

TA-X1-06-110-EN-C

Directorate-General for Education and Culture



# Sustainability of international cooperation projects in the field of higher education and vocational training

## Final Report



Publications Office

[Publications.europa.eu](http://Publications.europa.eu)

ISBN 92-9157-477-5



9 789291 574773

November 2006

European Commission



European Commission  
Directorate-General  
Education and Culture

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture)

This document draws on a study by Eureval for the Directorate-General Education and Culture on the sustainability of international higher education and vocational training cooperation projects.

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the  
European Communities, 2006

ISBN: 92-9157-477-5

© European Communities, 2006

## **Sustainability**

A project is sustainable when it continues to deliver benefits to the project beneficiaries and/or other constituencies for an extended period after the Commission's financial assistance has been terminated.

# Contents

	Page
Object of the study.....	3
Aim of the study.....	3
Tempus and US/Canada cooperation programmes.....	5
Methodology of the study.....	10
Defining sustainability.....	19
Our definition of sustainability.....	19
Sustainability factors.....	21
Balance of the key factors according to the type of project/area concerned.....	25
Main results concerning sustainability factors in Tempus projects.....	31
Quality of project design meeting academic, professional and/or social needs.....	33
Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation.....	36
Effective management and leadership.....	40
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups).....	42
Capacity for securing adequate resources for continuation.....	43
Academic and/or institutional support.....	46
Support from national authorities.....	49
Support from socio-economic actors.....	51
Main results concerning sustainability factors in US/Canada projects.....	55
Design corresponding to needs/demands shared by the participating countries.....	56
Quality of project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices.....	57
Involvement of consortium members – sense of ownership and motivation – committed leadership within the consortium.....	58
Target groups' participation.....	59
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation.....	60

Academic/institutional support – integration in university structure and stability of academic staff.....	62
International, national and local recognition.....	62
Conclusions and recommendations .....	65
Project-level factors .....	66
Context-level factors .....	77

# Object of the study

## Aim of the study

### To ensure the project's sustainability

Tempus and EU – US/Canada cooperation programmes are regularly evaluated to provide feedback for Council decisions, the legal base of education policy. However, this study is different from the traditional mid-term or final evaluations. The mission focuses on sustainability in project management.

By supervising this work, the European Commission emphasizes the importance of sustainable partnerships in the field of higher education and vocational training. The Commission wants to guide the project holder and applicants toward more sustainability. This aspect will receive more attention and weight in the selection processes and throughout the life-cycle of the projects.

In 1999, sustainability was declared as a key objective by the participants to the Tempus Annual Conference held at Kiev: "Good management involves making limited resources go as far as possible. This means not only ensuring that the impact of Tempus reaches as many qualified people as possible but ensuring also that the change that is generated is permanent. In other words, those projects are sustainable." One current task is to insist on the sustainability of the projects undertaken in the different programmes, for instance the sustainability of the networks created by the projects.

As noted in the Top Handbook (of 1997), "sustainability of project results can be defined as the result of a process which ensures that the outputs of a project are maintained after project funding has stopped".

In identifying factors and conditions that favour or hamper a project's sustainability, this mission had two main objectives:

- To provide project managers with guidance and advice for achieving sustainable outputs, in line with project objectives. The handbook provides tools enabling project coordinators to create independent and potentially self-sustainable outputs.
- To provide the European Commission with components of a tool for multi-criteria analysis to foresee the sustainability of the projects submitted in the selection process. A sustainability strategy will be developed from the beginning or even on intermediate outputs and not only at the end of the project.

Another result of this study is a handbook on sustainability for project managers. It endeavours to be as user-friendly and as short as possible, and focuses on the user's real needs.

The full scope of the study is presented in the chapter "Methodology of the study" (page 11).

### **Sustainability assessment in the selection and monitoring process**

#### *Tempus programmes:*

As seen in the beginning of the study, sustainability receives a qualitative attention at the main 4 steps of the selection and monitoring process:

1. In the applicant form, candidates write half a page on sustainability, but it seems to be more an expression of good will than a real and secured commitment.
2. During the selection process, potential sustainability is also assessed by the experts and is scored. However, sustainability seems hard to forecast in the academic assessment, notably due to the quick evolution of the context.
3. Sustainability is also a concern during the monitoring process (field visits, report reading). However, the way it is taken into account is once again informal.
4. At the end of the monitoring, potential sustainability is assessed (without explicit criteria) and mentioned in the project final report.

The persons we interviewed, in the inception phase, wished that the handbook could help to have a better focus on sustainability aspects. It could especially help them to give strong advices to the project's managers during the project's life.

#### *US/Canada programmes*

Sustainability effects in cooperation activities between EU and Canada or the US, which could "have a durable impact", are mentioned as objectives in the two guidelines. However, the applicant form does not contain a specific part about sustainability. It is only asked to "forecast" dissemination activities and the academic recognition between countries.

Intermediary and final project evaluation reports take sustainability into account, particularly chapter 8 (final report), which includes information about "ranking of factors considered most important by projects partners determining sustainability of the project".

## **Question about sustainability**

According to the terms of reference, the main question of this study is:

- Which factors ensure the sustainability of projects or hinder it?

To answer this question, we have studied the sustainability of projects through two aspects:

- The effective sustainability of the activities and/or outputs after the end of the EU funding: What does a sustainable project look like?
- The various factors of sustainability: What does sustainability depend on? How to identify the main sustainability factors depending on the projects (areas concerned, types of projects and activities...)?

## **Tempus and US/Canada cooperation programmes**

### **Origin and general objectives of the programmes**

Since 1990, many cooperation programmes between European and North American, Eastern European, Central Asian or Mediterranean universities have been launched.

The Tempus programme provides part of the European Community's assistance to the transition process in the partner countries, which is more generally governed by three programmes: CARDS for the Western Balkans; Tacis for Eastern Europe and Central Asia; and MEDA for the Mediterranean countries. The Tempus programme focuses on the development of the higher education systems in these countries through cooperation with institutions from the Member States of the European Community.

The first Tempus programme began after the fall of the Berlin wall and lasted from 1990 until 1994. The programme was consolidated and renewed for the 1994-1998 and 1998-2000 periods and, again, for the 2000-2006 period. These periods are referred to as "Tempus I", "Tempus II", "Tempus IIbis" and "Tempus III", respectively.

Following their accession to the EU, the ten Tempus associated countries were no longer eligible for economic aid under the Phare programme. They became fully eligible for Community programmes such as Socrates and Leonardo. The Tempus programme is no longer seen as an aid for acceding countries. It is still considered of particular importance for the evolution of the higher education systems and consequently for the social and economic transition process of the European Community partner countries.

Cooperation agreements with the US and Canada are very different from Tempus logic because they are shaped according to a "symmetric cooperation relationship" situation.

Their programmes aim at developing educational links for the promotion of curriculum development and student and teacher mobility in order to improve the quality of human resource development, to strengthen mutual understanding and to deepen political ties. In addition to the educational level, these agreements reveal a fairly important diplomatic aspect.

These Agreements between European Community and the United States of America and Canada, based on the 1995-2000 cooperation programmes on higher education and vocational training, came into force on 1 March 2001. They were planned to last until 2005.

Finally, since 1995 these agreements have represented a limited number of projects: 18-20 per year.

### Activities supported by the programmes

#### *Tempus*

An important characteristic of the Tempus programme is that it supports "bottom up" activities that are consistent with national priorities.

The Tempus programme can help in establishing new courses, in restructuring educational institutions, in reforming new educational policies or in enhancing the development of networks. Therefore, the Tempus programme supports three types of projects: Joint European Projects (JEP); Structural and Complementary Measures (SCM); Individual Mobility Grants (IMG). JEPs represent the main activity of the Tempus programme.

<b>TEMPUS PROGRAMME GRANTS AND BENEFICIARIES</b>			
<b>Type of grants</b>	<b>Joint European Projects (JEP)</b>	<b>Individual Mobility Grants (IMG)</b>	<b>Structural and complementary measures (SCM)</b>
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Consortia</b> Minimum size: 1 partner country University 2 EU Universities	Teaching staff, technicians, assistants, administrative staff, student associations, education experts, ministry officials	Support activities targeted at specific needs
<b>Duration</b>	2 or 3 years	From 1 to 8 weeks	From few weeks to one year

Joint European Projects include three sub-categories:

- *Curriculum development projects (CD projects)* aim to create new courses or update existing courses and to enhance the skills of teaching staff (and focus on the method of teaching);
- *University management projects (UM projects)* focus on the restructuring of the management, organisation and administration of universities;
- *Training courses for institution building (IB projects)* focus on developing the administrative and institutional structures.

**Example of a JEP in the MEDA region:  
A curriculum development project selected in 2002**

**Project Title:**

Partnership to Enhance Nursing Education

**Project Objective:**

To modernise two Masters programmes to be in line with international standards.

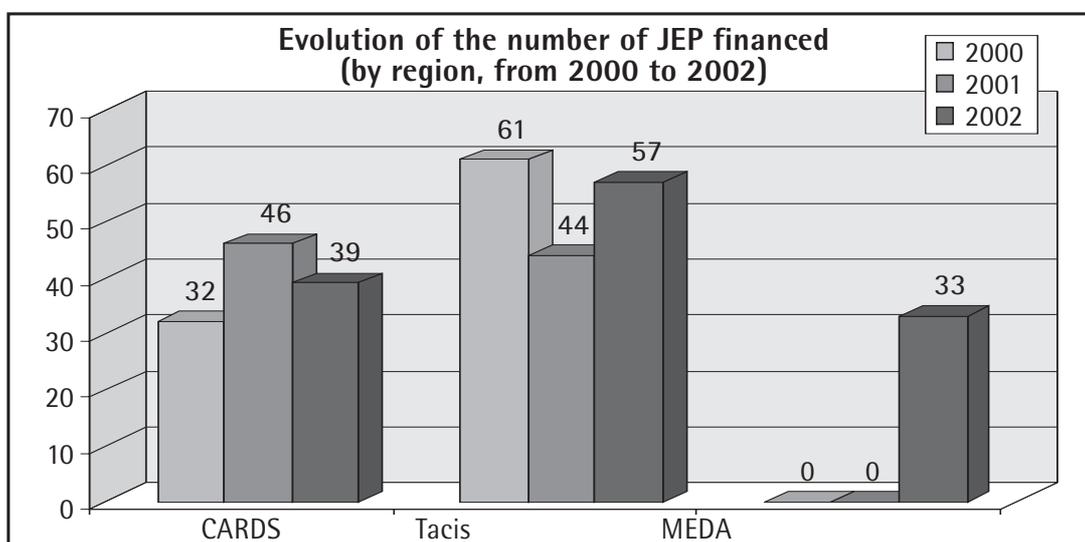
To establish a new MSN (Medical Staffing Network) programme on Maternal and Child Health Nursing

To build the capacity of faculty members

To disseminate and share learning experience and knowledge with faculties of nursing

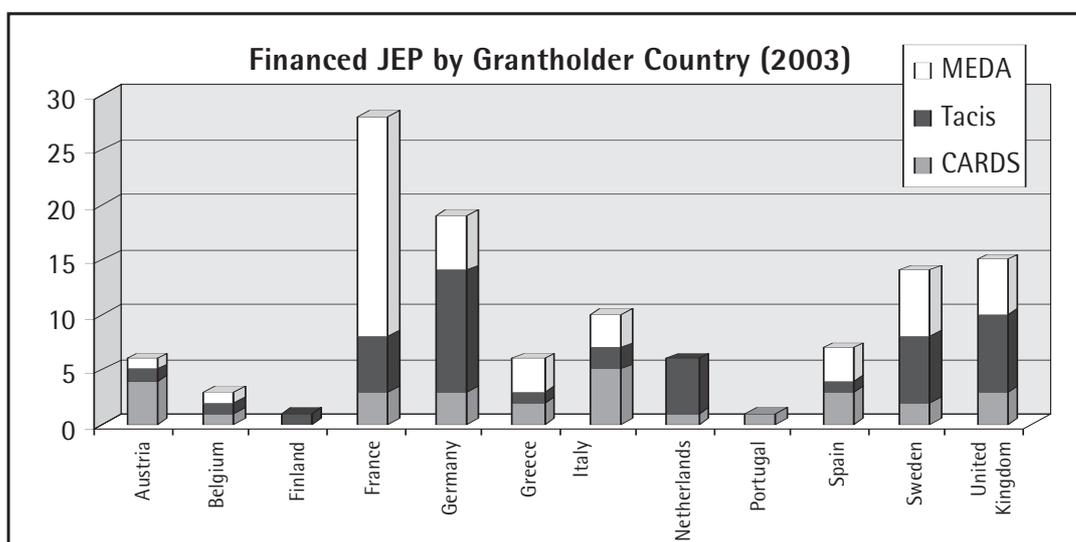
**Project Duration:** 3 years    **Target Country:** Jordan

**Consortium:** Great Britain, Ireland, Jordan

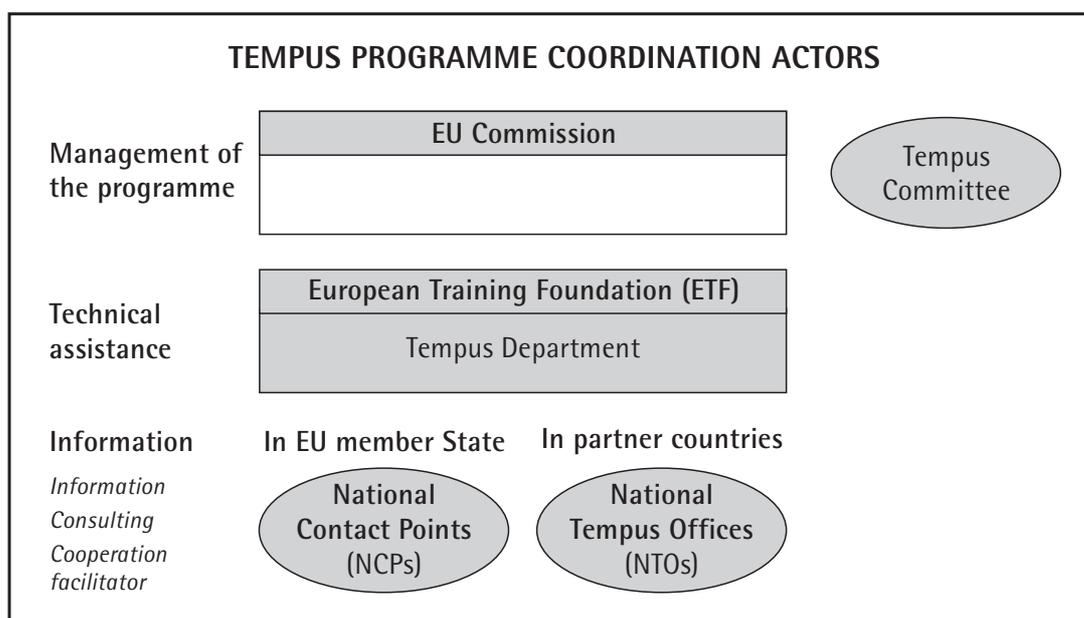


The selection process is carried out as follows:

1. Eligibility check
2. Independent academic assessors study the quality of academic cooperation
3. Technical evaluation and ranking of the applications
4. Consultation of the partner countries' authorities, delegations in partner countries and other EC offices
5. The European Commission takes the grant award decision after a final ranking proposal.



The various actors of the Tempus programme are described in the following diagram:



*EU/Canada and EU/US cooperation agreements*

The general features of the EU/Canada and EU/US cooperation agreements are highlighted in the following diagram:

<b>EU/CANADA AND EU/USA COOPERATION AGREEMENTS</b>		
<b>Main Aims</b>		
<i>Promoting understanding between the peoples</i>		
<i>Improving the quality of their human resource development</i>		
<b>Implementation</b>		
	EU/CANADA	EU/USA
<b>Activities supported</b>	Innovative, multilateral student-centred Consortia implementation projects (CIP): Minimum of three higher education or training institutions in three different Member States of the European Community and in two different Canadian provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consortia Implementation Projects (CIP)</li> <li>• Consortia Preparatory Projects (CPP)</li> <li>• Complementary Activities (CA)</li> </ul>
<b>Duration</b>	3 years	3 years (CIP), 1 year (CPP), 2 years (CA)
<b>Financial support</b>	EU Commission, DGEAC HRSD (Canadian partners)	EU Commission, DGEAC FIPSE (US Partnet Institutions)

In the EU/US cooperation programme, the following activities are supported:

- *Consortia Implementation Projects.* The programme fosters institutional partnerships through three-year consortia implementation projects. Students benefit from having an international curriculum and cultural dimensions added to their studies through a combination of curricular innovation and study or training abroad.
- *Consortia Preparatory Projects.* Grants for one year consortia preparatory projects provide initial opportunities for developing and planning international cooperation for institutions that have little or no innovation and study or training abroad.
- *Complementary Activities.* Grants for two years of complementary activities are designed to support the overall purpose of international curriculum development

The activities supported by the EU/Canadian programme are essentially Consortia Implementation Projects.

There is a slight difference between Canadian and US projects: the Canadian projects are more oriented to student exchange whereas the US ones are more oriented to curricula development.

The main subject areas of the projects are: Education; Medical Sciences; Environmental Sciences; Agricultural Sciences; European Studies and International Relations.

The participation of Member States is quite balanced (with some exceptions for some Scandinavian countries, relative to their size).

All these points are described in ECORYS last evaluation (on the EU – US/Canada agreements).

### **Success of the programme**

The mid-term Evaluation Report on the Tempus III programme (carried out by ECORYS-NEI) shows that: "in the PHARE countries an estimated 80 % of the higher education institutes were partners in one or more curriculum JEP". Even if the cooperation in CARDS and Tacis areas is more recent, it is noted that about 12 % of the higher education institutions in Russia have been concerned by the Tempus programme, and that "it is highly likely that [the Tempus programme] has involved hundreds of thousands of students".

Most actors agree with the fact that the Tempus programme is an overall success.

However, several hurdles still have to be overcome. For example, conflicts between granted and non-granted projects can occur. Moreover, as pointed out in the ECORYS-NEI mid-term evaluation, "the weakness of Tempus is found in its relatively informal status inside higher education institutions and the danger that the outputs and initiatives do not match with decisions taken at university management level". For instance, the weakness in the "bottom-up" approach has drawn attention to the importance of supporting curriculum development coordinated with policies at higher levels.

It has also to be noticed that the Tempus programme is just one element of the set of actions undertaken to achieve the reform that it wants to foster.

Finally, concerning the EU – US/Canada agreements, the ECORYS evaluation (2005) was, on the whole, highly positive and more so than expected.

## **Methodology of the study**

### **Architecture of the methodology**

In order to identify the main sustainability factors in Tempus and US/Canada programmes, we have developed the following methodology:

- Exploratory study (documentary analysis and interviews) = definition of the sustainability and building of the work plan
- Database analysis (Tempus) = identification of the most frequent sustainability criteria and factors quoted by ETF managers

- NTO and NCP Workshops (Tempus) = establishment of a specific list of criteria and factors for each area (represented in a matrix with a weighting of the main factors for Tacis, CARDS and MEDA areas)
- First meeting of the peers and experts panel = test and validation of the sustainability criteria and factor grids depending on types of area and selection of the ten case studies
- Ten case studies (Tempus and US/Canada) = identification of the effective sustainability of ten projects a few years after the end of the EU funding, and identification of the most influential sustainability factors for each case
- Questionnaire survey sent to project managers (Tempus et US/Canada) = identification of quantitative evidence on sustainability, identification of correlations between effective sustainability, factors and types of project
- Second meeting of the peers and experts panel = validation of the conclusions of the study and drafting of the main recommendations.

#### Tempus Projects Database analysis

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of the potential criteria and factors of sustainability</li> <li>• Typology of criteria of sustainability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of sustainability factors and criteria identified in the databases</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhaustive analysis of comments on the sustainability of 100 projects entered in the Tempus Projects Database (Progress Reports &amp; Implementation Reports) between 2000 and 2002 in order to identify the most frequent potential sustainability criteria and factors according to the types and objectives of the projects.</li> <li>• In-depth analysis of reports for a sample of projects in order to identify relations of cause and effect.</li> </ul>	

The purpose of the database analysis was to identify potential criteria and factors of sustainability for each of the three types of project.

We carried out an analysis of comments on the sustainability of 100 projects entered in the Tempus database (Progress Reports & Implementation Reports) between 2000 and 2002. Our aim was to identify the most frequent potential sustainability criteria and factors.

## NTO and NCP Workshops

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment per area of the relevance of the sustainability criteria and factors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific lists of criteria and indicators for each area (represented in a matrix with a weighting of C &amp; F)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <p>A "Metaplan" technique was used to obtain participants' opinions on three questions about sustainability criteria and factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to you, when/how can a curriculum development project in Tacis/CARDS/MEDA regions be considered as sustainable? What about UM and IB projects?</li> <li>• According to your own experience of Tempus projects, what has actually ensured or hindered/endangered their sustainability?</li> <li>• According to you, among these factors, which are the most crucial?</li> </ul> <p>The factors listed were finally weighted through a vote. The crossed analysis of the three workshops produced a common list of sustainability criteria and factors and a weight of the factors according to each area.</p>	

Three Workshops were organised in Brussels on 14/03/2005:

- CARDS Workshop with six NTOs and eight NCPs
- Tacis Workshop with nine NTOs and three NCPs
- MEDA Workshop with five NTOs and four NCPs

## First peers and experts panel

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test and validation of our first hypothesis on sustainability criteria and factors depending on types of project and region</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypothesis on sustainability criteria and factors validated</li> <li>• Selection of ten case studies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of a sample of 20-25 projects (different types and regions).</li> <li>• Data collection on these projects (progress and final reports) and transmission to peers and experts.</li> <li>• Use of the specific lists (matrix) of sustainability criteria and factors by each expert in order to assess the potential sustainability of the projects (3 to 5 projects per expert).</li> <li>• Analyses produced translated into quotations by each peer or expert.</li> </ul>	

- Discussion and propositions in order to improve the proposed tools (lists and matrix).
- Selection of twelve projects (nine Tempus and three US/Canada projects) for the case studies.

The first peers and experts panel was organised in Paris in April 2005. Seven international peers and experts participated.

### Case studies

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check if the hypothesis on the potential sustainability of projects (put forward during the selection and monitoring process) has been confirmed a few years later</li> <li>• Observe the existence of sustainability cycles and unexpected factors</li> <li>• Get genuine material on sustainability to illustrate the handbook</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten monographs (5 to 10 pages)</li> <li>• Results of cross-sectional analysis</li> <li>• Extracts to be put in the handbook</li> </ul> <p><b>Difficulties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to join the relevant people several years after the end of the projects</li> <li>• Ability to have high-quality interviews in English by phone (depending on the language level of the interviewees)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten cases selected amongst 25 cases, according to the expert's advice</li> <li>• First documentary analysis based on the monitoring documents</li> <li>• Phone interviews (average of three to five/case)</li> <li>• Seven cases concern the Tempus programme (3 curriculum development, 2 university management courses, 2 institution building) and 3 concern US/Canada cooperation (3 CIP).</li> </ul>	

Ten case studies have been implemented:

### Tacis

- CD 21051 – Russia
- CD 21171 – Russia
- UM 22130 – Russia
- IB 22080 – Moldova

## **CARDS**

- CD 15085 – Croatia
- UM 16077 – Albania
- IB 15038 – Albania

## **US/Canada**

- 699 – USA
- 1286 – Canada
- 702 – USA

The methodology has consisted in:

- Documentary analysis (application form, progress reports, final report, web sites, etc.)
- Phone interviews according to an open grid (three to five interviews per case, depending on the ability to reach people) with the project coordinators/contractors, the ETF manager, the NTO, some partners, etc.

Eight monographs have been written in French and two in English (in anticipation of the next expert panel).

## **Short presentation of the cases studied**

### **Tacis projects**

- *CD-JEP 21051 - 2001: Curricula Development on Soil and Water Resources Protection Using Information and Communication Technologies – Russia*

The three curricula built have been recognised by the Ministries and the training centre is fully used. New activities have been developed. The curricula and the centre seem very likely to be sustainable.

The sustainability is owing to strong university support and to the experience of the Russian project manager in the management of international projects.

There is a relative weakness of institutional support due to a lack of political stability in the Ministries, which can hinder fund-raising at this level, and a language barrier between Russian and European partners.

- *CD-JEP 21171 - 2001 Restructuring HE environmental teaching & training at Tyumen State University – Russia*

Tyumen University has set up a specialised training centre, recognised in 2002. Training sessions have been developed to train employees from private firms. The centre can be qualified as sustainable.

Its sustainability is due to strong academic and institutional support (ECTS, accreditation) and the previous knowledge of the partners.

The courses for nearby firms ensure the financial sustainability of the centre, which responds to local needs.

- *UM-JEP 22130 - 2001 Ural State University of Railway Transport (USURT) Career Resource Centre – Russia*

In this project, a modern centre for information and occupational guidance was set up in 2003, with strong institutional support (university and government). Many students use this centre and the services are being developed.

The sustainability of the centre is owing to its capacity to secure financial resources (public and private).

The project managers also involved the institutional managers early on in the project's life and the centre benefits from a strong local network.

- *IB JEP-22080-2001 Creation of a national network in on-going education – Moldova*

A service of on-going education has been set up in the university and a network has been built with firms. The network is still operational thanks to a vice-rector, who is developing it.

The sustainability is owing to the success of the project and its effective management, even if the capacity to finance new material is unsure in such a poor country.

### **CARDS projects**

- *CD JEP 15085-2001 Communicative Competence in Language Pluralistic Environment – Croatia*

This project aimed at modernising language teaching in Croatia and built widely-disseminated tools. Many actors were involved (more than 60 schools) and their involvement has been maintained today to keep disseminating the tools.

The project also benefited from official support from the Ministry of Education, owing to active lobbying by the project managers. The partners' previous knowledge was also

helpful in making the project succeed and the cooperation last (about new Tempus projects).

- *UM JEP 16077-2002 Development and Implementation of a Computer-Based administration at the Universities of Vlora, Gjirokaster and Prishtina (Albania and Kosovo)*

In this project, managed by the German partner, new software systems of finance and registration were built in the three Albanian-speaking universities.

The maintenance of the tools seems uncertain, due to a high staff turnover in the Albanian universities (low salaries), lack of financing to update equipment, and problems of telephone lines. However, the German partner's previous knowledge of the partner country has been useful.

- *IB JEP-15038-2000 Local Power and Civil Society in Albania*

In this project, the University of Tirana built specific training sessions for employees in the local public sector in Tirana and introduced the question of governance in its regular courses.

This project is sustainable thanks to the many projects built between the university and the public actors. There is no more relationship with the European partners, due to a lack of means and the autonomy of the partner country organisations.

### **US/Canada projects**

- *EU-USA n° 699 – 2000 Graduate Nursing Student Exchange Programme in International Family-focused Health Care*

In this project, courses in international family nursing were developed in Masters of Nursing Science (e-learning and student exchanges) in three European universities and three American universities.

The courses are still running in most of the universities even if they suffer from lack of students.

The sustainability of these courses is uncertain due to lack of students, which may be linked to disregarding their needs and constraints. Moreover, financing is uncertain, especially as regards the student exchanges.

- *EU-Canada n°1286-2000 International Master's Programme in Health Technology Assessment and Management ("Ulysses" project)*

This was an ambitious international project to create a Masters programme in a cutting-edge domain: Health Technology Assessment and Management (HTA&M). The

project turned out to be a real success and the partners were very keen to continue the course.

A second edition of the Masters programme was organised in 2003-2005 with 25 students from different nationalities. A third edition is starting (2005-2007) even if financial sustainability is in question.

The main sustainability factors are concrete involvement of actors, success of the project among students – which shows that it corresponds to students' and market needs –, and financial solutions that are relatively hard to find (especially in Europe).

- *EU-USA n°702-2000 The TIRES (Transnationalism, International Migration, Race, Ethnocentrism and the State) Consortium Exchange and Advanced Training Project*

"TIRES" was a consortium of eight European and American universities, collaborating for three years through web courses, student exchanges and summer schools.

Sustainable relationships were developed between the partners, even if the structure of the project evolved and some universities were less involved.

The problem of cost (summer schools, etc.) could be solved by distance courses.

### Questionnaire survey

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of quantitative evidence on sustainability</li> <li>• Test of hypothesis on sustainability</li> <li>• Identification of correlations amongst types of projects, regions, sustainability criteria and factors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Expected Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative evidence of sustainability of international cooperation projects and the perception of higher education as to the sustainability of their international cooperation projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A simple questionnaire consisting of three parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—1st part: short presentation of the project (type, region, objectives, expected outputs)</li> <li>—2nd part: questions on sustainability factors</li> <li>—3rd part: questions on sustainability criteria</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Testing the questionnaire</li> <li>• Emailing the questionnaire to all project consortiums (projects ended between 2000 and June 2003): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Submitted to the coordinator of a project</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- 2 email reminders
- Descriptive quantitative analysis of the answers with identification of correlations amongst the types of project, the region concerned, sustainability criteria and other factors
- Drawing up of a survey report

The questionnaire was administrated by Internet with the Sphinx software.

Eureval designed and tested the questionnaire in May/June 2005.

The questionnaire and two reminders were sent to the project coordinators in June 2005.

Sampling:

- Projects ended between 2000 and June 2003
- 97 EU – US/Canada project coordinators and 574 Tempus project coordinators

340 emails did not reach the addressees due to outdated addresses or system failures.

=> The questionnaire was received by 331 project coordinators.

Finally, 106 project coordinators answered to the questionnaire.

### **Second peers and experts panel**

<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of our conclusions and drafting of the recommendations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Expected Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection and discussion of the most relevant conclusions and recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the conclusions based on the data analysis.</li> <li>• Brainstorming in order to generate recommendations.</li> </ul>	

The second peers and experts panel was organised in Paris in September 2005. Five international peers and experts participated.

# Defining sustainability

We will first explain how we define sustainability through specific criteria.

## **Our definition of sustainability**

### **Previous definitions of sustainability**

The "Top Handbook" of 1997 states that "sustainability of project results can be defined as the result of a process which ensures that the outputs of a project are maintained after project funding has stopped".

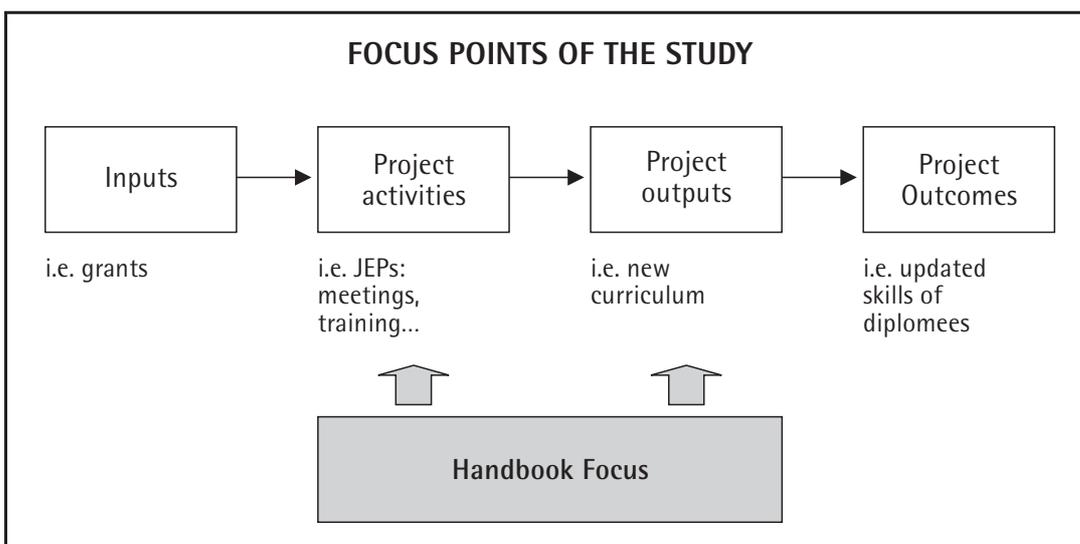
Moreover, "sustainability can be envisaged as being composed of various elements" as "visibility, networking, policy consensus, user feedback, funding, official recognition, competent staff, human resources commitment" etc.

### **Sustainability of project activities, outputs and outcomes**

Three levels of focus can be distinguished in the projects:

- Project activities
- Project outputs
- Project outcomes

According to the Terms of Reference, the study will focus on the sustainability of project activities and/or that of project outputs, depending of the types of project. Assessment of the sustainability of project outcomes may be difficult because that nature and context of projects are heterogeneous and most of the outcomes are not tangible.



We are aware that other forms of projects or international cooperation can take place at the end of the Tempus or US/Canada projects. In this case, they are considered as direct outputs.

#### **Relevant definition for this study**

Taking into account the previous definitions and the specific focus of this study (on project activities and direct outputs, cf. below), sustainability can be defined as follows:

#### **Definition of sustainability**

*The sustainability of a project implies that the outputs and/or activities (when relevant) are maintained after the end of the funding.*

The sustainability of a project will be defined in relation to the following:

- First, the **outputs** continue after the end of the EU funding, i.e. duration of the new degrees created, maintenance of the new computers bought.
- Second, **activities** are pursued after the end of the EU funding when outputs cannot be considered due to their nature (i.e. non-material).

We will take into account the specific outputs such as capacities (know-how, networking) which are safeguarded or reinforced after the end of EU funding and/or the end of activities, i.e. the management skills transfer or the building of international address databases.

We consider that a project is sustainable if the outputs (or the relevant activities) are maintained at least two years after the end of the EU funding, that is, more than one academic year.

## **Criteria and indicators**

Based on the entire study process (NTO and NCP workshops, peers and experts panel), we propose to use the following criteria to assess the sustainability of projects:

### *Sustainability criteria*

#### *Diversity/intensity of activities/results maintained or developed after the end of funding*

- Activities/results are maintained, i.e. new accreditation procedures (activities)/a curriculum is still used (outputs).
- Activities/results are developed, i.e. needs are assessed annually (activities)/a training centre has developed new training sessions (outputs).
- Activities/results can be disseminated, i.e. creation of a web site presenting e-learning sessions (activities) /the developed curriculum is included in existing courses in universities which do not belong to the initial consortium (outputs).

#### *Intensity and enlargement of cooperation*

- The international network is maintained, i.e. partners take care of the follow-up.
- The local network is maintained, i.e. the universities meet regularly with the private firms concerned.
- Finally, the initial network can be enlarged (to other domains or actors), i.e. new universities joined the international consortium.

## **Sustainability factors**

Here we will show how we established a grid of the main sustainability factors.

### **Sustainability factors listed by the Commission**

Different factors of sustainability have been listed by the European Commission<sup>1</sup> as follows:

- Policy support (after the end of the funding)
- Appropriate technology

---

<sup>1</sup> In the Terms of Reference for this study, according to the "Training Handbook", May 1999.

- Institutional and management capacity, including the will of actors to continue after the end of the funding
- Economic and financial visibility of the project
- Socio-cultural and gender issues affecting motivation and participation

Other factors have been listed in the Top Handbook (1997):

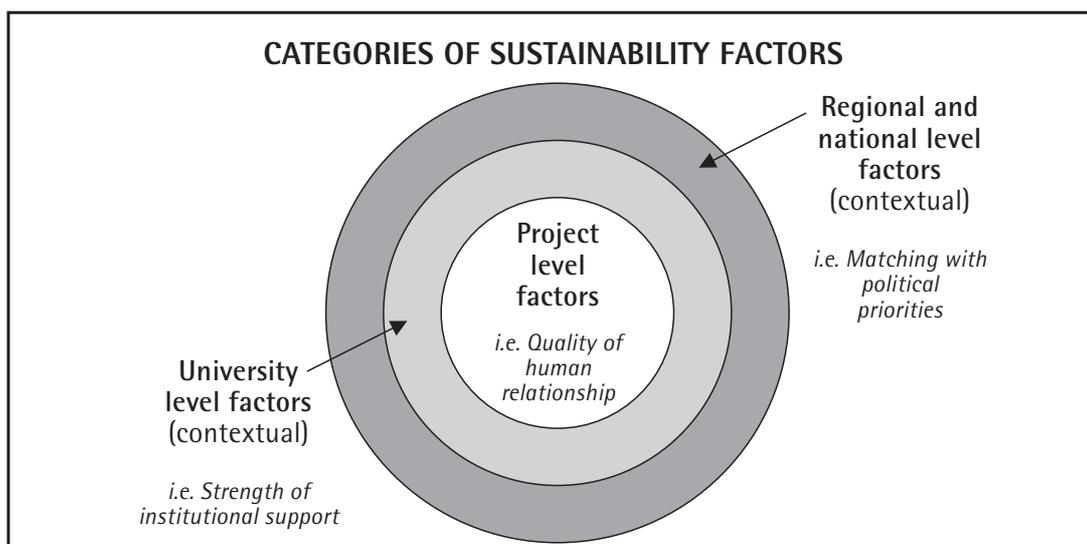
1. *Political consensus*
2. *Networking*
3. *Users' feedback*
4. *Public or private funding*
5. *Official recognition*
6. *Human resources commitment*

Nevertheless, as the Top Handbook points out, "these elements are not static in their nature, i.e. sustainability is not an eternal state" and is "difficult to measure in precise terms".

### **Categories of sustainability factors proposed in this study**

In order to focus on project coordinators needs, we listed the sustainability factors in two categories:

- *Project-level factors*, depending on project monitoring, i.e. human factors such as the existence of clearly identified, motivated and long-term project managers in universities.
- *Contextual factors* at university level, national level and socio-economic level, depending on the project environment, i.e. institutional framework integration/political support, etc.



It seems crucial to take into account both internal and external factors of sustainability which can be really important, as noted in the Top Handbook<sup>2</sup>. We assume that certain contexts are more favourable to sustainability and that some project managers anticipate threats to a greater degree.

### Final grids of sustainability factors

After establishing a sustainability factors grid during the NTO and NCP workshops, we improved it during the peers and experts panel. These grids were tested by the experts on the case studies in order to be improved.

We propose this grid for TEMPUS projects:

<b>Which factors ensure or hinder Tempus projects' sustainability?</b>
<b>Project-level factors</b>
Quality of project design in meeting academic, professional and/or social needs/demand
Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation
Effective management and leadership
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation

<sup>2</sup> Different grids are proposed to project managers, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their projects, and the threats and opportunities, depending on the context (in a SWOT diagram). "Their sustainability factors need to be studied from an evolutionary point of view". Examples given : "the adoption of new legislation or political strategies, the emergence of new actors, etc."

Context-level factors
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff
National support – national priorities matching with the project, political stability, national recognition
Socio-economic support – society and job market recognition

The same grid can be adapted to US/Canada projects:

Which factors ensure or hinder US/Canada projects' sustainability?
Project-level factors
Design corresponding to needs/demands shared amongst the participating countries
Quality of the project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices
Involvement of consortium members – sense of ownership and motivation – committed leadership within the consortium
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation
Context-level factors
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff
International, national and local recognition

This grid does not make a distinction between national level and socio-economic level, the latter being less important in the case of US/Canada projects than in Tempus projects. In US/Canada projects, international, national and local support is shown in the form of recognition, which can lead to a good reputation but will not directly provide financial, material or human resources. Hence financial means will depend largely on the partners' own resources.

The quality of the project, implying for instance the use of good or innovative practices, seems to be more crucial for US/Canada projects than for Tempus projects. Indeed, the success and sustainability of US/Canada projects depend in particular on their level of innovation, which can be used to attract students and new partners, and which contributes to maintaining different forms of cooperation, especially if the resources for the exchanges are not easily available.

## **Balance of the key factors according to the type of project/area concerned**

We then weighted the factors identified according to the type of project and the region concerned. The weighting criteria were determined during the NTO and NCP workshops and improved by the peers and experts panel after testing the grids on the case studies.

### **Tempus factors weighting**

As regards the Tempus programme, we concentrated the study on the JEP projects, which are long projects (2 to 3 years) with large budgets, and are expected to be carefully prepared by all partners. Complementary measures and mobility grants seem less relevant from the point of view of sustainability.

As stated in the Terms of Reference (Point 6-2-1), we studied the three types of projects covered by the Tempus programme:

1. *curriculum development (CD)*
2. *university management (UM)*
3. *training courses for institution building (IB)*

Following this work, we developed three specific grids: one for CD projects, one for IB/UM projects and one for US/Canada projects.

The grids present the results of the work carried out by the peers and experts panel.

### **How to use the grids? How to understand the weighting?**

These grids were tested on the case studies by the experts in order to ensure that they could be used to assess the potential sustainability of any project.

The experts scored each factor in the grey cells. The weighting grids automatically calculated the results:

- Score 1 means "weak level of the factor"
  - For instance: a project that is not financed and supported by universities
- Score 5 means "medium level of the factor" (or non-relevant factor<sup>3</sup> when the factor does not make sense in the specific case of the project scored)

---

<sup>3</sup> In this case, global weighting could be distorted. The expert had the possibility to mark their own global score under heading "Final note".

- Score 10 means "high level of the factor"
  - For instance: the universities have supported the project and the Deans have been involved in its implementation

The final score corresponds to the "potential sustainability" of the project:

- Score 1 means "very low level of sustainability"
- Score 10 means "very high level of sustainability"

The "potential sustainability" of a project calculated by the grid was compared with the "real sustainability" observed in the case study.

### The difficulty of weighting the different Tempus regions

We also tried to weight these factors according to the different Tempus regions (Takis, CARDS, MEDA). We proposed different weighting following the NTO and NCP workshops, and tested it with the peers and experts panel.

Finally, we concluded that such weighting is not be possible because of the heterogeneity of the countries (e.g. centralised/decentralised, level of development) composing each area.

### CD Grid

Which factors ensure or hinder international cooperation projects' sustainability in the field of HE?	Weight	Project CD 15085 Expert 4	Project CD 15085 Expert 2	Project CD 21171 Expert 4	Project CD 21171 Expert 3	Project CD 21051 Expert 5	Project CD 21051 Expert 4
<b>Project-level factors</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>8.15</b>	<b>9.65</b>	<b>7.70</b>	<b>8.20</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>7.80</b>
Quality of project design: meeting academic, professional and/or social needs/demand	15%	8	9	8	8	8	8
Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation	35%	9	10	8	8	7	8
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)	10%	9	9	5	6	7	7
Efficient management and leadership	10%	5	9	8	9	9	7

Which factors ensure or hinder international cooperation projects' sustainability in the field of HE?	Weight	Project CD					
		15085 Expert 4	15085 Expert 2	21171 Expert 4	21171 Expert 3	21051 Expert 5	21051 Expert 4
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation	30%	8	10	8	9	6	8
<b>Context-level factors</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>9.30</b>	<b>9.65</b>	<b>8.40</b>	<b>9.00</b>	<b>6.30</b>	<b>6.95</b>
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff	35%	8	9	8	9	8	8
National support – national priorities matching with the project, political stability, national recognition	40%	10	10	9	9	5	6
Socio-economic support - society and job market recognition	25%	10	10	8	9	6	7
<b>Weighted score</b>		<b>8.656</b>	<b>9.650</b>	<b>8.008</b>	<b>8.552</b>	<b>6.720</b>	<b>7.426</b>
<b>Final score (in case of non-relevant factors)</b>							
minimum score		5	9	5	6	5	6
maximum score		10	10	9	9	9	8

### UM/IB Grid

Which factors ensure or hinder international cooperation projects' sustainability in the field of HE?	Weight	Project IB	Project IB	Project UM	Project UM	Project IB	Project IB	Project UM	Project UM
		15038 Expert 1	15038 Expert 2	16077 Expert 3	1607 Expert 4	22080 Expert 1	22080 Expert 3	22130 Expert 5	22130 Expert 6
<b>Project-level factors</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>8.20</b>	<b>8.65</b>	<b>5.35</b>	<b>5.20</b>	<b>7.30</b>	<b>7.65</b>	<b>8.15</b>	<b>8.50</b>
Quality of project design: meeting academic, professional and/or social needs/demand	15%	9	10	9	7	9	7	8	9
Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation	35%	9	9	7	7	5	8	8	8

<b>Which factors ensure or hinder international cooperation projects' sustainability in the field of HE?</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Project IB 15038 Expert 1</b>	<b>Project IB 15038 Expert 2</b>	<b>Project UM 16077 Expert 3</b>	<b>Project UM 1607 Expert 4</b>	<b>Project IB 22080 Expert 1</b>	<b>Project IB 22080 Expert 3</b>	<b>Project UM 22130 Expert 5</b>	<b>Project UM 22130 Expert 6</b>
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)	15%	9	10	2	3	8	8	8	8
Efficient management and leadership	15%	9	10	7	7	8	8	9	9
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation	20%	5	5	1	1	9	7	8	9
<b>Context-level factors</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>8.40</b>	<b>8.40</b>	<b>5.45</b>	<b>6.15</b>	<b>9.00</b>	<b>8.60</b>	<b>8.65</b>	<b>8.65</b>
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff	45%	8	8	6	6	9	9	9	9
National support – national priorities matching with the project, political stability, national recognition	35%	8	8	5	7	9	9	8	8
Socio-economic support – society and job market recognition	20%	10	10	5	5	9	7	9	9
<b>Weighted score</b>		<b>8.300</b>	<b>8.525</b>	<b>5.400</b>	<b>5.675</b>	<b>8.150</b>	<b>8.125</b>	<b>8.400</b>	<b>8.575</b>
Final note (in case of non relevant factors)				7					
minimum score		5	5	1	1	5	7	8	8
maximum score		10	10	9	7	9	9	9	9

## US/Canada factors grid

<b>Which factors ensure or hinder international cooperation projects' sustainability in the field of HE?</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Project Canada 1286 Expert 1</b>	<b>Project Canada 1286 Expert 5</b>	<b>Project USA 699 Expert 4</b>	<b>Project USA 699 Expert 2</b>	<b>Project USA 702 Expert 6</b>	<b>Project USA 702 Expert 3</b>
<b>Project-level factors</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>6.90</b>
Design corresponding to needs/demands shared amongst the participating countries	25%	8	9	2	1	7	7
Quality of project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices	20%	7	8	3	1	7	8
Involvement of consortium members - sense of ownership and motivation - committed leadership within the consortium	20%	9	8	6	5	8	8
Target group participation	10%	6	8	1	2	8	7
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation	25%	4	5	1	2	6	5
<b>Context-level factors</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>4.90</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>7.45</b>	<b>5.55</b>
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff -	55%	4	4	3	2	7	6
International, national and local recognition	45%	4	6	5	5	8	5
<b>Weighted score</b>		<b>5.820</b>	<b>6.590</b>	<b>3.088</b>	<b>2.570</b>	<b>7.190</b>	<b>6.428</b>
<b>Final score (in case of non relevant factors)</b>							
minimum score		4	4	1	1	6	5
maximum score		9	9	6	5	8	8



# Main results concerning sustainability factors in Tempus projects

We will now present the results of the analysis of all data collected through the database analysis, the workshops, the case studies, the questionnaire and the peers and experts panel meetings (see *the Compendium for all the data collected*).

These results are presented factor by factor, according to the final grid (see above). We refer each time to the data that make these statements possible. We chose to present first the results concerning the Tempus projects, before presenting the differences concerning the US/Canada projects, in the next part.

According to the data collected and the expert's panel, we have ranked the importance of the different factors (see the grids below). It is interesting to see the following table, extracted from our Internet survey: in the question 93 of the Internet survey, the respondents were asked to choose 4 factors and rank them from 1 to 4 amongst a list of factors (1 being the most influential factor and 4 the least influential of the four):

	Nb. (rank 1)	Freq.	Nb. (rank 1 to 4)	Freq.
Quality of project meeting academic, professional or social needs	35	33.0%	75	70.8%
Involvement of stakeholders – sense of ownership and motivation	15	14.2%	51	48.1%
Audience participation (students, etc.)	11	10.4%	48	45.3%
Capacity to secure adequate resources (staff, funding, infrastructure, etc.) at the end of the project	11	10.4%	62	58.5%
University support, i.e. integration of the project in university life and stability of academic staff	16	15.1%	79)	74.5%
National support, i.e. national priorities matching with the project's political stability, national recognition	7	6.6%	35	33.0%

	Nb. (rank 1)	Freq.	Nb. (rank 1 to 4)	Freq.
Socio-economic environment support, i.e. society and labour market recognition	5	4.7%	28	26.4%
<b>TOTAL OBS.</b>	<b>106</b>		<b>106</b>	

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=106 project coordinators)

The analysis of the two grey columns helps in interpreting the results: the first one indicates how many respondents ranked the factor in the first position; the second one shows how many times the factor has been ranked (the sum).

According to the respondents, the sustainability factors should be ranked as follows:

1. Quality of project meeting academic, professional or social needs
2. University support, i.e. integration of the project in university life and stability of academic staff
3. Involvement of stakeholders – sense of ownership and motivation
4. Capacity to secure adequate resources (staff, funding, infrastructure, etc.) at the end of the project
5. Audience participation
6. National support, i.e. national priorities matching with the project political stability, national recognition
7. Socio-economic environment support, i.e. social and labour market recognition.

This table will be commented factor by factor in the following pages.

## **Quality of project design meeting academic, professional and/or social needs**

### **Factor definition**

"Quality of the project design" is the first sustainability factor from a time logic point of view. A project should be designed to meet specific needs and constraints in the partner country: academic or professional needs for new skills, university needs for institutional change, etc. This is why design is such an important phase.

Projects that match the real needs of students, socio-economic actors and the labour market are more likely to be sustainable. They will attract more students, more funding and more support from the universities. Needs can change, however, during the project's life and thus endanger the project if the project managers are not able to anticipate them.

Moreover, innovative projects can be risky if they fail to correspond to the specific needs and constraints of the partner country and especially of the target groups.

#### **See Case Study CARDS IB n° 15038 (Albania):**

"This Tempus project fitted in well with the general development trends of Albanian society and of the relations between the University and civil society, in particular as regards the objective of developing the University's role within civil society. Potential factors in the project's sustainability are its contribution to meeting real training needs for local government staff (the Municipality and Prefecture of Tirana) in a context of decentralisation, and precise determination of these needs during the course of the project."

### **Analysis results**

This is an important factor from the point of view of sustainability according to the Internet survey, the workshops and the case studies. The projects' relevance depends on their capacity to be linked to regional or national trends, i.e. all the case studies, which correspond to real needs in the partner countries. The importance of this factor has been emphasized in the MEDA workshop, particularly the "evolving capacity of the project" to stay in contact with changing needs.

If we look at the questionnaire survey, we notice how different needs are not addressed with the same care during the project design phase. In the context of the Internet survey, we asked 106 project coordinators in the EU and partner countries the following question:

To what extent were specific needs identified when designing the project?

	To a large extent	To some extent	To a limited extent	Not at all	TOTAL
Students' needs in terms of curriculum/international opening	68.1% ( 62)	26.4% ( 24)	4.4% ( 4)	1.1% ( 1)	100% ( 91)
Demand for civil servants training	40.6% ( 26)	34.4% ( 22)	12.5% ( 8)	12.5% ( 8)	100% ( 64)
Need for changes in institutions	46.9% ( 45)	39.6% ( 38)	12.5% ( 12)	1.0% ( 1)	100% ( 96)
Local labour market needs	24.1% ( 20)	39.8% ( 33)	28.9% ( 24)	7.2% ( 6)	100% ( 83)

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=106 project coordinators)

According to the respondents, the identification of needs was undertaken very carefully as far as students were concerned (68%) but not as far as labour market needs were concerned (24%).

This low (medium, average) level of attention paid to needs is surprising when we compare it to the project coordinators' perception of the strong influence of the factor "quality of project meeting academic-professional and social needs" on project sustainability.

Moreover, the first position of "quality of project" as the most influential factor (see table below, p 30) is confirmed for all the types of project: curriculum development, institution building, university management and EU – US/Canada projects.

However, in the statistical analysis of the Internet survey we did not identify strong correlations between "quality of project" and the level of sustainability of the projects (except for the Tempus projects with the "level of identification of local labour market needs").

How to ensure the quality of the project? The risk of non-sustainability can be assessed during the project design: it was said in the CARDS workshop that "new curricula are more likely to be unsustainable compared to projects aimed at improving an existing programme". A project in harmony with the Bologna process will also be more likely to be sustainable.

This factor can be negative when the project's design does not totally match the countries' realities, i.e. the project CARDS UM 16077, where some websites built are not up-dated due to a lack of means in the universities and to frequent problems with the telephone lines.

In the Internet survey, a project coordinator gave the following advice: "what is worth doing in terms of research and academic standards, may not be relevant to student activity. That's why some sort of selection of objectives must be done according to local priorities and needs".

### **Links with other factors**

This factor can be linked to other factors: if the project corresponds to needs, then it is attractive for students and/or target groups and more able to attract funding (private or institutional).

#### **See the Case Study Tacis CD n°21171 (Russia):**

"The first sustainability factor is the Centre's effective response to a real need. This factor is underlined by the fact that commercial and industrial undertakings are involved in the Centre's activities. The training courses provided for these undertakings provide a firm source of funding favourable to the Centre's continued existence and development."

This factor also depends on a shared involvement of the actors: it was said during the CARDS workshop that a project is more likely to meet local needs if the partner country universities are really involved in the project's design and feel a shared sense of ownership.

### **Specificity for UM/IB projects**

In the UM/IB projects, the socio-economic needs can change quickly and the continued involvement of the actors is crucial. That is why it is important to have a continuing and flexible adaptation to the changing socio-economic needs and institutional context as well as a continuity of the "vision".

## **Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation**

### **Factor definition**

The involvement of consortium members is crucial in a "bottom-up" process usually adopted in Tempus projects: "commitment is necessary, enthusiasm is not sufficient". This means that the partners share common interests in the project and respect one another's values.

The involvement of all the consortium members is one of the most crucial sustainability factors. It can sometimes counterbalance a lack of national support. Shared involvement can also favour efficient management and the capacity to find alternative resources and support. Close cooperation amongst members generates opportunities to launch new international projects after the end of the Tempus project.

### **Analysis results**

This factor is considered by a majority of project coordinators as a very influential factor on project sustainability. In Question 93 of the questionnaire, the factor "Involvement of stakeholders – sense of ownership and motivation" was considered as the most influential factor by 14.2% of the respondents, and half of the respondents considered this factor as one of the four most influential factors.

Our statistical analysis of the Internet survey confirmed the high influence of this factor. We identified correlations between the level of project sustainability and:

- the "level of commitment of coordinators/contractors in EU universities"
- the "level of commitment of university Top Management in partner countries".

For curriculum development projects, in addition to these two factors, we identified another factor correlated with the level of sustainability: the "level of commitment of the coordinator/contractor in partner countries".

The involvement of the consortium members also appears to be a crucial factor, according to the case studies and the workshops. The participants in the CARDS workshops emphasized the importance of a shared sense of ownership between all partners, CARDS universities being really involved in the project building (third most important factor according to the weighting). The sense of ownership is also the second factor weighted by the Tacis workshop.

The positive effects of a shared involvement are tangible: it can be a real motor of the project, Tempus consisting of "bottom-up" projects. The involvement of the individual actors can sometimes replace the lack of involvement of the universities.

**See Case Study CARDS CD n°15085:**

"However, according to the Final Report, the project was based primarily on 'individual commitment', because the support of the different universities was 'unequal' (Zagreb University was deeply involved, whereas the other universities' involvement was more formal in nature). The primary schools, on the other hand, participated in the project to a greater extent."

The cooperation tends to be looser after the end of the funding even if it can be continued by other Tempus projects, which is true in many of the cases studied.

The involvement of the consortium members can be favoured by:

- a real and common interest of all the partners

**See Case Study CARDS IB n°15038:**

"The logic of mutual benefit for all stakeholders (University and government), and the synergistic implementation of other projects involving the same partners, were other factors militating, by virtue of the dynamism thereby generated, in favour of the sustainability of the activities initiated during the Tempus project. This also contributed, in particular, to the emergence of new requirements to be satisfied in the cooperation between the University and local government institutions."

**See also Case Study Tacis CD n°21051:**

"For several interviewees, the factor of personal commitment is quite important. In particular, one manager interviewed highlighted the fact that the coordinator's motivation should not be his or her own welfare (e.g. a pay rise) but the will to improve the system for the new generations. Since the salaries in Tacis countries are not very high, this motivation is not always the easiest one to obtain. A way to identify real motivation is to check whether the project shows consistency or not, and whether the origin of the application is a real lack of funds or not."

In the Internet survey, a project coordinator gave this advice: "Cooperation can't work if one partner or group of partners has a very different level of perception of the usefulness of the programme and/or if one partner or group of partners intends to rule all the cooperation according to his/her set of rules."

- previous knowledge of the partners, the cause of friendly relationships and respect

**See Case Study Tacis IB n°22080:**

"This Tempus project was established following earlier collaboration between UTM and its Vice-Rector, Mr Amariei, and CESMECA, and it was facilitated by funding from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The collaboration allowed the French project director at ENISE to give lectures in Moldova. The CESMECA director was already known locally, as he had organised training for nearly 260 executives, engineers and technicians since 1993. The Moldovan project coordinator had previously visited him for a one-month study course on the French continuing training legislation, after which he submitted a report to the Moldovan Prime Minister. The prior familiarity with Moldova of the CESMECA director, who was appointed an Honorary Senator of UTM in 1999 at the beginning of the project, was a particular catalyst in the formulation of realistic project objectives, which were ultimately exceeded."

**See also Case Study CARDS CD n°15085:**

"The Croatian coordinator, who has been a driving force for the project, believes that: 'It helps to know people before collaborating' and 'good participation is really important for sustainability'"

In the Internet survey, a project coordinator gave the following advice: "It is an optimal situation if you already know the parties that you would like to start co-operating with".

- previous knowledge of the partner country by the European actors

**See Case Study CARDS UM n°16077:**

"The involvement of the Europeans thus seems to have been an important element for the success of the project. These actors have substantial experience and are well acquainted with the logic of the local situations. As the application file already noted, 'the experience of the Universities of Siegen and Staffordshire in a project in Tirana showed that it is not enough to convince managerial staff of the usefulness of the new methods. It is also important for the executives in charge of administration to be included in the discussions, so as to motivate their staff to use the new system once it has been installed'. In this way, then, a project can capitalise on the experience of its predecessor. Again, the German coordinator stresses his familiarity with Albania as a factor of trust and a means of exerting constant pressure on the actors to continue the process of change once the project comes to an end. 'If you just go there 2 years and then go, nothing really happens,' he says. He also pointed out in the final self-evaluation report that the Europeans must not forget that they were 'invited' to the partner countries and must behave accordingly. In his view, Tempus should select only Europeans who already have experience of at least one project with the partner country.

Finally, the involvement can be hindered by:

- a high turnover of the people in the partner countries

**See Case Study CARDS UM n° 16077:**

"Sustainability is not a matter of direct financial support, but is indirectly affected by high staff turnover in Albania caused by low salaries. For instance, the Albanian International Relations Officer changed twice during the project. In each case, all the accumulated know-how was lost. The involvement of the Europeans thus seems to have been an important element for the success of the project, whereas the Albanians' participation is the only guarantee of its sustainability, in the sense of commitment, staff retention, accumulation and handing down of skills, etc.

- a lack of funds after the end of the project to maintain the cooperation (particularly if the country is very poor)

**See Case Study Tacis IB n° 22080 in Moldova:**

UTM's Continuing Training Department submitted in 2005 a project proposal entitled 'Support for continuing training in human resources management in the Republic of Moldova' to the Cultural and Technical Cooperation Service of the French Embassy in Moldova, as a project under the auspices of France's Cooperation, Guidance and Projects Committee (COCOP).

The proposal was not accepted because UTM's proposed contribution to the cost was insignificant (only c3000 out of a total of c18 000).

**Links with other factors**

Previous knowledge of the consortium members is, in many cases, a factor ensuring other factors such as effective management, institutional support, etc.

**Specificity for UM/IB projects**

In these projects the study cooperation may stop without endangering the project's sustainability. See Case UM Tacis n° 22130, where it is not crucial.

**Effective management and leadership**

**Factor definition**

This factor relates to the project leaders and to their professional motivations, skills and ability to manage the whole project.

Effective management favours the involvement of partners, fundraising, and the ability to anticipate sustainability. For instance, the project manager can implement quality procedures, and organise an active dissemination of the project results to potential financiers or donors.

Good leadership combines institutional influence with the coordinators' managerial skills.

**Analysis results**

The quality of management can be useful for all the aspects of a project's life: ability to involve the partners, ability to lobby the authorities and potential financiers, ability to anticipate the problems, etc.

For instance, the project manager can anticipate language problems and try to solve them.

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21051:**

"Language barriers discouraged the involvement of Russian staff members. Moreover, the Russian coordinators had not thought enough about the linguistic aspects; for instance, providing some courses in English would have facilitated student exchanges."

Effective management can be enhanced by the project leader's previous experience in international cooperation and by sound knowledge of the partners (or the National Tempus Officer).

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21051:**

"The participation of the Professor at the Warsaw Agricultural University in Poland as an expert ensured partly the success of the project. As a project expert, he participated in the Project Management Group and in evaluation, monitoring and dissemination activities. Thanks to his experience in cooperating with Eastern universities and his knowledge of the Tempus project, he became a good 'mediator' between the partners. Several of his Polish colleagues were working in Moscow during the Tempus project period, which fostered relations between him and the Russian manager. The partners' interviews showed that the expert contributed to the project on both scientific and managerial level. Moreover, he played an important role in the communication between the EU and Russian universities. He had sound experience with Tempus projects. The Russian manager noted that the added value brought by an expert is comparable to that of the National Tempus Office that has been set up recently."

Effective management can be favoured by a clear distribution of responsibilities, which develops confidence amongst the partners.

In the Internet survey, two project coordinators gave the following advice:

- "Letters of partnership should describe more exactly the responsibilities of partners during the implementation period of the project as well (that is, after the project is completed)."
- "To place training contracts/agreements before the start of the project, it is best to include them into the Letters of Endorsement of the civil service bodies (municipalities)."

Effective management can, however, be hindered by burdensome tasks such as administration.

**See Case Study CARDS CD n°15085:**

"The project partners also suggested that rules be applied in a more flexible way so as to facilitate recourse management between countries and to avoid bureaucracy and wasting time."

For instance, this project encountered many problems with VAT procedures.

### **Specificity for UM/IB projects**

Finally, a high staff turnover may endanger the project, especially in partner countries (problem of low salary) and in particular in UM/IB projects where the involvement of the employees is crucial.

**See Case Study CARDS UM n°16077:**

"The main problem remains the lack of permanence of the staff and the lack of staff trained in new technologies at the Albanian universities. Sustainability is not a matter of direct financial support, but is indirectly affected by high staff turnover in Albania caused by low salaries. For instance, the Albanian International Relations Officer changed twice during the project. In each case, all the accumulated know-how was lost."

## **Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)**

### **Factor definition**

The "active participation of the audience" does not refer to the participation of the target groups in training courses (e.g. number of students) – which refers to the first factor (capacity to answer needs) – but to individual or collective initiatives of these beneficiaries to support the project's life and its sustainability. This factor is particularly relevant in less developed universities where means and professional staff are insufficient.

### **Analysis results**

The workshops, case studies and Internet survey indicated that this factor does not seem crucial.

However, it can be useful in the partner countries where there are few employees and the students' help can be useful.

**See Case Study Tacis UM n°22130:**

"Another good practice was to involve students in the activities of the Centre by establishing an international student association."

Moreover, the target group's participation, to be effective, implies its stability. See the above Case Study CARDS UM n°16077 and the high turnover of university employees.

Finally, the target group's participation can be ensured by effective support of the university (see Case Study Tacis CD n°21171).

## **Capacity for securing adequate resources for continuation**

### **Factor definition**

A sustainable project should secure appropriate resources in order to be maintained: financial resources (internal or external to universities) as well as human resources and material equipment. The project managers should anticipate the end of the EU funding sooner rather than later by seeking alternative sources of finance or making the project self-sufficient.

In most cases the financing of the projects is not necessary because only part of the activities need resources to be maintained. However, in less wealthy partner institutions the capacity to secure adequate resources is crucial for continuation.

Typically, in the case of sustainable projects, the managers anticipated financing from the outset and found solutions to diversify it.

### **Analysis results**

First, lack of anticipation by project coordinators has been witnessed. We tried to establish whether there were specific fundraising initiatives by grant-holders before the end of the EU project funding. In the context of the Internet survey, we asked 106 project coordinators in EU and partner countries the following question:

To your knowledge, have there been specific fundraising initiatives before the end of the EU project's funding?

	Nb.	Freq.
Yes, actively throughout the project's life	25	23.6%
Yes, actively just before the end of the project's EU funding	14	13.2%
No, there were already solutions at the beginning of the project	19	17.9%
No, it was done after the end of the project's EU funding	21	19.8%
Don't know	27	25.5%
<b>TOTAL OBS.</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=106 project coordinators)

One quarter of the respondents do not know if there has been fundraising. 40% of the project managers anticipated this matter and one third dealt with it at the end of the project, thus showing a lack of anticipation.

It is consequently interesting to know where they sought additional funding:

	Freq.
National Authorities (Ministries, etc.)	56%
University Top Management	41%
International funds	36%
Local public partners	18%
Private firms	10%
Other sources	8%

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=39 project coordinators)

Most financing was sought from Ministries, universities and international funds, and very little from private firms and local partners.

The lack of anticipation and variety of funding sources can be compared with the responses to Question 93 of the Internet survey and the statistical analysis that show the importance of this factor on project sustainability. 58.5% of the respondents consider the factor "Capacity to secure adequate resources (staff, funding, infrastructure) at the end of the project" as one of the four most influential factors on project sustainability. The statistical analysis of responses for Tempus projects shows that the level of sustainability is correlated with the factor "fundraising initiatives before the end of the EU project's funding".

The case studies and workshops also show that the "capacity for securing adequate resources for continuation" seems to be important. It was emphasised by the Tacis and MEDA workshops (third and first factors weighted).

The main problem of sustainability in the CARDS countries and some less developed Tacis countries (as Moldova) seems to be securing resources.

Some projects have found interesting solutions by mixing different sources of financing: public, private and international with new Tempus projects, for instance (see case CARDS IB 15038 and cases Tacis 21051, 21171 and 22130). The three Russian projects studied, for example, are co-financed by private sources, which ensure their sustainability.

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21171:**

"UW's website includes the following comment, which illustrates the actors' awareness of the importance of alternative financial resources: 'Sustainable development of the ETC is fundamentally linked to the development of a business and financial plan, setting of targets and measuring outcomes. The ETC will continue to develop training courses (applied to regional needs) to run as fully or partly funded short courses and workshops for employees of the city and regional government, and commercial enterprises (including those related to the oil and gas industries)."

Finally, note that in these sustainable cases the project managers had anticipated the need to diversify the financing since the beginning of the project.

In the Internet survey several project coordinators gave advice regarding this factor:

- "To create a functional unit, affiliated to the partner universities, able to generate funding and simultaneously benefit the socio-economic environment."
- "Create a separate organisation which can take over the project upon its completion."
- "It is vitally important for the partner universities to find resources somehow to maintain academic contacts through international conferences or seminars, in order to sustain activities developed during the project."
- "To allocate resources to develop research teams among the partners, in order to sustain the project after its funding."

## **Links with other factors**

This factor is clearly linked with the effective management (capacity to anticipate the funding) and the quality of the project: if it responds to real needs, it will be more likely to be financed, for instance by private firms offering training. It is also linked with the institutional and socio-economic support (see below).

## **Academic and/or institutional support**

### **Factor definition**

A project can be supported by institutional and organisational leaders ("central authorities") and/or academic bodies (CD projects). Official authorities (university Vice-Chancellor for example) inside the institution are one of the key counterparts since they counter-sign the project proposal. "Top management" support is crucial for operational managers in supporting the project's activities and processes.

"University leaders", that is, opinion leaders in the academic community, can play an important role since their acceptance or neutrality towards the project is necessary for official approval.

This is the factor with the most decisive influence on sustainability because most of the financing and support comes from the universities. Gaining confidence among the central authorities and university leaders can ensure sustainability, especially if your project is in line with the university strategy. Real support can be obtained by active involvement of the top managers in the project's design and life via interviews, conferences etc. The involvement of many faculties in the project can also help to secure support.

### **Analysis results**

The analysis of the Internet survey answers shows that "academic/institutional support" is the most determining factor on project sustainability.

In Question 93 of the questionnaire, 74.5% of the respondents considered the factor "University support, i.e. integration of the project into university life and stability of academic staff" as one of the four most influential factors on project sustainability. This is the proposed factor which collects the most "votes".

The statistical analysis shows that "Institutional support" (university) seems to be the most determining sustainability factor with four sub-factors:

- Support of the universities in the partner countries for the integration of the training curriculum/modules in regular curricula at university

- Support of the universities in the partner countries for the development of specific tools (management tools, teaching methods, etc.)
- Support of the universities in the partner countries for the search for students/trainees
- Support of the universities in the partner countries for the search for national accreditation (curriculum)

This factor also appears to be very important throughout the case studies and workshops. It has been emphasised by the CARDS and the MEDA workshops (first and second factors weighted).

The university can provide financial and material resources as well as skills to deal with administrative and linguistic problems.

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21171:**

"For instance, the ILC worked closely with the Russian coordinator. The Linguistic Centre proved to be very useful: in addition to the experience in the management of Tempus projects, it provided language training for exchange programme participants, a translation service for conferences at the partner universities, translation of the training material developed, etc. In general terms, the Centre played an important role in communication between the British university and TSU. Finally, all equipment orders, and hence a major part of the financial aspect of the project, were managed by the ILC"

Note that the more the project is linked to the university strategy and supported by top-level managers, the greater the institutional support.

**See case Study Tacis CD n°21051:**

"One factor that fosters sustainability is the particular interest and support of the universities for this project. The SWARP-ICT project, owing to its modern and international dimension, became an element of pride for the universities. The project benefits from it by a feedback process."

"There has been strong support from the universities involved in the project. Note that the Dean of MSUEE is Professor of Water Resources. Moreover, he has sound international experience (in Africa, Cuba, etc.). These elements have been very important for the project. The invitation of the Deans to the project meetings from the very beginning fostered the support of the University."

Effective university support can be obtained by active involvement of the top managers in a project's conception and life.

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21171:**

"Another important factor was the institutional support obtained. However, the position and contacts of the project director were not the only elements that facilitated securing this support; the fact that the decision-makers were invited to participate from the start of the project also contributed substantially in this respect."

The advices given by project coordinators in the context of the Internet survey illustrate how important this factor is:

- "Project sustainability depends on the real recognition of the university on: new structures implemented and member staff who will have to work within those structures. It must correspond to a clear interest of the university leaders. Therefore, the project coordinator has to make an analysis of power relations within the university and check that the project inputs will be supported and extended by a reliable leader group."
- "Ensure that your home institution fully recognises these activities for your own career considerations."

**Links with other factors**

This factor is clearly connected with the possibilities to secure adequate resources for continuation (mostly coming from universities) and the quality of the project, meeting the university strategies.

**Specificities for UM/IB projects**

In the case of IB/UM projects, academic recognition is less important than the political support of the top management of the universities. It may not be enough in the case of poor universities, as in CARDS countries.

**See Case Study CARDS UM n°16077:**

"The universities, however, supported the project and the Rectors were involved in its implementation and established relationships of trust with Professor Münch and with one another. However, while additional resources were provided for during the project to fund the salary of a specialist in new technologies, this funding was unstable afterwards due to lack of resources. On the other hand, one website is maintained on the initiative of a member of the teaching staff. So while personal initiatives may provide an element of sustainability, permanence cannot always be guaranteed as far as the whole project is concerned"

## **Support from national authorities**

### **Factor definition**

National support refers to the support of the national state institutions through the competent ministries and political and administrative means. This support may be in the form of financial resources as well as communication or political support and, above all, accreditation. Its role and importance depend largely on the organisational scheme of the countries concerned.

Ministries' support for accreditation is a key factor for CD projects and can be anticipated. Making provision for accreditation already in the design phase is a form of best practice.

National support may also be favoured by direct links between the project manager and members of Ministries, and by active lobbying.

### **Analysis results**

The statistical analysis of Internet survey responses for curriculum development projects shows that the level of sustainability is correlated with the factors "official support at national or local level for a national accreditation of a new curriculum" and "official support at national or local level for the dissemination of the project's results".

This factor appears to be more or less important, depending on the case studies and the workshops. It has been emphasised by the CARDS and the Tacis workshops (second and first factors weighted), and less in the MEDA workshops. During the Tacis workshop the importance of the ministries' support in these countries, especially for the accreditations, was highlighted.

National support can be favoured by the following elements:

- when the project managers have direct links with the ministry staff members

**See Case Study Tacis UM n°22080:**

"The project enjoyed the direct support of the staff of the University of Chişinău (for which the Moldovan project coordinator worked) and its Rector, who, as the Rector of the country's only university, had direct high-level links with the Moldovan State and Ministry of Education."

- When the project managers lobby actively

**See Case Study CARDS CD n°15085:**

"Contacts were forged from the beginning of the project with the Ministry of Education, while the National Office for the European Year of Languages (2001) recognised and published details of the project on its website. The question of accreditation was thus anticipated as early as in the first year (PR1). The Ministry also recommended the local authorities responsible for primary schools to use the books accruing from the project as teaching material. However, its support was ultimately forthcoming only at a late stage, at the end of the project. The ministries supported the project mainly during its final stage, in response to lobbying and communication by its managers. This support was not financial but comprised mainly communication facilities and official backing."

### **Links with other factors**

*This factor is linked to the involvement of actors and the management (determination, capacity to obtain support from the authorities, ministry etc.).*

### **Specificities of UM/IB projects**

Ministries' support for accreditation is a key factor for CD projects.

Political support (for instance: Ministries' support for cultural and social changes brought by the project) is a key factor for UM/IB projects.

## Support from socio-economic actors

### Factor definition

Socio-economic support in the partner countries refers to the support which can also be provided by private firms, local public administrations, professional bodies, NGOs, etc. The socio-economic support strongly depends on the level of identification of professional and/or social needs during the project design and the lobbying of private and/or local actors. The more a project corresponds to socio-economic needs, the more support it will be able to obtain from local actors. Even if local socio-economic financing in the partner countries concerns few projects, this factor can be important to ensure their sustainability.

### Analysis results

There is little support from socio-economic actors in general, except in Russia where the three cases show close links with private firms (see above).

The low level of support from socio-economic actors is illustrated by the answers to the following question asked in the questionnaire:

Did the project benefit from support of socio-economic actors in the partner country?

	Nb.	Freq.
Strong support	12	11.3%
Medium support	35	33.0%
Weak support	9	8.5%
Not relevant	38	35.8%
Don't know	12	11.3%
<b>TOTAL OBS.</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=106 project coordinators)

According to the respondents, the support of socio-economic actors in the partner country seems to be relevant for only half of the projects! Only 21% of these projects benefited from "strong support", probably due to the lower number of IB projects. Newly developed or updated curricula can also generate private financing through tuition fees.

The low level of support from socio-economic actors is translated into a low level of private financing, as we can see in the answers to the following question:

How have these activities been financed since the end of the EU funding?

	Mean value	Maximum value	No answers
University own resources	48.03%	100%	33
National financing (Ministry)	28.64%	100%	51
Other international support	21.00%	100%	66
Private financing	12.32%	70%	65
Local public financing	8.16%	60%	68
All	27.27%	100%	

Source: Eureval, Internet survey (n=106 project coordinators)

The main source of financing after the end of the EU funding are "university own resources" and "national financing". Very few projects have received "private financing" or "local public financing", as seen before.

The low level of private financing can be explained by the project coordinators' perception of the influence of this factor on project sustainability. In Question 93 of the questionnaire only a quarter of the respondents consider the factor "Socio-economic environment support, i.e. society and labour market recognition" as one of the four most influential factors on project sustainability. This is the proposed factor which has collected fewer "votes".

The fact that few projects have socio-economic support does not mean that this factor is not (cannot be) a determining factor for many projects. The Russian cases are interesting from this point of view, showing real dynamism (note that the CD project below has characteristics of an IB project).

**See Case Study Tacis CD n°21171:**

"Finally, the Centre offers a range of activities, which provide it with a certain degree of autonomy and good prospects of survival. For instance, its activities include university training on environmental matters, the provision of training services for natural resources specialists in local commercial and industrial undertakings and the provision of various forms of information (environmental data, an introduction to possible training courses in the field, etc.). This comprehensive range of activities demonstrates the dynamism of the young institution. Again, a number of commercial and industrial undertakings have approached the Centre for specific training needs. Many of these undertakings belong to the petroleum sector. For instance, TNK BP (Tyumen Oil Company) commissioned a seminar on natural resources, while the Siberian Oil Company sent 27 of its staff on a seminar on environmental risks and natural resources. A municipality in the south of Tyumen Region despatched 35 staff members for training in water-based management systems. Such training events are an important source of funding and dynamic activities responding to a real need encourage the involvement of local actors."

**See also Case Study Tacis UM n°22130:**

"Finally, the on-demand training services offered to commercial and industrial undertakings (in particular, at weekends and during university vacations) constitute an important source of funding for the Centre, ensuring that it remains viable and firmly rooted in local economic reality."

**Links with other factors**

This factor can be linked with the quality of the project, which is a condition for the socio-economic support. It is also linked with the capacity to secure adequate resources for continuation.

**Specificities for UM/IB projects**

Note that support can come from local actors such as public administrations, especially in IB projects (see case CARDS IB n°15038).



# Main results concerning sustainability factors in US/Canada projects

Comments will be made about the above factors, which are common to the two grids but show some particularities in the case of US/Canada projects. Special consideration will be devoted to the following two factors, which are defined for US/Canada projects:

- Quality of project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices
- International, national and local recognition

See the US/Canada specific factor grid:

Which factors ensure or hinder US/Canada projects' sustainability?
<b>Project-level factors</b>
Design corresponding to needs/demands shared amongst the participating countries
Quality of project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices
Involvement of consortium members – sense of ownership and motivation – committed leadership within the consortium
Active participation of the audience (direct target groups)
Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, diversification of funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation
<b>Context-level factors</b>
Academic/institutional support – integration in university strategy and stability of academic staff
International, national and local recognition

## **Design corresponding to needs/demands shared by the participating countries**

### **Factor definition**

This factor puts the emphasis on a shared opinion as to the importance of needs among partners. In US/Canada projects this factor is particularly important: if the project corresponds to needs, then it is attractive for students and is able to attract funding.

The existence of substantive benefits for the students participating in the project is an important element for sustainability: benefits mean scientific and professional knowledge, and national or international recognition.

### **Specific analysis results**

In US/Canada projects, this factor is particularly important: if the project corresponds to needs, then it is attractive for students and it is able to attract funding.

#### **See Case Study Canada 1286 which was exemplary on this point:**

"This was an ambitious international project to create a Masters programme in a cutting-edge domain: Health Technology Assessment and Management (HTA&M). A study of students' and market needs was carried out". "The project was particularly successful for the students, which shows that it corresponds to students' and market needs". "The target audience has been fully reached."

"Another factor influencing sustainability is the high quality of the Masters programme, corresponding to real student and market needs. This explains the success of the Masters programme among students (some even pay their travel expenses). We could also say that this Masters programme corresponds to students' constraints and gives them a high quality education, since the consortium undertook a formative evaluation in order to improve the course. In the course design, attention was put on the adaptation to both European and Canadian culture, i.e. through the examples given (cf. final report). Finally, effective dissemination has also made this Masters course viable. An active communication plan was implemented through PDF documents and printed brochures, a website, a call for applications in papers, mailing lists, etc. As noted in the final report: 'The website (created in 2000) was updated in 2003 to advertise the programme's second edition and has been a key element in recruiting new students for the programme', even students from Hong Kong and other countries."

**See also Case Study USA 699 which had some difficulties on this point:**

"A question could be raised whether the lack of students might be due to excessively fast, 'academic' project design, in which not enough time was devoted to a comprehensive examination of student needs and constraints (in particular, those related to funding, time and languages). Was it a good idea to include and obligatory three-month stays abroad, given that some students work and/or have families?

Again, has there been a study of employment opportunities for graduates of these courses? The value in terms of student employability does not seem to have been demonstrated in the project reports."

According to the statistical analysis of the internet survey, the factor "(the level of) identification of local labour market needs" seems to have less impact on sustainability in US/Canada projects than in Tempus projects.

## **Quality of project: integration and dissemination of good and/or innovative practices**

### **Factor definition**

Educational, technical and scientific innovations in terms of content or tools are a powerful driving force for US/Canada projects. It is important to see how these innovations will be integrated into ordinary work and possibly disseminated towards other universities.

### **Specific analysis results**

Provision to maintain and enhance a high level of innovation for all partners (high profile projects) is an influential factor. Linking teaching cooperation to joint research projects can ensure sustainability.

**See Case Study USA n°702:**

"Many links were forged between students from different universities and their teachers. The majority of intra-European links seem to be very firm and can be described as networks. The main sustainability factor was the interest of the teaching staff in this international programme, which enabled them to meet and work together with their counterparts in other countries."

New technologies can be used to solve different problems, such as travel expenses.

## **Involvement of consortium members – sense of ownership and motivation – committed leadership within the consortium**

### **Factor definition**

The involvement of consortium members is crucial in a “bottom-up” process usually adopted in US/Canada projects. This means that the partners share common interests in the project and respect one another's values.

The involvement of consortium members is a key factor, especially when universities' support is more formal. Solutions can be found for shared involvement on both sides, such as a coordinating committee.

We witness here the particular importance, in US/Canada projects, of a precise definition of roles on both sides, as a factor of common involvement. Respect for others' values is especially important for US/Canada programmes where a lack of mutual consideration between the partners can hinder sustainability.

### **Specific analysis results**

The involvement of consortium members seems to be a key factor, especially when universities' support is more formal.

#### **See Case Study Canada n°1286:**

“The first sustainability factor is without doubt the strong commitment of all partners, who are extremely motivated to continue this Masters programme. Sharing of roles between partners, previous international experience and knowledge of each other definitely helped in this respect. So much so, that one European coordinator was ready to cover their own travel expenses as no other sources of funding were found. However, having spent a lot of time and effort in the project, the coordinator is now “fed up” and “tired” of the lack of financial means and institutional support.”

Solutions have been found to have a shared involvement on both sides, see again case 1286 below:

**See Case Study Canada n°1286 for an example of successful and participative management:**

"In order to encourage participative management, a coordinating committee with representatives from all institutions was created and main decisions were taken during a conference call. Three subcommittees were also established. All partners participated in the project activities and a new partner (Canadian) has joined the consortium. The consortium has also established contacts with potential new partners (for instance the Universities of Toronto and

## **Target groups' participation**

### **Factor definition**

This factor refers to the participation of the target groups in the project's life – especially individual or collective initiatives of the beneficiaries to support the project's life and its sustainability.

Especially in US/Canada projects, if cultural issues are not taken into account they can hinder the students' interaction. Students may be reluctant to go to a partner country if they have a poor grasp of the language or feel that the proposed courses do not correspond to their needs (e.g. local business environment, local labour market) and constraints (e.g. a semester abroad can be long for students with a family).

### **Specific analysis results**

If the cultural issues are not taken into account, they can hinder the student exchange (e.g. linguistic problems). See Case 702 and Case 699 where American students had difficulties coming to Europe (problems of cost and language).

Otherwise, this factor does not seem crucial in US/Canada projects.

## **Capacity for securing adequate resources (staff, funding, infrastructure, etc.) for continuation**

### **Factor definition**

A sustainable project should secure appropriate resources in order to be maintained: financial resources (internal or external to universities) as well as human resources and material equipment. The project managers should anticipate the end of the EU funding sooner rather than later by seeking alternative sources of finance or making the project self-sufficient.

The sustainability of US/Canada projects is linked, in particular, to the sustainability of international cooperation (direct relations and exchanges maintained).

The least sustainable activities are student exchanges (lack of financing), although their financing can be anticipated in the project's life and other solutions found (e-learning courses etc.).

### **Specific analysis results**

The less sustainable activities are student exchanges (lack of financing). This is a source of problems in the three cases studied.

#### **See Case Study USA n°702:**

"One partner pointed out that three years' funding was much too little. It was sufficient for establishing previously non-existent exchange programmes or for instituting cooperation programmes, in particular for universities that were relatively undeveloped on the international side and had limited resources, but it was only after three years that serious cooperation began, and then funds would no longer be available!"

Although their financing can be anticipated in the project's life and other solutions can be found (e-learning courses etc.).

**See Case Study USA n°702:**

"Although the summer institutes were met with unanimous praise, their sustainability is in question owing to their high cost. The project activities were designed in such a way as to be sustainable once the funding from the European Commission and the FIPSE came to an end. For instance, the 'virtual seminar' is based on low-cost Internet technologies (the cost is in any case concentrated at the design stage). Again, the summer institutes could in the future potentially be substantially funded by registration fees (not provided for with the original project's summer institutes). Another possibility contemplated by the directors was to associate research projects with the organisation of these events. External aid could then cover part of the cost."

The anticipation is important but may not be sufficient to gain new funds:

**See Case Study Canada n°1286:**

"Although no alternative financial solution was found, even through active fund raising, the consortium finally discovered that the project costs were not unbearable and decided, during a meeting in Rome in October 2002, to continue the project anyway. "A number of financial scenarios were examined, including changing the number of modules and the number of faculties, and introducing distance learning tools" (final report p 27). It was decided that a new cohort be recruited for October 2003 and the three modules be maintained in Canada, Spain and Italy, while the other modules would be delivered locally.

The final report states that "several initiatives to find potential sources of funding (including private resources) were undertaken by both Canadian and European collaborators". However, certain funding programmes turned out to be too limited in scope or too focused on research. In addition, including private firms was too risky in terms of independence."

## **Academic/institutional support – integration in university structure and stability of academic staff**

### **Factor definition**

A project can be supported by institutional and organisational leaders and by academic bodies.

### **Specific analysis results**

This factor is also important in US/Canada projects, but it is better when the academic/institutional support is balanced on both sides. See Case 1286 where it causes the project to be unbalanced.

However, this support may be missing or hard to obtain.

#### **See Case Study Canada n°1286:**

"The support from Spanish universities was insufficient. It seems that they did not fully understand the potential of this international Masters programme, which was the first of its kind to be created in Spain. To overcome this barrier, the partners had lobbied some of the nearby universities but concluded that: 'In most institutions this process proved to be cumbersome, bureaucratically lengthy and time-consuming' (final report)."

It can also be formal (see Case 699).

## **International, national and local recognition**

### **Factor definition**

Distinction between these three levels of external support (international, national and local) seems less relevant here than in Tempus projects, they are considered all together.

### **Specific analysis results**

In US/Canada projects, it is important to find the right level of support: local level, state level, professional organisations or private companies (see Case 1286). The national level

seems to be less important than in Tempus projects because universities are more autonomous.

See project 1286, which found funding in Canada because the theme represented a national priority, which is not the case in Europe.

**See Case Study Canada n°1286:**

"The Spanish partners, who made many efforts to approach local and national authorities through interviews and lobbying, expressed their disappointment regarding the lack of institutional support: "we have worked out a Masters programme which, I think, is very good but we don't have any local or national support in Europe!". Viewing the EU grants procedure as too burdensome and having experienced problems in receiving the funds, the Spanish partners have



# Conclusions and recommendations

Owing to previous data analysis, we are now able to list the final conclusions of this study on the main sustainability factors and to make some recommendations to project designers and project managers.

The analysis results have been discussed by the second expert panel and have led to the following conclusions and recommendations.

We first present the general conclusions concerning all the types of Tempus Joint European Projects (CD, UM, IB) project, followed by the specific conclusions for US/Canada projects.

We also indicate the level of recommendations:

Some are addressed to the **project designers (PD)**

Some are addressed to the **project coordinators** during the project's implementation (**PC**)

## Project-level factors

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
1. Quality of project design meeting academic, professional and/or social needs						
<p>C1.1. Projects matching the needs of students, socio-economic actors and the labour market are more likely to attract students, funding and support after the end of EU funding.</p>	<p>Undertake an in-depth assessment of the needs of the target groups (a kind of "market study") in order to match existing or future requirements more satisfactorily. Be sure to anchor your proposal in key future issues of reform in your institution or country.</p>	X	X	X	X	
	<p>Analyse long-term labour market trends in order to estimate the potential beneficiaries in the coming years and argue on the future attractiveness of the curriculum.</p>	X		X	X	
	<p>Sustainability issues must receive more attention in case of risky projects such as setting up new degree courses, which is more risky than reforming or extending the existing curriculum.</p>	X		X	X	
	<p>Develop links to the labour market (to business and/or to public authorities depending on your project)</p>	X	X		X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C1.2. Regular revision is required to adjust to changes in socio-economic needs; projects will be more likely to be sustainable (notably for IB/UM projects).	Once a year at least, review, assess and, if necessary, update the risk and needs analysis and decide on appropriate improvements (e.g. by means of a quality process and regular assessments).	X	X	X		X
C1.3. The projects that present a high level of innovation for the partner country require closer examination of accreditation procedures and existing academic standards.	Safeguard the innovative components of your project during its implementation and at the same time ensure that the innovation is acceptable in the partner country.  Where possible, embed innovative CD projects in one way or another within existing accredited curriculum or in line with the evolution of accreditation criteria.  Innovative projects should take into account the gap between existing academic standards in the partner countries and those in the EU country.	X	X	X		X
		X			X	
		X	UM		X	

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C1.4. Provision to maintain and enhance the high level of innovation of the project for all partners (high profile projects) is a key factor of sustainability.	Implement innovative tools and practices in the project (web courses, web services, continuing evaluation, benchmarking activities...) if they match the needs.  Safeguard the innovative character of your project during its implementation (through technological survey, benchmarking...)	X	X	X	X	X
C1.5. Linking a cooperation project to a joint research project can ensure sustainability and fuel motivation amongst the partners on both sides.	Build strong links between course content and research in the field of the project.	X		X	X	X
C1.6. The existence of substantive benefits for the students participating in the project is a key element for sustainability. These benefits concern training content and academic, professional or international recognition which can improve their motivation to take part in the courses and the exchanges.	Be sure that the project provides sufficient benefits for students (cutting-edge knowledge, accredited diploma, professional recognition etc.).	X	UM	X	X	

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
<b>2. Involvement of consortium members: sense of ownership and motivation</b>						
C2.1. The individual involvement of the consortium members is one of the most crucial factors of sustainability; it may counterbalance a lack of university support.	Analyse the sources of the consortium members' motivation, their capacities and develop a shared interest based on mutual benefits for all the partners.	X	X	X	X	
	Ensure continuous and well-balanced involvement of each partner throughout the project's life (in order to avoid risks of partners dropping-out or, on the contrary, becoming over-involved), e.g. through regular steering committee meetings).	X	X	X		X
C2.2 Provisions for a maintained and continuous commitment of all the consortium members are important factors for ensuring sustainability: "commitment is necessary, enthusiasm is not sufficient".	Try to create a shared interest based on mutual benefits regarding future outcomes.	X	X	X	X	
	Organise participative management with clear decision-making procedures and regular reporting (e.g. regular meetings).	X	X	X	X	X
	Ensure continuous and well-balanced involvement of each partner throughout the project's life (prevent risks of dropping-out or over-involvement).	X	X	X		X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C2.3. The European actors' experience of cooperation amongst the consortium leaders in the partner country is a factor of sustainability.	Highlight existing cooperation relationships between consortium members (outside any EU programmes).	X	X	X	X	
	If possible, define a consortium around a limited number of members who have already worked together (in other than in EU projects).	X	X	X	X	
	If possible, involve European partners who already know the partner country or are really willing to discover it.	X	X		X	
C2.4. A moderate turnover within the consortium members can reinforce the continuity of the project (new dynamic); a turnover that is too high can hinder it.	Demonstrate how the partners' capacities and resources will contribute to the project purpose and ensure that there is a limited renewal of project's team members in each partner institution (by introducing contractual provisions)	X	X	X	X	
	Don't try to continue the cooperation after the end of the EU funding if it is not relevant.		UM			X
C2.5. International cooperation may stop without endangering the project's sustainability.						

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C2.6. There may be opportunities to launch new international projects to maintain the cooperation after the project.	Promote the building of new projects between consortium members, even if it is not sufficient to build a real sustainability.	X	X	X		X
C2.7. The particular importance of a precise definition of the roles on both sides is evident.	Draw up an organisational chart of consortium members.	X	X	X	X	X
C2.8. The conclusion concerning respecting others' values is particularly important for US/Canada programmes (the lack of mutual consideration between the partners can hinder sustainability).				X	X	X
<b>3. Effective management and leadership</b>						
C3.1. Effective management can favour the involvement of partners, fundraising and the capacity to anticipate sustainability issues. Experienced project managers can ensure it.	Be sure that there is at least one experienced leader (in international projects) in the consortium.	X	X	X	X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C3.2. Sustainability can be linked to the fact that the leadership combines institutional influence and professional interest.	It is important to involve the most influential persons in universities as well as the most active ones.	X	X	X	X	X
	Ensure that project leaders are formally accountable and that the roles and responsibilities of the consortium members are clear.	X	X	X	X	
	Ensure that the involvement of project leaders will be fully integrated by their institutions into their professional assignments and that that is compatible with their other tasks and overall workload.	X	X	X	X	
C3.3. The project is potentially sustainable if it fits the career aspiration of the project leader in the partner countries as well as the professional interest of the EU counterparts.	Be attentive to the personal interest of project leaders in the success and the sustainability of the project (integration of project activities in their professional tasks and responsibilities).	X	X	X	X	
C3.4. The importance of the managers' capacity to develop transparency and confidence amongst the partners is evident.	Foresee regular feedback to partners. Use information and communication technologies (Internet...).	X	X	X		X
	Ensure accountability engagements between project leaders.	X	X	X		X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C3.5. Importance of the leader's ability to develop a quality process that matches European academic standards.	Project leaders should foresee quality analysis procedures on academic content of CD (in line with western academic practices).	X				X
C3.6. Importance of the leader's ability to disseminate the results and to communicate on the project (particularly for IB/UM).	Be attentive to dissemination practices to the right persons	X	X	X		X
C3.7. Importance of the leader's ability to take into account contributions from external advisers (such as NTO, peers, public authorities...)	Involve NTO or external advisers in decision-making processes inside the project consortium (participation on a coordination committee) and schedule regular feedback to stakeholders by Internet, as well as appropriate dissemination of selected information to the most influential top-level bureaucrats (e.g. a newsletter).	X	X			X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
<b>4. Target groups' active participation</b>						
C4.1. The students' and beneficiaries' help on the project activities can be useful (particularly in the case of less developed universities in partner countries).	Foresee and promote involvement procedures of students and target publics to project activities	X	X		X	X
	Promote participation of students and target publics in the implementation of activities.	X	X		X	
C4.2. Importance of taking into account the issues that can hinder the student exchanges.	Organise symbolic rewards to the most committed ones (e.g. article in the newsletter).	X	X	X		X
	Use risk analysis to identify any obstacles to audience participation (linguistic, financial and cultural gaps) and plan possible remedies.	X		X	X	

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
<b>5. Capacity for securing adequate resources for continuation</b>						
C5.1. In most cases, the financing of the projects is not complete: only a part of the activities continue and need adequate resources. In The most sustainable cases, the project managers had anticipated the financing since the beginning of the project.	Identify precisely which activities are going to be sustainable and their costs during the project design phase.  Identify beforehand precisely which actors (private, public) could help you to finance the project after the EU funding and try to obtain some kind of formal agreement for future support.	X	X	X	X	
C5.2. The less sustainable activities are the student exchanges (lack of financing).	Anticipate, during the design of the project, ways to continue the student exchanges. You can use other solutions (e-learning courses, etc.) and/or find alternative financial resources to EU funding.	X		X	X	X
C5.3. The main problem of sustainability in the CARDS countries and some less developed Tacis countries (Moldova) seems to be securing resources.	Possibility to end the EU funding gradually over more than 3 years.	X	X		X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C5.4. Some projects have found interesting solutions by mixing different sources of financing: public, private and international.	Actively lobby the university to secure the main resources and do your best to create an autonomous entity in charge of implementing the project.	X	X		X	X
	Actively lobby private and/or local organisations in the partner country to support the project's activities after the EU funding has come to an end (e.g. selling services to private firms). Support from private and local actors are the less frequent means of securing resources.	X	X		X	X
C5.5. This factor is linked to institutional support (most of the funding comes from universities), even if it is not enough (especially in CARDS countries or in some Tacis countries where universities are poor)	Look at the private and local actors' capacities to support the project's activities after the funding.	X	X	X		X
	Be attentive to the importance of lobbying initiatives, to ensure institutional support, for the sustainability of project activities.	X	X	X	X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB/UM	US/Can	PD	PC
C5.6. If the curriculum is attractive, part of the students can be asked for tuition fees.		X	X	X		X
C5.7. The sustainability of projects is particularly linked to the sustainability of the international cooperation (direct relations and exchanges maintained), especially in US/Canada projects.	Foresee and promote the different other opportunities to maintain international cooperation between partners.			X	X	X

### Context-level factors

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB-UM	US/Can	EA	M
6. Academic/Institutional support						
C6.1. This seems to be the most determining factor on sustainability, which is confirmed by the fact that most of the financing comes from universities.	Identify precisely the types of activity that can benefit from university support (material, financial and human) and obtain formal commitment regarding resource allocation.	X	X	X	X	

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB-UM	US/ Can	EA	M
C6.2. Gaining the confidence of the central authorities as well as the university leaders can ensure sustainability, especially if your project is in line with the university strategy.	<p>Look for the support of influential persons in the universities and make your project attractive. For instance, organise active involvement of the top managers in the project's life (steering committee...).</p> <p>Pay attention to publicising the project in order to enhance added value for institutions: e.g. leaflets and newspaper interviews.</p>	X	X	X	X	X
C6.3. Academic recognition is not relevant for the IB/UM projects, even if institutional recognition is.	Search mostly institutional recognition on IB/UM projects.		X		X	X
C6.4. Existing cooperation with Eastern European partners is an advantage for academic/institutional support.	Identify existing cooperation relationships between consortium members.	X	X		X	
C6.5. It is preferable for academic/institutional support to be balanced on both sides.	<p>Ensure continuous well-balanced academic/institutional support of each partner on both sides.</p> <p>It is advisable to look for a support of the top management of the universities and to create links with research teams.</p>	X	X	X	X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB-UM	US/ Can	EA	M
<b>7. National support</b>						
C7.1. Ministries' support for accreditation is a key factor for CD projects. Political support is a key factor for UM/IB projects.	During the project design, test the opportunities and threats for future accreditation or recognition. See C7.2. Enhance attractiveness and future visibility of the project for national and academic bodies.	X	X		X	
C7.2. National support can be favoured by direct links between the project manager and Ministry members, and by active lobbying.	Try to create individual contact with members of the Ministries and to do active lobbying at this level.	X	X		X	
C7.3. Making provision for accreditation at the planning stage is a positive practice (CD projects).	Establish contacts early on, to obtain accreditation.	X			X	
C7.4. Integration in existing national and international networks and associations is important	Ensure existence and maintenance of contacts between consortium members and national and international networks throughout the life of the project.	X	X	X	X	X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB-UM	US/ Can	EA	M
C7.5. It is important to find the right level of support, especially in US/Canada projects: local, state, professional or private organisations. This depends on each project and context. The national level seems to be less important than in Tempus projects because universities are more autonomous.	Identify precisely the right level of support and try to obtain it by various means.			X	X	X
<b>8. Socio-economic support</b>						
C8.1. Only a few Tempus projects are actually concerned by local socio-economic support except in Tacis (Russia) where it seems more important (private support).	If relevant for your project, try to obtain support from local (private or public) actors to ensure sustainability. They can be identified through a study of needs.  Identify cultural gaps or economic impediments to socio-economic support in order to facilitate active lobbying.	X	X		X	X
C8.2. The more a project corresponds to socio-economic needs, the more it will be able to obtain support from local actors.	Check that your project really corresponds to the socio-economic needs	X	X			X

Conclusions	Recommendations	CD	IB-UM	US/ Can	EA	M
C8.3. There is little support from the universities to lobby private and local actors.	Verify in what your project can fall under the strategy of the university and promote this correspondence.	X	X	X	X	X

The main problem of sustainability in the CARDS countries and some less developed Tacis countries (Moldova) seems to be securing resources.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SUSTAINABILITY OF  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
VOCATIONAL TRAINING  
FINAL REPORT

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the  
European Communities

2006 - 82 pp. - 21.0 x 29.7 cm

ISBN: 92-9157-477-5