of readjusting the programme in the light of needs arising during its implementation.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 126, 18. 5. 1994, p. 1.

The results of Community measures shall be evaluated by external bodies at regular intervals on the basis of the objectives referred to in Article 3, and the findings of those evaluations shall be submitted to the Committee, and also to the European Parliament and the Council.

September 1998, an interim report on the launch phase, and before 30 September 2000, a final report on the implementation of this programme.

Done at ...

2. The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, before 30

For the European Parliament

For the Council

The President

The President

ANNEX

The purpose of the Socrates programme is to support the transnational actions planned in the different chapters of the programme.

CHAPTER I

HIGHER EDUCATION (ERASMUS)

This Chapter contains the two following actions aimed at:

- Action 1: promoting the European dimension in universities,
- Action 2: encouragement of student mobility and the financing of Erasmus grants.

The resources to be committed under Erasmus shall not be less than 55% of the overall budget available for the Socrates action programme.

The selection procedure for projects referred to in this chapter is carried out in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 5 of this Decision.

Action 1

The promotion of the European dimension in universities

Drawing on experience gained from the Erasmus and Lingua programmes, the Community will encourage transnational cooperation between universities, especially through the development of inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs), with the aim of gradually reinforcing the European dimension in higher education.

A. Inter-university cooperation

The Community may grant financial assistance for measures for the following activities:

- under ICPs:
 - (a) student mobility providing students of a university with an opportunity to undertake a period of study in another Member State, accompanied by practical experience where appropriate, such periods being fully recognized as an integral part of their diploma or academic qualification;
 - (b) promotion of the ECTS system (European credit transfer system) without calling into question the existence of any other similar systems;
 - (c) joint development of initial or advanced curricula geared to facilitating academic recognition and contributing, through exchanges of experience, to the process of innovation and improvement of the quality of education at Community level;
 - (d) mobility of teaching staff for the purpose of providing instruction forming an integral part of the curriculum in another Member State;
 - (e) intensive short-term education courses aimed at students coming from several Member States, and particularly in fields of study which do not lend themselves to long stays abroad.
- outside ICPs:
 - (f) study visits to pave the way for cooperation may be carried out by:
 - teachers,
 - administrative staff of universities,as well as by, if appropriate:
 - students associated with the preparation of cooperation projects.

B. Other activities to promote the European dimension in universities

1. The Community will encourage universities to develop transnational activities designed to bring a European dimension to all areas of study for the benefit of each and every student. The following activities could receive Community support:
 - (a) the incorporation into curricula of material contributing to the understanding of the cultural, artistic, political, economic and social characteristics of the other Member States as well as elements relating to European integration, especially through the creation of multi- or inter-disciplinary modules;
 - (b) learning of the languages of the European Union as an integral part of studies, with the emphasis on least widely used and least taught languages, as well as the use of new educational technologies;
 - (c) introduction of material as described in paragraph (a) above, by means of distance education.
2. Financial assistance may also be granted to groups of universities for the purpose of developing jointly one or more of the activities referred to in point 1, in cooperation as appropriate with regional or local communities and interested parties from the economic and social spheres.

C. Institutional contracts

Universities participating in several inter-university cooperation programmes or other activities referred to in B (1) (a) and (1) (b), may conclude an 'institutional contract' with the Commission covering all the activities eligible for Community assistance. Community financial assistance will cover a maximum period of three years initially, subject to regular reviews of the results at least once a year.

D. University cooperation projects on subjects of mutual interest

1. The Community will lend its support to projects enabling universities, possibly linked within networks, to cooperate on subjects of mutual interest. This coordination should enable them to exchange their experiences and spread their best practice, as well as discuss the qualitative and innovative aspects of higher education, improvements in teaching methods and the comparability of curricula and foster the development of joint programmes and specialized courses, particularly for subjects underrepresented in inter-university cooperation programmes;
2. One of the participating universities could act as a coordinator for activities linked to each project.

Action 2*Encouragement of student mobility and financing of Erasmus grants*

1. The following conditions must be fulfilled in order to ensure that periods of study spent abroad are of maximum benefit to students:
 - (a) studies abroad will be carried out on a full-time basis and for a significant period of time (a minimum of three months or one term, and a maximum of one academic year);
 - (b) studies undertaken in other Member States will be fully recognized by the university of origin;
 - (c) students must have a satisfactory knowledge of the language in which courses are given by the host university;
 - (d) host universities will not charge tuition fees to students participating in mobility schemes. They will take steps to facilitate the reception of students;
 - (e) students in the first year of their studies will not be eligible for mobility grants.

The Community will continue to develop a system of direct financial aid to students who complete a period of study in another Member State, as well as activities connected with their preparation (language courses, in particular for the least used and least taught languages of the European Union, information on social and cultural aspects of the host Member State, intensive courses, etc.).

2. The Community funds contributing to students' mobility grants will be shared out between the Member States according to the following formula:
 - (a) subject to budget availability, a minimum sum of ECU 200 000 will be allocated to each Member State;
 - (b) the remainder will be allocated to the different Member States depending on:
 - (i) the total number of students at university;
 - (ii) the total number of young people between 18 and 25 in the various Member States;
 - (iii) the difference in the cost of living between the Member State of origin and the host Member State;
 - (iv) the average cost of travel between the Member State of origin and the host Member State.

Furthermore the Commission will take any measures necessary to encourage balanced participation between various disciplines and regions, to take account of the flows of students and deal with specific problems such as the financing of some grants which, because of the structure of the programme of study, cannot be managed by the competent authorities referred to in point 3. The funds set aside for these measures may not exceed 5% of the annual budget for students' grants.

3. The Community funds shared out according to the formula mentioned in point 2 and intended for students grants will be administered by the national authorities established by all the Member States. These authorities will ensure coordination with the national systems of student grant/loans or other financial resources intended to encourage mobility of students. The NGAA's may, in cooperation with the Commission, take action to promote an equitable participation of universities or faculties at the national or regional level, by means of dissemination of information and awareness-raising actions.
4. The Community grants are intended to defray part of the additional costs incurred by mobility, that is, cost of travel, any preparatory language training which might be required and a higher cost of living in the host country. These grants may not exceed ECU 5 000 per student for a maximum of 12 months abroad.
5. Priority will be given to students who follow courses in activities supported under the terms of Action 1. In exceptional cases grants may be allocated to other students attending courses for which special provisions are made outside inter-university cooperation programmes (free movers) as long as they satisfy the eligibility criteria referred to in point 1 of this Action.
6. In allocating grants, the principle of equality of opportunity between men and women must be taken into consideration. The specific needs of disabled students should be taken into consideration when the amount of grant is determined.
7. As the Community's contribution covers only part of the costs of students' mobility, Member States are invited to help provide the necessary funds. In this connection grants or loans available to students in their own country will continue to be paid during the period of study in a host Member State.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL EDUCATION: (COMENIUS)

1. This chapter contains the three following actions intended to encourage:
 - Action 1: Partnerships between schools,
 - Action 2: Education of the children of migrant workers, as well as the children of occupational travellers, Travellers and Gypsies; intercultural education,
 - Action 3: Updating and improving of skills of educational staff.

These activities are based on the experience gained through the Lingua programme as well as the texts adopted by the Council and the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council, on Community cooperation in education, including pilot projects undertaken in the areas of primary and secondary education, schooling for the children of migrant workers and gypsies and the exchange of teachers.

The resources to be committed in the framework of school education shall not be less than 10% of the overall available for the Socrates programme.

2. The Community funds aimed at promoting Actions 1 and 3 will be shared between the Member States according to the following formula:
 - (a) subject to budget availability, a minimum of ECU 200 000 will be allocated to each Member State;
 - (b) the remainder will be allocated to various Member States depending on:
 - (i) the total number of pupils attending school;
 - (ii) the number of schools;
 - (iii) the number of teaching staff;
 - (iv) the gross domestic product by inhabitant;
 - (v) the average cost of travel between the country of origin and the host country.
3. The selection for projects referred to in this chapter is carried out in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 5 of this Decision.
4. The Commission, in cooperation with Member States, will take any measures necessary to encourage balanced participation by schools at Community, national and regional level. The funds for these measures may not exceed 5% of the annual budget for financing the activities described in this chapter.
5. The Community financial aid provided for in this chapter is intended to defray part of the costs deemed necessary for implementing the projects.
6. Community funds are awarded according to the principle of equality of opportunities, especially between men and women. The specific needs of disabled persons participating in the activities developed in the framework of this chapter should be taken into consideration when the level of grant is agreed.

Action 1

Partnership between schools

1. The Community will encourage the creation of multilateral partnership between schools which are built around a European Education Project (EEP).

A multilateral partnership is a group of at least three schools, from three Member States; one of the schools, or an associated educational body, will act as the coordinator. The partnership might be bilateral if the aim is mainly to promote knowledge of languages of the European Union, particularly those which are least widely used and least taught.

An EEP aims to develop one or more subjects of European interest through a set of educational activities and measures integrated into the regular activities of the schools.

These activities and measures may include the following:

- the participation of pupils in projects of, if possible, a multidisciplinary nature,
- learning and improvement of the languages of the European Union,

- the mobility of pupils, particularly for those participating in partnership where the aim is to improve knowledge of languages. Nursery pupils are excluded from this type of project,
 - exchange of teaching materials and exchange of information and experience on innovative teaching methods,
 - the use of information and communication technologies, including the opportunities offered through open and distance education, in particular so that achievements and experiences of partnerships may be widely disseminated, benefiting schools not directly participating in the projects.
2. Financial aid may be allocated for financing new EEPs for a limited period. It will be granted for a maximum period of three years initially, subject to periodic review of the projects carried out.

In granting Community aid, priority will be given to projects having the following subjects of European interest:

- the European dimension in general, as well as other themes concerned with cultural heritage, protection of the environment, artistic education, and the promotion of science and technology,
- elements promoting equality of opportunity in education between boys and girls,
- elements aiming to improve the level of achievement of all pupils,
- elements aiming to meet the needs of children with specific educational needs and capacities.

If several projects satisfy the same conditions for selection, preference will be given to projects including schools which have not yet taken part in Community activities.

3. Financial aid may be allocated for visits to prepare partnerships, for a maximum period of one week, and for exchanges of staff between schools to support partnerships and to develop European Education Projects, up to a maximum period of four weeks.

Action 2

Education of the children of migrant workers, as well as children of occupational travellers, Travellers and Gypsies; intercultural education

Financial assistance may be allocated to transnational projects aiming to:

- promote as full a participation as possible in school activities and equal opportunities for children of migrant workers, occupational travellers, Travellers and Gypsies,
- improve their schooling and the quality of the education they receive,
- meet their specific educational needs and capacities,
- promote intercultural education for all schoolchildren.

These projects may include in particular:

- the exchange of information and experience especially on all aspects referred to in the first paragraph,
- the design of specialized courses and teaching materials,
- the introduction of intercultural teaching practices.

Action 3

Updating and improving the skills of educational staff

1. Financial aid may be allocated to transnational projects submitted by institutions and organizations engaged in updating and improving the skills of teachers/teaching staff responsible for the teaching and/or guidance of pupils.

These projects are intended to promote:

- (a) the exchange of information and experience concerned with adding a European dimension to the updating or improvement of particular skills of educational staff;
 - (b) the updating and improvement of the skills of educational staff more particularly engaged in activities aimed at raising levels of school achievement and at ensuring as full a participation as possible in school activities of children with specific educational needs and capacities;
 - (c) the development of partnerships in the fields referred to in this Action, including those using information and communication technologies, as well as distance education.
2. Transnational projects for updating the skills of educational staff may also provide for a limited number of periods to be spent in another Member State so that staff may attend seminars organized jointly by the institutions or organizations concerned.

CHAPTER III

HORIZONTAL MEASURES

1. The activities described in this chapter apply at all levels of education. They supplement the actions presented in Chapters I and II and are intended to promote:

- Action 1: Language skills in the Community (Lingua),
- Action 2: Open and distance learning,
- Action 3: Exchange of information and experience, including Eurydice and Arion and other measures, including adult education.

The resources to be committed in the framework of horizontal actions will not be less than 25% of the overall budget available for the Socrates action programme.

2. (a) Community funds set aside to promote the activities provided for in Chapter III, Action 1.2 (b), (c) and (e) and Action 3.3 will be shared between the Member States according to the following formula:
- (i) subject to budget availability, a minimum of ECU 200 000 will be allocated to each Member State;
 - (ii) the remainder will be allocated to the various Member States depending on:
 - (a) the total number of teachers;
 - (b) the total number of pupils;
 - (c) the gross domestic product by inhabitant;
 - (d) the average cost of travel between the Member State of origin and the host Member State.
3. The selection procedure for projects mentioned in this Chapter is governed by the provisions of Article 5 of this Decision.
4. The Commission will take any steps which are necessary to encourage balanced participation by educational institutions in the Member States. The funds for these measures may not exceed 5% of the annual budget for financing the activities set out in this Chapter.
5. The Community financial aid provided for in this Chapter is intended to defray part of the estimated cost of implementing the projects.
6. Community aid will be awarded according to the principle of equality of opportunities, particularly between men and women. The specific needs of disabled persons who participate in activities developed in the framework of this Chapter should be taken into consideration when the amount of grant is agreed.

Action 1

Promotion of language skills in the Community (Lingua)

1. The promotion of language skills is a key factor in establishing an open European area for cooperation in education and for strengthening understanding and solidarity between the peoples of the European Union without sacrificing any of their linguistic and cultural diversity.

In the context of the Socrates programme foreign language teaching refers to the teaching as foreign languages of all the official languages of the Union, together with Irish, (one of the languages in which the Treaties establishing the European Communities are drafted), and Letzeburgesch (a language spoken throughout the territory of Luxembourg).

The Lingua action concerns questions of language learning overall.

2. Apart from the measures for encouragement set out in Chapter I, Action 1 and in Chapter II, Action 1, Community financial assistance may also be allocated to transnational projects aiming to undertake the following activities:

- (a) the development of European Cooperation Programmes (joint design and creation of innovative training schemes and teaching materials), submitted by institutions or organizations responsible for initial and continuing training of language teachers and aiming to update, reinforce and expand the language and teaching skills of present or future language teachers;
- (b) immersion courses of other similar activities abroad for language teachers, for teaching staff retraining as language teachers, for qualified teachers intending soon to return to employment as language teachers and for teaching staff of other disciplines intending to teach in a foreign language. The duration of these courses will be between two and four weeks;
- (c) assistantships abroad for future language teachers to enhance their knowledge of the languages which they will be teaching. These will last no less than three months and no more than one year and must be spent in a Member State where one of the official languages is the language which the assistant will in future be teaching;
- (d) development and exchange of curricula, production of new teaching materials and improvement of methods and tools for the recognition of linguistic experience. These projects are intended for the various interested sectors and concern mainly language preparation for students and pupils, whether in school or in training centres, to help them take part in mobility schemes;
- (e) limited financial aid will be provided for educational exchanges for pupils undergoing general, vocational or technical education. These exchanges are based on projects of educational institutions and their aim is to improve communication skills in foreign languages and to help to make those taking part more motivated to acquire competence in foreign languages.

3. As far as point 2 (a) to (d) above are concerned, priority will be given to projects and activities:

- relating to the teaching of languages of the European Union which are least widely used and least taught,
- including the use of new educational technologies, and/or distance education.

As far as point 2 (e) is concerned, priority will be given to projects in vocational or technical education which:

- develop innovation in the field of educational exchanges for foreign language learning,
- emphasize the European dimension in education,
- support the teaching of the least widely used and least taught languages of the European Union.

Action 2

Promotion of open and distance learning

The development of open and distance education, whether or not through the use of information and communication technologies, is a key factor enabling citizens of the European Union to take advantage of an open European area for cooperation in education.

The aim of the action is, by using teaching innovations, to make a contribution to the quality of education and to increase access to all levels of education, in particular for those who, because of their geographical or personal situation, have no other options open to them.

Besides those actions falling under open and distance learning referred to in Chapters I and II, Community financial assistance may also be allocated to transnational projects aiming to undertake the following activities:

- (a) facilitating cooperation between organizations and institutions in the field, based on the exchange of information and experience;
- (b) responding to the need to enhance the skills of teachers, trainers and managers in the techniques of open and distance learning;
- (c) improving the quality of distance education products and their user-friendliness;
- (d) encouraging the recognition of qualifications obtained in the context of open and distance learning.

Action 3

Promotion of exchange of information and experience

The measures outlined below are based on the experience acquired by the exchange of information among Member States, including the meetings of senior officials in the framework of the Council as well as the Eurydice network, the Naric network, the Arion programme and Action 4 of the Erasmus programme.

1. Questions of common educational policy interest

In questions of common educational policy interest laid down by the Council, the Commission will carry out, in cooperation with the Member States, an exchange of information and experience on educational policy. To this end appropriate incentive measures could be taken to encourage common treatment of these themes. The following specific measures could be taken:

- studies and comparative analyses,
- organization of colloquia,
- exchange of experts.

The following should be dealt with as priority themes:

- problems encountered by children and young people leaving the educational system without adequate preparation,
- methods for evaluating teaching quality and the possible establishment of pilot projects in this field.

2. Exchanges of information (Eurydice)

Actions supported in this field will ensure the availability of information aimed at various target groups, and in the first place at those responsible for national education policy, on educational systems and policy, reforms, innovations and the results of research in education.

These actions will be implemented by the Eurydice European Unit and the national units set up respectively by the Commission and the Member States.

The following activities of the European and national Units will be eligible for financial assistance:

- (a) pooling of data and the production and continuous updating of basic information on the structures and organization of educational systems in the Member States;
- (b) comparative studies on priority themes and the analysis of trends in education by agreement between the Commission and the Member States as well as pooling reference frameworks facilitating better comparison of information;
- (c) dissemination of such information through existing public and private information and distribution channels and appropriate relays at national, regional and Community level;
- (d) creation of Community data bases on education, the development of close links between existing data bases in the Member States and the improvement of access to these data bases;

- (e) use of new information processing and electronic technologies to ensure that exchanges are interactive and that there is more efficient sharing of resources. Activities attracting aid will take account of Community developments in the field of trans-European networks, especially telematics links between government departments.

When the activities referred to in points (a) to (e) are being implemented, close links will be developed with comparable activities of the European Centre for the development of vocational training (Cedefop) in the field of information on vocational training, with the Statistical Office of the Community (Eurostat) in the field of statistics, with the Community Naric network (National Academic Recognition Information Centres) and with any other information network in the field of education at national, European and international level.

3. Arion

Grants may be awarded for the organization of multilateral study visits for deciders able to induce a multiplier effect, and designated by the Member States. These study visits are intended to facilitate exchanges of information and experience on subjects of mutual interest to the Member States.

In the context of this Action, deciders means in particular persons in the educational field whose duties include management, assessment, training, guidance and coordination of European projects and people in responsible positions in the Ministries.

4. Naric

Financial assistance may be granted for the further development of the present Community network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (Narics).

5. Other measures

A. Promotion of the European dimension in adult education

The European dimension is to be reinforced in all areas of adult education (general, cultural and social), by means of transnational cooperation and exchange of experience between adult education organizations and institutions.

Community financial aid may be allocated to the abovementioned organizations and institutions, for the following transnational activities:

- project for developing and strengthening the European dimension of adult education, particularly with a view to disseminating knowledge about cultures and traditions in the Member States and the languages of the European Union, and for developing adult education courses which contribute to the understanding of political, economic and administrative affairs in the European Union,
- projects promoting the exchange of experience and making best practice more widely available in the field of adult education;

B. Complementary measures

The Commission will lend its support to the following complementary measures intended to further the programme's objectives:

- projects developed at European level by associations of teaching staff, students, and parents of pupils,
- the organization of awareness-raising activities to promote cooperation in the field of education and training,
- activities concerned with monitoring and evaluation of the actions described in this Annex.
- information activities relating to the various actions of the programme developed by the agencies designated by the Member States.

STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S REASONS

I. Introduction

1. On 3 February 1994 the Commission submitted a proposal for a Decision establishing the Community action programme 'Socrates'.
2. Opinions were delivered by the European Parliament on 21 April 1994 ⁽¹⁾, by the Economic and Social Committee on 27 April 1994 ⁽²⁾ and by the Committee of the Regions on 18 May 1994 ⁽³⁾.
3. In the light of those opinions, the Commission submitted an amended proposal for a Decision on 17 May 1994 ⁽⁴⁾.
4. On 18 July 1994, the Council adopted its common position under Article 189b of the Treaty.

II. Objective of the proposal

The main aim of the Socrates programme is to contribute to the development of quality education and the creation of an open European area for cooperation in education. In that spirit the programme will support and supplement Member States' action, while respecting their responsibility for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

III. Examination of the common position

1. *General comments*

The scope of the Socrates programme has been extended to fields other than higher education, in particular school education and open and distance education. The programme, lasting for five years (1995 to 1999), comprises three areas of Community action:

Chapter I: Higher education (Erasmus),

Chapter II: School education (Comenius),

Chapter III: Horizontal activities in the areas of:

- language skills in the Community (Lingua),
- open and distance education,
- promotion of the exchange of information and experience (including Eurydice and Arion).

In its common position, the Council has retained the main components of the Commission proposal, while making such amendments as it thought essential.

2. *Specific comments*

(references below are to the text of the common position)

⁽¹⁾ Not yet published in the Official Journal.

⁽²⁾ Not yet published in the Official Journal.

⁽³⁾ Not yet published in the Official Journal.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 164, 16. 6. 1994.

2.1. *Council amendments to the Commission's amended proposal*

The main amendments made by the Council to the Commission's amended proposal concern:

(a) Committee procedure (Article 4)

In the interests of reconciling the need for flexibility in the programme's management with that for Member States to be more actively involved in some important decisions, the Council opted for a committee whose powers would be exercised, depending on the subject matter, under either the management committee or the advisory committee procedure. The Committee is to be assisted by two subcommittees: one for higher education and the other for school education. The Council has taken care to see that this arrangement is entirely consistent with the rules on committee procedures.

(b) Financing

(i) Inclusion of an amount of funds estimated as necessary in the enacting terms (Article 7)

Through the drafting of a new Article 7 (budget), the Council has included in the text of the Decision the amount of Community funds estimated as necessary for the programme's implementation.

The Council has taken care to see that such inclusion does not affect the budget authority's prerogatives. The funds estimated as necessary thus come within the framework of the financial perspective for 1993 to 1999. The appropriations available for each financial year are to be determined by the budget authority, having regard to the principles of sound financial management referred to in Article 2 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.

(ii) Amount (Article 7)

The funds estimated as necessary in Article 7 amount to ECU 760 million.

That figure strikes an acceptable balance between the wish to support a programme unanimously backed by the Council and the need to reflect the requirements of a tight budget.

(iii) Breakdown of funds between Chapters

The Council decided that the resources to be committed under Chapters I, II and III would be not less than 55%, 10% and 25% respectively of the overall budget available for the programme.

(c) Selection procedure

The Council amended Article 5 (implementation and selection procedure) in order to make clear the arrangements for proposing and selecting the projects referred to in the Annex to the programme, depending whether an action is considered to be centralized or decentralized.

(d) Other comments

(i) Chapter II, Action 2

The Council thought it desirable to extend the scope of the action to include children of migrant workers and of occupational travellers as well as the concept of intercultural education.

(ii) Chapter III, Action 3 (5) (a)

The Council decided to strengthen, as compared with the original proposal, the measure concerning promotion of the European dimension in adult education.

(iii) Naming of Chapters

Chapter I has been named 'Erasmus' and Chapter II 'Comenius'.

2.2. *European Parliament amendments*

I. European Parliament amendments accepted by the Commission

In its amended proposal the Commission took on board, in whole or in part, 48 Parliament amendments.

The Council accepted 29 of those amendments in whole, in part or in a different wording. The amendments in question are as follows:

Nos 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 47, 51, 55, 57, 65, 71, 72, 75, 80, 83, 85, 86, 104 and 124.

II. European Parliament amendments accepted by the Commission and not taken up by the Council

(Amendment Nos 63 and 64) — balance between regions and between establishments

The Council thought that it was for the selection procedures laid down in the programme to ensure such balance.

(Amendment No 70) — mobility grants

The Council was unable to agree to this amendment in view of the fact that its text reflected the pre-existing arrangements for grants.

(Amendment No 56) — Structural Funds

The Council was unable to agree to this amendment as it thought references to the Structural Funds out of place within the Socrates programme, particularly since the programme was to be regarded as financially autonomous in the Community context.

(Amendment No 32) — mobility of 10% of students in higher education

The Council did not think it advisable to set rigid targets which it would not necessarily be possible to meet.

(Amendment No 78) — European schools

The Council felt that a reference to the educational experience of the European schools would be inappropriate in the context of European educational projects.

(Amendment No 87) — complementarity with the programme to combat exclusion

The Council did not think that reference should be made in Chapter II, Action 2, to a programme not yet adopted.

(Amendment Nos 7, 14, 19, 25, 36, 84 and 88) — drafting amendments

The Council was also unable to accept a number of amendments as they went beyond the programme's objectives. These were amendment Nos 82 (school competitions), 92 (the environment as a topic in Chapter III), 96 (intercultural education as a priority project in Lingua) and 103 (ongoing learning as an objective of Chapter III, Action 3).

III. Parliament amendments not accepted by the Commission

(a) Parliament amendments taken up by the Council

The Council accepted three amendments in whole, in part or in a different wording. The amendments in question are as follows:

Nos 20, 42 and 81.

(b) Parliament amendments not taken up by the Council

The Council was unable to accept the following amendments for the reasons given below:

(Amendment Nos 1, 2, 4 and 5) — Article 126 as the sole legal basis

The Council thought the dual legal basis more appropriate; Article 126 covers general education, whereas Article 127 concerns the vocational training part of the programme.

(Amendment Nos 41, 79, 89, 95 and 110) — language skills

While acknowledging the development of knowledge of Community languages to be one of the essential objectives of the Socrates programme, the Council felt that the above amendments brought in aspects going beyond what the programme could hope to achieve.

(Amendment Nos 37, 62 and 106) — research

The Council was unable to accept these amendments as they encroached upon the field covered by the fourth framework programme of research and development.

(Amendment Nos 99 and 100) — distance teaching

The Council was unable to accept these amendments, which would affect the quality of cooperation in this field.

(Amendment Nos 28, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 58 and 68) — subsidiarity

The Council was unable to agree to these amendments as they failed to observe the principle of subsidiarity. Amendment Nos 28, 38 and 45, dealing more specifically with the designation of national representatives on the advisory committee, were ruled out on similar grounds.

(Amendment Nos 22, 59, 105 and 126) — Structural Funds

The Council was unable to agree to these amendments as it thought references to the Structural Funds out of place within the Socrates programme, particularly since the programme was to be regarded as financially autonomous in the Community context.

(Amendment Nos 11 and 76) — balance between regions and between establishments

The Council felt that the balance sought could be ensured by means of the selection procedures.

(Amendment Nos 66, 73 and 74) — distribution of funds

The Council was unable to accept these amendments, which changed the distribution arrangements laid down in the programme.

(Amendment Nos 21 and 50) — extension of existing programmes

The Council considered these amendments redundant since the text of the common position ensured continuity between existing programmes and the Socrates programme.

(Amendment Nos 3, 6, 8, 24, 44, 60, 61, 69, 90, 91, 93, 94, 97, 98, 101, and 102) — drafting amendments

The Council did not think it should amend its text, which was acceptable to the Commission, on these points.

The Council was also unable to accept a number of amendments because they were either impracticable or incompatible with the programme's objectives. These are amendment Nos 48 (interim assessment report), 49 (opening up the programme to European associate countries), 52 (academic events bringing people together), 53 (minimum period of study abroad), 77 (participation by schools in multilateral partnerships) and 125 (provision of information: Chapter I, Action 1).

IV. Conclusions

The Council considers the common position to be a balanced text, geared to the needs of developing efforts in the educational field at Community level.

The text maintains the positive achievements of the past and opens up the way ahead for the fresh challenges of the future.
