COMMISSION DECISION

of […]

on the Annual Action Programme 2008 in favour of Brazil to be financed under Article 19 09 01 of the general budget of the European Communities

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No. 1905/2006\(^1\) of the European Parliament and the Council, of 18 December 2006, establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, and in particular Article 22 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) The Commission has adopted the Country Strategy Paper for Brazil\(^2\) and the Multianual Indicative Programme for the period 2007-2013, which indicates the priority of enhancing bilateral relations between the EC and Brazil (point 5.1) and foresees the development of a higher education programme to facilitate access to European Higher Education Area for Brazilian postgraduate students and university professionals in order to increase their employability skills and opportunities in their country (National Indicative Programme, point 5.2)

(2) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme are to improve the Brazilian higher education system, through establishing stronger links between European and Brazilian academic institutions, and to improve employability of Brazilian youths, by encouraging and enabling Brazilian students to complete graduate and postgraduate studies in Europe.


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\(^1\) OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, P.41
\(^2\) C(2007) 2032, 14.05.2007
laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities\(^4\).


(5) The Commission is required to define the term “substantial change” in the meaning of Article 90 (4) of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 to ensure that any substantial change in this decision shall follow the same procedure as the initial decision.

(6) The measures provided for in this decision are in accordance with the opinion of the DCI Committee set up under Article 35 of Regulation (EEC) No 1905/2006.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Annual Action Programme in favour of Brazil, constituted by the action “Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil)”, the text of which is set out in the attached Annex, is approved.

Article 2

The maximum contribution of the Community to the Annual Action Programme is set at EUR 18,605,000.00 to be financed from budget line 19 09 01 of the general budget of the European Communities for 2008.

This decision shall also cover any possible interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Within the global indicative budget of the specific action, cumulated changes not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution of the Community, shall not be considered substantial, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the Annual Action Programme.

The authorising officer may introduce non substantial changes to the Annual Action Programme in accordance with the principles of sound financial management.

Done at Brussels, (…)

For the Commission

(…)

Member of the Commission

ACTION FICHE FOR BRAZIL

1. IDENTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/Number</th>
<th>Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) / DCI-ALA/2007/019-471</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>EC contribution (100%): 18,605,000.00 € (30.5 % of IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid method / Management mode</td>
<td>Project approach – indirect centralised management (EAC-EA)</td>
</tr>
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<td>DAC-code</td>
<td>11420</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

Brazil

According to the National Education Plan which establishes the main Brazilian Government guidelines and objectives in the educational sector for the period of 10 years (2001-2010), among Latin American countries Brazil presents one of the lowest rates of access to higher education, even if one considers the participation of private institutions. Although higher education is increasingly perceived as the key to country’s successful insertion into the global economy, only about 15% of the age cohort is enrolled in higher education. This is quite low compared to other countries in the region (Argentina 36%; Chile 32%; Uruguay 30%; Venezuela, R.B. 29% [World Development Indicators 2001]) and to the OECD country average of 52% (OECD, 2001).

In the past years Brazil has issued a number of fundamental legal provisions regarding higher education reform. The National Education Plan (PNE), the Post Graduation National Plan (PNGP), the Education Development and the Federal Higher Education System Law are legal instruments which recognize the important role of higher education institutions finding solutions for current problems, building a better future for the Brazilian society and reducing inequalities. Universities are considered the core of the Brazilian Higher Education System. Higher education institutions (HEI) have also the mission to reduce regional imbalance and to improve country’s development, based on national strategies.

In the first term of President Lula Government, the Brazilian Ministry of Education launched a major programme (Education for All - PROUNI) in order to offer scholarships for less privileged students to enrol in higher education programmes of private institutions. 55,212 scholarships were offered by PROUNI in the second semester of 2007. The current Brazilian Federal Government has also put a strong emphasis on access of less privileged groups to higher education, particularly in regard to students coming from public schools and minority groups. This new legislation was discussed with organisations of the Brazilian civil society since the beginning of President Lula Government.

In April 2007 the Brazilian Government also launched the REUNI programme (Programme to support the restructuration and expansion of Federal Universities) as part of the Education Development Plan. From the 54 federal universities, 35 are associated to the REUNI programme in its current first phase. Under the REUNI programme, the federal universities
would have to design and implement an institutional development plan to include measures in order to guarantee social inclusion. Furthermore, one of the main strategies of the REUNI programme is to promote student mobility.

In a few words Brazilian national policy considers the following topics as base for higher education development:

1. Higher education institutions are responsible to provide professional staff capable to respond to internal needs of economical, social, cultural and technological development;

2. It is imperative to develop programmes to facilitate the inclusion of students from vulnerable groups;

3. Regional imbalances can be diminished through knowledge exchange between higher education institutions from poorest regions and prestigious national and international institutions;

4. International exchange is an important tool to improve national higher education system in terms of quantity and quality.

To a large extent, the Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) would provide an answer to these concerns and is thus fully consistent with national policies and strategies. Qualitative improvement of international exchange and the strengthening of institutions have become the most important goals of internationalization policies. This process generates an increase in the demand for studies abroad. Current number of scholarships provided by the Government, EC and Member States has only partially responded to internal needs.

The Academic Mobility Programme’s own nature permits the opening-up of European higher education institutions to Brazilian ones. This is the main purpose of the said initiative. This step will increase Brazilian students’ participation in academic activities in the EU. Brazil has several subject/study areas well developed. Nevertheless, some important areas to national development have been hampered during the years. This situation caused a great necessity in focus the programme in certain fields of knowledge.

Brazil’s higher education system reflects the many regional, socio-economic, political and cultural gaps. Higher education institutions are unevenly distributed across the country. More than a half are in the more developed region, the southeast, while just five percent are in the less developed region, north. Inequality in revenues’ distribution is one of the main determinants of poverty in Brazil and perpetuates through the exclusion of poor from the access to higher education. The consortiums participating in the Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) will be asked to pay special attention to inclusive measures in order to favour the participation of students from the least developed regions of Brazil. These measures would complement those initiatives already being undertaken by the Brazilian Government under the PROUNI and the REUNI programmes. The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) would thus also contribute to foster the inclusion of higher education institutions from different Brazilian regions, promoting the regional integration and mutual understanding at the national level.

Europe
The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) is in line with the EC policies on higher education such as the Lisbon Agenda, which recognizes the importance of higher education for economic and social development. Furthermore, the DCI regulation foresees and supports the creation of a common EU-Latin American higher education area as one of the main areas of cooperation for the region. Moreover, the Framework Agreement for Cooperation between the EU and Brazil signed in 1992 encourages cultural and academic exchanges. The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) is fully consistent with the proposed EC co-operation strategy for Brazil for the 2007-2013 period, which earmarked 50% of its indicative budget, representing €30.5 million, for a higher education mobility programme.

Today higher education in Europe faces the need to stimulate the process of convergence of degree structures and to add to the attractiveness of European higher education worldwide. These themes are central to the Bologna process and to the national reforms of higher education in the Member States. The EU has decided to encourage and support the opening up of European higher education to the rest of the world.

At institutional level, the project will help to create strong bonds between HEI from both parts as well as contributing to improve quality of education and university services to students, being fully in line with the above-mentioned Brazilian Government development strategy for the field of higher education. In addition, it is an important tool to build-up the Strategic Partnership EU-Brazil agreed between the parties during the Lisbon Summit of June 2007, first EU-Brazil Summit.

2.2. Lessons learnt

The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) will be the first bilateral initiative of this kind to be included in the EC bilateral cooperation with Brazil. It is based on the strong demand from Brazilian students, scholars and academic institutions as a result of regional programmes such as ALFA (academic cooperation for Latin America) and ALBAN (scholarships programme for Latin America). In the ALBAN programme, out of 3319 selected applicants 1077 were from Brazil. Lessons have been learned and taken into account for the elaboration of this project, not only from the ERASMUS experience, but also from other EC funded activities in the Latin American region. Some of those relevant lessons are:

- The added value of the previous cooperation programme such as ALFA and ERASMUS MUNDUS general scheme is the construction of a culture of cooperation and integration associating different higher education institutions from different countries through networking. In the case of Brazil one should consider also the different regions, as it is a country of continental size and that implies meaningful regional disparities. Therefore, a key issue for Brazil is integration at the national level.

- The participating universities must be recognised by their national authorities and certified as qualifying to take part in a student mobility programme.

- The participating institutions must guarantee the recognition of the studies undertaken by the students during the exchange period.

2.3. Complementary actions

Several European Union member countries in Brazil have scholarship programmes, but most of these are aimed at financing postgraduate studies in those same EU member states. The proposed Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window)
would complement the initiatives funded by the EC under the Erasmus Mundus general scheme (in which eleven Brazilian higher education institutions participate) and other EC planned activities such as the European Studies Institute which is included in the current indicative programming for Brazil. In addition, it would complement the regional projects such as Support for the MERCOSUR Mobility Programme in Higher Education (Mobility Programme) and planned Mobility Programme for Latin America. All of those have different scopes in terms of their overall target population and geographical range.

2.4. Donor coordination

The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) has been subject of several discussions with the EU Member States representatives and other donors in Brazil. The EC Delegation organized a presentation of the programme to the EU Member States on 24 September 2007 and intends to organize one additional presentation of the programme before the EU decision. The Delegation in Brazil organises frequent coordination meetings with other donors, especially other bilateral donors and in particular EU Member States, but also the International Financial Institutions and UN Agencies active in the country.

Institutionalised coordination mechanisms between the Brazilian Government and the external donors' community do not exist in Brazil. Donor coordination is thus made by the government through the bilateral dialogues it keeps with the different donors. Two main Brazilian institutions coordinate cooperation activities in the educational sector at the Federal Government level: the Ministry of External Relations, through the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (ABC-Agência Brasileira de Cooperação), which is in charge of the so-called “technical cooperation”, i.e., interventions that do not require the internalization of external resources into the national budgets; and the International Coordination Office of the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The Brazilian Ministry of Education has ensured a proper coordination with academic mobility schemes financed by other relevant bilateral donors like the USA, Canada and Japan.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil) aims at mutual enrichment and better understanding between the European Union and third-countries, through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills at higher education level.

The overall objective of the said programme is contributing to improve the Brazilian higher education system, through establishing stronger links between European and Brazilian academic institutions, and to improve employability of Brazilian youths, by encouraging and enabling Brazilian students to complete graduate and postgraduate studies in Europe.

Such an action also contributes to the EU - LA Higher Education Area.

Specific objectives are:

Objective 1: To enable Brazilian students to benefit from the experience of pursuing academic studies in Europe.
Objective 2: To further skills and qualification of academic staff.

Objective 3: To promote and encourage the creation of EU-Brazil academic partnerships, the exchange of know-how, successful experiences and best practices between the partners and the mutual recognition of diplomas.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Results related to objective 1: Minimum of 800 individual mobility flows granted to Brazilian students in different education levels (undergraduate, master\(^5\), doctorate and post-doctorate). In order to improve mutual understanding the Brazilian government underlines the need not only to send students to Europe but also to receive Europeans in Brazil. To answer to this Brazilian wish, a maximum of 30% of the individual mobility flows can be used to cover the mobility of students and academic staff from European institutions towards one or more Brazilian institutions involved in the partnership.

Results related to objective 2: Minimum of 170 individual mobility flows granted to academic staff.

Results related to objective 3: Minimum of 6 academic partnerships established, involving each one a minimum of 8 universities: 5 European universities from 3 different EU countries and 3 Brazilian universities from 2 different Brazilian regions. Each partnership (consortium) will be limited to 20 partners. Each call for proposal will result in a minimum of 3 academic partnerships.

Activities

The project will be composed of two main parts:

- The partnership activities for the organisation of mobility and the transfer of know-how and best practices. This activity involves creating optimal conditions, through quality support measures, for students and teachers to undertake periods of study/training/teaching/research at partner universities in the EU and Brazil;
- The management, coaching and supervising of individual mobility flows of students and academic staff.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Main assumption is that there is a political willingness from both parties to improve institutional capacity increasing mobility with third countries. A second important assumption is that high importance has been given within the HEI to further promoting internationalization. A third assumption is that there is an increasing demand from both sides for foreign mobility programmes.

One of the risks of the proposed programme would be a possible fall in the Brazilian Government’s commitment to and ownership of the programme, if the Brazilian Ministry of Education is not properly associated to the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the action. The Ministry’s commitment to and ownership on the project is very important for various reasons, but particularly as the Ministry of Education plays a key role in the area of mutual recognition of diplomas. To overcome or minimise this risk, the EC Delegation in Brasilia has been in close contact with the Ministry of Education and will associate the Ministry in all phases of the programme as much as possible. This should be discussed during inter-services consultations (ISC) and negotiations.

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\(^{5}\) It is not foreseen to offer mobility at master's level in the context of the 1st Call for proposals
The Brazilian government is concerned about possible “brain drain” effects of the programme, due, for instance, to the lack of internal resources for national researchers. To avoid this risk, the Brazilian government favours mobility schemes permitting students to perform only part of their studies abroad and maintain close links with their home institutions (e.g. “Sandwich PhD” schemes)\(^6\). Other specific measures will be included in the call for proposals in order to show in which ways the programme will avoid brain drain. In the first call, a strong focus is put on ‘sandwich PhD’ schemes. In that context doctorate students have to return to Brazil to complete their doctorate studies and research.

3.4. **Crosscutting Issues**

The project will be managed with special regard at gender equality and includes specific measures to encourage and facilitate the participation of students from vulnerable groups (already part of the Education policy of the Brazilian government). The Brazilian government also proposed to include HEI from different regions in the consortia with the purpose of diminishing internal regional imbalances.

There are no environmental negative aspects associated with the implementation of this project. In regard to institutional sustainability and good governance, the exchange of experiences in the field of academic mobility between institutions from EU and Brazil will allow the reinforcement of institutional capacity. In addition, the programme seeks for the improvement of mutual recognition of diplomas. If this purpose is achieved it will enable the promotion of this or others similar programmes after the end of the EC financing. Furthermore, the involvement of students and academic staff in the mobility scheme will provide to the country more qualified professionals entrenched with new experiences and important cultural values (particularly those of the EU). Moreover, there are strong political commitments from the Brazilian government and the EC to invest in HE aiming at responding to the challenges of the new Global Knowledge Society of a globalized world and of improving governance.

3.5. **Stakeholders**

The target group of the project is composed of students - from undergraduate until postdoctoral levels - and academic staff who will benefit from the mobility schemes. As stated above, in line with the current Brazilian Government’s higher education policies, positive discrimination measures will be taken to encourage and facilitate the participation of students from poor and vulnerable social groups in the mobility programmes. These measures will be taken into account by the consortia of higher education institutions that will be in charge of the implementation of the programme activities.

Key project stakeholders and main project partners are the Brazilian government and the higher education institutions that will participate in the programme, as well as other types of organisations that may be involved in the consortia as associated partners.

The Brazilian government, through the Ministry of Education, will be in charge of defining important aspects of the project, such as the priority thematic areas, the number and educational level of scholarships, etc., and should also monitor and evaluate its implementation, in coordination with the EC’s concerned services. This involvement of the government in the different phases of the project preparation and implementation, together with his confirmed interest in promoting internationalisation of Brazilian HEIs, is expected to ensure a strong commitment to and ownership of project ideas by national authorities.

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\(^6\) This is well institutionalised, particularly in the context of exchange programmes with some of the EU member States.
The participating Brazilian and European HEIs will be selected by competitive procedures on the basis of the merits of their proposals and will be responsible for organizing and managing the mobility schemes.

4. **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

4.1. **Implementation method**

The programme will be implemented in *indirect centralised management* by the Executive Agency of the Education and Culture Directorate-General of the European Commission, according to the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Windows approach and the conditions that have been negotiated between DG Relex, DG EAC and DG EuropeAid.

The use of this implementation method was decided between DGs RELEX, EuropeAid and EAC (note MA/Tg A-3252 D(2006) 1543) and aims at taking advantage of the experience of DG EAC and the Agency in managing several of the EC's programmes in education, culture and audiovisual fields, according to the delegation of powers determined in the Decision n° C/2005/365-2 of the Commission on 15/02/2005.

Under this approach the Agency, in coordination with DG EuropeAid, will ensure the launching of the calls for proposals, the selection and contracting of the consortia, the payment of the grants and the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

The Commission after consultation of the Brazilian government, through the Ministry of Education (ME), will decide the strategic orientation of the programme, such as priority thematic areas, number of individual mobility flows and level of knowledge (undergraduate/post graduate). During the preparation of the project, the Brazilian Ministry of Education expressed a strong wish of being also closely associated to the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

4.2. **Procurement and grant award procedures [programme estimates]**

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions. The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 100% (according to the procedures of the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window programmes). Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the DCI Regulation (EC) No. 1905/2006. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in articles 31(7) and (8) of the DCI Regulation.
4.3. **Budget and calendar**

The total cost of the Academic Mobility Programme for Brazil is estimated at €18,605,000.00, of which the EC contribution is 100% (for the period of 2007-2010):  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Breakdown</th>
<th>EC (Euro)</th>
<th>Beneficiary/ies (Euro)</th>
<th>Total (Euro)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Calls for proposals</td>
<td>18,605,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>18,605,000.00</td>
<td>EAC-EA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is foreseen to organise two calls for proposals with approximately the same value (€9.3 million) under the Academic Mobility Programme (Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window for Brazil). The first call will enable the implementation of the programme from the academic year 2008/2009. The second one is expected to be launched in the end of 2008.

The operational implementation phase of the programme shall end on 31st December, 2013.

4.4. **Performance monitoring**

EAC-EA will be responsible for day-to-day technical and financial monitoring and evaluation. The EC Delegation in Brasilia and the Brazilian Ministry of Education will be responsible for the follow up of the implementation of the activities of the Academic Mobility Programme. Brazilian authorities should be encouraged to participate in monitoring of the programme.

4.5. **Evaluation and audit**

EAC-EA will be responsible for evaluations and audits according to the terms agreed with DG EuropeAid. Brazilian authorities should be encouraged to participate in the evaluation of the programme.

4.6. **Communication and visibility**

EAC-EA will be responsible for communication and visibility of the Academic Mobility Programme, in close cooperation with DG EuropeAid. The EC Delegation in Brasilia and the Brazilian Ministry of Education will support these activities.

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7 A second phase of the programme, with a foreseen financing of €11.895 million, will be prepared in line with the national Indicative Programme