



The following is an abstract of the EFTA Bulletin “EFTA Guide to EU Programmes (2007-13)” published November 2007. The full Bulletin contains descriptions of all the 2007-2013 programmes, together with good practice examples and a section on how to apply for funding. The full Bulletin is available on the EFTA Secretariat’s website: <http://www.efta.int/>

Lifelong Learning – LLP



Until recently, most people associated learning with the education they received at school and university. Today, as part of the Lisbon Strategy, the EU is undergoing considerable transformation to become a world leading, knowledge-based society. This means that knowledge and lifelong learning are key assets in the EU, particularly as global competition becomes more intense. This implies that high quality basic primary, secondary and tertiary education are as important as ever, but that so too are ongoing vocational training, non-formal training and particularly the need to learn to constantly renew the skills of EU citizens.

Already in 1993, the then President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, pointed to the importance of lifelong learning, where both formal and non-formal education is made available to people throughout their lifetime. This created a notion of education that is broader than traditional classroom teaching, where learning becomes an integrated part of human life, i.e., learning that defines the individual in relation to society as a whole. This also creates a multi-dimensional answer to the huge learning challenges of modern society: a horizontal dimension where education takes place both inside and outside the classroom, and a vertical one where education takes place throughout one’s lifetime. An international aspect is also possible where the importance of intercultural learning becomes vital when navigating in an increasingly interconnected world.

Who can apply?

Students at all levels of education, teachers, education experts, education institutions and organisations can apply for the different parts of the Lifelong Learning programme.

Previous programmes

The first EU activities in the field of education were initiated in 1976, when education ministers in the European Community decided to set up an information network (Eurydice) as a basis for a

better understanding of educational policies and structures in Europe. Two years later, a study visit programme (Arion) was adopted, and a network of national academic recognition centres was set up in 1984.

All these initiatives have proved important and are well established today. However, it was only with the launch, in 1987, of the successful Erasmus programme for higher education and the Lingua programme for language training that EU actions in the fields of education and training became a reality.

While the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 established a legal basis for Community activities in education and training, the different programmes and activities were continued and expanded under the Socrates programme (1995-1999).

The EEA Agreement ensured EEA EFTA participation from 1 January 1995 in “all programmes of the Community in the field of education, training and youth in force or adopted” (Protocol 31, Article 4.2). From the very beginning, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway participated in Socrates, and in Leonardo da Vinci (see below). In 1998, the first pre-accession countries joined the programme.

In the 1990s, the profile of vocational training was raised as a crucial factor for economic and social change and employment. Similarly, there was an increased recognition of the importance of lifelong learning, as well as skills and competences as symbolised by the European Year of Lifelong Learning 1996.

To complement policy initiatives, which mainly encouraged debate, cooperation and exchange of experiences between the Member States, the Community decided to launch the vocational training programme, Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999).

Like Socrates, the programme was followed up by a second phase, Leonardo da Vinci II (2000-2006). To promote mobility in work-linked training and apprenticeships, the European pathway for training



initiative (2000-2004) was launched with the assistance of national contact points.

Added to this is the Erasmus Mundus programme, which supports European top quality masters courses and enhances, on a global scale, the visibility and attractiveness of European higher education. It also provides EU funded scholarships for third country nationals participating in these masters courses, as well as scholarships for EU nationals studying at partner universities throughout the world. Hundreds of European universities from all EU Member States and Norway are participating in the programme and 35 Erasmus Mundus masters courses are already operational.



The French movie "L'Auberge espagnole" (2002) was, according to the director, based on his sister's experiences as an Erasmus student in Barcelona. The movie's popularity is a reflection of the success of the programme. It gives many European university students the chance to live in a foreign country for the first time and it has reached the status of a social and cultural phenomenon. Well over 1.5 million students have so far benefited from Erasmus grants and the European Commission hopes to reach a total of 3 million by 2012. More than 15 000 EFTA students have participated in ERASMUS since it started in 1987.

L'auberge espagnole © Jérôme PLOM/ce qui me meurt 2002



The Lifelong Learning programme 2007–2013

Lifelong Learning is the successor of the earlier Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and eLearning programmes. All the EEA EFTA States have participated in these programmes and will participate in the new programme. Switzerland plans to join in 2008.

The programme's objectives are first to support the development of quality lifelong learning and then help Member States develop their own education and training schemes. The objectives are underpinned by actions which concentrate on the creation of links

between people, institutions and countries in the "European dimension" of education and training.

The new programme will also contribute to the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge society, with sustainable economic development, additional and better jobs and greater social cohesion (see the Lisbon Strategy). It aims to foster interaction, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the Community so that they become a world quality reference.

The new programme has also been set up to enable individuals in schools, universities and companies across Europe, at all stages of their lives, to pursue stimulating learning opportunities.

Lifelong Learning is an overarching structure built on 4 pillars or sub-programmes. Grants and subsidies are awarded to projects under each of these pillars to enhance the transnational mobility of individuals, to promote bilateral and multilateral partnerships and to improve quality in education and training schemes, e.g., through multilateral projects encouraging innovation.

The 4 pillars are:

Comenius: addresses the teaching and learning needs of all those in pre-school and school education up to the end of upper secondary education, and the institutions and organisations providing such education;

Erasmus: addresses the teaching and learning needs of all those in formal higher education, including transnational student placements in enterprises, and institutions and organisations providing or facilitating such education and training;

Leonardo da Vinci: addresses the teaching and learning needs of all those in vocational education and training, including the placement in enterprises of persons other than students, as well as institutions and organisations providing or facilitating such education and training;

Grundtvig: addresses the teaching and learning needs of those in all forms of adult education, as well as

The Lifelong Learning programme

Comenius	Erasmus	Leonardo da Vinci	Grundtvig
School education	Higher education and advanced training	Vocational education and training	Adult education
Transversal programme 4 key activities: policy cooperation, languages, ICT and valorisation (valorisation = dissemination and exploitation of results)			
Jean Monnet programme 3 key activities: Jean Monnet action, the European institutions and European associations			

institutions and organisations providing or facilitating such education.

The integration of these pillars and the general simplification of application and evaluation procedures for the programme is a major innovation in the area of education and training.

These four pillars are joined by a ‘transversal programme’, which pursues four key activities: policy cooperation and innovation, languages, information and communication technologies and dissemination and exploitation of results.

The whole structure is complemented by the new Jean Monnet programme, which supports institutions and activities that promote European integration. This sub-programme is designed to strengthen European identity and to boost knowledge and

EFTA good practice

European certificate for crisis management

The Securitas Mare project has developed a common European course concept dealing with the training and certification of seafarers.

The project aims to increase understanding and readiness for crisis management by providing participating European higher educational institutions with the competences and support to offer qualified and equal training in crisis management.

The project is supported through the Leonardo da Vinci part of the Lifelong Learning programme and includes Norwegian and Icelandic partners. The courses, which are mandatory for certain staff onboard passenger vessels, need to be harmonised, to enable authorities from different Member States to recognise each other’s certificates. The primary target groups are officers and crew onboard passenger vessels and passenger ferries. The project is a remarkable contribution to turning the idea of mutual recognition of educational certificates into reality. The project has brought together critical areas of competence in crisis management from healthcare and marine officer training in Europe. With a certificate issued by a participating institution, a seafarer will be able to take up positions, requiring such a certificate, onboard a vessel belonging to any of the national fleets of a country that has accepted the course.

See <http://securitasmare.sjofartshogskolan.nu/>



awareness of European integration. It is designed to stimulate teaching, reflection and debate on European integration at higher education institutions world-wide.

With regard to the 4 sectoral programmes, quantified targets have been set to ensure a significant, identifiable and measurable impact for the programme. These targets are for:

- Comenius: to involve at least one pupil in 20 in joint educational activities, for the period of the programme;
- Erasmus: to contribute to the achievement of 3 million individual participants in student mobility under the present programme and its predecessors by 2011;
- Leonardo da Vinci: to increase placements in enterprises to 150 000 per year by the end of the programme;
- Grundtvig: to support the mobility of 25 000 individuals involved in adult education per year, by 2013.

Education policy cooperation

As students become more mobile due to EU education and training programmes, the need for a transferable grading and degree system has increased. The Bologna Process was established in 1999 to create a European area for higher education by 2010. Key objectives are the introduction of a 3-cycle degree system (bachelor/masters/doctorate), quality assurance and recognition of qualifications and periods of study.

Forty-six European countries participate in the process, among them Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. In 2005, the annual meeting of education ministers was held in Bergen, Norway, adding a social and external dimension to the Bologna Process. Increasingly, the Bologna Process has been linked to the Lisbon Strategy.

Also, a European Qualification Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning has been adopted to help education institutions, employers and individuals compare qualifications across the EU's diverse education and training systems.

The Commission and the Council have drawn up an action plan on the future objectives of the European education system. The plan will include the establishment of indicators for benchmarking and quality assurance. This process is called Education and Training 2010.

Contact points



European Commission

<http://ec.europa.eu/lfp/>



Icelandic Lifelong Learning Office

<http://www.lme.is/>



Agentur für Internationale Bildungsangelegenheiten

<http://www.bildungsprogramme.llv.li/>



Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education

<http://www.siu.no/>

