

Ex-post Evaluation of the TEMPUS III Programme

Final report

Client: DG Education and Culture

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean, Pacific countries
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (Commission programme in the context of the stabilisation and association agreements with countries in the Western Balkans)
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG EAC	Directorate General for Education and Culture
EC	European Commission
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FYR(OM)	the Former Yugoslav Republic (of Macedonia)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product or Gross Domestic Income (GDI) is a basic measure of a country's economic performance and is the market value of all final goods and services made within the borders of a country in a year.
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IMG	Individual Mobility Grant (Tempus project type)
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
JEP	Joint European Project (Tempus project type)
MEDA	Mediterranean Development Assistance (Commission programme in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership)
NCP	National Contact Point (in the European Union)
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPPT	National Programme for Personnel Training (Uzbekistan)
NTO	National Tempus Office (in partner countries)

NUFFIC	Netherlands organisation for international co-operation in higher education (Dutch Government Agency)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (Commission programme in the context of the Europe Agreements with 10 acceding and candidate countries in Central Europe)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity. It equalizes the purchasing power of different currencies in their home countries for a given basket of goods
SCM	Structural and Complementary Measures (Tempus project type)
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (Commission programme in the context of the partnership and co-operation agreements with countries in Eastern European and the Asian states)
TEMPUS	Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies
TIP	Tempus Information Point (in TACIS Partner Countries)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Preface

This report presents the results of the ex-post evaluation of the TEMPUS III Programme. It follows from an assignment conducted for DG EAC by a team of evaluators from ECORYS Netherlands. This ex-post evaluation was launched according to Article 12 of the Tempus phase III Decision. The findings are to provide the basis for the Commission's ex-post evaluation report on the results achieved by the Tempus phase III programme (2000-2006) and on the qualitative aspects of the implementation of the programme. This is a general evaluation that covers all actions and geographic areas of the programme during the period 2000-2006, with a specific focus on activities since 2003 that were not covered by the interim evaluation

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views held by the European Commission services responsible for managing the TEMPUS Programme or the national organisations that are involved in the organisation or management of the Programme

For answering the evaluation questions that were formulated in the Terms of Reference a variety of activities were undertaken. These activities could not have been performed without the willingness of many people to participate in interviews, group discussions, questionnaires etc. We all thank them for their cooperation in the evaluation. A special word of thanks is due to the project partners, the National Tempus Offices and the representatives of the national ministries which we interviewed during the country visits in Morocco, Russian Federation, Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Serbia and Uzbekistan.

Furthermore the evaluation team wishes to thank the staff of the Commission involved in this evaluation including the staff of DG EAC and the members of the steering committee for the evaluation. Co-operation with the Commission has at all times been very helpful and constructive.

Within ECORYS the core team of consultants was effectively assisted by a backstopping team consisting of Mirjam Stuivenberg, Martin Gosset, Claudia Groen and Ria Groenendijk.

We sincerely hope that the results of this evaluation will contribute to refining the strategy, management and implementation processes of the TEMPUS Programme.

The evaluation team

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the ex-post evaluation of the TEMPUS III Programme 2000-2006 aimed at improving the quality of and support to higher education reforms in eligible Partner Countries, as well as the promotion of multilateral cooperation between Higher Education Institutions in the EU and in these partner countries. The evaluation focuses on five issues:

Relevance: The appropriateness of the programme project objectives to the problems that it was supposed to address, and to the physical and policy environment within which it operated.

Effectiveness: an assessment of the contribution made by the results to the achievement of the Programme, and how the assumptions made have affected programme/project achievements.

Efficiency: the extent to which results have been achieved at reasonable cost.

Impact: the effect of the programme/project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider policy or sector objectives.

Sustainability: an assessment of the likelihood of benefits produced by the programme to continue to flow after external funding has ended.

Political context

As was mutually agreed at the Lisbon Summit in 2000 the European Union is to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Modernisation of Europe's universities, involving their interlinked roles of education, research and innovation, has been acknowledged by the Commission not only as a core condition for the success of the broader Lisbon Strategy, but as part of the wider move towards an increasingly global and knowledge-based economy.¹ To this end the European Commission published a modernisation agenda for universities which was welcomed by the Member States and the main stakeholders in higher education. The modernisation agenda for universities is part of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs. In this process

¹ COM(2006) 208 final. Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation.

the Commission is not a direct actor in the modernisation of universities, but it aims to play a catalytic role, providing political impetus and targeted funding in support of reform and modernisation. The important role universities play in enhancing European competitiveness is being supported by the work that is done in the context of the Bologna process aiming, by 2010, at comparable qualifications (short cycle, Bachelor, Master, Doctorate); flexible, modernised curricula at all levels which correspond to the needs of the labour market; and trustworthy quality assurance systems.

The launch of the Bologna process in 1999 strengthened the relevance of TEMPUS III in various ways:

- TEMPUS offered the partner countries and the participating institutions opportunities to engage in international cooperation and academic exchange and by this contribute to and become part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) which is aimed for by the Bologna process.
- TEMPUS offered the participating institutions opportunities to work on HE reforms that are prominent in the Bologna process, such as comparable and compatible degrees organised in a three-cycle structure (e.g. bachelor-master-doctorate), quality assurance and recognition of foreign degrees.
- Depending on the actual content of projects and the characteristics of HE systems TEMPUS also contributed to a broader societal relevance of higher education, for instance by establishing or improving the links between higher education, enterprises, research and innovation. It is emphasized, however, that this process is on-going and in some countries has only just started.

Also in other respects TEMPUS is not an isolated EU cooperation programme, but it has in various ways a clear role in other EU policies, although on some points there is room for improvement. In particular the complementary role between TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus should be given more attention, in particularly since the Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs) were removed from TEMPUS. Furthermore, it is clear from the objectives of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) that TEMPUS can play a distinct role, for instance regarding strengthening (HE) institutions, reconciliation in the sense of promoting understanding between and reapproachment of cultures and human resources development, although its specific role appears to be underexposed.

Aside from its role to the EU External policy programmes, TEMPUS can also be claimed to have a function to the Sixth Framework Programme for promoting European research and technological development. For the relation between these two programmes we conclude that if academic education and academic research are to benefit to the full of each other – which in general is a sine qua non among academics - it appears that the complementarity or expected synergy between education reform programmes, like TEMPUS, and the European framework programme for research and technological development should get more attention than it has received up till now.

TEMPUS III programme

The TEMPUS programme is designed to help the process of social and economic reform and development in its Partner Countries. By means of cooperation between higher education institutions, TEMPUS also aims to strengthen civil society and promote democracy as well as enhance mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue between the EU and its partners. Funding for the programme is drawn from the financial instruments for external cooperation for the regions involved (IPA and ENPI previously mentioned, and as well the Development Cooperation Instrument, DCI).

The Commission launched the TEMPUS programme in 1990 with the aim of promoting higher education system reforms in the countries eligible for Commission support under the PHARE programme. During the second phase of the Trans-European Cooperation Scheme for Higher Education, Tempus II, which was adopted by the European Council in 1994, the number of eligible countries increased and funding was made available for PHARE² and TACIS³. TEMPUS III started in 2000 for Partner Countries in the TACIS and CARDS⁴ regions. In 2002 TEMPUS III broadened the scope to also cover the MEDA⁵ region. This decision was seen as a part of the wider strategy to strengthen dialogue between peoples and cultures in the European Union and the Mediterranean.

TEMPUS is a multilateral programme, in the sense that cooperation projects are undertaken by partnerships which include higher education institutions and non-academic partners such as companies and civil society organisations from Partner Countries and Member States. Through the TEMPUS programme, the European Commission wishes to support the Bologna Process, which aims to create a common European higher education area based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to students and staff in Europe as well as from other parts of the world, by 2010.

The TEMPUS III programme was implemented through the provision of grants for three types of projects:

- **Joint European Projects (JEP)** aimed to increase cooperation and network-building between actors in higher education in EU Member States and partner countries and help the higher education sector propagate its knowledge outside academic institutions. JEPS focused at curriculum development, university management and training courses for institution building.
- **Structural and Complementary Measures (SCM)** were designed to feed into national higher education policies. SCM were short-term activities aimed to enhance the capacity for strategic planning and institutional development of national bodies, to support the development or the implementation of a national strategy, action plan or legislation and to support the dissemination and use of the results

² Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (Commission programme in the context of the Europe Agreements with 10 acceding and candidate countries in Central Europe)

³ Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (Commission programme in the context of the partnership and co-operation agreements with countries in Eastern European and the Asian states)

⁴ Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (Commission programme in the context of the stabilisation and association agreements with countries in the Western Balkans)

⁵ Mediterranean Development Assistance (Commission programme in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership)

- **Individual Mobility Grants** aimed to provide academic and administrative staff of the Higher Education sector with the opportunity to benefit from limited mobility periods abroad.

Two types of priorities for projects are given by the programme:

- *Common Policy Orientations* for Partner Countries, which refer to the broader policy background for cooperation in the different regions.
- The country specific *National priorities*, which were established on an annual basis by the EC in agreement with the National Authorities in the Partner Countries, and refer to higher education policy strategies in the counties.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The overall aim of the evaluation is to gain more insight in the relevance, efficiency effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the programme. The objectives of the evaluation are:

- Assessment of the programme according to the evaluation questions related to these evaluation criteria established in the Terms of Reference.
- The provision of concrete recommendations on how the current Tempus IV programme could be managed to better address any deficiencies and gaps identified, and to maximise its relevance and impact as well as successfully exploit examples of good practice.

As a follow-up to the 2004 Mid-Term Evaluation of the programme, the evaluation covered all actions and geographic areas of the programme, with a specific focus on activities since 2003 that were not covered by the interim evaluation. This ex-post evaluation seeks mainly to assess the impact of the Tempus III programme and provides recommendations for the current and future development of the programme, including monitoring and evaluation tools.

Methodology

In 2009 DG EAC launched the ex-post evaluation of the TEMPUS III programme. ECORYS was contracted to carry out the evaluation and the ex-post evaluation of the TEMPUS programme took place between February and October 2009. The evaluation was guided by an Evaluation Steering Committee consisting of Commission's officials.

In order to carry out an objective and thorough evaluation an evaluation methodology based on a 'multi-perspective' approach and the combination of quantitative and various qualitative research methods - enabling validation of findings – was designed. The evaluation process we undertook consisted of the following activities:

- Desk research of relevant documentation and reports;
- (Telephone) Interviews;
- Three web-based surveys by questionnaires with participants in the three project types;

- Five country studies to Macedonia, Morocco, Russian Federation, Serbia and Uzbekistan: desk research, case study of selected projects, interviews with participating students, National Authorities, Civil Society organisations, EC Delegation participants and beneficiaries.

In the implementation of these activities the evaluation team encountered some problems for which solutions were sought and found.

- Contact details of the participating students were not available. We overcame this drawback by interviewing (groups of) students, as far as they were available during the country visits.
- Due to a lack of contact details the questionnaire yielded a limited response from participants from Partner Countries. Despite this the evaluation gathered extensive information and experiences of participants in the five country visits.
- There is a risk that the project participants surveyed might have had an interest in presenting a biased picture of their achievements. We sought to independently verify the information collected through the numerous interviews (as well as document analysis) and the in-depth analysis of projects within the Country Case Studies.

Main findings

The findings of the evaluation relate to: efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Here we present the main findings for each of these thematic issues.

Efficiency

The complex structure of the TEMPUS programme does not easily allow a quantitative measurement of cost-effectiveness. Its objectives are multi-faceted and refer to a large extent to systemic change of an indirect nature that quite substantially relies on external factors. This makes the attribution of effects to the Programme a considerable challenge. The heterogeneous programme outputs - partly due to the system of national priorities - make it difficult and probably even futile to establish unit costs that would otherwise provide a basis for comparison and an essential input for a quantitative assessment of cost-effectiveness. However, the qualitative evidence gathered through interviews and surveys clearly indicates that the Programme overall has made an important contribution to the development of the HE systems in the participating countries, which while compared to the available budget indicates a high level of cost-effectiveness.

In general the funding levels for TEMPUS III were not considered to be proportional to its ambitious objectives. Considering the large economic and social challenges in the eligible countries, the fact that the total budget for TEMPUS III was spent and that funding levels were insufficient to fund all relevant and high quality proposals, it can be asserted that the programme was under-funded. However, the absorption capacity of countries and institutions need to be considered. The funding levels for the selected projects appear in general to be sufficient.

TEMPUS was perceived as a cost-effective programme compared to (technical assistance) cooperation programmes. The multilateral nature of TEMPUS makes the policy instrument in essence cost-effective, although the degree differs per instrument.

JEPs are perceived as very cost-effective whilst the efficiency of both SCM (limited effectiveness) and IMG (high costs) mechanisms was viewed less positively.

Respondents were generally satisfied with the rigour of the selection process. The main issue identified concerns the perceived strong technical focus in the selection process. The weight given to the national needs and priorities on the 'ground' was considered by many respondents to be insufficient.

The monitoring process has improved considerably since the mid-term evaluation and this is clear from the positive feedback of project partners and beneficiaries. The main weakness that still remains concerned the limited feedback on field monitoring which could affect the effectiveness and quality of the projects and partnerships and the benefits of the overall monitoring on the implementation of the project.

Effectiveness

TEMPUS III has made an important overall contribution to the development of higher education systems, including to the five specific objectives of the 'Bologna Process'. This achievement includes 'core' higher education goals such as curriculum development, reform of higher education structures and establishments as well as development of skills profiles – although more so at the level of individual institutions than at the national policy level. Broader societal achievements are either harder to identify or appear to have been more indirect - TEMPUS III's bottom-up nature and the high level of people-to-people contact has definitely helped to promote understanding between and rapprochement of cultures but the contribution to the development of 'free and flourishing civil societies' is far less clear, with a lack of a clear vision on NGOs' role within the Programme.

Teachers benefited significantly from their involvement in TEMPUS III, notably through contacts with foreign colleagues, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions, improved training and the morale-boosting impact of career development and mobility opportunities. Students also benefited – through access to new learning materials/ methods, improved qualifications and greater awareness of other cultures – though less so in terms of the enhancement of their employability, where effects were more indirect.

Participation was geographically balanced in terms of both the EU and Partner Countries. EU HEIs viewed increased internationalization as the biggest benefit from involvement in TEMPUS III, with financial considerations rarely the sole reason for EU HE institutions to take part (in fact TEMPUS III is increasingly financially *unattractive* for certain Northern European universities, particularly in the UK). Participation was still relatively concentrated - with certain HEIs involved in multiple projects - and the highest-ranked EU universities were generally not participating. Geographical coverage within Partner Countries was balanced, with most public HEIs involved (either as a project partner or in dissemination activities), but private universities were prevented from participating in certain countries (e.g. FYROM). Non-university bodies (e.g. Ministries or accreditation/training bodies) were generally involved although the level of involvement was not always as widespread or as prominent as expected.

The size, scope and unique nature of TEMPUS III means that an identifiable, quality TEMPUS brand emerged in Partner Countries – particularly among university administrators, participating faculty staff and national HE actors, but less so among students and other faculty staff. In EU Member States the TEMPUS ‘brand’ is less pre-eminent, often in competition with bilateral HE support programmes.

Despite the overall positive picture, several weaknesses were identified. In particular, TEMPUS III struggled to promote systemic policy-level changes, with such change typically at best indirect and ad hoc. The inaccessibility of senior policy-level actors, varying levels of importance attached to HE and a lack of understanding of what SCMs are meant to achieve (along with them having a too short duration) all played a role here. The picture was not entirely negative however with some examples of important policy-level results achieved and it appearing that TEMPUS III had a greater impact at the policy-level in those countries seeking EU membership (Croatia, FYROM and Serbia).

Impacts

TEMPUS III helped to create more internationally oriented and flexible higher education institutions in the Partner Countries of the TEMPUS Programme. These are important impacts both in their own right and as a platform on which individual HEIs can further professionalise in the future. These, together with (related) impacts at the level of individual staff, are probably the single biggest impact of the programme. TEMPUS also made an important contribution to the long-term convergence process between Partner Countries (particularly the two Candidate Countries - Croatia and FYROM) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that is under development through the Bologna process. Finally, TEMPUS III had a significant impact on establishing or rekindling regional co-operation among Partner Countries across all regions and made an important, yet often overlooked, impact in terms of strengthening co-operation within individual Partner Countries.

Notwithstanding significant variation at the regional, country and even individual HEI levels, TEMPUS III made an important contribution to making teaching more responsive to labour market needs (both the public and private sectors). Many new curricula have been developed – often responding to highly specific and previously unmet labour market needs. However, the time-lag before a ‘critical mass’ of graduates can start to have a national-level impact means that, in many cases, insufficient time has passed at this point for students trained through TEMPUS III projects to deliver clear impacts.

Impact in terms of decision-makers utilising skills developed through TEMPUS III to influence their respective institutions is positive at the HEI level but more moderate at the national (policy) level. Numerous decision-makers within HEIs took part in projects and many of these will be able to play a future role in reforms of their own HEIs. At the national level, TEMPUS III was not able to engage as actively with policy-makers, which, as a group, also often experience high staff turnover. More widely, TEMPUS III found it difficult to directly influence national legislation in a systematic fashion. Where changes were brought about, these appear to have been much more indirect in nature (e.g. TEMPUS III projects ‘feeding’ policy discussions through a ‘demonstration effect’). And although TEMPUS III was able to generate significant results at the level of individual institutions in domains such as quality assurance or general university governance, HEIs

often found it difficult to promote/disseminate these changes to lead to impacts at the national level. The impact of TEMPUS III on broader societal needs is also more limited. Whilst an important contribution was made through exposing citizens to European values, it did not make a significant contribution to strengthening civil society.

Sustainability

The evaluation indicates that in general JEP projects, particularly in the area of curriculum development can be seen as sustainable. Sustainable outcomes in the field of structural reforms were more difficult to establish, although there are examples of SCM projects which claim to have sustainable outcomes.

For many benefits/outcomes of the Programme it can be assumed that these do have a certain sustainability due the fact that the experience or the knowledge gained in the project cannot be wiped out after the project has ended.

- Regarding the IMG activities this “imminent” sustainability is true for various benefits at the *individual level*: increased knowledge of a study area, improved working practice, improved teaching and management skills, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions.
- At the *level of the organisation*, sustainable outcomes were reported, in the sense of new curricula, together with a more innovative culture in the institutions.
- Also regarding JEPs some of the produced outputs basically bear an element of sustainability, mainly due to the fact that most activities in the JEPs were related to curriculum development, and which to a large degree appeared to be still in use after the end of the project.

Within the TEMPUS programme the SCMs have the most structural reform elements, with ‘support to the development or implementation of a national strategy’ and ‘support to dissemination and use of the results of cooperation actions’ as focal issues. This support was mainly provided by way of staff training on good practices, seminars or conferences, and developing websites and information materials. Contrary to the JEPs and IMGs these outputs are ‘less tangible’, in particular in the short run. From the fact that a large majority of respondents (77%) indicated that the outputs were still in use by their own organisation or their partner’s, it can be concluded that the produced outputs are assessed as valuable, although this does not automatically imply that structural reforms have been initiated.

The evaluation also shows that in many cases the programme encouraged sustainable partnerships in higher education, involving EC and partner countries in various degrees depending on the character of the project. A vast majority of projects partners that responded to the survey indicated that the cooperation with at least some of the project partners was continued after the end of the project.

Another important issue for sustainability concerns funding. The findings indicate that an important contribution for this is made by the involved institutions: half of the JEP partners continued the TEMPUS related activities by way of own funding. Also other external sources were used for the continuation of activities, i.e. national budgets, other multilateral or bilateral funding sources and also external fund raising. In this respect it can be concluded that there appears to be a high level of financial commitment by various

involved stakeholders to continue the activities and networks that have been put in place by TEMPUS. It would be interesting to collect and disseminate the good practices on this, because lack of funding always is a critical factor in the continuation of activities of this kind of cooperation programmes.

Dissemination

The picture regarding dissemination of TEMPUS results is mixed. Depending on the scope of the various TEMPUS instruments, dissemination has a different character.

- At the level of IMGs and JEPs dissemination to a large degree mainly consisted of sharing knowledge and experiences to colleagues. Although this was often done intensively, it is not clear in the light of sustainability what significance can be attached to this kind of activities.
- Based on the country visits, it appears that in many cases the dissemination activities need further improvement. Aside from practical obstacles regarding dissemination, there seem to be more basic problems which are often overlooked in the process of dissemination. Although from a policy point of view there often is a clear need for dissemination of results, eventually promoting the achievement of objectives and with this creating value for money, the stakeholders involved do not always have the incentives to cooperate actively in dissemination.

Recommendations

In the final chapter of the main document of this evaluation several recommendations are presented in an elaborated way, including the justification. In this summary we present a shortened version of these recommendations.

Recommendation 1 – Strengthen strategic programme orientation.

We recommend to strengthen the strategic orientation of TEMPUS, by making the strategic links between TEMPUS projects - national TEMPUS priorities and the national HE reform agendas (more) explicit. This would allow for proper strategic choices about the role TEMPUS can play in national HE reforms, including a targeted and well-founded use of SCMs. For this, it is recommended

- to **strengthen the policy dialogue** at national level as well as the dialogue between the EC and the national stakeholders, against the background of a clear – agenda-setting – national policy framework in the field of higher education.
- to **identify and disseminate good practices** of countries that already are working along the recommended lines.

Recommendation 2 – Improve effective synergy with Erasmus Mundus and other Community actions

In order to improve coherence of policy instruments and with this an effective use of instruments by stakeholders at all levels we recommend the EC to strengthen the links with the wider national policies in the countries as far as education system reforms are concerned (see also recommendation 10), improving communication on Erasmus Mundus and other Community initiatives and encouraging links with research.

Recommendation 3 –Reconsider level of funding in view of TEMPUS objectives

It is recommended to the EC to reconsider the levels of funding for TEMPUS with respect to the ambitious goals it has set. To reach a critical mass of projects that can be expected to have a concrete and sustainable impact at HE institutions and national policies based on the goals set higher levels of funding are recommended, without disregarding the absorption capacity of the applicants involved. Contrary to the current practice in TEMPUS IV, it is recommended to allow for smaller projects in line with the differentiated demand in the Partner Countries.

Recommendation 4 – Enrich quality of project proposals

It is recommended to further strengthen the quality of project proposals. Specifically we recommend:

- to both EC and NTO to give more support (advice and training) to potential participants to prepare a technical sound proposal;
- to the EC to require applicants to refer to current or previous relevant projects in the country, including lessons learned and the way this new application would complement/build-upon what went before;
- to the EC to give a clear explanation on the (final) selection and the applied criteria in this to the national stakeholders involved in the selection process.

Recommendation 5 - Improve the effectiveness of field monitoring

We recommend to improve elements of the evaluation and monitoring procedures of TEMPUS, especially regarding the field monitoring. Specifically, we recommend:

- to the NTOs and EC to have structural debriefings at the end of the monitoring visit;
- to the EC to encourage the contract partners to send the feedback letter to all partners involved (in the monitoring visits) and to request a substantiated reaction on this by the consortium partners.

Recommendation 6 - Give greater support to National Contact Points (NCPs) in New Member States

We recommend the EC to provide support (e.g information and training) to and to investigate funding opportunities for NCPs in new Member States in order to assist them to promote TEMPUS in the eligible countries.

Recommendation 7 - Better define the involvement of the ECD to improve the (structural) dialogue with the national authorities on HE

We recommend the EC to better define and communicate on the level of involvement of the Delegation. This would provide a forum for a dialogue on and assessment of TEMPUS in the specific partner country, helping to achieve greater involvement and more empowerment of the national stakeholders.

Recommendation 8 – Continuation of TEMPUS-like projects after EU accession

We recommend the EC to improve communication on alternatives for continuation of TEMPUS –like projects after country has acceded the European Union. Logically this communication would involve the actions under the Erasmus Programme and Erasmus Mundus (see also recommendation 2).

Recommendation 9 – More emphasis on best practices – information on linkages with the labour market and civil society

We recommend that the EC and NTOs should pay more attention to the ways that TEMPUS projects can be linked to the labour market and civil society. Successful projects should be disseminated.

Recommendation 10 – Give more priority to management reform projects

We recommend the EC and NTO and other involved parties to give more priority to projects focused at reform of HEI management to achieve durable impacts in this area.

Recommendation 11 – Give more attention to accessibility (equal opportunities) of the projects.

We recommend the EC to give more attention to equal opportunities in the project, by

- requiring applicants to fill out a specific section on equal opportunities in the project proposal and monitoring report;
- discussing with the NTO the importance of equal opportunities;
- monitoring and reporting on the achievements in this area.

Recommendation 12 - Support additional ambitions of projects

We recommend the EC to consider giving support for additional ambitions of projects which strictly speaking are beyond the scope of the Programme. Therefore the EC should explore the range of this kind of additional ambitions, investigate the problems that these are confronted with and see how extra support could be given to solve the problems. Dissemination of good practices, e.g. regarding double diplomas and joint degrees, could be an effective and efficient approach for this.

Recommendation 13 – Improve both dissemination and use of project results

At the programme level we recommend the EC to actively promote dissemination of project outcomes and results. This should be done in close relation to the strategic programme orientation (see recommendation 2). Good practices can play a key role in this. Use should be made of previous insights and achievements on effective dissemination, within the TEMPUS programme as well as in other similar programmes.

Dissemination of evaluation results

Aside from the communication by the EC related to the legislative procedures surrounding the TEMPUS programme the evaluation team would like to suggest the following activities regarding the dissemination of the evaluation results:

- the EC to put the evaluation report, including its Annexes, on the website of the Commission;
- the EC to ask all NTOs to put the summary of the final report on their website with a link to the full report on the website of the Commission and inform relevant stakeholders;
- the EC to ask the NTOs that were involved in the country studies to place their country report on their website and inform relevant stakeholders;

- ECORYS to send a summary of the report to all respondents that were interviewed or participated in the online survey, with a link to the full report on the website of the Commission.

1 Introduction

1.1 The assignment

The Tempus III programme emanated from the first Tempus Programme adopted in 1990 (and extended till the end of 1993) and the second Tempus Programme launched in 1994 and continued till 2000. The Tempus Programme III is focused on improving the quality of and support to higher education reforms in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as well as the promotion of multilateral cooperation between higher Education Institutions in the EU and in these partner countries. Tempus III started in 2000 and broadened its scope to also cover the Western Balkans (2000) and the Mediterranean Region (2002). The approach remained based on the exchange of know-how at the level of (i) institutions; (ii) individuals; and (iii) the sector level. The Tempus III programme ended in 2006 and has now been succeeded by Tempus IV.

This ex-post evaluation is launched according to Article 12 of the Council Decision that established Tempus III.⁶ Since the adoption of Tempus I, the programme has undergone 5 different evaluations.⁷ In addition, TEMPUS Impact studies and Review of TEMPUS Structural Measures were carried out. As a follow-up to the 2004 Mid-Term Evaluation of the TEMPUS III programme this evaluation covers all actions and geographic areas of the programme during the period 2000-2006, with a specific focus on activities since 2003 that were not covered by the interim evaluation. The Mid-Term evaluation was focused on the relevance of the programme and on conceptual issues such as programme design and management tools.

This ex-post evaluation seeks mainly to assess the impact of the Tempus III programme and provides recommendations for the current and future development of the programme, including monitoring and evaluation tools. The findings of the evaluation will *inter alia* provide the basis for the European Commission's (EC's) Communication on the results achieved by Tempus III and on the qualitative aspects of the implementation of the programme to be published by the end of 2009.

ECORYS was contracted to carry out the evaluation in February 2009. The evaluation was guided by an Evaluation Steering Committee consisting of Commission's officials.

⁶ See the Council Decision of 29 April 1999 adopting the third phase of the trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education (Tempus III) (2000-2006) (1999/311/EC).

⁷ The evaluation of the first phase 1990-1994, Mid term evaluation of the second phase 1994-1996, Evaluation of the Tempus programme in the countries eligible under Tacis, Final evaluation of the second phase 1994-2000, Mid term evaluation of the third phase 2000-2003

1.2 Evaluation questions

The overall aim of the evaluation is to gain more insight in the relevance, efficiency effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the programme. The Terms of Reference for the assignment prepared by the Commission Steering Group specified the evaluation questions which should be addressed that relate to these evaluation criteria. With respect to each of the evaluation questions, the evaluation is expected to provide conclusions and, as appropriate, concrete recommendations on how the current Tempus IV programme could be managed to better address any deficiencies and any gaps - in the extent to which the programme is satisfying the objectives set for - identified and maximise its relevance and impact as well as successfully exploit examples of good practice.

Evaluation questions formulated under *Relevance* involved the relevance of TEMPUS in relation to:

- The needs of partner countries; and
- Complementarity and community added value.

Evaluation questions on *Efficiency* address:

- Budget and cost effectiveness;
- Selection and monitoring procedures; and
- Support provided.

Evaluation questions on *Effectiveness* concern:

- Coverage and TEMPUS brand;
- Results and benefits; and
- Dissemination of European HE policies.

Evaluation question formulated under *Impact* cover:

- Societal and economic needs of partner countries;
- Regional cooperation; and
- Policy reforms and convergence.

Evaluation questions on *Sustainability* involve:

- continuation of projects and partnerships; and
- dissemination and use of project results.

Based on suggestions from ECORYS and in agreement with the Evaluation Steering Committee, some minor adjustments were made to the Evaluation questions presented in the Terms of Reference.

Table 1.1 provides an overview of all the evaluations questions.

Table 1.1 Overview of evaluation questions

Criteria	Evaluation Question
Relevance	1. To what extent have the general, specific & operational objectives proved to be relevant to the needs of partner countries' higher education systems within Tempus III?
	2. To what extent has the programme proved complementary to other Community initiatives within higher education & research (Erasmus Mundus/External Cooperation Window & Sixth Framework Programme) as regards to both its external cooperation policies & the intra-EU education policies?
Relevance	3. To what extent was the type of projects / actions supported by the Programme (in particular, JEPs & Structural Measures) relevant to the programme objectives in the light of expected results, outcomes & impact on higher education systems?
	4. Is the approach based on national priorities valid, how does it work in practice & is it appropriate for encouraging co-operation between partner countries?
	5. What was the Community Added Value of the programme from the perspective of participating institutions within the EU?
Effectiveness	6. To what extent can the programme's objectives be said to have been achieved, particularly as regards the needs of the partner countries? Are there any instances where the programme has exceeded initial expectations? What positive effects has this had in particular in terms of capacity building & convergence with European standards? Where expectations have not been met, what factors have hindered the development of the programme?
Effectiveness	7. To which extent has the programme contributed to disseminate European higher education policies in accordance with the objectives of the EU Modernisation Agenda as part of the overall Lisbon Strategy, as well as the Bologna process?
	8. Can an identifiable Tempus "brand" be said to have emerged, & with what qualities is it associated (for national authorities, institutions, academics, students & employers)? How well is it known & is it helping the implementation of the programme & the development of reforms in the partner countries?
Effectiveness	9. To what extent have the individual beneficiaries of Tempus grants been positively affected by their participation in the programme from a professional & personal point of view? To what extent has the programme impacted the employability of graduates? To what extent have the beneficiaries been encouraged to promote & support reforms in their countries & promote European approaches & practices in their home countries & institutions?
Effectiveness	10. Does participation in the programme appear balanced in terms of geographical coverage (within the European Union & in the partner countries) & the types of higher education institutions represented (in particular non University institutions)? Were the subject areas represented sufficiently diversified?
	11. Does participation in the programme appear satisfactory in terms of equality between men & women? Could any particular patterns be distinguished in this respect from a geographical point of view as well as for the different actions or strands of actions? To what extent do the programme design & implementation mechanisms promote equal participation of men & women? Could any particular points of improvement be identified?
	12. What has been the possible impact of European partners' participation in Tempus within their own institutions & countries?

Criteria	Evaluation Question
Efficiency	13. Was the size of budget for the programme appropriate & proportional to what the programme set out to achieve? Was it sufficient for reaching a critical mass of impacts? Could the same results have been achieved with less funding? Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms have provided better cost-effectiveness?
	14. To what extent have the mechanisms applied by the Commission & the ETF for selecting & monitoring the projects ensured a proper implementation of the programme & notably quality & effectiveness of selected projects & partnerships?
Efficiency	15. To what extent have the National Tempus Offices in the partner countries fulfilled their role & tasks? Could the same results have been achieved with other support mechanisms? What kind of other activities / services could be initiated / developed at their level to support the programme objectives?
	16. To what extent have the National Contact Points in the EU countries fulfilled their role & tasks? Could the same results have been achieved with other support mechanisms? What kind of other activities / services could be initiated / developed at their level to support the programme objectives?
	17. Did the EC Delegations play a sufficiently defined role & to which extent was it adapted to the evolving context of the programme (more emphasis to national priorities & stronger involvement of the Ministries of the partner countries)?
Sustainability	18. Which activities or elements or outcomes of the programme would be likely to continue & in which form when Community support ceased? This question applies in particular to the curricula developed under the JEPs activities.
	19. What efforts have been made by partner organisations, national & local authorities to ensure institutional sustainability of the outcomes of the programme?
	20. To which extent have non-academic partners (e.g. businesses) been involved to support the process?
	21. To what extent have the results of the actions been properly disseminated within the partner country organisations & beyond to the Ministries in charge of Higher Education & to external stakeholders & the public? What is their exploitable potential, & to what extent can one say that this potential has been exploited?
Impact	22. To which extent has the programme encouraged sustainable partnerships in higher education involving EC & partner country institutions?
	23. Has the programme contributed to making policy, administration & teaching in the partner country higher education institutions more responsive to society's & the labour market's needs? Has the programme contributed to more internationally-oriented & flexible partner country institutions?
	24. Is there evidence to show that the programme is helping to meet the partner countries' societal & economical needs, in terms of producing graduates with relevant skills, boosting capacity in key sectors & increasing the exposure of partner countries' higher education to international competition in teaching & research?
	25. To what extent has the programme contributed to the training of policy & decision makers, & to which extent does this staff play a role in current & future reforms?
	26. To what extent does the programme seem to be influencing national legislation on issues relevant for modernising higher education systems & convergence of systems, such as university governance, structures, funding, quality assurance mechanisms, etc.?

Criteria	Evaluation Question
Impact	27. How far has the programme contributed to help the candidate countries & the potential candidate countries to get closer with EU practices & standards in higher education within the perspective of their adhesion to the EU?
	28. To which extent has the programme contributed to the convergence process between the partner countries & with the EU higher education standards & practices?
	29. To what extent has the programme had an impact on the regional cooperation (cooperation among partner countries) & at local level (communities) in the partner countries?

Judgment criteria were defined for each evaluation question. These are presented in Annex I.

1.3 Overall methodology and organisation

The evaluation took place in four phases: (1). Inception; (2). Information gathering; (3). Fieldwork; and (4). Consolidation and report writing. An inception report was produced at the end of the Inception Phase and an Interim Report at the end of the Fieldwork Phase.

Inception phase

In the inception phase the evaluation design was further developed. Several interviews were held with EC, (former) ETF staff, and the National TEMPUS Office (NTO) and EC Delegation in Kazakhstan. These interviews complemented the input of the Evaluation Steering Committee during the kick off meeting and initial desk research conducted by the evaluation team. Based on this information an inception report was written in which an elaborated methodology and reconstruction of the intervention logic were presented. In addition the report included a description of the specific types of information as well as the specific sources to be used for each evaluation question (see Annex 1).

Information gathering phase

In the information gathering phase first additional programme data on the programme and the projects was collected and studied.

Next three online questionnaires for participants in Joint European Projects (JEPs), Structural and Complementary Measures (SCMs) and Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs) were launched and all project contractors/ grant holders have been invited through an e-mail to fill out the questionnaire. To avoid duplication we selected one project (finished most recently) for every project contractor (per SCM and JEP). We asked the project contractors both in the email and at the end of the questionnaire to invite their project partners to comment. All participants in TEMPUS III were invited to fill out this questionnaire. In addition telephone interviews were held with all National TEMPUS Offices (NTOs) and selected National Contact points (NCPs). Furthermore additional interviews were held with EC staff.

Field work phase

In the fieldwork phase five selected countries were visited with the objective to get more detailed illustrative information on the evaluation criteria. Geographical spread as well as

coverage of countries where TEMPUS III was most active (in terms of the number of projects) served as the main criteria for the selection of countries. Based on this the following countries were selected: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Morocco, Russian Federation, Serbia and Uzbekistan.

For each of the five selected countries, the following criteria were applied in the selection of projects or programme participants:

- Good representation of the different Measures:
 - Joint Education Projects (2);
 - Structural Complementary Measure (1);
 - Individual Mobility Grants (2).
- Number of partners involved (at least one large partnership with preferably regional cooperation);
- Subject of project or sector (relevant, but no major criteria);
- Participation or involvement of enterprises (at least one project per country);
- Size of projects (at least one project with a large budget per country);
- Accessibility;
- Inclusion of at least one more recent project.

First results and the preliminary findings from the interviews, online questionnaires, field visits and desk review were presented to the Evaluation Steering Committee in the Interim Report.

Information consolidation and report writing

This phase comprised of an analysis of all data gathered and consideration of all comments received after the presentation of the preliminary findings in the Interim Report.

Table 1.2 summarises all of the activities undertaken for this evaluation.

Table 1.2 Planned and completed activity

Research activity planned	Results
Analysis programme data	Completed: Analysis of the main programme data provided by the European Commission
Desk research	Completed: Three types of documents were consulted: 1) documents that relate to the programme as a whole (including previous evaluations of the programme), 2) documents that relate to the HE system in the selected countries and 3) Project documentation for the projects selected. The full list of documents consulted is included in the Annex

Research activity planned	Results
Interviews with EC staff	Completed: 6 interviews (see Annex V for list of interviewed persons)
Online Questionnaires JEP ⁸	Sent to 787 contract partners; response by in total 388 respondents (EU 266; Partner country 109), of which 375 could be used in the analysis
Online Questionnaire SCM	Sent to 237 contract partners; response by in total 116 respondents (EU 79; Partner country 32), of which 111 could be used in the analysis
Online Questionnaire IMG	Sent to 1801 grant holders; response by 670 respondents in total (EU 140, Partner country 507), of which 647 (36%) could be used in the analysis
Interviews with all NTO and selection of NCPs	Completed: 31 telephone interviews (27 NTOs and 4 NCPs)
Field visits studies	FYROM, Morocco, Russian Federation, Serbia and Uzbekistan were visited
Draft Final report and meeting with SC	Comments included in the Final report
Submission Final report	

1.4 Strengths and limitations of the evaluation

The ex-post evaluation of the TEMPUS programme has taken place between February and October 2009. During this relatively short period a large number of activities was carried out which resulted in an objective and thorough evaluation with the methodology used. In this section we would like to highlight the main strengths and the limitations of this evaluation. This can be of help for future evaluations.

Strengths

The main strengths of the evaluation have been as follows:

- A 'multi-perspective' approach, in which we not only took into account the views of project partners, but also of students, other staff involved, National TEMPUS Offices and National Contact Points, and representatives of national ministries (during the field visits). Through triangulation of these different perspectives we succeeded in establishing a well balanced view of the results achieved with TEMPUS III.
- Combination of quantitative and various qualitative research methods which enabled us to back up the results of one method with the results of other methods (e.g. questionnaires, interviews and review of documents).
- Cooperation with local consultants during the field visits which proved to be very useful for contacting the right persons and enabling in-depth interview with all relevant stakeholders, and also for collecting and analysing background information on country specific policy issues in the field of higher education.
- The willingness of project partners to participate in the evaluation has been very good - definitely making it easier for us to carry out the evaluation. Unfortunately the response to the written questionnaire was not fully satisfactory (see below).

⁸ The full analysis of the three questionnaires including panel data can be found in Annex III.

- The use of web-based questionnaires proved to be a good instrument for collecting data among project partners. The available database with contact details of the project partners appeared to be fairly up-to-date, although additional efforts were needed to find missing e-mail addresses. Unfortunately contact details of the participating students were not available. We overcame this drawback by interviewing (groups of) students, as far as they were available during the country visits.

Limitations

From an evaluation perspective we mention a few limitations of the evaluation:

- The project participants surveyed might have had an interest in presenting a positive picture of the achievements of their project or the programme, in general. We sought to independently verify the information collected through the numerous interviews (as well as document analysis) and the in-depth analysis of projects within the Country Case Studies.
- Due to the wide coverage of TEMPUS III, there was little opportunity to collect information on institutions that were not involved in the programme – something that might have yielded interesting additional information on the value-added of the programme.
- On request from DG EAC and in agreement with ECORYS the selection of countries was, aside from geographical coverage, based on a certain degree of active involvement in TEMPUS III, in this way enabling us to identify concrete impacts and disentangle underlying mechanisms. It is possible that in the countries that were not visited, the programme might have yielded other outcomes. It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess whether this was the case.
- Due to a lack of contact details the questionnaire yielded a limited response from participants from Partner Countries. Our request to contract project coordinators in TEMPUS to invite their partners to fill out the questionnaire was only partly successful. Despite this the evaluation gathered extensive information and experiences of participants in the five country visits.

1.5 Report structure

Following this introductory chapter, the remainder of this Final Report is divided over the following sections:

- **TEMPUS III programme (Chapter 2)** – this section provides a short overview of TEMPUS III as well as a reconstruction of the intervention logic of the programme;
- **Relevance of TEMPUS III (Chapter 3)** – presents our findings on relevance and answers to the evaluation questions on relevance;
- **Efficiency (Chapter 4)** – covering the evaluation questions on efficiency and other pertinent efficiency aspects;
- **Effectiveness (Chapter 5)** – reports on our findings on the evaluation questions formulated under effectiveness;
- **Impact (Chapter 6)** – covers the evaluation questions with regard to Impact;
- **Sustainability (Chapter 7)** – this section provides the findings on sustainability and dissemination; and
- **Recommendations (Chapter 8)** – presents our recommendation grouped according to the five evaluation criteria as well as the conclusions they refer to.

In addition the Final Report contains the following seven annexes:

- Linking evaluation questions to available data (Annex I)
- Chronology of calls for proposal (Annex II)
- Basic programme statistics (Annex III)
- Results of the questionnaire Analysis (Annex IV);
- Five country reports (Annex V);
- List of people interviewed (Annex VI); and
- List of documents consulted (Annex VII).

2 TEMPUS III programme

In this Chapter we provide a presentation of the TEMPUS III programme. After an introduction on the history of the programme, the set up of the programme in terms of objectives, activities and target groups is described. The second part of the Chapter provides a reconstruction of the intervention logic.

2.1 Short overview of the programme

2.1.1 History

The Commission launched the TEMPUS programme in 1990 with the aim of promoting higher education system reforms in the countries eligible for Commission support under the PHARE programme. The TEMPUS programme was designed to promote staff and teacher mobility, network development and higher education cooperation between institutions of Partner Countries and the EU Member States. The second phase of the Trans-European Cooperation Scheme for Higher Education, Tempus II, was adopted by the European Council in 1994. During the second phase of the programme the number of eligible countries increased and funding was made available from PHARE and TACIS. The programme was renewed again in 1999 and the Tempus III programme started in 2000 for the Partner Countries in the TACIS and CARDS regions⁹. In 2002 TEMPUS III broadened the scope to also cover the Mediterranean Region (MEDA). This decision was seen as a part of the wider strategy to strengthen dialogue between peoples and cultures in the European Union and the Mediterranean.

The 12 New Member States that acceded to the EU in May 2004 and January 2007 respectively (previously large beneficiaries under TEMPUS I and II) could after the accession only participate in TEMPUS III without funding. The reason for still keeping Tempus III open to them was to share their achievements under the programme with the neighbouring countries and develop regional and cross-border cooperation. In this respect cooperation between TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus¹⁰ projects was encouraged from the start of this programme phase in 2005.

⁹ The then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo) and Croatia became formally eligible to participate in the programme in 2001.

¹⁰ Erasmus Mundus aims to enhance quality of European higher education through scholarships and academic cooperation between Europe and the rest of the world. The programme is intended to complement the European Union's regional programmes such as TEMPUS in higher education with third countries. Whilst TEMPUS fosters international co-operation in higher education between the European Union and eligible Partner Countries, the Erasmus Mundus programme seeks primarily to enhance the quality and attractiveness of higher education within Europe and promoting dialogue and understanding between people and cultures through cooperation with third countries by supporting the international mobility of scholars and students from the European Union and the Partner Countries.

Foreign policy instrument

Tempus is one of a number of European Community programmes designed to help the process of social and economic reform and development in its partner countries. By means of cooperation between higher education institutions, TEMPUS also aims to strengthen civil society and promote democracy as well as enhance mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue between the EU and its partners. Funding for the programme is drawn from the external cooperation programmes for the regions involved¹¹.

2.1.2 Objectives

Overall objective

The overall objective of TEMPUS III was formulated as follows:

“... to promote, in line with the guidelines and general objectives of the PHARE and TACIS programmes for economic and social reform, the development of the higher education systems in the eligible countries through the most balanced cooperation possible with the partners from all the Member States of the Community”¹²

The following wider objective of the TEMPUS programme was included in the 2004 guide for applicants to refine the objectives of the programme:

“At a broader level, the TEMPUS Programme aims to promote understanding between, and rapprochement of, cultures and people through cooperation, partnership and structured dialogue”¹³.

Specific objectives

The overall objective was to be achieved by meeting a number of specific objectives, which were initially defined as follows:

- “... to facilitate the adaptation of higher education to the new socio-economic and cultural needs of the eligible countries by addressing:
- a) issues relating to the development and reshaping of curricula in the priority areas;
 - b) reform of higher education structures and establishments and their management;
 - c) the development of training leading to qualifications, with a view to making good the shortage of high-level skills needed in the context of economic reform, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry;
 - d) the contribution of higher education and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy.”

¹¹ EuropeAid – European Commission Co-Operation Office (AIDCO) and Directorate General for Enlargement allocate funds to manage the Programme.

¹² Council decision 1999/311/EC, this overall aim was reformulated in Council Decision 2002/601/EC allowing selected North African and Middle Eastern countries to participate in TEMPUS III but did not change in any substantive sense.

¹³ Guide for applicants 2004 part 1, p 15.

This was reformulated in 2002 into the following:

- i) *promote understanding between and rapprochement of cultures, develop free and flourishing civil societies; and*
- ii) facilitate the adaptation and development of higher education to better respond to the socio-economic and cultural needs of the eligible countries by addressing:
 - a) issues relating to the development and reshaping of curricula in the priority areas;
 - b) reform *and development* of higher education structures and establishments and their management;
 - c) the development of training leading to *such* qualifications *as will remedy the shortage* of high level skills needed in the context of economic reform and development, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry;
 - d) the contribution of higher education and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy.

The sentences and words, which are indicated with italics in the objectives formulated in 2002, identify the elements of renewal and reorientation in the objectives of TEMPUS III formulated in 2002 compared with the objectives formulated in 1999. The main difference concerns the first specific objective which was not included in the Council decision of 1999. This objective reflects the notice that higher education at a broader level can promote the rapprochement of cultures and to promote free and flourishing civil societies.

The Bologna process

Through programmes like TEMPUS, the European Commission wishes to support the Bologna Process¹⁴, which aims to create a common European higher education area by 2010. In June 1999, Europe's education ministers vowed to reform the structures of their higher education systems aiming for convergence, while still retaining their fundamental values and diversity. A number of TEMPUS partner countries have since then signed up to this process. The overarching aim of the Bologna Process is to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to European students and staff as well as to students and staff from other parts of the world¹⁵. The reforms are about: comparable and compatible degrees organised in a three-cycle structure (e.g. bachelor-master-doctorate), quality assurance and recognition of foreign degrees and other higher education qualifications. Work is also undertaken in areas of broader societal relevance, such as the links between higher education, research and innovation; equitable participation and lifelong learning.

2.1.3 Organisation, national priorities and activities

Target group

TEMPUS is a multilateral programme, in the sense that cooperation projects are undertaken by partnerships which include institutions from at least two EU Member States and institutions from one or more Partner Countries. Partnerships could include universities –core members of the consortia-, non-academic partners such as companies

¹⁴ European Commission, TEMPUS, Modernisation in higher education, http://www.bmwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/europa/bologna/Tempus_leaflet_en.pdf

¹⁵ <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/about/>

(both public and private), business organisations, professional associations, public authorities at local, regional and national level (in particular ministries) or social partners.

Only universities from EU Member States could act as a project contractor¹⁶. The consortium members acting as Grant coordinator, i.e. responsible for the management, coordination and monitoring of the project activities and the coordination of consortium members, could be from Partner Countries as well as EU Member States.

National and regional priorities

In the TEMPUS guide for applicants two types of priorities are given: Common Policy Orientations and National Priorities. *Common Policy Orientations* for Partner Countries refer to the broader policy background for cooperation in the different regions. In the guide for applicants 2002 the Common Policy Orientations for CARDS and TACIS countries were presented by the European Commission. The following overarching indicative priorities were given for CARDS countries:

- *Participation in the Bologna process.*
- *Reforms of university governance, management and finance*, which aims at developing integrated institutions of which faculties are constituent part;
- *Multi-partner country cooperation*

In TACIS countries the TEMPUS priorities were meant to be consistent with the three selected fields for cooperation (out of the six indicated fields in the TACIS regulation 2000-2006)¹⁷ between the European Commission and the partner countries in the region. In addition the TEMPUS Programme promotes *Multi-country cooperation*.

The Common policy orientations for the MEDA countries refer to the regional level cooperation progress made in the framework of the Barcelona process. More specifically reference is made to the political and security partnership: establishing a common area of peace and stability, economic and financial partnership: creating an area of share prosperity; and partnership in social, cultural and human affairs: developing human resources, promoting understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies.

National priorities refer to the more specific higher education policy strategies in the Partner Countries. The country specific priorities for TEMPUS were established on an annual basis by DG EAC in agreement with the National Authorities in the Partner Countries. Following the recommendation of the interim evaluation that there was a need to reinforce the “top-down” approach of the programme by better defining these national priorities, DG EAC invited all TEMPUS Partner Countries to conduct an individual policy dialogue in Brussels in the spring of 2004. These meetings were followed by further exchanges and correspondence in order to refine the national priorities.

The national priorities provided a listing of issues within the field of higher education.

¹⁶ The project contractor is legally responsible for the administration of the Tempus grant in accordance with the plans presented in the application and the terms of the grant awarded

¹⁷ According to the TACIS regulation (2000-2006) there are six areas of cooperation: 1) Institutional, legal, and administrative reform; 2) Private sector and economic development; 3) Social consequences of the transition; 4) Infrastructure networks; 5) Environmental protection and 6) Rural economy-related matters.

The national priorities in the period 2004-2006 varied between the CARDS, MEDA and TACIS regions. Nevertheless some common themes emerged from the dialogue between the European Commission and the Partner Countries, including *inter alia* accreditation, quality assurance, the need to adapt higher education better to labour market needs and the Bologna Process.¹⁸ The guide for applicants indicated that the national priorities identified for each Partner Country were to be taken into consideration. Whilst focussing on national priorities was not necessarily a pre-condition for project selection, preference was however given to the projects that were most in line with these.

Activities

The specific objectives were to be achieved by the following main types of activities¹⁹:

1) **Joint European Projects (JEP)** which were structured projects with clearly defined objectives which were awarded primarily to groups of institutions or universities cooperating together. Three types of JEPs were funded:

- *University Management JEP*: support for the restructuring of the management, organisation and administration of universities reform of universities and their management;
- *Curriculum Development JEP*: focus on the content and method of teaching in higher education institutions in the Partner Countries. They aim to create new courses or update existing courses and to enhance the skills of teaching staff; they provide also a framework for student and teaching staff mobility; and;
- *Training courses for Institution Building JEP*: support the administrative and institutional structures of the Partner Countries through the provision of courses aimed at improving the practical knowledge, and up-dating the skills, of non academic staff.

During the early periods of the programme two other types of interventions faded out, the so-called ‘mobility -’ and ‘multiplier projects’.

2) **Structural and Complementary Measures (SCM)** operated at a broader (i.e. national or sectoral) level and were to provide a framework for targeted action to increase the programme’s impact on the reform of Higher Education in Partner Countries. The specific objectives of SCMs were:

(ii) *enhancing the capacity for strategic planning and institutional development of national bodies* dealing with national reform as well as helping them to build up international relations;

(iii) *supporting the development or the implementation of a national strategy, action plan or legislation* in a given Partner Country to develop a specific aspect of higher education;

(iv) *supporting the dissemination and use of the results of sustainable cooperation actions* which target the Tempus Programme's objectives and which support national reform in higher education.

¹⁸ Guide for applicants 2004 and 2005, TEMPUS National priorities.

¹⁹ The so-called networking projects were only funded in the first year of the project.

3) **Individual Mobility Grants (IMG)**: to provide academic and administrative staff of the Higher Education sector with the opportunity to benefit from limited mobility periods abroad.

Calls for proposals

Under Tempus III seven calls aimed at JEPs, seven calls for proposals for SCMs and 14 calls specifically aimed at IMGs were launched. The deadlines for application were set by the different guides for applicants.

Given the interest amongst Partner Countries in the Bologna process, a joint call for proposals Tempus/Socrates aimed at supporting Bologna-related projects was launched in 2004. Institutions from Partner Countries were invited to submit proposals under SCMs. The aim of the ten selected projects, *inter alia*, was to set up teams of Bologna promoters and to involve Partner Countries in Bologna-related conferences and seminars.

Annex II provides an overview of the different calls for proposal.

Facts and figures on the programme

To give an overall view of the volume and scope of the programme we present some key facts en figures. An overview of all programme data can be found in Annex III.

Over the years the TEMPUS III budget increased from €33,100,000 in 2000 to €66,100,000 in 2005. Between 2002 and 2003 the budget increased considerably due to funding made available for the eligible countries of the MEDA region. The decrease in budget to €53,450,000 in 2006 can be explained by less funding made available for TACIS countries (respectively €29.7 million in 2005 and €18.3 million in 2006). The total budget for TEMPUS III amounted to €352 million. The largest part of this was spent on JEPs (71%) with a committed budget of about €250 million. Furthermore grants were awarded for 300 SCMs (€29 million) and 1500 IMGs (€7 million).

Starting from the 2003 calls on grants did not cover the total cost of projects. From then on participants were obliged to finance at least five per cent of the project themselves. The average level of co-financing in the period 2003 - 2006 was 6.94 per cent for JEPs and 6.33 per cent for SCMs. The year 2004 showed a peak in the level of co-financing with an average level of almost 8 percent for JEPs²⁰.

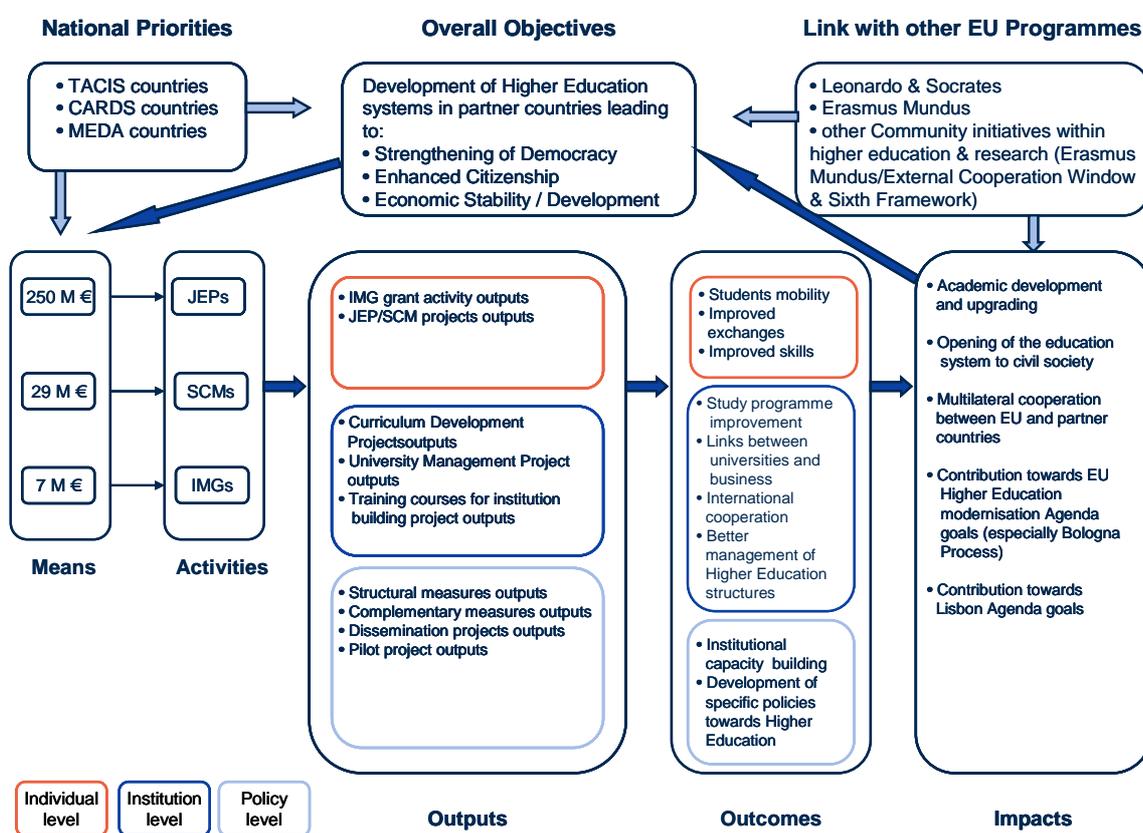
2.2 Reconstruction of the intervention logic

Although there is a widely held understanding of its overall aims as well as the means to achieve them, no explicit and official intervention logic has been developed for TEMPUS III (nor its predecessors). We felt that formulating such an explicit intervention logic would be useful for our evaluation to ensure that all stakeholders have a common understanding of *what* it is meant to achieve and *how* this is to be done.

²⁰ See Annex III table AIV 0.11-0.14.

The intervention logic is used for understanding the various elements of the programme in terms of means, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts (and the assumptions made about cause and effect, and risks) and the way these are supposed to relate to the global, specific and operational objectives of the programme presented earlier and the needs. The intervention logic has been developed for the three core components of the programme, i.e. JEPs, SCMs and IMGs. The elements are described at the individual and organisational level as well as the policy level. The description of each of the elements was derived from the programme documentation relating to the Tempus III programme.

As the TEMPUS III programme emanated from the two earlier programmes the *objectives* and *activities* have developed over time but also during the lifetime of the TEMPUS III programme in response to success rates of activities, changing contexts and the priorities stated in the annual plans. The subsequent decisions indicated the sets of *objectives* as described in Section 2.1. The activities were presented in the different calls for proposal included in the guide for applicants.



The horizontal relationships are indicated by the blue arrows in the above figure. As is shown the activities relate to the objectives. When we describe the horizontal relationship from the bottom-up the *activities* are assumed to result in *outputs*, *outcomes* (specific objectives) and long term effects –*Impacts* (global objectives).

If an activity is started in the sense of one of the instruments in the programme (JEP, SCM, IMG), and **if** certain assumptions are met, **then** it can be expected that the project will reach its expected output in the form of:

At the individual level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for staff/students (associations) Student/staff exchange programmes/visits Preparation of a new TEMPUS project Visits to Conferences/seminars abroad Cooperation in joint research activity
At the institutional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Didactic materials Development and reshaping of syllabus Upgrading existing curricula Newly developed degrees Studies on higher level (master, PhD) Lifelong learning New teaching methods New structure of organisation Introduction of credit point system (IT) equipment upgrade
At the national/policy level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey or study Training to ministry officials, academics and university administrators (International) seminars and conferences on HE Creation of a centre of excellence/pilot project Website, Information materials and campaigns etc. Services for link university-labour market Cooperation link to network(s)

Moreover, it is assumed that these outputs, under certain conditions will reach the expected outcomes:

At the individual level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of a study area Improved working practice Upgraded qualifications Quicker promotion opportunities Access to new learning materials & methods Improved foreign language skills Improved ICT skills Improved geographical mobility Improved employability Development of networks Greater awareness of other cultures Improved opportunities for lifelong learning etc.
At the institutional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved teaching & working practice Study programme improvement/ Coverage of new areas Increased awareness/ use of innovative methods (e.g multimedia) Increased research activities International/regional cooperation (Improved) relations between universities and business Development and participation in networks Better management and modernisation of administration Integration of young academic, non-academic and students into the decision-making of the University management Improved library functions Improved recognition of studies abroad Improved attractiveness/prestige as organisation Increased enrolment of students Improved quality assurance system etc.

At the national/policy level

- Development of credit transfer system
- Improved design and development of accreditation system
- Increased adaptation of Higher Education institutions to the life-long learning concept
- Improved international recognition of higher education institutions
- Improved cooperation between university-business community
- Improved evaluation of higher education institutions
- Improved curricula
- More elaborated national strategy within Higher Education
- Improved information exchange on national/regional level
- Better trained ministry officials, academics and university administrators
- Improved Higher Education reform process
- Development of best practices in the Higher Education sector.
- Increased internationalisation/ international cooperation etc.

Furthermore if sufficient people and organisations are reached by the Programme activities, outputs and outcomes, the assumptions underlying the global objectives are that cooperation in the field of higher education will contribute to strengthening of democracy, enhanced citizenship and economic development.

3 Relevance

3.1 Introduction

As this evaluation is part of the ongoing process of the European Commission of EU policy making in the field of (higher) education there is a recurrent need to pay attention to the relevance and utility of policies, programmes and activities in this field and to update the information that is available from earlier evaluation reports. However, it should also be noted that the focus of this final evaluation of TEMPUS III is on effectiveness and impact. From an evaluation point of view relevance is of special importance in ex-ante or interim evaluations.²¹ For answering the evaluation questions regarding ‘relevance’ we made use of primary sources (interviews and questionnaires) as well as national and EC policy documents, project documentation and earlier evaluations.

The main question regarding relevance relates to the extent to which the programme objectives remain pertinent to needs, problems and issues of the eligible countries. This question is to be answered at the subsequent levels of general, specific and operational objectives. If the objectives of an intervention (programme) address the needs, problems and/or issues identified, the intervention strategy can be judged as respecting the criterion of relevance. This question is addressed in this chapter by answering various sub-questions which will subsequently be answered in the following sections.

3.2 Tempus and the needs of partner countries

1. To what extent have the general, specific & operational objectives proved to be relevant to the needs of partner countries' higher education systems within Tempus III?

Global objective

The relevance of the global objective is to be assessed as to whether higher education systems in the eligible countries are enabled to play their foreseen role (as formulated in the global objective) in promoting economic and social reform as well as promoting understanding between, and reapproachment, of cultures and people. IF HE systems are not enabled to play this role, THEN the global objective will not be achieved. The rationale behind the global objective of the TEMPUS programme can be evidenced as follows.

²¹ European Commission, Directorate General for the Budget, Evaluating EU-activities. *A practical guide for the Commission Services*, July, 2004.

There seems to be broad consensus among economic scholars that education and training play a vital role in achieving sustainable economic growth, employment and cohesion, and that private and social returns to investment in education and training are relatively high.²² Various sources indicate that educational human capital has strong and consistent positive effects on economic growth and productivity of a country.²³ Furthermore, the quality of education, as measured by cognitive achievement tests, seems to have an even bigger impact on the development of nations than mere educational quantity, both in terms of economic growth of countries over time²⁴ and of levels of economic development achieved by the countries.²⁵ This economic development is not solely due to a higher educational attainment of the labour force, but also because of increased health, decrease of crime and more social cohesion which are positively correlated with more education.²⁶ From this, it can be concluded that educational cooperation programmes like TEMPUS in various ways, inter alia by reforming education systems and by enhancing their quality, can play a role in the social and economic reform of the eligible countries..

The mid-term evaluation of TEMPUS III (finalised in November 2003) contained two important conclusions regarding the relevance of the programme:²⁷

- 1) "The socio-economic needs that gave rise to Tempus are also prevalent today in the Tacis, CARDS and MEDA countries." More in detail the mid-term evaluation revealed that "The CEEC transition process from communist societies to democracies and market economies created the socio-economic needs for *belief system change, institutional change and skills change/training*. These needs gave rise to first phase of Tempus after the fall of the Berlin wall and to the second phase of Tempus in the early nineties. Ten years later the necessary reforms underpinning this transition are in varying degrees in place. In the PHARE countries that were invited to join the EU in 2004 and 2006, these socio-economic needs have to a large extent been met. In eligible countries for the third phase of Tempus these needs are still very much felt and this makes the programme highly relevant."
- 2) "The socio-economic development challenges that face the eligible countries of Tempus III are no less formidable than those addressed by Tempus I and II and they strengthen rather than weaken the case for giving priority to training and higher education reforms." Furthermore the mid-term evaluation referred to the following issues and developments that have been prevalent during the implementation period of TEMPUS III (2000-2006) and which to a large degree give expression to a need for a programme like TEMPUS: an intensified cultural dialogue; enhanced regional co-operation; catching up in science and ICT; development of economic free trade zones with the EU (Tacis and MEDA); and further economic integration with the EU (CARDS). Belief system change,

²² See for instance: De la Fuente, Angel and Antonio Ciccone, *Human capital in a global and knowledge-based economy, Final report for DG Employment and social affairs*, European Commission, 2002.

²³ Krueger, Alan and Mikael Lindahl (2001). Education for Growth: Why and for Whom? *Journal of Economic Literature* 39 (4): pp. 1101-1136; de la Fuente, Angel and Rafael Doménech (2006). "Human capital in growth regressions: how much difference does data quality make?" *Journal of the European Economic Association* 4(1), 2006, pp. 1-36..

²⁴ Hanushek, Eric A. and Dennis D. Kimko (2000). Schooling, Labor-Force Quality and the Growth of Nations. *American Economic Review* 90 (5): pp. 1184-1208.

²⁵ Wößmann, Ludger (2003). Specifying Human Capital. *Journal of Economic Surveys* 17 (3): pp. 239-270.

²⁶ Stephen H. Courtright, Public Rates Of Return On Higher Education Investments, By State, *Journal of College Teaching & Learning* – August 2007 Volume 4, Number 8, Groot, W en H. Maassen van den Brink, *Investeren en Terugverdienen. Kosten en baten van onderwijsinvesteringen*, SBO, Den Haag, 2003.

²⁷ ECORYS-NEI, *Mid-term evaluation report of the third of the TEMPUS programme (2000 -2006)*.

institutional change and skills changes were seen by the mid-term evaluators as the key areas for intervention. In conclusion the mid-term evaluation of TEMPUS III stated that reforms aimed at meeting these needs and partnership programmes like Tempus are therefore very much needed [today] to ensure that the EU and its neighbours can become a prosperous and peaceful group of countries in the highly competitive globalising world that is taking shape.²⁸

The relevance of TEMPUS was evidenced by earlier evaluations of the programme which showed that cooperation in education and training was key for the transition of countries that were to become candidate countries in the short term. Aside from this, it is seen as essential by the Member States that the EU-systems become more and more open to the rest of the world, so enabling to learn from and absorb excellent practice wherever it is found, if the EU is to achieve the goal set at the 2002 Barcelona European Council of becoming a world quality reference in education and training.²⁹

In this final evaluation of TEMPUS III the afore mentioned relevance of the programme was reconfirmed. In the interviews the relevance of TEMPUS was generally viewed as high, although the accent differed between countries:

- In the Western Balkans TEMPUS III was of vital significance to re-establish regional relationships inter alia among HE institutions, after a period of violent conflict. Furthermore, the actual or likely EU candidacy of (most) countries in this region made the relevance of TEMPUS unquestionable, necessitating reforms of the HE sector. (See also below in the section on specific objectives).
- In Eastern Europe and Central Asia the relevance of the programme was connected to the (political) will to raise the quality and standard of HE. For several of the countries in this region education is also one of the few areas where there is a policy dialogue and bottom-up co-operation with the EU.
- For the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) participation in TEMPUS opened up opportunities to realign their education system to the new French qualification framework (three tier system) to which the Maghreb countries traditionally have been closely related and thus also getting in line with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Relevance of specific objectives

The degree of relevance of each specific objective does differ from country to country depending on whether they are parties to the Bologna process and/or whether they have significant national-level HE reform initiatives underway. The setting of national priorities for TEMPUS III clearly reflects the differences in developmental pace of the countries involved. In general however, all specific objectives were and remain relevant to a greater or lesser extent – with quality of education remaining an important issue in all countries. It should be acknowledged however that the development of quality assurance in higher education is a highly complex phenomenon, in many countries departing from a

²⁸ European Commission, *The New Generation of Community Education and Training Programmes after 2006*, COM (2004), Final, p. 32.

²⁹ Idem.

model in which a genuine concern for “academic quality” was not altogether absent but was woven into a complex mix of ideology, party politics and bureaucratic procedures.³⁰ The relevance of TEMPUS for promoting the development of quality assurance systems can be underpinned by academic literature based on research in the Central and East European Countries.³¹ It is also evidenced from this literature that quality assurance can only be fully developed when account is taken of the interests of students, employers, and society more generally, something that in traditional state driven top down approaches used to be very uncommon.

The launch of the Bologna process in 1999 strengthened the relevance of TEMPUS III in various ways:

- TEMPUS offered the partner countries and the participating institutions opportunities to engage in international cooperation and academic exchange and with this contribute to and become part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) which is aimed for by the Bologna process.
- TEMPUS offered the participating institutions opportunities to work on HE reforms that are prominent in the Bologna process, such as comparable and compatible degrees organised in a three-cycle structure (e.g. bachelor-master-doctorate), quality assurance and recognition of foreign degrees and other higher education qualifications. These issues clearly received greater prominence in TEMPUS projects over the period since 2000. For CARDS this was also due to the fact that the Bologna process was one of the indicative priorities that was agreed between the European Commission and the Partner Countries on in the Common Policy Orientation for the implementation of TEMPUS III.
- Depending on the actual content of projects and the characteristics of HE systems TEMPUS also contributed to a broader societal relevance of higher education, for instance by establishing or improving the links between higher education, enterprises, research and innovation. From the interviews and country visits it became clear that this process is still on-going and in some countries has only just started.

The relevance of TEMPUS III in the Western Balkans was also strengthened by the efforts of certain countries to accede to the EU – necessitating more urgent reforms of the HE sector. TEMPUS III’s specific objective #5 (Strengthening regional cooperation) has also been particularly relevant in the Balkans, given that the Programme came immediately after a period of regional disintegration and violent conflict. The importance of TEMPUS for re-establishing regional relationships has especially been relevant for Serbia and FYROM. TEMPUS is regarded as *the* programme that lifted the isolated position of these countries, not only in the Western Balkans but also regarding Western Europe. The opportunities for academics and (post-graduate) students to connect to the ‘outside world’ and to travel again to other countries were greatly valued by all respondents.

³⁰ Kohoutek, J. (ed), *Implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Central and East-European Countries – Agenda Ahead*, Bucharest, 2009 (published by UNESCO).

³¹ Kohoutek, J. (ed), *Implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Central and East-European Countries – Agenda Ahead*, Bucharest, 2009 (published by UNESCO).

Operational objectives

The bottom-up character of TEMPUS III contributed to the relevance of the programme, by way of allowing the formulation of national priorities reflecting the different stages of the transformation process in the Partner Countries and their different transformation needs, including the role of the higher education sector in this.

National priorities refer to the more specific higher education policy strategies in the Partner Countries. The country specific priorities for TEMPUS were established on an annual basis by DG EAC in agreement with the National Authorities in the Partner Countries. For this DG EAC invited all TEMPUS Partner Countries to conduct an individual policy dialogue in Brussels in the spring of 2004, followed by further exchanges and correspondence in order to refine the national priorities. The national priorities provided a listing of issues within the field of higher education, including *inter alia* accreditation, quality assurance, the need to adapt higher education better to labour market needs and the Bologna Process.³² Whilst focussing on national priorities was not necessarily a pre-condition for project selection, preference was however given to projects that were most in line with these.

It should be noted that the national priorities were not fixed for the full TEMPUS III period, allowing countries to adapt existing priorities and formulate new ones reflecting change and developments in the higher education system. This was for instance clearly the case in the Russian Federation whereas in Morocco no significant change of national priorities took place. In some cases the attention for education topics seriously changed due to changes in government (e.g in Serbia attention towards education has grown since 2008).³³

In the Russian Federation the set of general priorities for 2002-2003 focused on the integration of the Russian educational system into the framework of the Bologna process. For the latter period of TEMPUS III the national priorities focused on the selection of priority fields for curriculum development and the preparation of development strategies, including financing aspects (fund-raising). In addition, special attention was paid to the nation-wide dissemination of the post-graduate (master) level, which even became one of the main priorities of the Russian Federation for the TEMPUS IV programme. Also in Serbia and FYROM the relevance of TEMPUS was underlined by stressing the congruity between the operational objectives of TEMPUS and the process of catching up with the Bologna process.

There is some evidence that in some countries the selection of projects did not fully reflect the needs of the country involved, because recommendations and advice of national stakeholders were not (fully) taken into account. The issue of the selection of projects is assessed in a more elaborated way in the chapter on efficiency (Chapter 4 of this evaluation).

³² Guide for applicants 2004 and 2005, TEMPUS National priorities.

³³ The interrelationship between TEMPUS and national priorities in the field of higher education is further illustrated in the country reports (see Annex V).

3. To what extent was the type of projects / actions supported by the Programme (in particular JEPs & Structural Measures) relevant to the programme objectives in the light of expected results, outcomes & impact on higher education systems?

The overall mixture of programme approaches - i.e. “bottom-up” JEPs, “top-down” SCMs and ad hoc and flexible IMGs – are perceived to have been a relevant means of achieving the programme’s expected results, outcomes and impacts. Whereas IMGs were targeted at individual mobility (of teachers, trainers, university administrators, senior ministerial officials, education planners and other experts in training), JEPs more focused on the intermediate level of curricula and university management, and SCMs had more a macro focus on development and restructuring of the higher education system. With this variety in actions TEMPUS could reasonably be expected to achieve its specific objectives, although this is more clear for objectives regarding for instance curricula reform or management training than for strengthening democracy. In this respect the outcome of this evaluation is in line with the Mid-term evaluation of TEMPUS III which reported that “each of the project types of Tempus has its own relevance and proper place in the Tempus intervention logic.”³⁴

The general perception among the interviewed respondents is that the relevance of JEPs can be claimed to be higher due to the fact that the IMGs often are not targeted at structural changes and that the SCM often appeared difficult to implement. Some NTOs commented that the SCM projects were difficult to explain as the expected benefits to the individual organisations were not always obvious. Furthermore, to achieve benefits at the national/policy high involvement at ministry level was required which in most countries was not easy to realise. In this respect it was commented that EU Member State HEIs sometimes refrain from participation in SCM because of the perceived political background of the instrument. According to one NCP: “*the institutions get the feeling that they are too much involved in political action*”. In the MEDA countries only a few SCMs were carried out especially in the smallest countries.

Furthermore it is evident from the overview of implemented JEPs that the content of the projects are all in line with the specific objectives of TEMPUS (see introductory section of this chapter) with specific objective #4 (the contribution of higher education and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy) being least explicitly visible in the projects.

4. Is the approach based on national priorities valid, how does it work in practice & is it appropriate for encouraging co-operation between partner countries?

Allowing countries to define their own TEMPUS national priorities does in principle increase the relevance of TEMPUS III. However, its realisation in practice is subject to a series of assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that countries do have their own individual needs – something that was clearly evident over the 2000-2006 period. Secondly, it assumes that the EC actually allows countries to define their own national priorities. This is possible within the boundaries of the general and specific objectives of the programme,

³⁴ ECORYS-NEI, Mid-term evaluation report of the third phase of the TEMPUS Programme.

leaving individual countries the opportunity to specify their own needs in terms of national priorities. In a way one could therefore argue that TEMPUS is “semi-demand driven”. At the same time however there is evidence from the country cases indicating supply driven projects, in which the Western partners supplied “off the shelf” course material. Thirdly, the approach assumes that Partner Countries are properly able to define and articulate their national needs – a process that requires “vision” and also the involvement of a wide range of relevant stakeholders. The extent to which this actually happened differed from one country to another. This is similar to findings from the mid-term evaluation of TEMPUS III which concluded that the national priorities for some countries is a long and unspecific wish list (e.g. business economics, fiscal policy, tourism, social work, biochemistry), whereas for others countries it provides a focus on cross-cutting horizontal issues (e.g. two-stage diploma cycle, ECTS, life long learning, distant education, university-industry co-operation).³⁵

The Russian Federation is a clear example of a country seriously developing its national policies in the field of higher education whereas Morocco obviously encountered difficulties in setting its national priorities, resulting in a wide variety of priorities and eventually hampering the impact of the programme.

There is little evidence of the process of national priority-setting encouraging co-operation between partner countries. Rather, the key driver of this co-operation appears to have been basic eligibility requirements (particularly surrounding TEMPUS III regional projects). An exception here however is the Western Balkans where anecdotal evidence suggests that the fact that countries with similar HE systems (and therefore similar reform agendas) did lead to enhanced co-operation between different countries. The Maghreb countries also closely consulted with each other, and with other Mediterranean countries through TEMPUS initiatives, aiming at realignment of their education systems to the new 3-cycle degree structure, which is in line with Bologna, and ultimately trying to become part of the ‘Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education and Research Area.’

The specific organisation of the process of setting national priorities varied among the partner countries. In a few countries all major stakeholders (Ministry of Education, representatives of HEI and the NTO) were involved in a so called TEMPUS Board or TEMPUS Committee, bringing together various national stakeholders for discussion on national TEMPUS priorities (e.g. Albania), whereas in other countries only the ministry of education (or ECD and NTO) was involved. The ministry in most cases consulted different experts. In the majority of partner countries the NTO was involved in the process. In most cases the NTO was consulted by the ministry. In a few other countries, however, the NTO was the driving force in the consultation process with the different stakeholders. The ECD was only involved in the process in two cases.

In most if not all countries the TEMPUS programme fitted very well into national policies. The involvement of the ministry in the process of setting national priorities should ensure consistency between the two. The motivation for the selection of specific national priorities however was not always clear. Some NTOs mentioned in this respect

³⁵ ECORYS-NEI, *Mid-term evaluation report of the third phase of the Tempus programme (2000-2006) Final report*, Rotterdam, 2003.

that the ministry frequently changed the national priorities or was just “ticking boxes”, lacking a clear goal orientation. Priorities set were not always shared by other stakeholders in the HE system as is reflected in a comment of one of the respondents: *“it was decided to focus on areas that have not been covered yet; in some of the major priority areas nobody was interested”*.

3.3 Complementarity and Community added value

2. To what extent has the programme proved complementary to other Community initiatives within higher education & research (Erasmus Mundus/External Cooperation Window & Sixth Framework Programme) as regards to both its external cooperation policies & the intra-EU education policies?

As was mutually agreed at the Lisbon Summit in 2000 the European Union is to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Modernisation of Europe’s universities, involving their interlinked roles of education, research and innovation, has been acknowledged by the Commission not only as a core condition for the success of the broader Lisbon Strategy, but as part of the wider move towards an increasingly global and knowledge-based economy.³⁶ To this end the European Commission published a modernisation agenda for universities which was welcomed by the Member States and the main stakeholders in higher education. The modernisation agenda for universities is part of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs. In this process the Commission is not a direct actor in the modernisation of universities, but it aims to play a catalytic role, providing political impetus and targeted funding in support of reform and modernisation. The important role universities play in enhancing European competitiveness is being supported by the work that is done in the context of the Bologna process aiming, by 2010, at comparable qualifications (short cycle, Bachelor, Master, Doctorate); flexible, modernised curricula at all levels which correspond to the needs of the labour market; and trustworthy quality assurance systems. As was illustrated in the previous section TEMPUS III for the participating institutions and countries in various ways had a clear relation to the Bologna process. In this section we focus on other EU measures and programmes TEMPUS III can or should be related to.

The EU supports a broad range of measures to modernise the content and practices of higher education in the 27 Member States and the EU's 28 neighbouring countries, including with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the Tempus programme and the EU's programme for worldwide academic cooperation: Erasmus Mundus. The EU also works to support the modernisation agenda of universities through the implementation of the 7th (at the time of TEMPUS III this was the 6th) EU Framework Programme for Research (European Research Area) and the Competitiveness and

³⁶ COM(2006) 208 final. Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation.

Innovation Programme as well as the Structural Funds and loans from the European Investment Bank.³⁷

As far as TEMPUS concerns the aim of complementarity is expressed in Article 9 of the Council Decision on TEMPUS III, underlining the links between TEMPUS and other Community actions: “the Commission shall ensure consistency and, where necessary, complementarity between Tempus III and other Community actions undertaken both in the Community and as part of assistance provided to eligible countries, particularly with regard to the activities of the European Training Foundation.”³⁸

Erasmus Mundus

Erasmus Mundus has a clear goal in the field of education aiming to enhance quality in higher education through scholarships and academic cooperation between Europe and the rest of the world. More specific the objectives of Erasmus Mundus are:³⁹

- to promote a quality offer in higher education with a distinct European added value, attractive both within the European Union and beyond its borders;
- to encourage and enable highly qualified graduates and scholars from all over the world, to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union;
- to develop more structured cooperation between European Union and third-country institutions and greater European Union outgoing mobility as part of European study programmes;
- to improve accessibility and enhance the profile and visibility of higher education in the European Union.

These objectives are pursued by means of: (a) Erasmus Mundus masters courses selected on the basis of the quality of the proposed training and hosting of students; (b) a scholarship scheme; (c) partnerships with third-country higher education institutions; (d) measures enhancing the attractiveness of Europe as an educational destination; (e) technical support measures.

From a perspective of NTOs and NCPs the complementarity of TEMPUS was mainly related to Erasmus Mundus in which they themselves were often involved. At the same time, however, a considerable number of respondents (particularly in the MEDA countries) expressed the wish to receive more information on the Erasmus Mundus programme. A NCP respondent commented on the subject: “*NTOs should have been involved in information days of the ERASMUS MUNDUS II programme, whereas they are directly concerned by the promotion of this programme*”. Involvement of NTOs in other EC - or bilateral programmes in the area of higher education is limited.

All respondents found TEMPUS to be complementary to other programmes in HE. The complementarity (especially since the IMGs were removed from TEMPUS) with the

³⁷ Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc1290_en.htm

³⁸ Council Decision of 29 April 1999 adopting the third phase of the trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education (Tempus III) (2000-2006) (1999/311/EC), OJ L 120, 8.5.1999, p. 30. It should be noted that in 2006 the programme management of the TEMPUS programme was moved from the European Training Foundation to the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

³⁹ Decision No 2317/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 December 2003 establishing a programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries (Erasmus Mundus) (2004 to 2008), Official Journal of the European Union L 345/1.

Erasmus Mundus programme was mostly put as – “*Erasmus Mundus is for students and staff mobility and TEMPUS for the national and institutional level and infrastructure*”. Several respondents provided examples of TEMPUS projects which were continued by an Erasmus Mundus project or the other way around. Cooperation through a bilateral programme was also often the follow-up to a TEMPUS project (and vice versa). Other EC programmes were considered to be complementary to TEMPUS, involving other countries (regions) and research. Below we elaborate on the complementary role of TEMPUS in other EU programmes, i.e. Sixth Framework Programme, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

Sixth Framework Programme

Whereas education and research within universities are assumed to have an iterative and complementary relationship, it is logical that aside from education programmes like TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus the European Commission also developed a programme to promote European research and technological development – during the term of TEMPUS III this programme was called the Sixth Framework Programme (abbreviated FP6) that ran from 2002 till 2006. The evaluation of FP6 was positive about the results achieved, as illustrated by the following reference:

FP6 was a powerful mechanism for catalysing RTD in Europe that could only be realised through action at the European level. It built upon the contributions of the Member States in order to become a key instrument to tackle sub-criticality in European RTD. The Expert Group believes that the activities under FP6, especially its core thematic priorities that constitute 65% of its total expenditures, have generated European Added Value (EAV), contributed generally towards increased industrial competitiveness, generated network externalities, and strengthened the knowledge infrastructure in Europe.” Furthermore FP6 included first-rate projects, involving top-quality researchers and well-managed consortia. Collectively, these have contributed to the improved mobility of researchers and to the internationalisation of research teams.⁴⁰

The ex-post evaluation report of FP6 does not mention any specific relations between FP6 and the TEMPUS programme, which might be surprising for two programmes largely aiming at the same target groups, i.e universities. From various instances in the evaluation of FP6 it can be concluded that TEMPUS and FP6 encountered similar problems, i.e underdeveloped university structures. This can be illustrated with the following citation from the evaluation report:

The accession of ten New Member States during FP6 also meant that the FP had in 2004 to absorb many new participants from systems still undergoing reorganisation towards EU standards, with RTD generally having been under-funded for many years, comparatively weak infrastructures and institutional structures that had tended to keep research, higher education and industry apart.⁴¹

One could argue that whereas TEMPUS was aiming at reforming and developing HE structures and establishing professional management, FP6 and its successor could

⁴⁰ *Evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development 2002-2006*, Report of the Expert Group, February 2009.

⁴¹ *Evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development 2002-2006*, Report of the Expert Group, February 2009.

effectively promote European research and technological development. In both programmes this mutual complementarity is clearly underdeveloped. Whereas in the Council Decision for TEMPUS III complementarity with other EC activities is expressly mentioned, the Council Decision on FP6 does not, nor synergy with other education oriented programmes.⁴² Also in the response by the Commission to the Reports of the Expert Groups on the Ex Post Evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programmes complementarity between the two programmes is not clearly expressed.⁴³ So, if academic education and academic research are to benefit to the full of each other it appears that the complementarity or expected synergy between education reform programmes, like TEMPUS, and the European framework programme for research and technological development should get more attention than it now is given.

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

The overall objective of IPA is to assist the eligible countries in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the *acquis communautaire*, with a view to EU membership.⁴⁴ Key areas for assistance are: (a) strengthening of democratic institutions, (b) promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, (c) public administration reform, (d) economic reform; (e) development of civil society; (f) social inclusion; (g) reconciliation, confidence-building measures; (h) regional and cross-border cooperation. The Cross-Border Cooperation Component may support the eligible countries in cross-border, and, where appropriate, transnational and interregional cooperation among themselves and between them and the Member States.

Furthermore the Council Decision on IPA expressly also asks for support related to the adoption and implementation of the *acquis communautaire* and social, economic and territorial development including, inter alia, infrastructure and investment related activities, in particular in the areas of regional, human resources and rural development. The Council Decision is clear in stating that IPA may inter alia be used to finance capacity and institution building as well as investment. Coordination with other Community instruments for cross-border, trans-national and interregional cooperation is expressly addressed in the Council Decision on IPA.

Whereas in general TEMPUS aims at contributing to many of the objective areas IPA is targeting at, this is especially the case regarding strengthening (HE) institutions, reconciliation in the sense of promoting understanding between and reapproachment of cultures, human resources development by way of among others curricula development, improving management skills in the HE sector, and contribution of HE and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy. So, in general as well as regarding more specific objectives TEMPUS can be said to have a clear role to IPA.

⁴² Decision No 1513/2002/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 June 2002, concerning the sixth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities, contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and to innovation (2002 to 2006). *Official Journal of the European Communities* L 232/1.

⁴³ *On the Response to the Reports of the Expert Groups on the Ex Post Evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programmes*, Communication from the Commission to the Council, European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2009) 210 final.

⁴⁴ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) *Official Journal of the European Union* 31.7.2006.

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our neighbours and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all concerned.⁴⁵ ENP offers countries the chance to participate in various EU activities, through greater cooperation on political, security and economic issues as well as culture and education. Through this deeper engagement with its partners, the EU seeks to promote partners' commitment to common values such as the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, and the promotion of good neighbourly relations. The tailor made Action Plans contain a number of priorities intended to strengthen commitment to these values. The Action Plans should contribute to cross-border cooperation. In this, the experience gained with structural policies will be taken into account.

As was also elaborated on the relation with the above mentioned Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) TEMPUS has been in the position to play a (complementary) role in the ENP, although its date of commencement (2004) obviously has limited this role regarding TEMPUS III, which ended in 2006. In particular the "higher level" objectives of TEMPUS regarding promoting understanding and reapproachment of cultures and the contribution of HE and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy are clearly in line with the objectives of ENP. The other specific objectives of TEMPUS addressing inter alia curricular reform and development of HE structures and establishments and their management probably could contribute in a more indirect way to the objectives of ENP.

Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)

Although not yet developed at the time of the implementation of TEMPUS III, and therefore beyond the scope of this evaluation, as from 2006 TEMPUS can also play a complementary role to the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). This instrument aims at supporting cooperation with developing countries, territories and regions. The primary and overarching objective of cooperation is the eradication of poverty in partner countries and regions in the context of sustainable development, including pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the promotion of democracy, good governance and respect for human rights and for the rule of law.⁴⁶ More specifically in the field of HE the programme aims at promoting vocational training, higher education, lifelong learning, cultural, scientific and technological cooperation, academic and cultural exchanges as well as enhancing mutual understanding between partner countries and regions and the Community. The geographical areas that are covered by DCI are broader than the ones covered by TEMPUS, including Latin America and South Africa. but also including TEMPUS regions like the Middle East and Central Asia. Complementary with DCI seems to be obvious but is to be developed under TEMPUS IV.

⁴⁵ Communication from the Commission to the Council on the Commission Proposal for Action Plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), COM(2004) 795 final.

⁴⁶ Regulation(EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, *Official Journal of the European Union* L 378/41

Complementarity from a respondents' point of view

Besides the analysis of policy instruments the answers to the questionnaire indicated TEMPUS to be complementary to other programmes, although the actual meaning of “complementarity” remains somewhat obscure⁴⁷:

- About half of the respondents involved in IMGs indicated to have been involved in other international cooperation programmes in higher education (HE) with measures comparable to the IMGs. Most of these respondents (59%) were involved in other EC cooperation programmes in HE. Around one third used national HE cooperation programmes and HE cooperation programmes launched by other regions/ countries. The programmes mostly took place in the EU (69%) or their own region (37%).
- Of all respondents involved in JEPs, 63 per cent had been involved in other international cooperation programmes in HE with measures comparable to the JEP. Of these respondents, most of them mentioned to be involved in other EC cooperation programmes in higher education (65%) or in national HE cooperation programmes (45%). More than half of these other programmes took place in the EU.
- Of all respondents involved in SCMs, 63 per cent had been involved in other international cooperation programmes with measures comparable to the SCM. Most of them were involved in other EC cooperation programmes in higher education (81%) or in national higher education cooperation programmes (47%). More than half of these other programmes took place in the EU.

5. What was the Community Added Value of the programme from the perspective of participating institutions within the EU?

From the perspective of participating EU institutions, the most significant Community Added Value is derived from the establishment, maintenance or expansion of networks resulting from TEMPUS III projects. Whilst such network creation is not restricted to a multi-lateral programme per se, Tempus III's size and level of partner involvement does appear to have led to unique benefits at the network level, which probably would not have evolved without TEMPUS. In this respect TEMPUS certainly contributed to the (further) opening of the HE sector within the EU, and with this reflecting a trend towards an increasingly global economy. Also TEMPUS helped countries to make steps in the Bologna process, and with this paved the way for intensified cooperation in the future, for instance regarding exchange under Erasmus Mundus and the agreement on mutual recognition of studies (ECTS).

3.4 Conclusions

The evaluation indicates that TEMPUS III remained relevant with respect to its global, specific as well as its operational objectives:

The relevance of its global objective is due to the fact that socio-economic and democratic transformation processes are still ongoing across all Partner Countries,

⁴⁷ See Annex IV tables All 0.41-43 for IMG, tables 0.59-0.61 for JEP and 0.140-0.142 for SCM.

although countries differ in this, meaning that the character of relevance is different in different countries and regions.

All specific objectives were and remain relevant to a greater or lesser extent – with quality of education remaining an important issue in all countries. The degree of relevance of each specific objective does however differ from country to country depending on their involvement in the Bologna process and/or whether they have significant national-level HE reform initiatives underway. In this respect the launch of the Bologna process in 1999 strengthened the relevance of TEMPUS III in various ways:

- TEMPUS offered the partner countries and the participating institutions opportunities to engage in international cooperation and academic exchange and with this contribute to and become part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) which is aimed for by the Bologna process.
- TEMPUS offered the participating institutions opportunities to work on HE reforms that are prominent in the Bologna process, such as comparable and compatible degrees organised in a three-cycle structure (e.g. bachelor-master-doctorate), quality assurance and recognition of foreign degrees.
- Depending on the actual content of projects and the characteristics of HE systems TEMPUS also contributed to a broader societal relevance of higher education, for instance by establishing or improving the links between higher education, enterprises, research and innovation. It is emphasized however, that this process is on-going and in some countries has only just started.

The relevance of TEMPUS III was also high because of the bottom-up character of the programme, allowing the formulation of national priorities, taking into account different stages of the transformation process and have different transformation needs, including the role of the higher education sector. Priorities set were not always shared by all stakeholders in the HE system. In most if not all countries the TEMPUS programme fitted very well into national policies, although in some cases missing a clear strategic goal orientation. There was little evidence of the process of national priority-setting encouraging co-operation between partner countries. The demand-driven character of TEMPUS was in some cases seriously challenged by supply driven mechanisms on the side of partner institutions supplying course material “off the shelf”.

The overall mixture of programme approaches - i.e. “bottom-up” JEPs, “top-down” SCMs and ad hoc and flexible IMGs – are perceived to have been a relevant means of achieving the programme’s expected results, outcomes and impacts. Whereas IMGs were targeted at individual mobility (of teachers, trainers, university administrators, senior ministerial officials, education planners and other experts in training, JEPs more focused on the intermediate level of curricula and university management, and SCMs had more of a macro focus on development and restructuring of the higher education system. With this variety in actions TEMPUS could reasonably be expected to achieve its specific objectives, although this is more clear for objectives regarding for instance curricula reform or management training than for strengthening democracy.

Aside from its relation to the Bologna process and the European reform agenda for higher education TEMPUS also in other respects is not an isolated cooperation programme, but in various ways has a clear role in other EU policies, although the evaluation shows that

this is open to improvement. In particular the complementary role between TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus is open to improvement, which has gained special relevance since the IMGs were removed from TEMPUS. Furthermore, it is clear from the objectives of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) that TEMPUS can play a distinct role, for instance regarding strengthening (HE) institutions, reconciliation in the sense of promoting understanding between and reapproachment of cultures and human resources development, although its specific role appears to be underexposed.

Aside from its role to the EU External policy programmes TEMPUS can be claimed to have a complementary function to the Sixth Framework Programme for promoting European research and technological development . For the relation between these two programmes we conclude that if academic education and academic research are to benefit to the full of each other – which in general is a sine qua non among academics - it appears that the complementarity or expected synergy between education reform programmes, like TEMPUS, and the European framework programme for research and technological development should get more attention than it received up till now.

4 Efficiency

4.1 Introduction

Inputs for the TEMPUS III projects were provided both by DG EAC (EC) in terms of funds and support and by the participants in terms of additional funds, time and manpower. In addition National Contact Points (and their funding agencies) and National Authorities provided support to the programme.

The total budget for TEMPUS III amounted to €352 million, which was a considerable decline from the funding level of TEMPUS II (whose geographical scope was admittedly very different). The overall allocation for the second phase of TEMPUS (€527 million) however included €404 million from PHARE country budgets. The remaining amount €123 million came from TACIS country budgets. During TEMPUS III about €160 million was allocated to TACIS countries whilst CARDS and MEDA countries received respectively €110 million and €80 million (see table Annex III A1.1).

4.2 Budget and cost effectiveness

13. Was the size of budget for the programme appropriate & proportional to what the programme set out to achieve? Was it sufficient for reaching a critical mass of impacts? Could the same results have been achieved with less funding? Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms have provided better cost-effectiveness?

To answer the first part of this question it is important to understand that TEMPUS III was only meant to catalyse change within Partner Countries, not to finance wholesale change itself. It is difficult, particularly in view of this catalyst role, to give an objective indicator for an appropriate and proportional budget. Moreover, its catalyst role also depends on the national characteristics of the HE system. The more traditional a system is, the more difficult it will be to get things ‘in motion’.

The picture of the findings on the funding levels is mixed. Findings described in the chapter on Impact (chapter 6 of this report) show that TEMPUS has been able to reach considerable impacts in several areas such as initiating regional cooperation among partner countries and Partner Countries’ socio-economic development by equipping graduates with relevant skills and expertise in particularly TACIS and CARDS countries. Nevertheless, impacts and the extent to what these effects will be sufficient to reach a critical mass of impacts - a level of impact that will be durable and fuel further impact – varies among the countries and regions. The general feeling of the interviewed respondents during the country visits was that the total budget for TEMPUS III should

have been bigger, allowing more projects to be selected and effects to be stronger. In Morocco for instance HEIs were very active and exhausted their country budget relatively quickly compared to other countries in the region, which left limited opportunities for other relevant and quality project proposals. The NTO in Morocco indicated in this respect that they did not encourage more initiatives because of the limited budget possibilities. In line with this, the findings of the recent Impact Study showed that the objectives of the TEMPUS programme were considered ambitious, whilst the actual budget was reported to be too small to reach all objectives⁴⁸.

When looking at the average budget per country within the different regions during TEMPUS III, the CARDS countries generally received the highest budgets per country (€ 2,250,817,-) closely followed by MEDA countries. The average yearly budget for TACIS countries was almost €500,000 lower than for countries in the other regions⁴⁹. In the past TEMPUS could with a considerable higher budget fund a high intensity of TEMPUS projects to achieve durable impact in the PHARE accession countries. The Commission has not developed such an approach outside the PHARE countries. The challenges in the area of higher education in particularly the TACIS and MEDA countries, which are larger, more traditional and partly underdeveloped regions, however, are considerable. For example in countries such as Morocco and Uzbekistan the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education is still very low with respectively 11 and 10 per cent of the population of tertiary age in tertiary education (ISCED 5 and 6).

Considering these challenges that are (still) very large and the catalyst role of the programme, durable impact will depend very much on the number and the quality of the funded projects. In this respect (and this has not changed during the later half of TEMPUS III) the midterm evaluation concluded that funding levels had been insufficient to fund all relevant and high quality proposals for some of the eligible countries. This can be considered an indicator for under-funding.

An important issue to be considered, however, when the budget would be increased, is the extent to which countries could absorb more funding under the current model. In some of the countries almost all HEIs were already involved in one or more TEMPUS III projects and in other cases the involvement of certain HEI in multiple TEMPUS project raised questions about their particular absorption capacity.

Generally, respondents considered project budgets to be sufficient for implementing the projects, although more than a quarter of the surveyed respondents (mainly TACIS and MEDA participants) indicated that the project could have yielded more and/or better results if the budget had been bigger. Furthermore the majority of surveyed participants indicated that projects would not have taken place without TEMPUS funding. More than 60 per cent of both JEP and SCM respondents were of this opinion, whilst in most other cases the project would have been implemented in a different form or with less impact⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ European Commission, THE IMPACT OF TEMPUS III. The impact of the Tempus Programme on higher education development in the Tempus Partner Countries. A Survey, 2008

⁴⁹ Annex III table AI O.3

⁵⁰ Annex IV table AII 0.58 for JEP and table AII 0.139 for SCM

Given that the essence of TEMPUS III is its multilateral nature, it seems that when this works as expected – by making use of the expertise and experience of different organisations and systems – it is an effective way of achieving its goals. Moreover, the TEMPUS programme is not only focused on reforms of HE systems but also on the development of understanding and rapprochement of cultures and people. Particularly for these more long-term objectives it appears that they can more effectively be realized through multilateral cooperation.

Interviewed respondents see TEMPUS as a very cost effective programme compared to technical assistance programmes intended for partner countries funded by programmes such as the EC's European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) This is supported by the findings of the mid-term evaluation that TEMPUS compares very favourably to other technical assistance programmes.⁵¹ The explanation for this was found in the budgeting guidelines of TEMPUS which sets low compensation rates for expert inputs and in the opportunities offered to academics to match their TEMPUS inputs with their academic interests. The results of the survey also indicate that TEMPUS is assessed as a cost effective programme⁵². According to the majority of respondents TEMPUS is more worthwhile, useful and high quality than other international cooperation programmes in higher education.

An assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the three different mechanisms selected provides however a mixed picture. Generally JEPs are considered to be a very effective instrument by the surveyed and interviewed respondents. This is shown for instance by the survey results with about 90 percent of the JEP respondents⁵³ indicating that the outcome of their project in relation to the project objectives was (very) successful. On the other hand the cost-effectiveness of SCMs can be called into question given the limited results in several countries due to the fact that are perceived as difficult to implement. This issue has been addressed in a more elaborated way in the relevance chapter (section 3.2). Furthermore the one-year SCM projects in TEMPUS III were deemed by many respondents as being too short to effect genuine policy-level changes. Nevertheless the potential value of this type of instrument is in general underlined. EC officials considered IMGs not to have been a very cost-effective way of achieving individual mobility - despite its popularity among recipients - because of the high internal costs linked to the management of a high number of very small grants compared to the benefits they yielded.

4.3 Selection and monitoring procedure

14. To what extent have the mechanisms applied by the Commission & the ETF for selecting & monitoring the projects ensured a proper implementation of the programme & notably quality & effectiveness of selected projects & partnerships?

⁵¹ ECORYS-NEI, Mid-term evaluation report of the third of the TEMPUS programme (2000 -2006), p84.

⁵² See Annex IV tables 0.44-0.47 for IMG, tables 0.62-0.65 for JEP and 0.142-0.146 for SCM

⁵³ Table AII 0.92 Annex IV.

Selection procedure

The project selection procedure for JEPs and SCMs during Tempus III consisted of:

- (i) Eligibility check by the ETF;
- (ii) Quality check by independent academic assessors;
- (iii) Technical evaluation and ranking of applications by ETF;
- (iv) The short-listed projects were then sent to be examined to the NTOs, EC Delegations in Partner Countries and Ministries/national authorities to make comments and recommendations according to specific questions asked by the EC (project's strategy, priorities, team, coordination, etc.);
- (v) Final ranking of the projects by DG EAC in Brussels.

The duration of the selection process was reduced from 18 months at the start of the Tempus III programme in 2000 to 6 months from 2003 onwards.

Although the participants were in general satisfied with the rigour of the selection procedure, a number of interviewed respondents indicated that the first selection made by the academic assessors and ETF was sometimes 'too technical' and paid insufficient weight to national or regional needs. As one of the respondents stated: "*sometimes a project is not well written but very relevant*". This is in line with the findings of the mid-term evaluation which concluded that the project selection process was appropriate although among others the process was not well suited to compare the relative merits of one project versus another, in the wider context of the higher education reform needs of the eligible countries. As the aforementioned report goes on to say, this implies that the final selection may contain high quality projects, which nevertheless are not perceived as the most relevant by the stakeholders in the eligible countries.⁵⁴

But were projects that were 'technically compliant' being selected over projects that better met needs? The evaluation team has not studied the selection process but asked TEMPUS stakeholders if they considered the selection process instrumental in reaching the objectives of the TEMPUS III programme. The issue was raised during the interviews with the NTOs and during the interviews with stakeholders within the country visits. Several interviewed respondents pointed out that the EC did not follow the recommendations or advice of the national stakeholders on several projects. The projects selected were sometimes found to be less relevant or insufficiently adapted to national needs or in other cases involved weaker national partners. In some cases, particularly in smaller countries with fewer HEI, it was argued that rejection of certain projects/ larger faculties might have an impact on the whole country. Generally the interviewed respondents felt that the selection procedure should give more ground to the expertise and recommendations of the partner countries for this reason. This is reflected in the comment of one of the interviewed participants: "*the selection procedure should not be so strict, especially when it concerns a really important project. There should be some possible adjustments to better respond to the needs of the country*". The interviewed NTOs in particular felt that their involvement in the selection procedure should be larger as they have the knowledge about what is happening "on the ground". On the other hand EC officials argued that there is often strong pressure from local universities on their Ministries to support their projects whilst the Commission has to respect the strict

⁵⁴ ECORYS-NEI, Mid-term evaluation report of the third of the TEMPUS programme (2000 -2006), p.124,

selection procedures and cannot be influenced by outside pressure, especially in countries where national authorities are biased. Moreover the Commission can only assess a project based on its application and cannot consider a project if the principle criteria for funding are not fulfilled.

A complaint voiced by some of the interviewed participants was about the feedback given on the project selection. Some indicated that the ministry and/or NTO were not informed about the reasons for projects not being selected.

Monitoring

The following types of monitoring were set out in TEMPUS:

- Preventive project monitoring (guidance and advice on a case-by-case basis).
- Desk monitoring (evaluation of progress reports); and
- Field monitoring (visits to projects).

The objective of the **project monitoring** was twofold:

- To provide projects with guidance and advice for optimising the organisation of their activities and for achieving sustainable outcomes in line with project objectives.
- To provide the EC with a tool for controlling whether the expenditure of the awarded grant complies with the Tempus contract rules.

DG EAC/ ETF were involved in all types of monitoring whilst the NTOs were involved in preventive and field monitoring. In addition the EC Delegations in several partner countries were involved in field monitoring activities.

In general respondents perceived monitoring as very important due to the positive impact it could have on the implementation of the projects and because of the support and guidance it offered to the people involved. The mid-term evaluation concluded in this respect that monitoring practices were limited but could be considered adequate given the competition for management resources in the programme.⁵⁵

Field monitoring did not take place in a systematic manner in the beginning of TEMPUS III. During the latter half of TEMPUS III field monitoring took place in a more structured way. Although the available monitoring budgets are limited and insufficient to visit all projects, a number of projects were selected - depending on the available time and budget of the NTO in cooperation with the EC. Based on the desk monitoring and sometimes (informal) monitoring of the NTOs field monitoring was in most cases focused on the more problematic or larger projects. Most of the surveyed respondents who received support through project monitoring⁵⁶ rated this support high compared to the rating of other NTO activities. Nevertheless some of the respondents were more critical about the quality of the monitoring activities of the NTO. About 10 percent of both SCM and JEP participants gave a poor-very poor score to this support. Some of the interviewed respondents also expressed criticism as their opinion was not consistent with the assessment of the NTO. This however does not need to be viewed negatively and could also point to thorough and critical monitoring.

⁵⁵ ECORYS-NEI, Mid-term evaluation report of the third of the TEMPUS programme (2000 -2006), p.125.

⁵⁶ See Annex IV, tables 0.70-0.73 for JEP and tables 0.151-0.154 for SCM.

Feedback of the monitoring visits to the project partners however appeared to be limited. Although feedback sessions by the NTO monitors could be included from the second half of TEMPUS III, only two of the interviewed NTOs indicated that they had debriefings with the project partners. Furthermore feedback letters from DG EAC were sent to the grant holders only and not directly to the project partners monitored, as the EC is not allowed to contact project partners directly. The project partners of one of the projects visited complained that they had not received the feedback letter of the monitoring visit at all.

Internal M&E

Most surveyed participants (JEP and SCM) indicated that their project was mostly evaluated through a written progress report and/or an informal discussion within the partnership itself (over 80 percent). But self-evaluation methods and an external evaluation by a professional evaluator were also mentioned by a large group of the participants.

4.4 Support provided

4.4.1 National TEMPUS Offices

15. To what extent have the National TEMPUS Offices in the partner countries fulfilled their role & tasks? Could the same results have been achieved with other support mechanisms? What kind of other activities/ services could be initiated/ developed at their level to support the programme objectives?

Institutions from the partner countries were assisted by their National Tempus Office (NTO). During the first years of TEMPUS III institutions in the TACIS countries received support from TEMPUS Information Points (TIP). The NTOs had three main roles:

- National information and reference point on TEMPUS;
- Facilitate the communication between the EC and the national authorities;
- Provide information support to the TEMPUS desk officers in Brussels.

From 2005 onwards, the NTOs were more closely involved in field monitoring which complemented the Commission's activities in this regard.

NTOs in general performed the regular tasks defined by the EC which are promotion and information provision, support to applicants, support during the implementation phase, monitoring and evaluation activities (visits and reports) and reporting on TEMPUS. The three online surveys showed positive responses about the NTOs, especially in the information and application phase.⁵⁷

- About 50 per cent of the surveyed participants rated the quality of the services received as good or very good, whilst about 10 per cent of the respondents rated the

⁵⁷ See Annex IV, tables 0.70-0.73 for JEP and tables 0.151-0.154 for SCM.

support as (very) poor. About 20 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had received no support at all.

- The respondents were also asked to give their opinion about the quality of the support given during the various stages of the project. Respondents were especially satisfied with the support in project monitoring, whilst support in dissemination was rated the lowest. Of all different project members, the project coordinators were most positive about the support received.

Contrary to the overall positive opinions on the NTOs by most respondents, there are also findings that modify this picture. The interviewed EC officials indicated that there was a large variety in the quality of NTOs. This also became apparent during the country visits which showed some strong examples of very active and capable NTOs whose support was highly valued and went far beyond the more narrow remit outlined above to also include dissemination of best practices and policy advice (for example in Uzbekistan). Other NTOs however could have been more active to increase their network and connections with HEI (and other institutions) and could have played a more dynamic role in the promotion of the programme. Besides, some respondents, mostly in TACIS countries, indicated that it was difficult to communicate with the Ministry.

The institutional arrangement for NTOs differed between the Partner Countries. EC officials indicated that the EC is looking for the right institutional environment for NTOs in the specific context of the different partner countries. In line with this a large group of the NTOs had a direct relation with the Ministry of Education in their respective countries or were more independent but supervised by the Ministry as well as DG EAC. Some NTO's were established and supervised by DG EAC⁵⁸ only. Remarkably two coordinators of such NTOs were part-time professors at HEI as well, which could indicate a lack of independence. Support provided by the NTO was appreciated as being critical for efficiency in all countries visited. Examples of successful NTOs show that the mechanism can work very well. NTOs with strong (in)formal links with the Ministry of Education were in a better position to facilitate and increase the involvement of the national authorities and achieve 'better' results in this area.

Activities of most NTOs concentrated on provision of programme information and promotion. Fewer NTOs played active roles in dissemination of best practices. Furthermore additional provision of training in application writing was often an additional request from (potential) participants although some of the NTOs indicated that more support in proposal writing on this should be provided by DG EAC. Both activities could be initiated or developed further by the NTOs to support the programme objectives. In view of the limited involvement of NTOs in other complementary EC cooperation programmes in HE (see section 3.3) and the reported lack of information and knowledge about these programme, promotion and communication on the other EC programmes would be another area where more activities could be -and considering the inclusion of this task for NTOs in Tempus IV, will possibly be - developed.

⁵⁸ In some partner countries existing NGOs were contracted by the EC to perform the role of TEMPUS NTO. These NGOs remained active in other projects in the field of education.

Most interviewed NTOs complained that the funding received was not sufficient to perform all of their roles, particularly the implementation of promotion and information and monitoring activities.

4.4.2 National Contact Points

16. To what extent have the National Contact Points in the EU countries fulfilled their role & tasks? Could the same results have been achieved with other support mechanisms? What kind of other activities / services could be initiated / developed at their level to support the programme objectives?

Institutions from EU Member States are assisted by the National Contact Point (NCP). The main role of the NCP is to provide information about the Tempus programme, help the participating institutions from that particular Member State and facilitate cooperation with the Partner Countries. The NCPs are not financially supported by the Commission.

When respondents received support by the NCP the quality of support provided was generally rated as ‘good’ or ‘very good’⁵⁹. However as many as one third of the surveyed participants (both JEP and SCM) claimed they did not receive any support. Some participants mentioned that they “*did not need any support*”. The support received consisted mostly of provision of programme information, assistance with project applications and provision of practical project assistance⁶⁰. The SCM participants were particularly positive about the quality of the NCP with regard to communication about the Tempus programme. Grant holders more often rated the quality of the NCP as ‘very good’ than other project members.

The support mechanism of NCP appeared to be working well in most countries. The NCPs almost in all cases were part of (public) organisations which were closely involved in the development of the higher education sector. The institutional arrangements of NCPs, differed: some NCPs were public agencies which were supervised (and partly funded) by the national authorities of their respective countries and others were foundations in the area of higher education or NGOs. Nevertheless in the case of the new Member States, some of the interviewed respondents indicated that the budget of the NCP tends to be limited because of the more limited interest of the HEI which had to adapt to their new role (opposed to their former role as beneficiary of the programme) in the TEMPUS programme and national authorities that did not always support TEMPUS (“*because it does not benefit the country directly*”). This sometimes made it difficult for the NCP to play an active role in facilitating cooperation with other countries (both in the country itself as well as in the beneficiary countries).

Other activities initiated by NCPs were particularly support in dissemination of good practices and assistance in evaluation activities. NCP respondents mentioned in this respect that they would like to be more involved in monitoring activities to get a better view of the projects. Other activities which could be initiated or developed at the level of the NCPs is communication, notably the exchange of good practices, with NTOs, and

⁵⁹ See Annex IV tables 0.75-0.77 for JEP and 0.156-0.158 for SCM.

between NCPs themselves. These interactions are, for most NCPs and NTOs, to a large extent, limited to the yearly meetings in Brussels.

4.4.3 EC Delegation

17. Did the EC Delegations play a sufficiently defined role & to which extent was it adapted to the evolving context of the programme (more emphasis to national priorities & stronger involvement of the Ministries of the partner countries)?

The involvement of the EC Delegation differed widely per country – from a Delegation that was heavily involved and active to examples where the role of the Delegation was minimal or non-existent. For example, in the Russian Federation the EC Delegation was very active in education whilst in other countries, such as FYROM, the EC Delegation depended greatly on the professionalism and expertise of the NTO. In still others (e.g. Uzbekistan), there was no EC Delegation with basic project management and representation functions handled instead by a (lower status) “Europa House”. In almost all countries the EC Delegation and NTOs shared information and attended each others meetings. In fewer countries the Delegation were involved in more strategic activities that were in line with the increased focus on the top-down approach.

Generally speaking the involvement of the Delegation had grown since 2005. Some of the interviewed NTOs mentioned in this respect that the involvement of and relationship with the Delegation changed substantially during the period of TEMPUS III. Nevertheless the commitment of the EC Delegations appeared to vary among different Delegations – depending on whether they had an Education desk within the delegation and on the priority given to TEMPUS. However, a pro-active role of DG EAC also appeared to be important. This was reflected in the comment made by one of the participants that the EC Delegation involved did not receive enough (or any) information from DG EAC on TEMPUS to be able to be involved/be of use to the programme.

4.5 Other aspects

In addition to the main evaluation questions regarding efficiency, which were addressed above, the evaluation also looked at other efficiency aspects that could have hampered project results.

Organisational and administrative procedures within TEMPUS III

The surveyed participants were asked to indicate which improvement of conditions would have enabled them to achieve better or more results⁶¹. More than half of the surveyed participants indicated in this respect that less administrative obligations would have benefited project implementation. The respondents felt that the (financial) administrative obligations of the projects were time-consuming. As one respondent put it: “*The burden of administration and financial management was excessive, and was disproportionate to*

⁶¹ See Annex IV table 0.11 for IMG, table 0.94 for JEP and table 0.174 for SCM.

the benefits gained by my institution. For this reason, it is unlikely that we will participate in future TEMPUS projects.” In the interviews some respondents indicated that in certain cases invoices were rejected very rigidly without any additional contact with the participants for clarification. These findings are in line with the conclusions of the mid-term evaluation in 2004 that the rules for contracting and especially for financial administration, budgeting, invoicing and project completion were more rigid and time consuming than necessary.

The permitted time span of the projects (and tight deadlines) was also considered to be one of the main constraints –selected by more than 50 per cent (56% for JEPs and 60% for SCMs) of the participants to achieve better or more results. Particularly in the case of SCM projects it was mentioned that the duration of the projects was not enough to get the desired results.

In general the interviewed NTOs and NCPs were positive about the support of DG EAC. Its assistance and involvement in national events were highly valued. The only complaint voiced by some of the NCPs was about the provision of statistical information and feedback with respect to content on projects involving partners of the countries involved.

Own organisation

The active involvement and buy-in of high-level university management (in many, but not all, countries – particularly the Dean or Rector) of the institution was found to be a key success factor in project implementation. University management does not necessarily have to be actively involved in a project, but they do need to be aware of the general thrust of activities and support them. In the interviews and country visits, examples were given of projects that had been too attached to just a single person (both at the side of the partner country as well as the EU member institution) and were in some instances not even known to the university management. In cases where key people left the institution or did not give priority to the TEMPUS project, the projects were abandoned. Almost half of the surveyed IMG participants⁶² felt that more and better support from their own organisation would have improved the impact of the IMG activities.

Project partners (cooperation & quality)

Among the surveyed participants, 25 percent (particularly in the MEDA countries) felt that more cooperation within the consortium could have enabled better or more results. This is also reflected in the findings of the country visits that showed varied levels of cooperation within the projects visited- from active and effective cooperation between partners to examples of almost completely inactive or ‘lost’ partners. The interviewed respondents mentioned good cooperation between the project partners as one of the key success factors in project implementation. It was indicated that efficiency is (perhaps unsurprisingly) generally better in the case of universities that had previously participated in the programme or have been involved in other forms of mutual cooperation. Interviewed respondents noted that efficiency of projects was enhanced when projects

⁶² See Annex IV table 0.11.

were based on strong partnerships built around open communication between participating institutions.

4.6 Conclusion

The leading questions on efficiency have been whether the programme as a whole and the organizational structures were efficient. Our conclusions on efficiency are mixed. In general the funding levels for TEMPUS III were not considered to be proportional to its ambitious objectives. Considering the large challenges in the eligible countries the fact that the total budget for TEMPUS III was spent and that funding levels have been insufficient to fund all relevant and quality proposals which can be considered a factor for under-funding. However, the absorption capacity of countries and institutions need to be considered. The funding levels for the projects in general appear to be sufficient.

TEMPUS was perceived as a cost-effective programme compared to (technical assistance) cooperation programmes. The multilateral nature of TEMPUS makes the policy instrument in essence cost-effective, although the degree differs per instrument. JEPs are perceived as very cost-effective whilst the efficiency of both SCM (limited effectiveness) and IMG (high internal management costs) mechanisms was viewed less positively.

Respondents were generally satisfied with the rigour of the selection process. The main issue identified concerns the perceived strong technical focus in the selection process. The weight given to the national needs and priorities on the 'ground' was considered by many respondents interviewed to be insufficient.

The monitoring process is improved considerably since the mid-term evaluation which is shown in the appreciation of this process. The weakness identified concerns the limited feedback on field monitoring which could affect the effectiveness and quality of the projects and partnerships and possible impact of monitoring on the implementation of the project.

The NTOs, NCPs and EC Delegations are all actors, who fulfilled supportive roles to the programme and its participants. The evaluation however showed that the way in which these actors fulfilled their respective roles varied considerably in the different countries and left room for improvements

- Support provided by NTOs is appreciated as being critical for efficiency. The evaluation indicates that the opinion on the quality of the activities of the NTOs is positive although the picture differed considerably between NTOs. Nevertheless, examples show that the mechanism can work very well.
- According to the respondents, NCPs have to a large extent fulfilled their role and tasks. The support point in EU Member states which was generally supported by government and HEIs appears to be working well in most countries. An exception here are the New Members States where the NCP was restricted in its activities due to limited budgets.
- The role of the EC Delegation with regard to the TEMPUS programme differed widely per country and appeared not to be not very well defined. The level of

involvement of the Delegation, which in general increased since the introduction of a more top-down focus, depended very much on the commitment and educational focus of the particular EC Delegation. Communication by DG EAC to both the Delegations and NTOs with respect to the expected role of the Delegation perceived to be is not always clear.

5 Effectiveness

5.1 Introduction

This Section analyses the effectiveness of TEMPUS III, i.e. the extent to which both the Programme as a whole as well as its constituent elements (i.e. individual JEPs, SCMs and IMGs) met their expected objectives. The objectives are placed at different levels, ranging from the overall objectives to specific and operational objectives. For a detailed description of these objectives we refer to Chapter 2, section 2.1. In this chapter we first present the results of projects and programme (5.2) followed by the benefits for students, staff, institutions and countries (5.3), coverage and the existence of a TEMPUS brand (5.4) and the role TEMPUS III played in the dissemination of European higher education policies (5.5).

5.2 Results of projects and the programme

6. To what extent can the programme's objectives be said to have been achieved, particularly as regards the needs of the partner countries? Are there any instances where the programme has exceeded initial expectations? What positive effects has this had in particular in terms of capacity building & convergence with European standards? Where expectations have not been met, what factors have hindered the development of the programme?

TEMPUS III has made an important contribution to the development of higher education systems in all eligible countries. The nature and scale of this contribution differs from country to country and the level of achievement was lower in the MEDA countries as a result of the Programme only operating in the region for three years (instead of the six years in other regions). Nevertheless, the general consensus among policy makers, rectors, faculty staff and university administrators was that benefits have been delivered in all regions. Notwithstanding concerns from some Partner Country HEIs on the quality of partnerships, co-operation appears to have been balanced and has indeed involved partners from all Member States (see Section 5.4). This overall positive picture is evident from all sources – the surveys of projects and NTOs as well as interviews with actors within HE institutions and the policy level within Partner Countries. We elaborate on specific examples in the Sections to come.

The achievement of ‘core’ higher education goals such as curriculum development, reform of higher education structures and establishments as well as development of skills profiles contained within this Specific Objective is clearly evident – although more so at

the level of individual institutions than at the national policy level where impacts were at best of a more indirect nature.⁶³ The evidence from the country case studies and interviews with NTOs pointed to curriculum development JEPs being the most successful type of all types of TEMPUS intervention – i.e. better than University Management or Institution-Building JEPs or SCMs. 55% of JEP respondents considered curriculum development to be one of the main benefits of TEMPUS III in their country⁶⁴. Moreover, it should be stressed that successful curriculum development projects often do much more than developing new curricula, including introducing new teaching practices and methodologies, developing new teaching and learning materials, introducing new quality assurance procedures and, in certain cases, even modifying the way universities are governed.

The achievement of the broader elements of this Specific Objective was either harder to identify or appeared to have been more indirect. TEMPUS III's bottom-up nature and the high level of people-to-people contact has definitely helped to promote understanding between and rapprochement of cultures. A full two-thirds of JEPs surveyed⁶⁵ claimed that their project had made a significant contribution to multi-lateral co-operation in HE between the EU and their country and similar sentiments were shared by stakeholders interviewed during the field missions. On the other hand, the contribution to the development of 'free and flourishing civil societies' is far less clear: 26 % and 36% of JEP survey respondents⁶⁶ claimed that their project had made 'significant' or 'minor' contributions respectively to the openness of the education system to civil society. However, it proved hard to substantiate this on the basis of evidence collected during other evaluation phases (notably the field missions) – especially given the fact that civil society bodies rarely had a major role in TEMPUS III projects and the fact that civil society remains tightly controlled by national authorities in many partner countries (notably many TACIS and MEDA countries). In general, it appears that there was a lack of a clear vision on how NGOs should have a meaningful role within TEMPUS III given the wider role of civil society within the countries themselves.

There are instances where individual Tempus III projects have exceeded initial expectations. Examples here would include Uzbekistan SCM T077A06-2006 (“Extention de la Formation des Gestionnaires de l’Enseignement”) which went far beyond its objective to even include the design of a Masters in University Management and Russian SCM TO 280B05 (“Conference on EU-Russia mobility”) which exceeded its original objective to even lead to initiatives for inter-Russian mobility. It is not however true that specific areas of intervention (e.g. curriculum development or institution-building) have exceeded expectations across the board. In any given country, examples of more positive projects would generally appear to be tempered by less successful ones.

The overall success of TEMPUS III in realizing most aspects of its Specific Objective (see above) has had a definite effect on both capacity-building and convergence with European standards. One clear example here comes from FYROM where the formulation

⁶³ As shown through the questionnaire results – see Table All.5.**Error! Main Document Only.** in Annex IV.

⁶⁴ See Annex IV table All 0.124.

⁶⁵ See Annex IV table 0.118.

⁶⁶ See Annex IV table 0.117.

of strategic development plans was done in such a way so as to lead to a much greater involvement of student bodies in high-level decision making.⁶⁷ And as was already indicated in chapter 3 in instance the TEMPUS III projects and the Bologna process were closely intertwined, using the outputs and experiences of TEMPUS projects for Bologna implementation. In general, it appears that TEMPUS III had a greater impact at the policy-level in those countries seeking EU membership (Croatia, FYROM and Serbia). The effect on capacity-building and convergence with European standards is covered in more detail in Sections 5.5 and 6.3.

Despite the overall positive picture, there are cases of where overall expectations of TEMPUS III were not met. The clearest example here refers to the problems encountered in promoting systematic policy-level changes. Whilst the picture is by no means uniform, factors such as the inaccessibility of senior policy-level actors in many countries and varying levels of importance attached to HE⁶⁸ have all conspired to limit the scope for widespread policy-level changes through TEMPUS III. A lack of understanding of what SCMs are meant to do among HE institutions and a feeling that they were also too short to be able to bring about meaningful change also restricted the effectiveness of TEMPUS III at the policy level. In general, the dominant feeling among surveyed JEP and SCM project partners⁶⁹ was that TEMPUS III had at best an indirect influence on legislative changes in the HE sphere (26% for SCMs and 36% for JEPs) with only 19% (SCMs) and 7% (JEPs) claiming a direct influence on legislative changes.

The picture with respect to policy is not entirely negative however with some examples of important results. For example, in Russia an SCM project led to the creation of a well-recognised accreditation agency (SCM TO19A06). Other more indirect effects are also evident. Moreover, even where TEMPUS III was not able to formally influence policy directly, it did sometimes provide the space for different options to be tested (see the box below for an example from Morocco).

Tempus as a 'Laboratory for Reform' in Morocco:

The main elements of HE policy reform in Morocco were determined in 2000 (through Law 01-00) prior to the country's entry into TEMPUS III. But whilst TEMPUS was not able to influence wider policy, several higher-level stakeholders we consulted highlighted that TEMPUS has been an excellent 'laboratory' for testing out new ideas in terms of curriculum development and governance innovations and also an essential catalyst of the reform itself. A respondent illustrated this trend whereby certain innovations appeared first as TEMPUS projects and once they proved their worthiness, were considered at the national level (e.g. the digitalisation of information management, introduction of quality assurance systems, setting up of an equivalence of courses and degrees scheme et cetera).

The creation of joint degree courses is an area where there was a clear divergence between the expectations of Partner Countries and what TEMPUS III could deliver – leading to widespread disappointment on the part of participating students and staff. It

⁶⁷ Support Network for Improvement of Strategic Planning.

⁶⁸ For example, although the current situation is now very different, HE was not a political priority in Serbia for much of the period covered by TEMPUS III.

⁶⁹ See Annex IV table AII 0.125 for JEP and AII 0.205 for SCM.

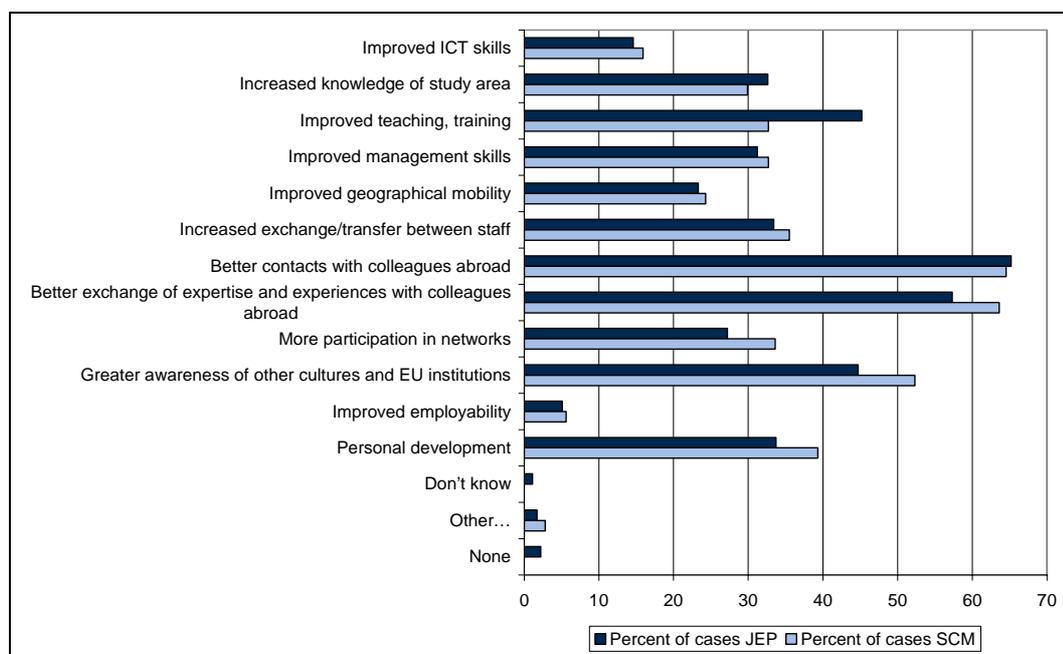
seems that the expectations of Partner Country HEIs were somewhat misplaced here as, apart from a relatively small number of projects, joint degree courses were never an expected outcome of TEMPUS III projects and the wider regulatory conditions required for such courses are far from being in place. In particular, legal regulations on course accreditation systems of EU Member States as well as difficulties in guaranteeing quality assurance within Partner Countries present the main barriers to the creation of such courses.

5.3 Benefits for students, staff, institutions and countries

9. To what extent have the individual beneficiaries of Tempus grants been positively affected by their participation in the programme from a professional & personal point of view? To what extent has the programme impacted the employability of graduates? To what extent have the beneficiaries been encouraged to promote & support reforms in their countries & promote European approaches & practices in their home countries & institutions?

Individual project participants – whether staff or students – have clearly benefited from their involvement in TEMPUS III. Benefits were generated in a number of different areas including better contacts or exchange of expertise and experience with colleagues abroad, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions as well as improved teacher training cited as the principal benefits to staff participating in JEPs or SCMs (see Figure 5.1). Increased knowledge of a particular study area is also a clear benefit – particularly for those participants in a curriculum development JEP.

Figure 5.1 What have been the main benefits to your staff of JEP or SCM? (Maximum of five options possible) ⁷⁰



⁷⁰ See Annex IV tables 0.87 for JEP and table 0.170 for SCM.

In the case of certain countries a more intangible, but equally important benefit of TEMPUS III was its contribution to maintaining the morale among the staff of HE institutions. This relates in particular to the poorer of the Partner Countries where staff of HE institutions are often poorly paid and foreign travel possibilities are effectively blocked by either the cost or visa difficulties. In such cases, the opportunity to participate in a TEMPUS III project (particularly the mobility possibilities) had a particular personal importance and may even have played a role in motivating and keeping staff within the HE sector itself.

In terms of students, the principal benefits of involvement in TEMPUS III were access to new learning materials and methods, greater awareness of other cultures and improved qualifications. This was revealed by both the survey of JEP and SCM Project Coordinators in Partner Countries⁷¹ as well by discussions with students themselves during the country visits.

There is mixed evidence to support the hypothesis that TEMPUS III has positively impacted the employability of graduates. Only 17% of JEP questionnaire respondents felt that their project had increased the employability of students⁷² and we uncovered relatively few examples of a direct causal link between the programme itself and (an) individual(s) gaining employment. Uzbekistan seems to be an exception here with a wider policy position (supported by TEMPUS III) to make qualifications more vocationally relevant reflected in two of the case studies where graduates have gained employment as a direct consequence of the project⁷³. In general however, the evidence seems to point towards more indirect effects of graduates utilizing their skills, competences and qualifications gained or enhanced through TEMPUS III to obtain jobs.

Although TEMPUS III projects (particularly JEPs) did play an important ‘demonstration’ role in many Partner Countries and helped to catalyse further change, there is little evidence to suggest that beneficiaries were systematically encouraged to promote and support reforms in their countries and promote European approaches and practices in their home countries and institutions. This is due in large part to the fact that the focus of JEPs was typically at the level of individual HE institutions and SCMs (the principal instrument through which policy-level reforms were to be encouraged) failed to gain traction during TEMPUS III. The only exception here was the promotion of particular approaches through end-of-project dissemination activities (sometimes involving national level policy actors) – but this too was often limited in scope and itself subject to problems.

IMGs were an extremely popular instrument of TEMPUS III and also delivered considerable benefits – primarily to participating individuals but also more widely to HE institutions themselves (see below). Although the duration of foreign visits was often comparatively short, they typically delivered wide-ranging benefits. This is shown *inter alia* by our survey results⁷⁴ with at least half of respondents indicating that IMGs

⁷¹ See Annex IV table 0.88 for JEP and Table 0.171 for SCM

⁷² See Table AII.0.88 in Annex IV.

⁷³ The MAHMIT project where students have obtained employment in the health management sector and SEASCAPE where *inter alia* several ex-students have created small businesses following the training on entrepreneurship.

⁷⁴ See tables AII 0.12-0.24 in Annex IV

delivered the following personal benefits *to a large extent*: increased contacts with colleagues abroad (69%), personal development (61%), increased exchange of expertise and experiences with colleagues abroad (59%), increased knowledge of a study area (58%), improved (inter)national mobility (52%), improved working practices (51%) and greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions (50%). IMGs also delivered wider institutional benefits because the personal contacts and information exchange that they generated often led to the design of JEPs, SCMs or other forms of international co-operation (e.g. DAAD-funded initiatives).

12. What has been the possible impact of European partners' participation in Tempus within their own institutions & countries?

EU HE institutions view the biggest benefits from involvement in TEMPUS III resulting from the increased internationalization of their institution. Internationalisation is an increasingly important issue for EU HE establishments – especially in terms of attracting and retaining both staff and students. The specific benefits offered by TEMPUS III were the development of professional networks, enhanced knowledge transfer and general opportunities for increased international mobility for staff.⁷⁵ Enhanced cultural understanding was another frequently-cited benefit to EU HE institutions. It is important to stress that EU HE institutions view both these internationalization and cultural understanding benefits in terms of both interaction with Partner Country institutions *as well as* other EU institutions. This latter point is important - there are numerous examples where TEMPUS III has contributed to the establishment of wide-ranging and deep-rooted collaboration between EU HE institutions from different Member States.

Financial considerations were rarely the sole reason for EU HE institutions to participate in TEMPUS III. Some EU HE institutions did highlight the financial incentive to participate in TEMPUS III – in terms of the opportunity to cover staff costs and finance development activities (e.g. curriculum development). However, it was only a decisive factor in influencing the decision to participate in selected institutions from a small number of countries (Greece, Italy and Spain). Conversely, it seems that TEMPUS III was particularly *unattractive* from a financial perspective for certain Northern European universities - particularly UK ones which are under increasing pressure to function on a quasi-commercial basis. Several Project Co-ordinators indicated that they had struggled to convince their superiors of the merits of participation given the financial conditions on offer.

5.4 Coverage and TEMPUS brand

10. Does participation in the programme appear balanced in terms of geographical coverage (within the European Union & in the partner countries) & the types of higher education institutions represented (in particular non University institutions)? Were the subject areas represented sufficiently diversified?

⁷⁵ See Annex IV for evidence from the survey to support these findings.

Participation in the programme was geographically balanced in terms of both the EU and the Partner Countries. HE institutions from all ‘old’ EU Member States (including Luxembourg) participated and there is no systematic year-on-year underrepresentation of countries although TEMPUS III does appear to have become progressively less popular among UK HEIs. All of the 10 New Member States that acceded to the EU on 1st May 2004 had universities involved in projects although their level of involvement was comparatively limited in comparison to ‘old’ Member States.

Geographical coverage within the Partner Countries was also balanced and it is interesting to note that at the national-level, there are several cases of TEMPUS III being used to strengthen the relative position of HE institutions outside the major cities.⁷⁶

In most Partner Countries almost all public HE institutions have been involved in one way or another in a TEMPUS project (generally as a project partner but occasionally just in dissemination activities). An exception here are some (but not all) countries (e.g. Russia and FYROM) where private universities were prevented from participating in TEMPUS III. This was often because of their lack of formal accreditation but also sometimes for political reasons. Non-university HE institutions (e.g. Ministries or institutions such as accreditation or training bodies) from Partner Countries were generally always involved although the level of involvement was not always as widespread or as prominent as might be expected (e.g. institutions that should have been centre-stage having a minor role). Coverage of subject areas was considered sufficiently diversified and was essentially demand-driven as it was set by the Partner Countries themselves within the framework of their National Priorities (see Section 3).

The picture with respect to the involvement of EU Member State HE institutions is more complicated. Whilst a wide-range of different HE institutions were involved, two broad trends are apparent. Firstly, there is a high degree of concentration of participation - with certain EU HE institutions involved in multiple TEMPUS III projects. The level of concentration goes even further to the personal level – with certain individuals having a role in multiple projects (in fact there are cases of staff having no other academic duties and only working on TEMPUS III projects). Secondly, despite some obvious exceptions, the best EU universities⁷⁷ generally did not intensively participate in TEMPUS III and involvement was dominated by ‘second tier’ EU universities - including a preponderance in several EU Member States towards high schools and polytechnics that have gained university status. This can be seen as having both good and bad features - good in the sense that TEMPUS III allowed EU HEIs with limited other options to derive benefits from international co-operation⁷⁸ but negative insofar as ‘second tier’ universities are perhaps less well placed to disseminate EU ‘state-of-the-art’ in HE policy.

⁷⁶ For example, in Kazakhstan outside of Almaty and Astana and in Uzbekistan outside of Tashkent and Samarkand.

⁷⁷ For example, very few of the EU universities appearing in the top 200 of the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) were significantly involved in TEMPUS. See: <http://www.arwu.org>.

⁷⁸ The best universities are often less reliant on external co-operation programmes as they already have established international networks as well as more scope to finance such activities (e.g. through their own endowments).

11. Does participation in the programme appear satisfactory in terms of equality between men & women? Could any particular patterns be distinguished in this respect from a geographical point of view as well as for the different actions or strands of actions? To what extent do the programme design & implementation mechanisms promote equal participation of men & women? Could any particular points of improvement be identified?

Gender did not receive explicit attention within the implementation of TEMPUS III – despite occupying a prominent position in the Council Decisions that created and amended the programme.⁷⁹ Unsurprisingly given the diversity of countries that participated in TEMPUS III, its importance as an issue differs dramatically across the Partner Countries. In very broad terms, it appears that the position of women in the HE sector is relatively much stronger in the Balkans and selected countries of the former Soviet Union (notably Russia and Ukraine). Here women dominate many faculties (including senior positions). The status of women within HE is relatively much weaker in participating countries in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia – although even here the picture is more nuanced and differs from one country to another. Participation in the programme generally mirrored these broad societal trends, with greater involvement of women (particularly women in higher level positions – whether as Rectors or Vice-Rectors within HE institutions or at senior policy-making levels within Ministries).

In general programme design and implementation does not actively promote equal participation of men or women per se, although this does not appear to be needed in the majority of countries. Even where gender equality is more problematic, it appears that this issue was at best dealt with in an ad hoc manner through the initiative of the NTO. However, most NTOs did not see gender as an issue requiring their intervention.

The results of the survey show that, of the participants that felt able to comment⁸⁰, most think the access to scholarships in the TEMPUS programme was equally balanced between men and women. In the MEDA countries, the share of respondents suggesting an unequal distribution (26%) was twice the share of respondents in other regions. About a quarter of respondents indicated that their project specifically addressed equal opportunities between men and women. In 40 per cent of the cases this was accomplished through communication activities specifically focused on (increased participation of) women. Other measures mentioned were offering specific support or guidance to women (21%) and setting of fixed percentages for both men/women (19%). In addition, positive discrimination, when participants were equally qualified, was also mentioned in a number of cases.

⁷⁹ See Article V of the Council Decision of 29 April 1999 adopting Tempus III: "The aim of Tempus III is to promote, in line with the guidelines and general objectives of the PHARE and TACIS programmes for economic and social reform, the development of the higher education systems in the eligible countries through the most balanced cooperation possible with the partners from all the Member States of the Community [...] The Commission will, when pursuing the objectives of Tempus III, endeavour to adhere to the Community's general policy on equal opportunities for men and women. The Commission will also endeavour to ensure that no group of citizens is excluded or disadvantaged."

⁸⁰ More than half said that they did not know.

8. Can an identifiable Tempus "brand" be said to have emerged, & with what qualities is it associated (for national authorities, institutions, academics, students & employers)? How well is it known & is it helping the implementation of the programme & the development of reforms in the partner countries?

The size, scope and unique nature of TEMPUS III means that an identifiable TEMPUS brand did emerge in Partner Countries – particularly among university administrators, participating faculty staff and national HE actors. The fact that TEMPUS III was the largest external co-operation programme in the HE sector and the only one with an avowed multi-lateral dimension led to it establishing a high profile in almost all countries (maybe less so in the MEDA countries where it had less time to embed itself over the programme period). Its profile is however less strong among students and wider faculty staff where the mobility-focused ERASMUS-MUNDUS External Co-operation Window had greater prominence. At these levels there also existed an erroneous impression among some parties that simply associated TEMPUS III with mobility opportunities rather than its higher level purpose of HE reform. Finally, it appears that in general the TEMPUS brand did not extend to employers or indeed any stakeholders outside of the HE sphere.

TEMPUS III was generally viewed as a quality brand in Partner Countries. More often than not however TEMPUS III's branding advantages were indirect – with it having an effect on the 'brand' of participating HE institutions, with it improving as a result of participation in a TEMPUS project. For example, in Russia, those universities that participated in TEMPUS III were often the ones that were selected to take part in pilot initiatives of the Ministry of Education.⁸¹ More generally, any institutions able to develop a joint-course with a Western Institution were also able to enhance their brand – increasing the demand from prospective students.

The picture in EU Member States is somewhat different. Here the TEMPUS 'brand' is less strong insofar as it is less well known and typically also has to compete with well-established, bilateral HE support programmes (such as those organized by the British Council, Germany's DAAD or the Netherlands' NUFFIC). Moreover, at least in terms of participation, in many EU Member States the TEMPUS brand is restricted to a relatively limited number of HE institutions with the majority choosing not to participate.

5.5 Dissemination of European Higher Education policies

7. To which extent has the programme contributed to disseminate European higher education policies in accordance with the objectives of the EU Modernisation Agenda as part of the overall Lisbon Strategy, as well as the Bologna process?

TEMPUS III made an important contribution to the EU HE Modernisation Agenda as part of both the overall Lisbon Strategy as well as the Bologna Process. With respect to Bologna, 13 TEMPUS III Partner Countries have signed the declaration and are thus members of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA): Croatia (signed in 2001),

⁸¹ Although a counter-argument would be that the Universities invited to participate in TEMPUS III in Russia were already among the best ones, so may also have been invited to participate in such initiatives without their involvement in the programme.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Serbia and Macedonia (all 2003), Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (all 2005) and Montenegro (2007). Several other countries such as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have formally or informally registered interest in joining the EHEA but have been prevented from joining as their countries formally lie outside of Europe.

TEMPUS III made an important contribution to the five specific objectives required for a European Space for Higher Education (the ‘Bologna Process’), namely the introduction of (a). a common framework of readable and comparable degrees, (b). the three-tier system of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral degrees; (c). ECTS compatible credit systems; (d). a European dimension in quality assurance; and (e). the elimination of remaining obstacles to the free mobility of students and teachers. Although much remains to be done (indeed as it does among the EU members of the EHEA), significant progress was made through involvement in TEMPUS III. Indeed it seems that TEMPUS III and Bologna were both strengthened by the existence of the other – TEMPUS III helped to bring about Bologna-convergence and – notwithstanding the previously documented problems with TEMPUS III at the policy level - Bologna promoted a national impetus for HE reform that led to individual projects often being taken more seriously. Even many of the countries that are not Bologna signatories (e.g. Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan) decided to adopt elements of the declaration and used TEMPUS III to promote its introduction.⁸²

The HE-related aspects of the Lisbon Agenda make up the other main element of the EU HE Modernisation Agenda. They are wide-ranging and clearly beyond the scope of a programme such as TEMPUS III:

1. Break down the barriers around universities in Europe;
2. Ensure real autonomy and accountability for universities;
3. Provide incentives for structured partnerships with the business community;
4. Provide the right mix of skills and competencies for the labour market;
5. Reduce the funding gap and make funding work more effectively in education and research;
6. Enhance interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity;
7. Activate knowledge through interaction with society;
8. Reward excellence at the highest level; and
9. Make the European higher education area and the European research area more visible and attractive in the world.

Nevertheless, TEMPUS has made an important contribution in a number of important areas⁸³ and importantly also, through the promotion of internationalization and awareness-raising on EU HE practices among Partner Country HEIs, TEMPUS III laid the ground for further achievements through subsequent programmes such as TEMPUS IV, ERASMUS-MUNDUS and the Seventh Framework Programme.

⁸² Given that Bologna is a voluntary process, even if a country is not a formal signatory, it can apply the Bologna principles without restriction.

⁸³ We would highlight objectives 1, 2 and 9 as the areas where TEMPUS III made the largest contributions and 3, 4 and 5 as domains where it was less successful.

5.6 Conclusions

TEMPUS III has made an important overall contribution to the development of higher education systems, including to the five specific objectives of the ‘Bologna Process’. This achievement includes ‘core’ higher education goals such as curriculum development, reform of higher education structures and establishments as well as development of skills profiles – although more so at the level of individual institutions than at the national policy level. Broader societal achievements are either harder to identify or appear to have been more indirect - TEMPUS III’s bottom-up nature and the high level of people-to-people contact has definitely helped to promote understanding between and rapprochement of cultures but the contribution to the development of ‘free and flourishing civil societies’ is far less clear, with a lack of a clear vision on NGOs’ role within the Programme.

Teachers benefited significantly from their involvement in TEMPUS III, notably through contacts with foreign colleagues, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions, improved training and the morale-boosting impact of career development and mobility opportunities. Students also benefited – through access to new learning materials/methods, improved qualifications and greater awareness of other cultures – though less so in terms of the enhancement of their employability, where effects were more indirect.

Participation was geographically balanced in terms of both the EU and Partner Countries. EU HEIs viewed increased internationalization as the biggest benefit from involvement in TEMPUS III, with financial considerations rarely the sole reason for EU HE institutions to take part (in fact TEMPUS III is increasingly financially *unattractive* for certain Northern European universities, particularly UK ones). Participation was still relatively concentrated - with certain HEIs involved in multiple projects - and the highest ranked EU universities generally not participating. Geographical coverage within Partner Countries was balanced, with most public HEIs involved (either as a project partner or in dissemination activities) but private universities prevented from participating in certain countries (e.g. FYROM). Non-university bodies (e.g. Ministries or accreditation/training bodies) were generally involved although the level of involvement was not always as widespread or as prominent as expected.

The size, scope and unique nature of TEMPUS III means that an identifiable, quality TEMPUS brand emerged in Partner Countries – particularly among university administrators, participating faculty staff and national HE actors, but less so among students and other faculty staff. In EU Member States the TEMPUS ‘brand’ is less pre-eminent, with it often in competition with bilateral HE support programmes.

Despite the overall positive picture, several clear weaknesses can be identified. In particular, TEMPUS III struggled to promote systematic policy-level changes, with such change typically at best indirect and ad hoc. The inaccessibility of senior policy-level actors, varying levels of importance attached to HE and a lack of understanding of what SCMs are meant to achieve (along with them being too short) all played a role here. The picture was not entirely negative however with some examples of important policy-level

results achieved and it appearing that TEMPUS III had a greater impact at the policy-level in those countries seeking EU membership (Croatia, FYROM and Serbia).

6 Impacts

6.1 Societal and economic needs of Partner Countries

23. Has the programme contributed to making policy, administration & teaching in the partner country higher education institutions more responsive to society's & the labour market's needs? Has the programme contributed to more internationally-oriented & flexible partner country institutions?

TEMPUS III did make an important contribution to making policy, administration and teaching in partner country HEIs more responsive to labour market's needs. These impacts do however vary at a number of different levels. Firstly, at the regional level, some regions can point to a greater contribution to labour market needs (e.g. many of the countries within the former Soviet Union) than others such as the MEDA region where TEMPUS III operated for a smaller period of time and where there were fewer projects.⁸⁴ Secondly, at the country-level, certain countries within a particular region (e.g. Russia or Uzbekistan) were particularly successful in realizing impact here. In the case of Russia, the building of linkages between academia and the labour market is seen as being one of the principal benefits of TEMPUS III, especially because this was a major area of weakness in the initial stages of the post 1991 transformation process. Finally, impacts vary according to the specific HEIs concerned (or even specific faculties). HEIs that successfully participated in related TEMPUS III projects are obviously in a stronger position to respond to labour market needs than those that did not. However, the general raising of awareness among HEI in general (particularly through end-of-project dissemination exercises) has left a wider legacy at the partner country level itself.

When analyzing labour market needs, there is sometimes a tendency to focus on the HE needs of private enterprise – particularly in transition countries with nascent private sectors. Whilst this is undoubtedly very important in all of the Partner Countries covered, it should not overshadow the parallel need for skills and expertise in public sectors that are being subjected to wide-ranging reform. TEMPUS III delivered some important labour market impacts in this regard – strengthening linkages between higher education and different levels of the public sector. For example, following the development of a Management Masters Programme (through JEP 24018), Baikalsky University in Irkutsk, Siberia has co-operated with local municipalities to develop tailored learning courses for municipal workers. Another good example of (future) labour market impacts for the public sector is in the health sector in Uzbekistan (see below).

⁸⁴ For example, TEMPUS has only operated in Morocco for 5 years and has seen the completion of just 40 projects.

The impact of TEMPUS III on broader societal needs is more limited. An important contribution has certainly been made in terms of exposing citizens to other societies and points of view in the EU. It also indirectly promoted human rights through curriculum development (e.g. the Masters degree in Human Rights in Morocco).

Student Internships Leading to Increased Labour Market Relevance

Several TEMPUS III projects in the Russian Federation gave students the first opportunity to undertake internships in private companies. This helped universities to strengthen relations with the private sector and led to several students re-evaluating their choice of study or careers.

Whilst just under half of questionnaire respondents maintained that the openness/ accessibility of the education system to civil society had ‘slightly improved’⁸⁵, TEMPUS III does not appear to have made a widespread contribution to strengthening civil society within Partner Countries. Civil society partners were sometimes involved in projects, but they rarely had a leading role. TEMPUS III undoubtedly led to more internationally-oriented partner country institutions. The findings of our questionnaire analysis⁸⁶ along with numerous examples given during the country case studies, would suggest that this, together with (related) impacts at the level of individual staff members, is probably the biggest single impact of the programme. In delivering these impacts, TEMPUS III was clearly able to take advantage of a wider tendency in a number of countries (e.g. Morocco, Russian Federation and Uzbekistan) to grant individual HEIs more freedom than had previously been the case. The impacts in terms of greater flexibility and internationalisation here are obviously important in their own right but also provide a platform on which individual HEIs can further professionalise in the future.

24. Is there evidence to show that the programme is helping to meet the partner countries' societal & economical needs, in terms of producing graduates with relevant skills, boosting capacity in key sectors & increasing the exposure of partner countries' higher education to international competition in teaching & research?

There is a general perception on the part of both project staff and wider stakeholders at the policy level that TEMPUS III has made an important socio-economic contribution by equipping graduates with relevant skills and expertise. The strong emphasis on curriculum development means that new courses have been created in all Partner Countries – in some cases responding to highly specific and previously unmet labour market needs. Examples here would include new two-level curricula in Food Safety (Russian Federation) and Health Management (Uzbekistan).

In other cases, already existing curricula have received a radical overhaul through a project – such as business-related degrees offered by the Tashkent Financial Institute (TFI) and Andizhan Institute of Industrial Engineering (AIIE) which were enhanced through the JEP 25085-2004 “SEASCAPE” project (see also the box on this project). The scale of the contribution is also considerable – for example in Morocco (a country that

⁸⁵ See Table AII.6.**Error! Main Document Only.** in Annex IV.

⁸⁶ See in particular Table AII.6.**Error! Main Document Only.** on JEPs and **Error! Reference source not found.** on SCMs – both in Annex IV.

only started participating in the Programme in 2002) respondents informed us that around 30 percent of Masters degrees now on offer were created through a TEMPUS project.

Significant Labour Market and Entrepreneurship Impacts through a Successful TEMPUS Project

Uzbekistan's JEP 25085-2004 "SEASCAPE" project demonstrates the range and level of labour market spin-off impacts that can result from a successful project. Following the project's conclusion, the two participating institutions have:

- Established an annual Business Plan Competition where major banks award prizes to the students producing the best business plans within their coursework (TFI);
- Established a "Buyers Service Agency" to support farmers in the rural Fergana Valley through the development of new varieties of vegetables through seed manipulation (AIE);
- Prepared a business plan for the development of Tashkent's "Entertainment Agency" on the condition that students would be then be given the opportunity to do internships within the Agency (TFI).
- Signed 4-year agreements with 29 commercial banks to provide two week retraining courses for banking staff. So far they have trained 170 staff and TFI is now holding discussions with banks to get them to outsource certain functions (e.g. loan portfolio monitoring).

What is not clear however, is the level of impact realized in this domain. First of all, there is a clear time-lag before a 'critical mass' of new graduates can be trained so as to have an impact on the national level – particularly in Masters courses with a comparatively small number of participants each year.⁸⁷ Secondly, there is another important time-lag - namely the period of time it takes for a new recruited graduate to start making a genuine contribution within an organization. In many cases, insufficient time has passed at this point for students trained through TEMPUS III projects to become effective. For example, staff at Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institute in Uzbekistan maintain that several graduates of the MA in Health Management Programme (JEP 23142-2002) are now employed at the Ministry of Health. They point out however that given that all joined at 'entry-level' positions, as yet none are at a level where they can influence policy. Finally, across most Partner Countries there is a distinct lack of tracking of graduates' post-course progress following the completion of TEMPUS-supported courses.⁸⁸

6.2 Regional co-operation

29. To what extent has the programme had an impact on the regional cooperation (cooperation among partner countries) & at local level (communities) in the partner countries?

Notwithstanding certain limitations, the TEMPUS III had a significant impact on regional co-operation among Partner Countries. This is evident for all regions – within the former Soviet Union (including more narrowly within Central Asia), the Balkans and North Africa and the Middle East. In two notable cases, TEMPUS III played an important role in rekindling regional co-operation that had previously been very strong but had

⁸⁷ This makes the issue of sustainability - i.e. whether a course continues or not – particularly important (see Section 7).

⁸⁸ It is important to stress that we did not interview employers to gauge their relative satisfaction with graduates from TEMPUS III supported courses compared to regular ones.

disintegrated since the early 1990s as a result of war (Western Balkans) or a mixture of geo-political rivalry, economic turmoil and environmental (water) disputes (Central Asia). In both of these cases, TEMPUS III was *the* instrument to re-establish academic co-operation that had strong roots based on a common previous heritage and language.

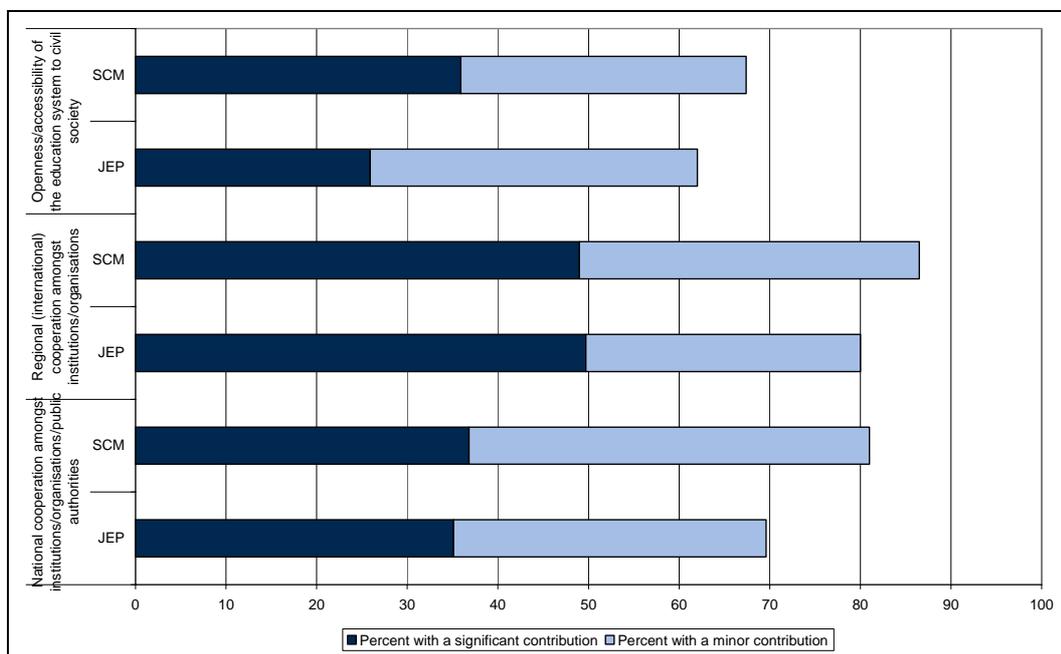
Impacts have however been limited in an (admittedly limited) number of cases where HEIs from different countries have partnered with one another for purely expedient reasons – for example to strengthen an application for a regional project. In such cases, impacts from the regional partnership were very often at best extremely limited. On the other hand however, there are examples of bilateral (regional) relationships developed within wider (multi-lateral) TEMPUS III projects that delivered as many or more benefits than conventional partnerships between HEIs in a Partner Country and the EU. One reason for this is the fact that HEIs from one Partner Country often understood the policy context of economic and political transformation better than HEIs from the EU.⁸⁹

The contribution of TEMPUS III to strengthening co-operation within individual Partner Countries is an extremely important, yet often overlooked, impact. This was evident from all country case studies and was also clearly highlighted by our survey of JEP and SCM participants (see Figure 6.1). Particularly in large countries such as the Russian Federation or the Ukraine, enhanced interaction within the country is arguably a more important impact than strengthened inter-regional co-operation. In many countries, the higher education system had previously been extremely hierarchical (with little horizontal contact and exchange of ideas between individual institutions). TEMPUS III helped to overcome this – helped in no small measure by a wider policy stance to afford HEIs in several Partner Countries greater autonomy.

Two further observations are important with respect to the topic of regional co-operation. Firstly, programmes such as TEMPUS can help promote regional co-operation with third countries. For example, cross-border co-operation in Eastern Siberia means interacting with China, Mongolia and Japan. One of the impacts of TEMPUS III projects in this region has apparently been to help increase the number of Chinese and Mongolian students wanting to study at Siberian universities. Secondly, TEMPUS III made an important contribution in helping residents of the EU to learn about regions (e.g. Central Asia) or parts of countries (e.g. Far Eastern Russia) that they otherwise would not normally come to know.

⁸⁹ The involvement of St Petersburg State Electrotechnical University in Uzbekistan's JEP 25085-2004 "SEASCAPE" project is a good example here.

Figure 6.1 The Impact of TEMPUS III on the openness of HE to civil society, the level of regional co-operation among institutions and national HE co-operation (% of JEP and SCM Respondents)⁹⁰



6.3 Policy reforms and convergence

25. To what extent has the programme contributed to the training of policy & decision makers, & to which extent does this staff play a role in current & future reforms?

Numerous decision-makers within individual HEIs (e.g. Rectors, Vice-Rectors and Deans of Faculties) took part in training organized within the framework of TEMPUS III projects, including in certain cases participation in study visits abroad. Many more were not directly trained *per se*, but were aware of training being offered to their staff. This, combined with the fact that in most countries there is relatively low staff-turnover within senior academic posts, means that it is likely that these individuals will be able to play a role in reforms of their own HEIs and, as far as the country context allows, at the national policy level. The picture at the level of individual HEIs is therefore generally positive.

The picture with respect to the training and capacity-building of policy-makers with a view to them participating in future reform agendas is less positive. Firstly, as is stated elsewhere in this report, TEMPUS III was frequently unable to exert significant influence at the policy level – in large measure because it was unable to engage effectively with those that truly wield power in national education politics. Secondly, even where key institutions (Ministry or national level bodies) were technically involved in projects, their involvement was often rather passive and at a low level. Thirdly, in some (but not all) Partner Countries, there is a comparatively high turnover of senior level officials within ministries (particularly political appointees who tend to be replaced following changes in

⁹⁰ See also tables 0.115-0.117 for JEP and 0.195-0.197 for SCM in Annex IV.

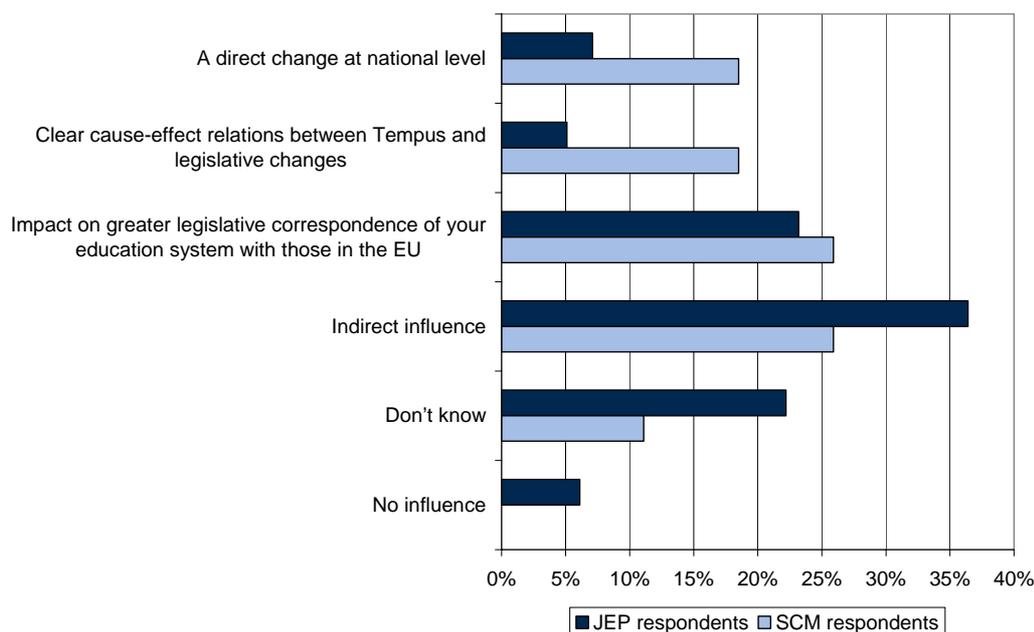
either Government or Minister). Although the picture is less positive than among decision-makers within HEIs, the picture is not totally bleak. There are (future) policy-level actors who have been involved in TEMPUS III projects (including study visits abroad) who should be able to utilise their new knowledge, skills and contacts within future reform agendas. Nevertheless, it seems that strengthening the scope for TEMPUS to effect change at the policy level is a clear way in which its overall impact could be enhanced.

26. To what extent does the programme seem to be influencing national legislation on issues relevant for modernising higher education systems & convergence of systems, such as university governance, structures, funding, quality assurance mechanisms, et cetera?

The impact of TEMPUS III at the policy level is weaker than at the level of individual HEIs. Although there are positive examples and the picture does vary across countries, in general TEMPUS III found it difficult to directly influence national legislation in a systematic fashion. This is borne out by the findings of our questionnaire analysis (see Figure 6.2) as well as the interviews held with stakeholders during the country visits.

Where changes have been brought about, these appear to have been much more indirect in nature, with TEMPUS III projects ‘feeding’ policy discussions - often by providing a ‘demonstration effect’ through a particular project or by demonstrating a need for reform - rather than driving the changes themselves. This is not altogether unsurprising given the way in which policy formulation and politics in general works in many transition economies. The impact here could arguably also have been greater had the dissemination of TEMPUS III project results been more successful (see also Section 7.6).

Figure 6.2 The Impact of TEMPUS III on legislative changes concerning Higher Education (% JEP and SCM Respondents)⁹¹



Although TEMPUS III was able to generate significant results at the level of individual institutions in domains such as quality assurance or general university governance, HEIs often found it difficult to promote/disseminate these changes to lead to impacts at the national level. This is shown by the findings of DG EAC’s 2008 Survey on the Impact of TEMPUS III. Whilst TEMPUS is acknowledged as having played an extremely important role in fostering links, setting up contacts and generally improving relations between HEIs and national authorities, its impact in key areas of national level policy such as in terms of domestic accreditation systems and development of mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications is seen as negligible.⁹²

27. How far has the programme contributed to help the candidate countries & the potential candidate countries to get closer with EU practices & standards in higher education within the perspective of their adherence to the EU?

Although (higher) education is formally considered as more of a Member State competence, with little formal legislation *per se*, Chapter 26 (Education and Culture) of the *acquis communautaire* does *inter alia* cover EU policies within the HE domain such as the Bologna process as well as the HE modernization agenda. Candidate Countries are judged on developments within the education sector within the Annual Reports on their Progress Towards Accession. The overall picture is one of progress being made in the two current Candidate Countries - currently Croatia and FYROM⁹³ - towards implementing the Bologna principles, particularly in terms of the latter which enacted a new Law on Higher Education. Progress has also been made – albeit more unevenly and

⁹¹ See Annex IV table 0.125 for JEP and 0.205 for SCM.

⁹² See the text on page 14-15 of DG EAC’s 2008 Survey on the Impact of TEMPUS III.

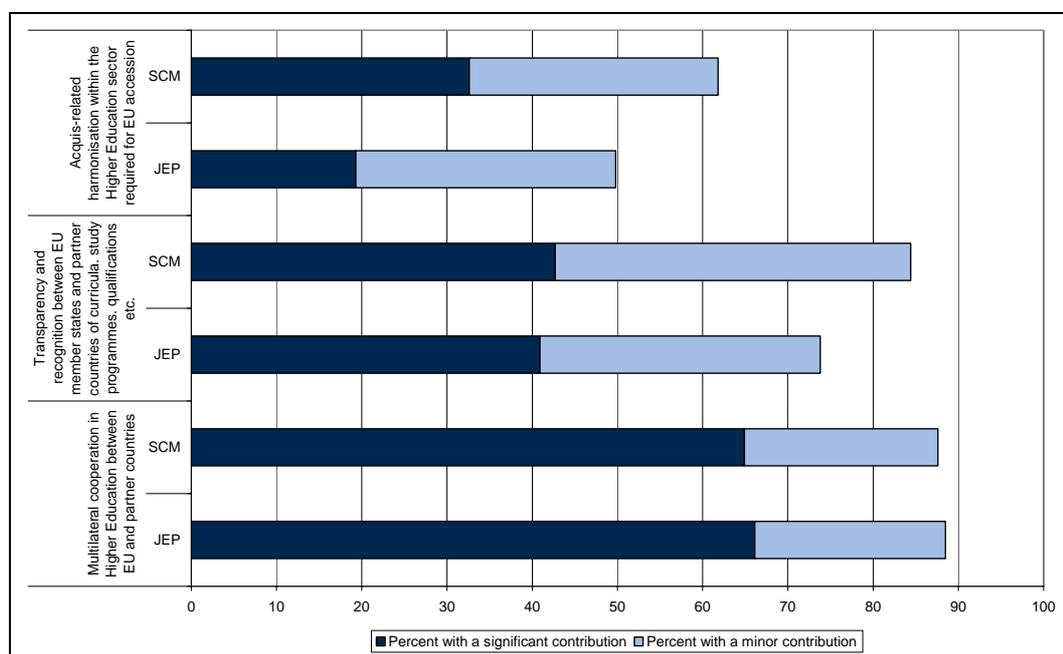
⁹³ Turkey is also a Candidate Country but did not participate in TEMPUS III.

at a slower pace - by the potential Candidate Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo⁹⁴) to prepare for eventual EU Accession.

It is difficult to judge the contribution which TEMPUS III has made to the above progress. Not only have there been other large Technical Assistance projects in the HE domain (both EC-funded and other) to several of the countries, evidence from earlier Candidate countries (notably the 10 that joined on 1st May 2004) would suggest that the prospect of EU membership is on its own a major impulse for initiating reforms.

Nevertheless, based on the feedback from the questionnaire analysis as well as oral feedback received from stakeholders in one Candidate country (FYROM) and another possible Candidate country (Serbia), it seems that TEMPUS III did make an important contribution. Moreover, anecdotal evidence suggests that the overall prospect of EU membership frequently acted as a catalyst for a greater level of impact from TEMPUS III projects – particularly at the policy level (which in general was more difficult for the Programme – see also Section 5.2) and during the second half of TEMPUS III where the realistic prospect of eventual EU membership actually became apparent for these countries.

Figure 6.3 The Impact of TEMPUS III on acquis-related harmonization, transparency and mutual recognition and multi-lateral co-operation between the EU and partner countries (% JEP and SCM Respondents)⁹⁵



⁹⁴ Kosovo is under UN Security Council Resolution 1244. Iceland is now also a potential Candidate Country but did not participate in TEMPUS III.

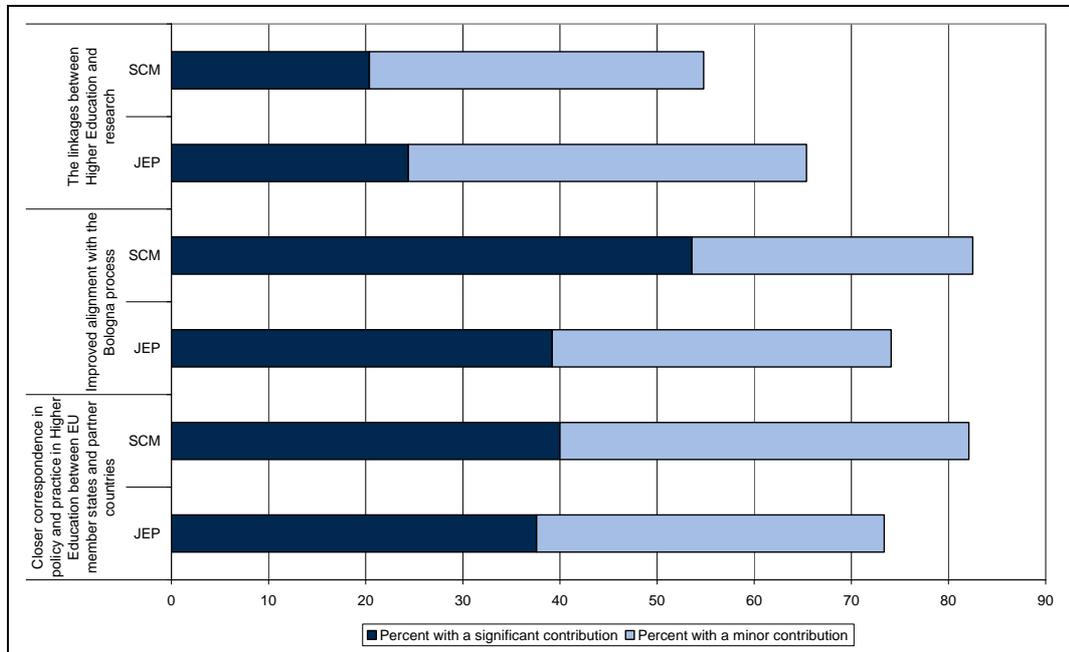
⁹⁵ See tables 0.118-0.120 for JEP and 0.198-0.200 for SCM in Annex IV.

28. To which extent has the programme contributed to the convergence process between the partner countries & with the EU higher education standards & practices?

TEMPUS III has undoubtedly made an important contribution to the convergence process between partner countries and EU higher education standards and practices – most notably encapsulated within the Bologna Process and the wider HE reform agenda. This sentiment is shared by questionnaire respondents (see the Figure 6.4) and numerous stakeholders interviewed during the country visits.

A couple of important qualifying remarks do however need to be made with respect to the contribution towards convergence. First of all, the convergence process needs to be seen as a long-term process that could take several decades to complete – assuming of course that this is what the country is working towards.⁹⁶ The impact of TEMPUS III’s comparatively short six year timeframe does therefore need to be set against this much longer time horizon. Secondly, not all Partner Countries are even seeking to fully implement the Bologna Principles – with several adopting instead specific elements. Finally, to pick up on a recurring point made within this report, TEMPUS III has enjoyed less success in terms of directly effecting change at the policy level than at the level of individual HEIs. This could mitigate against many of the more profound aspects of the convergence process that do require legislative changes at the national level.

Figure 6.4 The Impact of TEMPUS III on the linkages between HE and research, improved alignment with the Bologna Process and a closer correspondence in policy and practice in HE with EU Member States (JEP and SCM Respondents)⁹⁷



⁹⁶ In this regard, it is particularly important to remember that most EU Member States have yet to adequately implement all of the provisions of the Bologna Process.

⁹⁷ See Annex IV table 0.121-0.123 for JEP and 0.201-0.203 for SCM.

Nevertheless, TEMPUS III has undoubtedly made an important contribution against the long-term objective of convergence – in terms of both the direct contributions it has made itself (particularly at the level of individuals and individual institutions) as well as in terms of readying HEIs and other stakeholders for further changes in the future through this initial exposure to EU methods, practices and thinking.

6.4 Conclusions

TEMPUS III helped create more internationally-oriented and flexible partner country HEIs - important impacts both in their own right and as a platform on which individual HEIs can further professionalise in the future. These, together with (related) impacts at the level of individual staff, are probably the single biggest impact of the programme. It also made an important contribution to the long-term convergence process between Partner Countries (particularly the two Candidate Countries - Croatia and FYROM) and EU higher education standards and practices – most notably encapsulated within the Bologna Process and the wider HE reform agenda. Finally, TEMPUS III had a significant impact on establishing or rekindling regional co-operation among Partner Countries across all regions and made an important, yet often overlooked, impact in terms of strengthening co-operation *within* individual Partner Countries.

Notwithstanding significant variation at the regional, country and even individual HEI levels, TEMPUS III made an important contribution to making teaching more responsive to labour market needs (both the public and private sectors). Many new curricula have been developed – often responding to highly specific and previously unmet labour market needs. However, the time-lag before a ‘critical mass’ of graduates can start to have a national-level impact means that, in many cases, insufficient time has passed at this point for students trained through TEMPUS III projects to deliver clear impacts.

Impact in terms of decision-makers utilising skills developed through TEMPUS III to influence their respective institutions is positive at the HEI level but more negative at the national (policy) level. Numerous decision-makers within HEIs took part in projects and many of these will be able to play a future role in reforms of their own HEIs. At the national level, TEMPUS III was not able to engage as actively with policy-makers, which, as a group, also often experience high staff turnover. More widely, TEMPUS III found it difficult to directly influence national legislation in a systematic fashion. Where changes were brought about, these appear to have been much more indirect in nature (e.g. TEMPUS III projects ‘feeding’ policy discussions through a ‘demonstration effect’). And although TEMPUS III was able to generate significant results at the level of individual institutions in domains such as quality assurance or general university governance, HEIs often found it difficult to promote/disseminate these changes to lead to impacts at the national level. The impact of TEMPUS III on broader societal needs is also more limited. Whilst an important contribution was made through exposing citizens to European values, it did not make a significant contribution to strengthening civil society.

7 Sustainability

7.1 Introduction

TEMPUS is an ambitious programme aiming at sustainable reforms in the higher education systems of the eligible countries. However, since the duration of the projects funded by TEMPUS is limited, it is not self-evident that structural reforms will take place. Moreover, the education sector in general is perceived as rather stable, mainly due to its structures and traditions and partly also due to vested interests of institutions and staff. As a consequence, structural reforms in education in general take many years to take place, is commonly characterised by setbacks and sometimes also by direct or indirect resistance. To achieve sustainable outcomes, eventually leading to structural reforms, is a major challenge. In particular, for this to take place, it is necessary that the produced outputs of TEMPUS and in particular the outcomes for the stakeholders involved (i.e. HE institutions, staff, students) display a certain sustainability. To assess this, we take a closer look at the kind of benefits achieved by TEMPUS III and the degree to which activities, networks and outcomes can be seen or are assessed as sustainable by the stakeholders involved. The IMGs, JEPs and SCMs can be assumed to contribute to this each in their own specific way.

7.2 Sustainable benefits

18. Which activities or elements or outcomes of the programme would be likely to continue & in which form when Community support ceased? This question applies in particular to the curricula developed under the JEPs activities.

The evaluation indicates that in general JEP projects, particularly in the area of curriculum development are seen as sustainable. Sustainable outcomes in the field of structural reforms are more difficult to establish, although there are examples of SCM projects which claim to have sustainable outcomes. Furthermore it is claimed in various countries that TEMPUS (i.e. JEPs) contributed to a growing involvement in and acceptance of the Bologna process, which due to its structural character can be seen as a sustainable reform.

For many benefits/outcomes of the Programme it can be assumed that these do have a certain sustainability due the fact that the experience or the knowledge gained in the project cannot be wiped out after the project has terminated. This can be demonstrated by looking at the outputs and outcomes of the various instruments of TEMPUS:

Regarding the IMG activities this is true for various benefits reported by the respondents to our survey. Examples of outcomes at individual level which, whilst difficult to measure, are likely to continue, in some form or another, after the end of the project are: personal development, increased knowledge of a study area, improved working practice, improved teaching and management skills, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions. At the level of the organisation, sustainable outcomes were also reported, in particular new curricula, together with a more innovative culture in the institutions. The majority of the respondents (81%) stated that they or their organisation still profit from their involvement in the IMGs⁹⁸. In TACIS (87%) and CARDS (86%) countries more participants feel they still profit from the involvement than in MEDA (72%) and EU (80%) countries. Participants in two or more IMGs think they profited most from their involvement in Tempus (96%).

Regarding JEPs some of the produced outputs basically bear an element of sustainability, mainly due to the fact that most activities in the JEPs were related to curriculum development, by way of: training for staff/students; (IT) equipment upgrade; new teaching methods (both didactic materials and development and reshaping of syllabi)⁹⁹. More importantly however, from a sustainability point of view is the fact that according to 44% of the respondents involved in JEPs these outputs to a large extent were still in use in their own institutions whereas this even seems to be considerably higher (73%) within the partner institutions in the TEMPUS projects¹⁰⁰. JEPs appeared to produce less sustainable outcomes among participants from Member States, more often indicating that outputs are not (any longer) in use within their organisation or only to a limited extent.

The country visits delivered several interesting examples of sustainable outcomes. For instance, in the Russian Federation where the majority of the projects concerning curriculum development were said to have been incorporated into the educational supply of the universities or the university infrastructure. An important aspect which contributed to ongoing use of project outcomes was the official accreditation of the newly developed curriculum, which has been the practice in countries like the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and Morocco. Interestingly, in FYROM it was emphasized that the development of new curricula resulted in increased enrolments of students, which of course is an important condition for sustainable changes in the system. Aside from changes in education supply, other outcomes also seem to have a high degree of sustainability, such as in FYROM where the installation of student bodies with representation in faculty or university management structures, installation of international relations offices at faculty and university level, monitoring and evaluation procedures involving students to assess the quality of education, development of ECTS and quality assurance have all taken place.

However, despite this, some programmes did not survive for financial reasons (for instance for telecommunication services) or other reasons (e.g high staff turnover in Uzbekistan), where some end up only a shadow of the vivid projects that they once were under TEMPUS. The respondents to the questionnaire indicated that obstacles for not

⁹⁸ See Annex Table AII.0.39.

⁹⁹ See Annex Table AII.0.79.

¹⁰⁰ See Annex Table AII.0.80.

continuing the use of outputs of JEPs mainly related to administrative difficulties, lack of funding, and non-transferable outcomes (e.g training)¹⁰¹. Nevertheless, despite such difficulties, universities do seem to do their best to maintain the new developed programmes as well as upgrading libraries and e-sources however possible.

As a result of the project activities in JEPs and the outputs produced, many outcomes/benefits for the stakeholders involved intrinsically bear elements of sustainability, although it is not always clear what the scope and depth of this may be in the long run (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Main benefits of JEPs for the Institutions, Staff and Students involved

Institution	Staff	Students
International cooperation between organisations in EU countries and partner countries (76%)	Better contacts with colleagues abroad (65%)	Access to new learning materials & methods (39%);
(Improved) relations between universities (44%)	Better exchange of expertise and experiences with colleagues abroad (57%)	Greater awareness of other cultures (33%);
Study programme improvement (39%)	Improved teaching, training (45%)	Improved qualification (25%);
Better trained staff (35%)	Greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions (45%)	Improved geographical mobility (22%);
Internationalisation of the organisation (33%)	Personal development (34%)	Improved foreign language skills (22%).

At the level of the institution, continuation of the TEMPUS results was said to be mainly accomplished through the continuation of established EU-partner country cooperation (55%) and through continuation of training courses/ transfer of knowledge to staff who had not been involved (42%)¹⁰².

After the project financing ended, the funding was said to be mostly provided through the respondent's own (institutional) sources (50%)¹⁰³. Of all project coordinators even 60 per cent claimed to have continued project results through own (institutional) funding. Almost half of the respondents indicate that the all partners that were involved in the TEMPUS project continued to work together after the grant for the project had finished, whereas in most other cases some of the project partners continued their cooperation¹⁰⁴. This is a clear indicator that TEMPUS to a large extent contributed to enduring networks between EU and non-EU universities. Regarding this, it is worthwhile mentioning however that a large part of the involved institutions already had contacts with their partners before their cooperation in TEMPUS, indicating that TEMPUS activities to a certain degree contributed to the sustainability of, and in many cases intensified, already existing networks.

¹⁰¹ See Annex Table AII.0.83.

¹⁰² See Annex Table AII.0.126,

¹⁰³ See Annex Table AII.0.127,

¹⁰⁴ See Annex Table AII.0.131.

Within the TEMPUS programme the SCMs have the most structural reform elements. Within the SCM projects ‘support to the development or implementation of a national strategy’ (42%) and ‘support to dissemination and use of the results of cooperation actions’ were implemented most often (37%)¹⁰⁵. This support is mainly provided by way of staff training on good practices, seminars or conferences, and developing websites and information materials. Contrary to the JEPs and IMGs these outputs are clearly “less tangible”, in particular in the short run. From the fact that a large majority of respondents (77%) indicated that the outputs were still in use by their own organisation or their partner’s, it can be concluded that the produced outputs are assessed as valuable, although this does not automatically imply that structural reforms have been initiated.

From the benefits of the SCMs¹⁰⁶ it appears that the projects contributed to the development of systems, knowledge, networks and awareness which clearly are basic elements for a sustainable structural reforms in the long run. Although interviewed respondents at the levels of ministries and NTOs were less positive about the implementation and results of SCMs, these projects from a participant point of view, clearly seem to be part of larger structural reforms in the HE sector. On the national level interviewed respondents felt that the results of TEMPUS projects frequently have been sustained by legal reform(s), indicating a sustainable development partly initiated by TEMPUS. In the Russian Federation outcomes of SCMs were continued by the universities and the Ministry through for instance the establishment of an agency or follow-up conferences. But even although project outcomes are picked up in a structured way, there can be important obstacles in achieving sustainability. For instance in Morocco, following the results of an SCM, several technology platforms to enhance the links between universities and industries were installed, but are so far not functional due to problems with accreditation organisations and resistance from another organisation with a similar function.

It is obvious that education reforms are complex and take significant time. Not surprisingly that participants in SCMs frequently expressed the opinion that their project only had a minor contribution to structural reforms in their country¹⁰⁷. In this context it was commented that the maximum length of one year for SCMs in TEMPUS III often was seen as too short. The difficult character of SCMs is also reflected in a lower level of continuation of projects after the grants have finished – compared to the IMGs and JEPs¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁵ See Annex Table All.0.159.

¹⁰⁶ See Annex Table 6.2.

¹⁰⁷ See Annex e.g Table All.191.

¹⁰⁸ See Annex Table All.0.209.

Table 7.2 Main benefits of SCMs for the HE sector, Institutions, Staff and Students involved

HE sector	Institution	Staff	Students
Improved international recognition of higher education institutions (57%)	International cooperation between organisations in EU countries and partner countries (83%);	Better contacts with colleagues abroad (65%);	Improved geographical mobility (28%);
Improved design and development of quality assurance systems (40%)	Internationalisation of institution (58%);	Better exchange of expertise and experiences with colleagues abroad (64%);	Greater awareness of other cultures (27%);
Increased adaptation of Higher Education institutions to the life-long learning concept (37%)	(Improved) relations between universities (51%);	Greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions (52%);	Access to new learning materials & methods (24%);
Development of credit transfer system (24%)	Better knowledge of EU procedures (32%);	Personal development (39%);	Improved opportunities for lifelong learning (21%);
	Increased awareness / use of innovative methods (30%).	Increased exchange/transfer between staff (36%).	Validation and recognition of degrees (18%).

7.3 Sustainable partnerships involving EC & partner country institutions

22. To which extent has the programme encouraged sustainable partnerships in higher education involving EC & partner country institutions?

The evaluation shows that in many cases the programme encouraged sustainable partnerships in higher education, involving EC and partner countries in various degrees depending on the character of the project. For the IMGs and JEP respondents, the main benefits of participating related *inter alia* to increased contacts with colleagues abroad, Increased exchange of expertise and experiences with colleagues abroad, improved (inter)national mobility and increased participation in networks. At the individual level these are important basics for creating sustainable relationships. For participants in JEPs, the main benefits for the institutions also relate to cooperation and partnerships, in particular international cooperation between organisations in EU Member States and Partner Countries and (Improved) relations between universities. Also looking at the impacts, participants in JEPs and SCMs indicate that TEMPUS significantly contributed to multilateral cooperation in Higher Education between EU and partner countries (66% for JEPs and 65% for SCMs)¹⁰⁹.

At the level of the institutions, participation in IMGs in many cases led to sustainable cooperation between universities, although it is clear from the survey outcomes that the cooperation with EU universities is more often seen as sustainable than cooperation with universities in non-EU countries. Additionally, regarding JEPs, many participants emphasize that the visits of EU university staff to the partner universities in non-EU

¹⁰⁹ For JEPs see Annex Table All.0118 and Table All.0.124; for SCMs see Table All.0.198 and Table All.0.204.

countries to a large degree contributed to sustainable relations between EU and non-EU universities (Table AII.7.3).

A vast majority of project partners that responded to our survey indicated that the cooperation with at least some of the project partners was continued after the end of the project:

- Almost 50 per cent of the respondents involved in JEPs indicated that the cooperation with all project partners continued after the end of the project. Another 45 per cent claimed continued cooperation with only some partners¹¹⁰.
- Almost all respondents involved in SCMs indicate that the cooperation with at least some of the project partners continued after the end of the project. Less than 5 per cent stated that the cooperation with the project partners did not continue at all¹¹¹.

Also during the country visits frequently examples of sustainable international partnerships due to TEMPUS were mentioned. For example, in the Russian Federation continued cooperation led to the preparation of new TEMPUS projects, set up of a double diploma (an unplanned result) and the organisation of follow-up activities. Moreover the interviewees stressed the importance of relations between the individual participants within a project. Success and sustainability to a large extent depends on the interactions between the partners. In addition, in Uzbekistan it was clear that many of the contacts made through projects or IMGs have been maintained and it is clear that TEMPUS III has strengthened the demand for further reform and modernisation of the higher education system.

7.4 Efforts to ensure institutional sustainability

19. What efforts have been made by partner organisations, national and local authorities to ensure institutional sustainability of the outcomes of the programme?

The main effort partner organisations undertook for making TEMPUS results sustainable at the national/political level consisted of dissemination activities (for all project types), although also other instruments and activities were implemented. As will be discussed under dissemination all participating institutions promote the dissemination of TEMPUS results at the various levels in their organisations, mainly by way of sharing knowledge and experiences. For JEPs trans-national cooperation also contributed considerably to the sustainability of the results of TEMPUS projects. For IMGs this was established by mutual research activities and continuation of cooperation with an EU university. For SCMs continuation was also established through the continuation of established EU-partner country cooperation, through continuation of established national/ regional cooperation and through the use of developed methods and approaches in other courses within the university¹¹².

¹¹⁰ See Annex Table AII.0.131.

¹¹¹ See Annex Table AII.0.209.

¹¹² See Annex Table AII.0.206.

Another important issue for sustainability concerns funding after the project was terminated. Half of the JEP partners that participated in the survey stated that their institution continued the TEMPUS related activities by way of own funding, although also external sources appeared to have been of considerable importance for this, i.e. national budgets (26%), other multilateral or bilateral funding sources (18%) and external fund raising (11%)¹¹³.

Obviously, the sustainability of the ongoing cooperation between TEMPUS project partners is also determined by its character. From Table 7.3 it can be concluded that in most cases cooperation was continued between the EU universities and the universities in the partner countries. When cooperation did continue, this was mostly in the area on which the TEMPUS project concentrated (67%) or by simply information exchange (66%)¹¹⁴.

Table 7.3 How have project results been continued at the level of the organisation after the Tempus financing was over? More options possible.

	JEP	SCM
Through the continuation of established EU-partner country cooperation	55%	70%
Through the continuation of established national/regional cooperation	39%	44%
Through continuation of training courses/ transfer of knowledge to staff who were not involved	42%	27%
Use of developed methods/approaches in other courses within the university	39%	43%
Don't know	4%	4%
Other	20%	6%
Not	3%	1%

7.5 Involvement of non-academic partners

20. To which extent have non-academic partners (e.g. businesses) been involved to support the process?

From the interviews with NTOs and the information from the country visits we conclude that non-academic partners were involved in the TEMPUS projects only to a limited extent, with projects in general being dominated by universities. This conclusion is largely in line with earlier evaluations and impact studies of TEMPUS III. In particular, the Impact Study of TEMPUS III demonstrated that a more structured university-enterprise relationship would address the low involvement of businesses¹¹⁵. However, non-academic partners were frequently mentioned as partners in the project by the respondents to our questionnaire. In particular, in SCMs non-academic partners such as

¹¹³ See Annex Table Table All.0.127.

¹¹⁴ See Annex Table All.0.132.

¹¹⁵ European Commission, DG Education and Culture, The Impact of TEMPUS III. The impact of the Tempus Programme on higher education development in the Tempus Partner Countries. A Survey. 2008.

enterprises (especially SMEs), professional associations, chambers of commerce, and non-governmental organisations were sometimes involved in some way.

Table 7.4 What kind of organisations were involved in the regional cooperation within the TEMPUS projects? More options possible, percentages do not sum up to 100 per cent.

	JEP	SCM
University	93.6	96.0
Higher education network	3.7	18.5
Public authority	.5	30.9
Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (less than 250 people employed)	.8	23.2
Large Enterprise (more than 250 people employed)	.3	8.1
Professional association	.3	16.8
Chamber of Commerce	0	9.4
Representative organisation of employees and/or employers	0	4.0
Non-governmental organisations/Civil society organisation	.5	15.1
Other non-academic institution	.3	9.7

Aside from (limited) active involvement from enterprises in TEMPUS, the activities under TEMPUS in a minority of cases also contributed to the dialogue between the Higher Education sector and enterprises. 32% of the respondents involved in JEPs indicate that their Tempus project contributed significantly to the dialogue between the Higher Education sector and enterprises¹¹⁶. The corresponding figure for SCMs is 18%¹¹⁷.

7.6 Dissemination and use of project results

21. To what extent have the results of the actions been properly disseminated within the partner country organisations & beyond to the Ministries in charge of Higher Education & to external stakeholders & the public? What is their exploitable potential, & to what extent can one say that this potential has been exploited?

The picture regarding dissemination of TEMPUS results is mixed. Depending on the scope of the various TEMPUS instruments dissemination has another character:

- According to participants in IMGs, dissemination of new ideas gained by visits to a partner university has been the main benefit for their organisation¹¹⁸. This “light form” of dissemination was to a large degree implemented by the participants in the IMGs¹¹⁹, by way of sharing their experiences and knowledge gained in the TEMPUS project. Especially in TACIS and CARDS many IMG participants were involved in this form of dissemination.

¹¹⁶ See Annex Table All.0.111.

¹¹⁷ See Annex Table All.0.191

¹¹⁸ See Annex Table All.0.25.

¹¹⁹ See Annex Table All.0.40.

- The majority of respondents in JEPS and SCM indicate that at political and national level the main instrument for giving continuation to TEMPUS results has been by way of dissemination of results¹²⁰. It is worth mentioning here that the project coordinators in JEPs were especially positive about the support they received from the NTOs regarding dissemination activities. Almost 40% of the project coordinators rated the support by the NTO/NIP in this area as good or very good. The main instruments for disseminating the results of JEPs were, in descending order: a website, seminar or workshop and publications¹²¹.

It is difficult to get a good in-depth picture of the dissemination activities implemented through a written questionnaire. Therefore during the country visits dissemination was an explicit theme in the interviews, although this also gave only partial information on the scope and quality of the dissemination activities performed. Based on this, it appears that in many cases the dissemination activities needs further improvement. For instance, dissemination of TEMPUS III results in the Russian Federation was assessed by the interviewed people in general as weak. Internal dissemination to colleagues was often limited and not sufficient to really share knowledge and experiences. Respondents indicate that it was difficult to access data on projects undertaken. Project websites for were developed but provided only limited information on the process, project results and experiences.

These experiences in the Russian Federation seem to be related to more basic problems which are often overlooked in the process of dissemination. Although from a policy point of view there often is a clear need for dissemination of results, eventually promoting the achievement of objectives and with this creating value for money, the stakeholders involved do not always have the incentives to cooperate actively in dissemination. There could be various reasons for this, such as the competitive advantage (knowledge, information and experience) a participant might have due to the project and which he is not willing to share with other universities (i.e. competitors). This was clearly the case in various TEMPUS projects in the Russian Federation where possession of information puts one in a powerful position. There can also be resistance in receiving information on new developments through dissemination from the side of the target audience. Aside from these strategic obstacles, it was also frequently mentioned in the interviews that the projects under TEMPUS were often too short, leaving hardly enough time to design a more sophisticated dissemination plan. Since dissemination is seen as a key priority by many stakeholders it is clear that more attention is needed, especially as regards the conditions under which successful dissemination can take place.

The question on the potential for exploitation is a very difficult one, also to a large degree depending on the type of outputs and outcomes that were achieved. To get some idea of the extent to which TEMPUS outputs were used we asked some questions on this in the survey. As we already described

¹²⁰ See Annex Table 0.128 and Table AII.0.206.

¹²¹ See Annex Table AII.0.129.

a large part of the surveyed participants indicated that the outputs of their projects were still by the project partners and also, although to a lesser extent, by other (non-partner) organisations.

More specifically we assessed the extent to which the methods and approaches developed in JEPS or SCMs were replicated by other universities. Not surprisingly, for JEPs this appeared to be more often the case than for SCMs. From this information however, it is not possible to draw conclusions on further potentials for the use of methods and approaches developed in TEMPUS projects. For this question to be answered also information on the needs of universities is needed. These needs are not known, since these also depend on various institution specific aspects.

7.7 Conclusions

The evaluation indicates that in general JEP projects, particularly in the area of curriculum development are seen as sustainable. Sustainable outcomes in the field of structural reforms were more difficult to establish, although there are examples of SCM projects which claim to have sustainable outcomes.

For many benefits/outcomes of the Programme it can be assumed that these do have a certain sustainability due the fact that the experience or the knowledge gained in the project cannot be wiped out after the project has terminated. Regarding the IMG activities this is true for various benefits reported by the respondents to our survey, for instance at a personal level: increased knowledge of a study area, improved working practice, improved teaching and management skills, greater awareness of other cultures and EU institutions. At the level of the organisation, sustainable outcomes were also reported, in particular new curricula, together with a more innovative culture in the institutions. Also regarding JEPs some of the produced outputs basically bear an element of sustainability, mainly due to the fact that most activities in the JEPS were related to curriculum development, and which to a large degree said to be still in use after termination of the project.

Within the TEMPUS programme the SCMs have the most structural reform elements. Within the SCM projects ‘support to the development or implementation of a national strategy’ (42%) and ‘support to dissemination and use of the results of cooperation actions’ were implemented most often (37%). This support was mainly provided by way of staff training on good practices, seminars or conferences, and developing websites and information materials. Contrary to the JEPs and IMGs these outputs are clearly “less tangible”, in particular in the short run, although there are examples of SCM projects which claim to have sustainable outcome. From the fact that a large majority of respondents (77%) indicated that the outputs were still in use by their own organisation or their partner’s, it can be concluded that the produced outputs are assessed as valuable, although this does not automatically imply that structural reforms have been initiated.

The evaluation also shows that in many cases the programme encouraged sustainable partnerships in higher education, involving EC and partner countries in various degrees depending on the character of the project. A vast majority of projects partners that

responded to our survey indicated that the cooperation with at least some of the project partners was continued after the end of the project.

Another important issue for sustainability concerns funding. The findings indicate that an important contribution for this is made by the involved institutions: half of the JEP partners continued the TEMPUS related activities by way of own funding. Also other external sources were used for the continuation of activities, i.e. national budgets (26%), other multilateral or bilateral funding sources (18%) and external fund raising (11%). In this respect it can be concluded that there appears to be a high level of financial commitment by various involved stakeholders to continue the activities and networks that have been put in place by TEMPUS. It would be interesting to collect and disseminate the good practices on this, because lack of funding always is a critical factor in the continuation of activities of this kind of cooperation programmes.

The picture regarding dissemination of TEMPUS results is mixed. Depending on the scope of the various TEMPUS instruments dissemination has another character. At the level of IMGs and JEPs dissemination to a large degree mainly consisted of sharing knowledge and experiences to colleagues. Although this was often done intensively, it is not clear in the light of sustainability what significance can be attached to this kind of activities. On the other hand, especially based on the country visits, it appears that in many cases the dissemination activities need further improvement. Aside from practical obstacles regarding dissemination, there seem to be more basic problems which are often overlooked in the process of dissemination. Although from a policy point of view there often is a clear need for dissemination of results, eventually promoting the achievement of objectives and with this creating value for money, the stakeholders involved do not always have the incentives to cooperate actively in dissemination

8 Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

TEMPUS remains relevant with respect to its global, specific as well as operational objectives. The activities funded by TEMPUS have at various levels (individual, institutions and policy) contributed to reforms that otherwise would probably not or at a much slower pace gained momentum. At the same time it is clear that in many countries further progress in reforming the HE sector is still needed and important challenges in reforming HE structures are still ahead or have just started. The evaluators therefore support the continuation of the TEMPUS Programme, as it is now being implemented in TEMPUS IV.

In this chapter we present the recommendations and the key conclusions they refer to. We stress that these key conclusions and recommendations are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of project partners or stakeholders in TEMPUS. Our recommendations only refer to how the current TEMPUS IV programme could be improved and not to issues and weak points of the TEMPUS III programme that have already been addressed by the new programme.

For each recommendation, it is indicated to whom in particular the recommendation is addressed. To make clear how the recommendations follow-on from our evaluation findings and conclusions, we have made a distinction whether the recommendations refer to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impacts or sustainability. If a recommendation refers to more than one of these (e.g. if it contributes to both effectiveness and sustainability) it has been put just under one.

8.2 Recommendations

8.2.1 Recommendations regarding the relevance of the programme

Recommendation 1 – Strengthen strategic programme orientation.

Conclusion: The relevance of TEMPUS III was generally assessed as high, with respect to its global, specific as well as operational objectives. In particular the bottom-up character of TEMPUS III, allowing the formulation of national priorities reflecting the different stages of the transformation process in the Partner Countries, including the role of the higher, contributed to the relevance of the programme. At the same time however, the evaluation indicated considerable differences in the way national TEMPUS priorities were selected, with regard to the - sometimes limited - involvement

of national stakeholders as well as the strategic relation of the national TEMPUS priorities to the wider national reform agendas in higher education.

Recommendation: We recommend to strengthen the strategic orientation of TEMPUS, by making the strategic links between TEMPUS projects - national TEMPUS priorities and the national reform agendas (more) explicit. This would allow for proper strategic choices about the role TEMPUS can play in national HE reforms, including a targeted and well-founded use of SCMs.

In order to have meaningful TEMPUS priorities linked to national policies, a **proper dialogue** should take place. At national level this dialogue should involve all relevant national stakeholders. In this, the national HE reform agenda should be taken into account as a clear – agenda-setting - policy framework. The outcome of this dialogue, indicating well-founded country-specific needs in HE, can be used to (further) strengthen the dialogue process between the EC and national stakeholders. Since the setting of national priorities for TEMPUS would be linked in a natural way to the national HE reform policy cycle this recommendation would not lead to an extra administrative burden of Partner Countries, as long as they are working along these lines.

Since large differences exist in the way eligible countries are currently dealing with the national priority setting we recommend the EC to **identify and disseminate good practices** of countries that already are working along the recommended lines.

TEMPUS projects (particularly SCMs) should be **monitored** *inter alia* on the basis of their contribution to the national strategic goals in higher education, which should itself be subject to some sort of mid-term review exercise (e.g. after two years). Preferably the monitoring of TEMPUS project should be based on indicators that are clearly linked to the national strategic framework.

Recommendation 2 – Improve effective synergy with Erasmus Mundus and other Community actions

Conclusion: The evaluation indicates that many stakeholders are not well informed about the possibilities offered by Erasmus Mundus and synergy options with other Community actions. In particular many are not aware that the mobility grants in TEMPUS (IMGs) have been replaced by mobility opportunities through the Erasmus Mundus External Co-operation Window. The role of TEMPUS to the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) seems obvious although appears to be underexposed. Furthermore TEMPUS and the Framework for European research and technological development could have a distinct complementary role in both ways, in which academic education and research are developed in a coherent way.

Recommendation: In order to improve coherence of policy instruments and with this an effective use of instruments by stakeholders at all levels it is recommended to the EC to strengthen the links with the wider national policies in the countries as far as education system reforms are concerned (see also recommendation 10) improving communication

on Erasmus Mundus and other Community initiatives and encouraging links with research.

8.2.2 Recommendations regarding the efficiency of the programme

Recommendation 3 –Reconsider level of funding in view of TEMPUS objectives

Conclusion: In general the funding levels for TEMPUS III were not considered to be proportional to its ambitious objectives. In view of the social and economic challenges that are (still) very large in the eligible countries, the fact that the total budget for TEMPUS III was spent and funding levels have been insufficient to fund all relevant and high quality proposals can be considered factors for under-funding. However, the absorption capacity of institutions and countries for more projects seemed to be limited in some of the countries.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC to reconsider the levels of funding for TEMPUS with respect to the ambitious goals it has set. To reach a critical mass of projects that can be expected to have a concrete and sustainable impact at HE institutions and national policies based on the goals set higher levels of funding are recommended, without disregarding the absorption capacity of the applicants involved. A reasonable indicator for an increase in budget could be distracted from the number of good proposals that, due to budget constraints, are not being selected for funding. In addition, contrary to the current practice in TEMPUS IV, it is recommended to allow for smaller projects in line with the differentiated demand in the Partner Countries. We also recommend the EC consider a possible differentiation of programme goals for the different geographical areas and countries ((potential) accession countries and other partner countries) TEMPUS is focusing at.

Recommendation 4 – Enrich quality of project proposals

Conclusion: The participants were generally satisfied with the rigour of the selection process. The main weaknesses were found in the perceived technical focus of the selection process and insufficient weight given to “on-the-ground insights”. There is also a tendency for both new applicants and selectors to overlook outcomes and experiences in similar current or previous projects. This might result in sub-optimal project proposals and eventually sub-optimal effects and impacts.

Recommendation: It is recommended to further strengthen the quality of project proposals. Specifically we recommend:

- to both EC and NTO to give more support (advice and training) to potential participants to prepare a technical sound proposal;
- to the EC to require applicants to refer to current or previous relevant projects in the country, including lessons learned and the way this new application would complement/build-upon what went before; for this it should be investigated how project results and solutions for obstacles met, could be effectively disseminated to relevant stakeholders. This could be done by making (a selection of) project information available on the internet.

- to the EC to give a clear explanation on the (final) selection and the applied criteria in this to the national stakeholders involved in the selection process. This will also contribute to a strengthened dialogue with national authorities.

Recommendation 5 - Improve the effectiveness of field monitoring

Conclusion: The monitoring practice has been improved considerably since the mid-term evaluation which is shown in the appreciation of the process, but limited attention is given to feedback on the field monitoring. Moreover, with the increase in project volume (more partners in regional projects) and increases in number of countries involved, there is a need to clarify the responsibilities of the different NTOs involved in monitoring

Recommendation: It is recommended to improve elements of the evaluation and monitoring procedures of TEMPUS, especially regarding the field monitoring. Specifically, we recommend:

- to the NTOs and EC to have structural debriefings at the end of the monitoring visit;
- to the EC to encourage the contract partners to send the feedback letter to all partners involved (in the monitoring visits) and to request a substantiated reaction from the consortium partners with clarifications and actions to be undertaken. This responsibility could be underlined while signing the grant agreement.

Recommendation 6 - Give greater support to National Contact Points (NCPs) in New Member States

Conclusion: The NCPs support is working well in most countries. Exceptions are some of the New Member States where the NCP was restricted in its activities due to limited budgets.

Recommendation: The evaluation team recommends the EC to provide support (e.g information and training) to and to investigate funding opportunities for NCPs in new Member States in order to assist them to promote TEMPUS in the eligible countries. Their experience and position as recent beneficiaries of the TEMPUS programme can be valuable in helping Partner Countries to develop and implement successful projects.

Recommendation 7 - Better define the involvement of the ECD to improve the (structural) dialogue with the national authorities on HE

Conclusion: The role of the EC Delegation with regard to TEMPUS differed widely per country. Although the level of involvement of the ECD has grown during TEMPUS III it appeared not to be well defined in all countries. Communication to both the delegations and NTO with respect to the expected role of the Delegation is not always clear.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC to better define and communicate on the level of involvement of the Delegation. This would provide a forum for a dialogue on and assessment of TEMPUS in the specific partner country, helping to achieve greater involvement and more empowerment of the national stakeholders.

8.2.3 Recommendations regarding the effectiveness and impacts of the programme

Recommendation 8 – Continuation of TEMPUS-like projects after accession to the EU

Conclusion: For the candidate countries TEMPUS has had a clear role in the reform of HE systems, for instance as regards modernisation of curricula, the implementation of quality assurance systems and capacity development among HE staff. At the same time, however, it is clear, that not all reform operations are yet fully implemented and in some cases will not be at the moment of EU-accession.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC to improve communication on alternatives for continuation of TEMPUS –like projects after country has acceded the European Union. Logically this communication would involve the actions under the Erasmus Programme and Erasmus Mundus (see also recommendation 2). If new member states experience obstacles in participating in these programmes action should be undertaken by the Commission.

Recommendation 9 – More emphasis on best practices – information on linkages with the labour market and civil society

Conclusion: Notwithstanding significant variation between institutions and countries TEMPUS III made an important contribution to making teaching more responsive to labour market needs. This applies both to the needs of private sectors within Partner Countries as well as reforming public sectors. The strong emphasis on curriculum development means that new courses have been created (or existing ones modified) in all Partner Countries – often responding to specific and previously unmet labour market needs. The evaluation indicates that there are important differences between countries in the way that TEMPUS projects contribute to a successful transfer between higher education and the labour market. Whilst an important contribution was made through exposing citizens to European societies and points of view, it did not however make a significant contribution to strengthening civil society within Partner countries.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the EC and NTOs should pay more attention to the ways that TEMPUS projects can be linked to the labour market and civil society.. Successful projects should be disseminated in such a way that other projects and new applicants can learn how they can make their projects more worthwhile in terms of the labour market. In doing so use should be made of the best practices study *Evaluation of mechanisms for the dissemination and exploitation of the results arising from programmes and initiatives managed by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture*¹²² and the outcomes of the TEMPUS dissemination conference in Amman.

¹²² ECOTEC, Birmingham, March 2006

Recommendation 10 – Give more priority to management reform projects

Conclusion: TEMPUS has made an important contribution to the development of higher education systems. The nature and scale differs from country to country. Within TEMPUS there is still an emphasis on curriculum development projects, whilst respondents were more critical of the results of projects focused at the reform of higher education structures and institutions and their management. Changes of structures in universities are often more difficult to achieve and take more time particularly in countries which are less open.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC and NTO and other involved parties to give more priority to projects focused at reform of HEI management. Although also curriculum development projects often include activities in this area more emphasis is necessary to achieve durable impacts in this area.

Recommendation 11 – Give more attention to accessibility (equal opportunities) of the projects.

Conclusion: Gender did not receive much explicit attention within the implementation of TEMPUS III – despite occupying a prominent position in the programme’s Council Decisions. Unsurprisingly given the diversity of Partner Countries, its importance as an issue differs enormously. In general, programme design and implementation did not actively promote equal participation of men or women per se, although this does not appear to have been needed in the majority of countries.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC to give more attention to equal opportunities in the projects. Specifically we recommend to:

- require applicants to fill out a specific section on equal opportunities in the project proposal and monitoring report;
- to discuss with the NTO the importance of equal opportunities at the different levels in the specific countries;
- to monitor and report on the achievements in this area.

Recommendation 12 - Support additional ambitions of projects

Conclusion: Some of the projects showed ambitions which were not directly related to the objectives of the TEMPUS III programme, but could lead extra high valued outcomes. Examples identified relate to the implementation of joint degrees and double diplomas. Although implementation of joint degrees as such were not an objective of TEMPUS III many Partner Country HEIs nonetheless had strong expectations that joint degree courses would result from their participation in TEMPUS III. The evaluation shows that due to various obstacles this is seldom put into practice in many cases.

Recommendation: It is recommended to the EC to consider support for additional ambitions of projects which strictly speaking are beyond the scope of the Programme. Therefore the EC should first explore the range of this kind of additional ambitions, investigate the problems that these are confronted with and see how extra support could

be given to solve the problems. Dissemination of good practices, e.g. regarding double diplomas and joint degrees, could be an effective and efficient approach.

8.2.4 Recommendations regarding the sustainability of the programme

Recommendation 13 – Improve both dissemination and use of project results

Conclusion: Dissemination activities need further improvement. Aside from the practical obstacles regarding dissemination there seem to be more basic problems. Although from a policy point of view there is a clear need for dissemination of results, the stakeholders involved do not always have the incentives to cooperate actively in dissemination. There can also be resistance in receiving information on new elements through dissemination from the target audience.

Recommendation: At the programme level it is recommended to the EC to actively promote dissemination of project outcomes and results. This should be done in close relation to the strategic programme orientation (see recommendation #2). Good practices can play a key role in this. Also use should be made of previous insights and achievements on effective dissemination, within the TEMPUS programme as well as in other similar programmes.

At the project level the above mentioned recommendation (#5) to require new applicants to elaborate on previous projects relevant to the proposed project will increase the target audience. At project level additional emphasis on dissemination at the later stage of the project is necessary. The evaluation team recommends the EC to request participants to write a dissemination plan half/one year before end of project including strategic policy issues the dissemination activities are to address.

List of documents and literature

Council Decisions and Communications

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