

Education and mobility: Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries

2007/0145(COD) - 16/12/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish the second phase of the ERASMUS MUNDUS programme for the period 2009-2013.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision No 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries.

CONTENT: having reached agreement at first reading, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Decision establishing the second phase of the ERASMUS MUNDUS programme from 1 January 2009 until 31 December 2013.

The aims of the programme shall be:

- the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries;
- the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education.

The Parliament insisted that the programme should be implemented in compliance with the **objectives of academic excellence**, while taking into account a geographical representation of beneficiaries that is as balanced as possible.

Aims and specific objectives: the aims of the programme are to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives.

The specific objectives of the programme are to:

- promote structured cooperation between higher education institutions and to promote an **offer of high quality in higher education** with a distinct European added value, attractive both within the European Union and beyond its borders, with a view to creating centres of excellence;
- develop the qualifications of men and women so that they possess **appropriate skills**, particularly as regards the **labour market**, and are open-minded and internationally experienced;
- contribute towards the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in third countries through **increased mobility** streams between the European Union and third countries;
- **improve accessibility** and enhance the profile and visibility of European higher education in the world, as well as its attractiveness for third-country and European nationals.

The Commission shall ensure that no group of third country or European nationals is excluded or disadvantaged.

The aims and specific objectives of the programme shall be pursued by means of the following actions:

1. **Action 1:** Erasmus Mundus joint programmes (**masters and doctoral programmes**) of outstanding academic quality, including a scholarship scheme;
2. **Action 2: Erasmus Mundus partnerships** between European and third-country higher education institutions as a basis for structured cooperation, exchange and mobility at all levels of higher education, including a scholarship scheme;
3. **Action 3: promotion of European higher education** through measures enhancing the attractiveness of Europe as an educational destination and a centre of excellence at world level.

Further details of these actions are set out in the Annex.

The programme also provides for the compliance with certain specific criteria for the implementation of the programme, including: (i) support for the development of high-quality joint educational programmes and cooperation networks facilitating the exchange of experience and good practice; (ii) enhanced support for mobility of people in the field of higher education selected on the basis of academic excellence, particularly from third countries to European countries; (iii) promotion of language skills, providing students with the possibility of learning at least **two of the languages spoken** in the countries in which the higher education institutions are situated; (iv) support for pilot projects based on partnerships with an external dimension designed to develop innovation and quality in higher education; (v) support for the analysis and follow-up of trends in, and the evolution of, higher education in an international perspective.

Moreover, the programme provides for technical support measures including studies, meetings of experts as well as information and publications directly linked to the achievement of the objectives of the programme.

Website: the Commission shall ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on activities and developments in the programme, mainly through the **Erasmus Mundus website**.

Funding: the overall budget for the entire programming period (2009-2013) for Action 1 and Action 3 (joint masters and doctoral programmes, including scholarships, and attractiveness projects) amounts to **EUR 493.69 million**. Action 2 (co-operative partnerships with HEIs in specific third countries, including mobility) is funded through external co-operation instruments, in accordance with the rules, procedures and objectives laid down in Regulation (EC) No [1085/2006](#), Regulation (EC) No [1638/2006](#), Regulation (EC) No [1905/2006](#), Regulation (EC) No [1934/2006](#), the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement and the Internal ACP-EC Agreement.

Scholarships: details of all the terms and conditions for access to scholarships for all academic levels can be found in the Annex to the Decision. The Decision also specifies that the flat-rate amounts for the scholarships shall take into consideration the level of tuition fees and the estimated expenditure for the studies. Moreover, the Decision clearly defines the types of potential scholars in line with their level of education (first, second and third cycle students, doctoral candidates and post-doctoral researchers).

Horizontal issues: in implementing the programme, due regard shall be paid to ensuring that it contributes fully to furthering the horizontal policies of the Community, in particular by: (i) enhancing the European knowledge-based economy and society and contributing to creating more jobs in line with the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy; (ii) fostering culture, knowledge and skills for peaceful and sustainable development in a Europe of diversity; (iii) promoting an awareness of the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity within Europe, as well as of the need to combat racism and xenophobia; (iv) making

provision for students with special needs; (v) promoting equality between men and women and contributing to **combating all forms of discrimination**; (vi) promoting the development of third countries.

Note that, in its evaluation of the programme, the Commission should pay particular attention to its potential **brain drain** effects (particularly for participants from developing countries).

Arrangements for implementation: details of the arrangements for the implementation of the programme are also set out in the Decision, as well as:

- the persons and bodies eligible;
- the tasks of the Commission and of the Member States;
- the arrangements for the implementation of the programme (in particular, the means of funding through other relevant Community programmes);
- the terms for the participation of third countries in the programme: ERASMUS MUNDUS shall be open to the participation of EFTA countries which are members of the EEA, the candidate countries which have a pre-accession strategy, the countries of the Western Balkans and Switzerland;
- the terms for monitoring and evaluating the programme.

Consistency and complementarity: the Commission shall ensure overall consistency and complementarity with other relevant Community policies, instruments and actions, in particular with the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, development policy, external cooperation programmes, the ACP Association Agreements and the European Fund for the Integration of third country nationals.

Reports: the Commission shall submit (i) an interim evaluation report on the results achieved and on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of the programme by 31 March of the second year following the actual start of the new courses set up under the programme; (ii) a communication on the continuation of the programme by 30 January 2012; (iii) an ex post evaluation report by 31 December 2015.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 20/12/2008. Transitional provisions are provided for to ensure consistent follow-up of activities initiated during the first phase of ERASMUS MUNDUS.