

# English Summary

## Study of Erasmus funded Intensive Programmes and Curriculum Development Projects

### The aim and realisation of the study

The aim of the study was to look at the progress of intensive programmes and curriculum development projects which are financed by funding from the Erasmus programme. The objective was further to explore how well they function in practice, as well as the possible problems associated with them and the impact of each project on the activities of the co-ordinating institution.

The following were the central questions of the study:

1. How have the projects for curriculum development and intensive programmes progressed?
2. What kinds of problems have the projects encountered and what good practices have been used?
3. What were the results of the projects?
4. What are the impacts of the projects at the departmental level?

The study was mainly carried out using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to all projects for intensive programmes and curriculum development that were co-ordinated by a Finnish institution and received Erasmus funding during the academic years 1997/98–2000/01. There were a total of 44 projects that were realised within the framework of the Socrates/Erasmus programme and co-ordinated in Finland. Of these, 25 were based at a university and 19 at a polytechnic; 27 were projects for intensive programmes, 17 were focused on curriculum development (CD, EM and ILC).

A total of 36 questionnaires were returned, that is, 82 per cent, which is a relatively high return rate. The table below shows the distribution of the returned questionnaires according to type of institution and project.

| Type of institution               | Total amount in sample | Returned | Return % |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|
| University                        | 25                     | 18       | 72 %     |
| Polytechnic                       | 19                     | 18       | 95 %     |
| Total                             | 44                     | 36       | 82 %     |
| Type of project                   |                        |          |          |
| Intensive programme (IP)          | 27                     | 22       | 82 %     |
| Curriculum development (CD or EM) | 17                     | 14       | 82 %     |
| Total                             | 44                     | 36       | 82 %     |

**Table 1. Returned questionnaires according to type of institution and project (number).**

Information on the projects was also sought from their application documents for Erasmus funding and final reports. In addition, eight co-ordinators for curriculum development projects were interviewed over the telephone. These interviews were carried out as theme interviews.

## Basic information on the projects

The basic information on those projects which were co-ordinated in Finland and which are presented in this chapter is taken from their project application documents and final reports. Information is gathered on all 44 projects included in the sample, not only on those who answered the questionnaire.

The average duration of projects for intensive courses is 1.5 years. A clear majority of the intensive course projects co-ordinated by Finnish institutions last only one year. The average length of curriculum development projects (CD/PROG) is 2.3 years and that of module projects (EM/MOD) is 2.6 years.

The co-ordinators of the projects usually belong to the teaching staff of the institution (professor, lecturer, etc.). In six of the projects, the co-ordinator was a member of the administrative staff, usually the co-ordinator for international affairs in the department or the faculty. The project co-ordinators are quite mobile: the co-ordinator changed in nearly one third of the projects during the period of Erasmus funding. This can be seen both as a negative and a positive factor. On one hand, the change of co-ordinator usually slows down the progress of the project and is probably an indication of the fact that he or she is not very committed to the project. On the other hand, the change of co-ordinator reflects the commitment of the whole department to the project, not just that of one person, and the project continues even after the persons active in it have changed.

In addition to the co-ordinating institution, a project must include partner institutions from at least two different countries in order to qualify for Erasmus funding. In practice, however, there are often more participants – usually three, four or five. Intensive course projects especially tend to include a large number of participants. On an average, these projects comprise more than five participating institutions, whilst curriculum development projects have an average of fewer than four participants.

It is, as a matter of fact, useful to have more than the minimum number of participants, since often some of them leave the project. In approximately half of the projects studied here the number of participating institutions had changed during the project and in almost all of these cases their numbers had decreased.

The most popular countries co-operating in projects for intensive programmes and curriculum development are the same as the most popular ones in student exchange, that is, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden.

The table below shows information on the total budget of the projects, the Erasmus funding applied and received, as well as other funding for the project. The sums quoted are average amounts based on the information in the projects' funding applications and final reports.

|                               | Intensive programmes | Curriculum development |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Budget/year                   | 38 745               | 46 240                 |
| Applied Erasmus funding/year  | 25 550               | 26 669                 |
| Received Erasmus funding/year | 9 456                | 10 382                 |
| Other funding/year            | 4 453                | 1 712 <sup>1</sup>     |

**Table 2. The average budget of the projects and funding received per year (average in euros).**

<sup>1</sup> The sum for curriculum development projects refers only to other funding used at the coordinating institution.

In practice, the projects are run with considerably lower use of funds than indicated in the original budget. Erasmus funding received covers, on an average, only less than half of that applied for, and about one third of the original budget of the project. Furthermore, the projects use less other funding than calculated in the budgets. Either the original budgets are vastly overestimated or much of the planned activities are cancelled during the project.

## **Birth of the project idea and setting up the project**

The co-ordinators' responses to the questionnaire contained five different patterns for the start of a European co-operation project.

1. Most commonly, *co-operation and networks* were emphasised as the basis for the original project idea. The responses all described the birth of the project as having taken place in co-operation with several participants at a national or international meeting.
2. The significance of existing co-operation networks is also emphasised in those responses that describe the project as an *established custom* among the partner institutions or members of the network.
3. Responses where the co-ordinator stresses that the project was his or her *own idea*, represent an opposite to those that emphasise co-operation. The co-ordinator typically has a central role in the running of these projects.
4. The *importance of the subject* was also the incentive for the birth of some courses or curricula. The subject was so new or it was perceived as so important that it was felt to be worthwhile creating a specific project for it.
5. The project can also be grounded in a *wish to develop the international co-operation of the institution*. The primary motivation for the project is not always the importance of the subject but rather the need to develop the institution's international co-operation network. Projects for intensive courses and curriculum development were seen as a means to forming closer international contacts.

The co-ordinators emphasised that the project idea must not "embrace the world" – on the contrary, small is beautiful. A project should focus on one clearly defined issue and realise this as well as is possible.

Projects typically acquired partners from such institutions that either the co-ordinator or other participants had had prior contact with. Usually, co-operation had already taken place within the framework of the Erasmus or Nordplus programmes; or student and teacher exchange had been organised with the partners, or research and teaching co-operation had been carried out.

By choosing familiar partners, the co-ordinators aim at guaranteeing successful co-operation and active involvement of the participants. However, prior contacts with the participants are not an absolute prerequisite for a successful project. Among those studied, there are projects with good outputs where co-operation was initiated with departments and persons who were previously totally unknown to the co-ordinator. This, however, requires a solid project idea – a theme which all partners perceive as particularly important. According to the co-ordinators, the most crucial criteria when choosing partners are evidence of willingness of the partner to actively participate in the project, the existence of prior contact with the partner, as well as of courses within the institution in suitable subjects, as well as a favourable reputation of the institution within the relevant field.

One third of the projects studied also worked with partners from outside the university sector. Most of these were state or local authorities, private enterprises or foundations, organisations, etc. A larger proportion of the projects for intensive programmes than those for curriculum development comprised partners outside the university sector. Typically, representatives for the non-university partners are invited to the intensive courses to present their special field, latest innovations, machines or the like.

## **Communication with partner institutions**

Joint working meetings are regarded as very important and the co-ordinators do not think that these meetings could be, at least not completely, replaced by video conferences or other similar arrangements. The meetings were experienced as having a motivating effect on the partners. Co-operation becomes more intense before and during the meetings. It was also seen as positive that the meetings constitute a break from one's own working routines and enable the participants to fully focus on the project.

Usually one or two meetings are organised per year. If several meetings are arranged during the course of a project that spans more than one year, the first meeting is typically held at the premises of the co-ordinating institution and those following at one of the various partner institutions in turn. Organising each meeting to be held at a different participating institution was seen as good practice; in this way, each of the participants get to know the others' practices and teaching in more depth.

Two meetings per year was regarded as a suitable number for a curriculum development project, even if these were not always actually realised. The significance of the meetings depends on the life cycle of the project. They were perceived as particularly important in the early stages of a curriculum development project when the partners agree on objectives, division of tasks and timetables, and thus establish their commitment to the project. On the other hand, meetings are also important at the final phase of the project, when its products and outputs are finalised and brought together.

In the case of intensive programme projects it is also recommended to organise at least one meeting before the actual course. In a few projects for intensive programmes no meetings were held, for financial reasons, a state of affairs which proved to be bad practice. It was not possible to work out a successful division of tasks merely by phone and e-mail.

However, the extent to which co-ordinators were satisfied with the number of meetings held for particular projects depended on many different factors, including the overall organisation of the project, the activity of each partner, the clarity of the division of labour, the smoothness of the co-operation, etc. Thus, this is not directly related to the number of meetings held. Many co-ordinators who had met with their partners only once per year found the frequency of meetings sufficient, while the co-ordinators of other projects who had met up to four times annually, thought there was an insufficient number of meetings.

The co-ordinators communicated with their partners by e-mail, phone, etc. once a month on average. However, the level of communication varies greatly during the life cycle of the project.

## Division of tasks

Two models for the division of tasks within the co-ordinating institution can be discerned. 1) In the *model of the strong co-ordinator*, the co-ordinator him or herself is involved in addressing all or most of the demands of the project's organisation, such as maintaining overall co-ordination and communication with partners, monitoring and administrating finances, and planning course contents and practical arrangements. 2) In the *model of distribution of tasks*, a person other than the co-ordinator is clearly responsible for some of the tasks within the project. The model of the strong co-ordinator is prevalent in more than half of the studied projects.

Those projects that followed the model of distribution of tasks were usually more satisfied with the division of tasks than those who followed the model of the strong co-ordinator. Financial administration and practical arrangements within the project in particular were tasks that the co-ordinators would have liked somebody else to take care of. A good model for the planning of the course content of the project was to form a team consisting of members of the teaching staff, who discussed these issues, insofar as they concerned the co-ordinating institution, together with the co-ordinator. Close contact with the institution's international office was also seen as important, since that office is especially able to provide assistance in matters concerning Erasmus funding and its requirements.

The responsibility for the various tasks associated with the project is usually distributed among the participating institutions so that the co-ordinating institution takes care of the application for Erasmus funding, reports and information among the partner institutions and the overall progress and schedules of the project. In curriculum development projects the co-ordinator is also responsible for the allocation of funds to the other participating institutions. Usually the co-ordinating institution also arranges the first project meeting as well as the first intensive course, and puts together the planned teaching content as well as teaching materials.

In cases where the project includes several meetings and intensive courses, these are organised in turn by the partner institutions. In addition, each partner produces their part of the project's contents – course outlines, teaching material, etc. – according to the agreed division of tasks. In intensive programme projects, a mechanical division of tasks was seen as good practice; that is, each partner is responsible for, for example, the contents of and materials for two of the course days. The planned products of curriculum development projects are usually first tested at one or two institutions. The other participants are themselves responsible for putting the final products into practice at their institution.

The coordinators of curriculum development projects in particular are quite often dissatisfied with the input of the partner institutions. In approximately every third project, it was felt that the partners could have been more active, at least from the viewpoint of the co-ordinating institution. Curriculum development projects, which span a longer period of time, are more prone to this problem than intensive programme projects. Changes in the organisation, staff and priorities of universities are much more likely to happen in the course of three years than one year.

Joint working meetings were seen as the best way to ensure the commitment of partners to the project. During these meetings the partners get to know each other and the institutions they represent in more depth. It is also crucial for the smooth running of a project that the aims and division of tasks are agreed on in detail at the start of the project. Co-ordinators pointed out that a project is often started and funding applied for in a great hurry, and therefore the finding of as many partners as

possible might become more important than ensuring their actual readiness to co-operate.

On the whole, the co-ordinators regard the workload of the co-ordinating department as being relatively heavy. Most time is spent on the planning of the contents of the actual product of the project - the course, programme or module. This can be seen as a positive result, since it demonstrates the fact that most time has been used on working with the actual issue at hand – not only on creating prerequisites for the work. Apart from the actual planning, a great deal of time was spent on practical arrangements and handling various reports and other bureaucracy. The practical arrangements were experienced as particularly time consuming in projects for intensive programmes.

## **Erasmus funding**

Departments usually get information on the possibility of receiving Erasmus funding for intensive programmes or curriculum development projects either from the international office at their own institution or from their international partners.

The majority of the co-ordinators find that the Erasmus funding is small in proportion to the amount of work it requires. A few thought the amount of funding was reasonable, while nobody regarded it as generous. Interestingly, many more of those in charge of intensive course projects assessed the Erasmus funding as small than the co-ordinators of curriculum development projects.

Over half of the respondents found that it was not possible to realise their original project idea with Erasmus funding alone. Either the project must obtain additional funding from another source, or the original plans must be reduced and changed. The additional funding of the projects is primarily support allocated by the co-ordinating institution or by the other participating institutions. Only three of the studied projects used external sources for their funding: one received support from the city authorities, one from private sponsors and one from a specific project grant from the Ministry of Education.

Typical ways to cut costs in intensive programme projects is to shorten the length of the course or reduce the number of participating students. Curriculum development projects primarily reduce their costs by lowering the number of meetings or cutting back on material and machinery acquisitions. In particular, those projects that planned to use video-conferencing equipment found that the costs for the technology needed would have been unreasonably high.

Two thirds of the respondents thought that the length of the application process for Erasmus funding influences the form of the arrangements of their projects. The lengthy process caused problems especially for intensive programme projects. Firstly, the fact that the decisions on funding are taken approximately one year after the applications have been submitted leaves a large void in the planning process. The planning of the realisation of the project is not started as long as the outcome of the application is uncertain. In a year, however, circumstances at the universities can change, and the enthusiasm and commitment to the project might diminish.

Secondly, the delay in the funding decision and in receiving the money leaves only a short time for making practical arrangements. Particularly in the case of intensive courses, the actual planning time is very limited. Many institutions settle their programme for the following academic year in the early summer at the latest, at which point it was seen as difficult to fit in the workload needed for the project in the

working plans. In practice, the length of the application process made it difficult to organise project meetings during the autumn semester and totally impossible to arrange an intensive course during the autumn.

## **The outputs of the projects**

The output of a project here refers to what is actually produced by the project: for example, an intensive course; an outline for a teaching programme, or teaching materials. The evaluation of its output is considered separately from an assessment of the impact of the project, which in this study refers to the general influence of the project on the activities of the institution. The aims of intensive programme projects differ from those of curriculum development projects and so the outputs of each type of project are looked at separately below.

The intensive courses organised by the projects usually lasted ten days and only a few courses lasted more than 15 days. On average, just over four students and just under two teachers from each partner institution participated in the course.

The subject of the intensive courses is usually relatively specific and requires that the participating students already know the basics of their field. In some cases, the subject of the intensive course was so new that it was difficult to get teaching in it at any single university. The co-ordinators found that intensive courses are a suitable form for teaching in which new perspectives on a subject are sought and diverse teaching methods are used, including lectures, seminars, workshops, exercises, study visits, etc. A particularly good practice was the inclusion of distance learning to the course programme. This usually meant that prior to the course the students were sent material and assignments which were to be dealt with during the course. In a few projects, the students also produced a report or other written work after the course, which was returned to the teachers.

The studied projects included five curriculum development projects that developed study programmes (CD/PROG). Four of these were projects at initial or intermediate level (CDI) and one at advanced level (CDA). The objective in two of the CDI projects was to develop the pedagogical basis for the teaching of the subject by switching the focus to a problem solving approach. The work mainly consisted of exchanging experiences of the bases and practices used in the teaching offered in different countries, and developing teaching material and model courses. One CDI project developed joint web pages that present information on the subject and can be used in teaching. The fourth project developed an outline for a modular model study programme in the subject.

The CDA project created a model for a one-year vocational qualification programme, where the students would attend intensive courses at the various partner institutions. A master's programme realised as a series of intensive courses was perceived as a particularly good solution. As the students would circulate between different universities, each institution could offer them their specialities within the subject.

The general impression of the output is that it is uncertain to what extent the CD projects actually have changed the curricula and the degrees of the institutions. Some of the projects convey a notion that they have only developed a few course models or teaching materials or Internet sites that each of the partner institutions can use in the way they wish, or leave unused. In the case of the studied four CDI projects, it is difficult to assess how large a part of the degree is covered by the co-operation

and to what extent the degree has changed due to the project. The objective of the CDA projects within the Erasmus programme is to create separate 1–2 year study programmes with their own student selection. The output of the CDA project included in this study achieved this aim, but the planned programme was never realised.

The projects studied included nine projects for European Modules (EM/MOD). The scope of the planned modules varied between 2–3 and 10–15 credits. Three of the projects created an outline for a distance study programme, four modules contain both contact and distance teaching, one is realised as a video conference among the students and one project only produced material to be used in teaching. All module projects except one developed teaching materials.

According to the guidelines for the Erasmus programme, the modules may focus on, for example, the history, economy, culture or society of various European countries. They can also concentrate on different aspects of the unification of Europe, the organisation of the European Union, or explore the scientific field of the project from a comparative perspective using the various viewpoints of the participating countries. In those projects which are co-ordinated in Finland, the contents of the modules usually entail the comparison of practices and conditions within the field between different countries. None of the modules primarily deal with European integration.

In some cases, the border between the CD and EM project categories remains blurred at the level of the actual outputs. The output of some of the CD projects was a course or material package limited to a certain subject, which each partner institution can apply in the way they wish – very similar to the products of module projects. Correspondingly, in some of the EM projects the European aspect in the contents of the module remains very vague. The main part of the module deals with completely different matters than European integration, different cultures or comparison between the practices in various countries.

The most common forms of dissemination of the projects' results are the writing of various articles, publications and reports, distribution of material and other products for teaching purposes and the publishing of these on the Internet, as well as presentation of the project through personal contacts or at conferences. About half of the projects had carried out some form of dissemination activity. Often the dissemination had been realised quite sporadically, according to the interest of the project participants.

The output of the curriculum development projects have usually been introduced as part of the elective courses at the institutions. Only in a few cases was the whole programme as such transferred to the teaching programme of the co-ordinating department. Usually the product was adapted to suit local needs and only parts of the programme were used. Many co-ordinators were unwilling to plan study programmes that were too rigid. Rather, flexible packages where each institution can use the parts they find suitable were favoured.

## **Problems**

The most common problems associated with the projects concerned the communication between the participating institutions, the practices of Erasmus funding, and the workload of the co-ordinator.

Almost half of the projects reported problems in communication between the participants. By far the most common problem was *passivity on the part of participants*. According to the co-ordinators, participants took too long to answer e-mails and phone messages, or they had to be given excessive support and be prompted to take action. As was already mentioned in the chapter above on the division of tasks, the co-ordinators found that the best remedy for the passivity of participants was carefully planned meetings, particularly at the initial stages of the project, as well as discussions on the aims and division of tasks among the partners.

The *differences in the working cultures* of the participating institutions and *inadequate technical equipment for communication* were also perceived as problematic. Communication is troublesome when e-mail facilities are not generally available to everybody and faxes only work occasionally.

Another problem that some of the co-ordinators encountered was *a partner's insufficient knowledge of English*. Thus the co-ordinators recommend that all issues be explained as clearly and simply as possible. Written minutes from the meetings also help in checking that everybody agrees on what has been decided. In addition, *the change of contact persons* can slow down the progress of the project since it must always be explained from the very beginning to the new contact. It also proved to be problematic to *co-ordinate the different timetables* of the institutions. The busiest periods and suitable times for meetings vary from one country to another.

The practices of the Socrates programme were also perceived as problematic. It was felt that the conditions and *guidelines for funding changed* continually. The *demanding application and reporting process* was criticised. The co-ordinators particularly wondered why the same information on the project had to be submitted to the Commission time and time again. The application process for funding for curriculum development projects will actually change, starting from the November 2002 application round, so that funding is applied for the whole project at once, not annually as has been the case so far.

It has already been mentioned in the chapter on Erasmus funding that the *long funding application process* and the delay in making allocation decisions and of receipt of the funds are seen as harmful for the projects. The intensive programme projects in particular saw the *small size of the Erasmus funding* as problematic. In reaction to the insufficient funds available, the number of meetings was cut, courses were shortened and the number of students attending the courses decreased. The small amount of funding did not seem to be as big a problem for the curriculum development projects: at least it was not mentioned as frequently by these as by the intensive course projects. All co-ordinators did not seem to be aware of the fact that the amount of Erasmus funding is calculated mechanically on the basis of the number of participating institutions, and therefore the low amount of funding was a surprise for them<sup>2</sup>. Generally, everybody who sets up or joins a project should assure that their department (and university) is willing to support the project. The support should not only include a positive attitude to the project but also the availability of financial resources.

---

<sup>2</sup> The principles for allocating funds for curriculum development projects will change from the autumn 2002 application round. The funding for the projects will, to a larger extent, be based on the budget of the project. The allocation of funds for intensive courses will remain unchanged.

Those who co-ordinate a project should also be prepared for a relatively heavy workload. This is, of course, eased by a functioning division of tasks both among the partner institutions and within the co-ordinating university. Often, especially in the case of intensive programmes, the co-ordinators felt that the amount of work is large in relation to a relatively "small" output – a course lasting a few weeks. Concerning the workload, it is worth noting that the funds granted curriculum development projects can be used also for personnel costs from the 2002 application round onwards.

A problem specific to the intensive programme projects is the selection of students and the at times insufficient prior knowledge of the students. In some cases, the courses were attended by students who were insufficiently prepared, lacked the required basic knowledge and had inadequate language skills. Partly this might be explained by a breakdown in communication: the information about the contents and prerequisites of the course had not reached the students and information on the students selected to the course had not been forwarded to the representatives of the other institutions.

## **The impact of the projects**

The projects for intensive programmes and curriculum development were experienced as useful. The most important impacts at departmental level in both project categories are 1) the introduction of new ideas, perspectives and methods in the teaching, 2) useful international contacts and increased international co-operation, and 3) experience in working in an international environment and on project management. These are the advantages the co-ordinators mentioned when describing the most important impacts of the project in their own words.

Especially in the case of intensive courses, the experience of studying in a multicultural group is mentioned as an important advantage for the students. To a large extent, intensive courses offer students the same benefits as student exchange: new perspectives on their field of study, multicultural experience, international contacts and language skills. Thus, the courses offer an excellent opportunity to attend a multicultural study period for those students who are not willing to study abroad for a longer exchange period.

The impact of the curriculum development projects is more clearly directed towards the department's teaching staff. The teachers' international co-operation and experiences were assessed as having increased as a result of the projects. In addition, the curriculum development projects provided the departments with new teaching material.

The co-ordinators were also asked to assess the impact of the project by evaluating its influence on a range of factors given in a structured table. These assessments are collected in table 3 below. The numbers are quoted as percentages in order to facilitate comparison between the two project categories. It should, however, be noted that in a material with such a small amount of cases, even single opinions change the percentages considerably.

| Impact   | Intensive programme projects (N=21) |            |          |            | Total      |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------|----------|------------|------------|
|  | Greatly                             | Reasonably | Little   | Not at all |            |
| Co-operation between teaching and other staff at the partner institutions increased          | 19<br>31                            | 38<br>62   | 38<br>8  | 5<br>-     | 100<br>100 |
| Co-operation between researchers and doctoral students at the partner institutions increased | 10<br>-                             | 14<br>8    | 43<br>54 | 33<br>39   | 100<br>100 |
| The variation of the department's selection of courses increased                             | 10<br>8                             | 43<br>33   | 33<br>58 | 14<br>8    | 100<br>100 |
| New perspectives were included in the teaching   | 33<br>33                            | 48<br>58   | 19<br>8  | -<br>-     | 100<br>100 |
| The project introduced new teaching methods  | 19<br>39                            | 33<br>46   | 43<br>15 | 5<br>-     | 100<br>100 |
| The project produced new teaching material   | 33<br>38                            | 19<br>53   | 33<br>8  | 14<br>-    | 100<br>100 |
| Research in the field increased  | 5<br>8                              | 38<br>23   | 29<br>23 | 29<br>46   | 100<br>100 |
| The project increased the number of publications produced at the department                  | -<br>8                              | 10<br>-    | 38<br>46 | 52<br>46   | 100<br>100 |
| The project increased student mobility   | 14<br>15                            | 33<br>23   | 38<br>54 | 14<br>8    | 100<br>100 |
| The project increased teachers' international mobility.                                      | 19<br>8                             | 29<br>62   | 38<br>23 | 14<br>8    | 100<br>100 |
| The project increased the use of ECTS credits  | 5<br>8                              | 5<br>31    | 32<br>23 | 58<br>39   | 100<br>100 |
| The project facilitated the recognition of studies completed abroad                          | 5<br>8                              | 11<br>-    | 32<br>46 | 53<br>46   | 100<br>100 |

**Table 3. The impact of intensive programme and curriculum development projects on the activities of the department (%)**

The projects have had the greatest impact on the introduction of new perspectives, teaching methods and materials, and on the co-operation of the staff. The recognition of studies completed abroad, the use of ECTS credits, the number of publications and the research within the field does not seem to have been influenced by the projects to any large extent.

The co-ordinators are cautious when assessing the projects' impact on the department's selection of courses and on student and teacher mobility: the influence is seen as neither great nor small. This is slightly surprising, since it would be relatively easy to increase the course selection and mobility through the projects. On the other hand, all of the curriculum development projects do not directly aim at increasing the number of courses offered, but at changing the existing courses. Furthermore, the planned study programmes do not usually comprise very many credits, and thus do not constitute any considerable addition to the degree programme as a whole. Student and teacher mobility does probably increase during the project, but this ceases after its completion.

In most of the curriculum development projects the planned study programme is also realised after the end of Erasmus funding and the product is included in the

normal teaching of the department. However, the module or programme is usually adapted to fit the needs of the institution and is not realised exactly in its planned form.

In only three of the curriculum development projects was the planned programme or module never realised. In one additional case, teaching was carried out according to the module for a few years, but then discontinued. Even if these constitute just a fraction of all the projects, the failure to carry out the planned teaching is such a considerable shortcoming for a project, that these cases need to be explored in more detail. In one of the cases the project ended because the co-ordinator moved to another university. In another case, there was, in the end, no room for a new module on the degree programme. In the third case, there was no funding for the realisation of the teaching programme and furthermore, the target group proved to be so small that there was no basis for organising the module.

Despite their differences, these cases all illustrate the importance of integrating the curriculum development project as part of the department's, and if need be, the faculty's, or the degree programme's, activities from the very beginning in order for it to have any concrete impact on the course selection of the department. It must be investigated, whether there is a real need for a programme such as the one planned by the project and if the department or institution is willing to finance it. Furthermore, the project must not be dependent on the activity of the co-ordinator alone. If this is the case, the project ends if the co-ordinator moves elsewhere.

Intensive programmes are not as easily integrated into the teaching programme of the department as the modules planned by curriculum development projects. Usually the organisation of intensive programmes comes to an end as the Erasmus funding ceases, even if they provide ideas and material for other teaching forms. On the other hand, intensive programmes often "stay alive" by inspiring new projects at the department: either new intensive programme projects, or other co-operation projects, usually funded by the European Union.

Thus, no dramatic changes in the teaching programme are brought about by the intensive programme and curriculum development projects. Often the main motivation for starting a project is to enhance the department's international co-operation, rather than a response to a need to change the teaching programme. The cases where the curriculum development project was found to have a great impact on the teaching programme of the department have one feature in common: the motivation for their project was a need at the co-ordinating department to reform their teaching programme and this change would have been carried out even without the Erasmus curriculum development project.

On the whole, the greatest impact of the projects on the departments is not the perceptible marks they leave in the teaching programme. What is more crucial is their introduction of ideas that gradually result in reforms of teaching methods. They enable the comparison of the teaching between departments in different countries. They also augment and enhance international contact and co-operation between departments and offer experience in acting on an international arena. These can be regarded as significant impacts on the activities of the department.