Basic information

2000/2089(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Training, education: Socrates programme, socio-economic background of ERASMUS students. Report 1997-1998 **Subject** 4.40.06 Teachers, trainers, pupils, students	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	HEATON-HARRIS Christopher (PPE-DE)	22/02/2000

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	ROCARD Michel (PSE)	28/03/2000
FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
18/01/2000	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2000)0004	Summary
17/03/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/07/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
13/07/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0199/2000	
05/09/2000	Debate in Parliament		
06/09/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0366/2000	Summary
06/09/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		

07/05/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2089(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/5/12409

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0199/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0011	13/07/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0366/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0083-0186	06/09/2000	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2000)0004	18/01/2000	Summary

Training, education: Socrates programme, socio-economic background of ERASMUS students. Report 1997-1998

2000/2089(COS) - 18/01/2000 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to indicate the results of a survey into the socio-economic background of ERASMUS students. CONTENT : this survey was conducted at the end of 1998 and concerned more than 20,000 students or nearly one-quarter of those who took part in the ERASMUS Student Mobility scheme in the 1997/98 academic year were invited to take part in the survey which covered more than 300 institutions of Higher Education in 15 countries. Replies were received from nearly 9,500 students. The ERASMUS mobility scheme, which has grown from about 3,000 students when it first began in 1987/88 to over 100,000 today is extending into many of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Many of the findings of the survey support widespread views about the strengths of the study period abroad within the framework of ERASMUS and about the impact of the programme on student mobility in Europe. This confirms that the Community programmes in the field of education, training and youth play an important role. The main findings highlighted in this survey include: 1) the lack of harmonised and European statistics relating to the socio-economic situation of students; 2) a very high degree of satisfaction with the outcome of the study period abroad both academically and socially/culturally : 98% of students who took part in the socio-economic survey considered their ERASMUS experience to have been positive or very positive from a social and cultural point of view and 91% felt that it was positive academically. Furthermore, differences between the educational systems in the Member States as regards organisation and the level of funding (which in turn have an influence on the material conditions) may be a handicapping factor of the good working of the programme; 3) rate of participation : despite the number of places offered (181,000 places in the 18 countries) only about 50% are actually used. The discrepancy between places offered and places used can be related to a numebr of different factors, which vary in importance from country to country, including linguistic problems (students choose countries with more widely taught and spoken languages), and financial problems (the high grants policy is a high grant which is given to a small number of students, rather than smaller grants to many students) may be another reason why the full capacity

of outgoing student places is not used; 4) the socio-economic situation of the student : although there is a lack of comparative data, the survey shows that the family economic background (in terms of parents' income status) does not have a significant effect on the personal income of ERASMUS students (the difference in income between students from the highest and the lowest family income levels is only 70 euros/month. However, the findings seem to indicate that the economic background of students is taken into account either by the national student support schemes (direct or indirect) or in the process of allocating the ERASMUS grant or both. It is concluded that any bias of ERASMUS students towards higher income levels to a large degree reflects the situation amongst the Higher Education students in general in the Member States. Despite the effortsthat have been made to provide opportunities for all social groups, access to Higher Education is still somewhat biased towards higher economic groups. The question of how to decrease the bias towards students from the advantaged socio-cultural groups is in fact very problematic precisely because it is not based on economic grounds, but cultural ones. Therefore, there is a need for an open discussion about how to ensure that the ERASMUS programme is available to young people from a wider variety of culural backgrounds than seems to be the case at present. As far as gender equality is concerned, the findings seem to show that participation in ERASMUS is not, in general, influenced by gender (59% of ERASMUS students are female, against 49% male). Other issues related to equal opportunites including students with physical disabilities, certain social groups like the immigrant population and other minority peoples, were not investigated in the framework of this survey. Finally, it is extremely interesting to note that around 80% of the students who answered the survey are the first in their family to study abroad; 5) economic and financial issues : 57% of the students reported financial problems abroad (especially students who lived with their parents in their home country and also students who come from countries with low direct public support for students). The differences in the modes of living and the national student financial support systems seems to be the main factors explaining the financial difficulties of ERASMUS students. Additional accommodation costs are a substantial proportion. In general, the survey confirms that the ERASMUS grant is a necessary financial supplement for mobility and that it does to some extent cover the extra costs of studying abroad. In certain countries, it can be observed that the ERASMUS grant is used to compensate for the lack of public funding for studies abroad. It is also worth noting that it is the group of students which receives the largest ERASMUS grants which reports the highest degree of financial problems. The findings also indicate that although an increase in the Community funding for ERASMUS grants would be welcomed by the students it would not solve all the problems in so far as they are structural and related to national policy.

Training, education: Socrates programme, socio-economic background of ERASMUS students. Report 1997-1998

2000/2089(COS) - 06/09/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In approving the report drafted by Mr Christopher HEATON-HARRIS (EPP/ED, UK), the European Parliament adopted the resolution on the report from the Commission - 'Survey into the socio-economic background of Erasmus students'. However, the Parliament, nevertheless, calls upon the Commission to submit a report on the reasons why many students do not feel encouraged to take part in the Erasmus programme. The Member States are called upon to optimise coordination between national student financial support and Erasmus grants with a view to ensuring the widest possible take-up of the Erasmus programme and promoting social equality in access to the programme. The Commission is called on to consider, within the total sum of money already available for this scheme, other forms of indirect support (reductions in fares, accommodation allowances, systems of loans to cover the cost of mobility, etc) in addition to the present Erasmus grant to make it more effective.