Tempus & Erasmus Mundus
Opportunities for the Eastern Partnership

Kiev, 5-6 December 2011

Conference report
1. What is the Eastern Partnership?

2. Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and the Eastern Partnership

3. Conference background – aims and structure
   Aims
   Organisation
   Participants
   Structure

4. Conference proceedings
   Opening session and presentations of Tempus and Erasmus Mundus
   Workshop sessions
   Closing session

5. Feedback from the conference

Annex - programme
1. What is the Eastern Partnership?

The Eastern Partnership fosters cooperation between the European Union and six neighbouring countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine.

Heads of government of EU and Eastern Partnership countries and the European Commission have emphasized the importance of increasing the contacts between people in the two regions - particularly at the level of civil society. "People-to-people contacts" has therefore been set as one of the priorities for developing relations between the EU and these six countries. It forms the basis for Platform IV of the Partnership, which aims at target-oriented activities to stimulate open and free discussion around the main areas of cooperation and higher education.

Moreover, "Promoting higher education reform and student mobility" is one of the six priority areas for the EU's relations with all its neighbouring countries.

So while Eastern Partnership countries are at the centre of the European Union's efforts to support democratic and growth-oriented reforms around the world, they are also the EU's privileged partners for international academic cooperation though the improvement of education systems and increased mobility of students and staff.

2. Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and the Eastern Partnership

Tempus and Erasmus Mundus are considered the most effective EU funded programmes for building relations between the two regions in this domain. The six Eastern Partnership countries have, from the outset of their participation in Tempus and Erasmus Mundus, considered these programmes as the main tools for modernising their higher education institutions, stimulating international cooperation with EU institutions and see them as major contributors to higher education reform and to greater student mobility.

The European Commission's decision to triple the budget assigned to both Tempus and Erasmus Mundus for Eastern Partnership countries in the 2011-2013 period reflects this strong emphasis on this priority area of higher education reform and student mobility.

It is against this background that the joint promotional event on Tempus and Erasmus Mundus was organised.
About Tempus and Erasmus Mundus

Tempus and Erasmus Mundus are two of the European Union’s key programmes for international cooperation in the field of higher education.

The **Tempus** programme promotes partnerships between higher education institutions in the EU and the Partner Countries surrounding the EU: the Southern Mediterranean, Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Russia and Central Asia.

- Tempus Joint Projects aim to modernise higher education courses and institutions and focus on the themes of curriculum development (at any level), university governance and links between higher education and society.
- Structural Measures projects aim to modernise national higher education policies and systems.


The **Erasmus Mundus** Programme is a world-wide programme, promoting:

- Joint programmes of outstanding quality at masters and doctoral levels, including scholarships/fellowships to participate in these programmes;
- Partnerships between European and "third-country" higher education institutions, including scholarships and fellowships for mobility at all academic levels;
- Projects to promote European higher education through projects to enhance the attractiveness of Europe as an education destination to tackle the challenges of international higher education cooperation

3. Conference background – aims and structure

Aims

The aim of the event was to promote the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes in the six Eastern Partnership countries, to enhance the regional dimension of the two programmes and to involve those institutions that have had less exposure to international programmes.

To date, a large number of higher education institutions have been involved in project proposals in both programmes and have been part of project consortia. There remain, however, a number of institutions that have yet to participate in the two programmes or have had little contact with them. This event was considered as a good opportunity for new institutions to learn more about Tempus and Erasmus Mundus and how to prepare (or become involved in) project applications, so that good quality proposals will be submitted under future calls for proposals. The conference was designed to also provide concrete opportunities for networking, which will undoubtedly lead to new institutional partnerships being formed and an increased involvement from institutions located in remote areas of the countries concerned.

The overall objective was to contribute to bringing the six Eastern Partnership countries closer to the European Union and to strengthen the Eastern Europe regional dimension, in line with the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus philosophy.

Organisation

The conference took place on 5 and 6 December 2011 in Kiev, Ukraine (Hyatt Regency Kiev hotel).

It was organized by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), in cooperation with the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Development and Co-operation – EuropeAid, the Directorate-General for Education and Culture and with the European External Action Service. The Agency worked in close cooperation with the European Commission, National Tempus Offices and EU Delegations of the six Eastern Partnership countries for all content-related aspects.

Participants

A total number of 264 participants attended the event, by invitation only. Identification of all participants was carried out by Tempus and Erasmus Mundus staff in close cooperation with NTOs, Erasmus Mundus National Structures and EU Delegations.
Approximately 210 of the participants came from the six Eastern Partnership countries. A fair balance of participants between these six countries has been ensured. The main target groups were practitioners, academic and administrative staff of higher education institutions located in the six Eastern Partnership countries. The selection was based on the participants’ ability to be proactive with the top management of their home institution and be able to internally disseminate information among other department colleagues, and towards a wider student body. In addition, representatives of National Tempus Offices and Erasmus Mundus National Contact Points from the six Eastern Partnership countries, as well as Ministries of Education, took part in the conference.

From the EU side there were 45 representatives of EU higher education institutions, Erasmus Mundus National Structures and experts.

The conference was backed up by staff of the European Commission, EU Delegations and EACEA.

The level of commitment to this conference by the European Commission was demonstrated by the presence of the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, European Commission, Ms Androulla Vassiliou, who took part in the opening session of the event. Guest speakers of the conference were the Deputy Minister, Acting Minister of Education and Sciences of Ukraine, the First Counsellor of the EU Delegation in Kiev, Directors from the Directorate-General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid and the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission, as well as the Director of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

**Event structure**

A full programme is included in the annex to this report. All presentations are available on the webpage devoted to the conference:


The first day was opened by welcome speeches, an introduction of the political context and the presentations of the two programmes Tempus and Erasmus Mundus.

In order to provide audience with in-depth knowledge on the main programmes components and stimulate them to the debate, four workshops have been organised:

1. Impact of international cooperation
2. Preparing a good project proposal
3. Forming and running an international consortium
4. Student and staff mobility
Each 75-minute workshop was repeated four times during the event, to enable all participants to attend all four workshops.

For each workshop a team of three experts was created: chair, facilitator and rapporteur. These three people worked together via e-mail during the preparatory phase. They met the day before the event, and ran the workshops four times during the event. Experts to lead the workshops were selected by Tempus and Erasmus Mundus staff at EACEA in close cooperation with EU Delegations and NTOs.

**Networking**

In line with the objectives of the conference, plenty of time and space was provided to allow participants to network, gather information and share ideas.

Four **discussion corners** covering the four workshop topics were available within the conference area. This allowed delegates to follow up on topics raised in the workshops. Each workshop team (chair, facilitator and rapporteur) was available at their discussion corner during all coffee and lunch breaks to answer questions and share experience.

**Stands** provided information about Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes, as well as the activities of NTOs, NCPs, and Erasmus Mundus National Structures. These were available throughout the event, and staffed during coffee and lunch breaks.

A dinner was organised during the evening of the first day, providing a more informal setting to continue discussion.

The languages of the conference were English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation was provided throughout the event.

**Event visibility**

An event-specific visual identity was used in all materials produced for the conference and participants, as well as in the web pages developed to provide information on the event and disseminate results.

In particular, the Commissioner's visit to Ukraine raised media interest in the conference: the event and some key facts about EU's higher education links with Ukraine were therefore reported in Ukrainian media.
4. Conference proceedings

4.1. Opening session and presentations of Tempus and Erasmus Mundus

Mr Borys Zhebrovskyi, Deputy Minister, Acting Minister of Education and Sciences, Ukraine
Deputy Minister Borys Zhebrovskyi said he was happy that the event – in the framework of the Eastern Partnership – has been organised in the Ukraine. He recalled Ukraine's long experience with both programmes, in terms of the number of projects approved and the volume of EU financial assistance obtained. He emphasised the importance of having a European space for education from kindergarten to higher education.

Ms Androulla Vassiliou, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth
The Commissioner outlined the EU's priorities for higher education, in particular the renewed higher education modernisation agenda recently issued by the Commission. She explained how the EU international cooperation programmes fit within this policy context and informed the audience about the Commission's proposal for the future "Erasmus for All" programme.

Mr Marcus Cornaro, Director of Neighbourhood Policies, DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, European Commission
Mr Cornaro spoke about the Commission's "European Neighbourhood Policy Review", underlining the main elements and focusing on education. He insisted on the importance of education for cooperation with partner countries and for their economic development; the allocation of extra funding to Erasmus
Mundus and Tempus and possible further impact on the programmes (new rules, bigger projects, intra-regional mobility). He also mentioned the post 2014 agenda - cooperation on higher education with partner countries will continue, based on the needs of each partner country.

Ms Lika Glonti, Director of National Tempus Office, Georgia chaired a session presenting Tempus and Erasmus Mundus.

Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit for Tempus at the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, introduced the Tempus programme.

As preliminary remarks, he reminded participants of the objectives of the event:
- reinforcing networking between potential and existing applicants;
- offering opportunities to higher education institutions that are less familiar with EU programmes and which have less exposure to international programmes, especially HEIs from remote areas in the Eastern Partnership countries.

He underlined the substantial increase in EU funding and the opportunities for awarding grants to a bigger number of good quality projects in 2012-2013.

Mr Joachim Fronia, Head of Unit for Erasmus Mundus at the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, introduced the Erasmus Mundus programme, in particular the opportunities available to universities and students from the Eastern Partnership countries. He explained how increased financing in 2011 has already enabled more university partnerships and scholarships to be funded for the Eastern Partnership. This will continue in 2012 and 2013.

We are involved in three Erasmus Mundus partnerships. The idea of attending this conference allows us to strengthen our knowledge of the programme and speak to potential new partners.

University of Grodno, Belarus

Mr Petro Bekh, Vice Rector for international relations at Taras Shevshenko University, Kiev

Mr Bekh underlined the direct outcomes of such cooperation: new curricula developed; upgraded competences for academic and administrative staff; more job opportunities for more open-minded students.

Questions from the audience focused on the opportunity to have cross regional projects, the criteria in order to set up a high quality partnership and the opportunity for newcomers to be initiated in project management.

4.2. Workshops sessions

Overall summary of workshop conclusions

The debates over all four workshops reflected the importance of personal initiative and commitment in order to establish international cooperation. They also underlined the opportunity for human development that such cooperation is offering for academic and administrative staff.

Rapporteurs encouraged the higher education representatives to start writing proposals, while recognising the workload it represents and the very competitive nature of calls for proposals.
Rapporteurs insisted that the start of an efficient partnership lies in the joint preparation of the proposal. A number of participants reported on new ideas for projects and consortia that had emerged from the conference. The positive experience of some recurrent award holders motivated universities with less exposure to EU programmes to invest in identifying partners and preparing projects.

Workshop conclusions 1: Impact of International Cooperation

The workshop presentations and discussions showed that international cooperation has an impact on individuals, systems and practice throughout the higher education sector.

International cooperation involves the sharing of knowledge and expertise, as regards both learning and teaching. It also obliges universities to consider rules and systems they have in place for managing joint studies or programmes, providing credits and study recognition. Agreeing on areas of cooperation often brings with it a move towards shared quality assurance systems. It can also have an impact on teaching equipment, methods and resources used by universities.

The experience of universities cooperating in this way can help inform and instruct decision-makers and higher education administrations who are considering or implementing new legislation.

There are also wider benefits at an individual and institutional level, as international experience boosts employability for graduates and the attractiveness of institutions.

To reap the full benefits, stakeholders need information about the options open to them and examples of good practice that can serve as information and inspiration. International cooperation needs support at all levels – institutional, national, regional and local – and needs to take place in an atmosphere of trust.

Workshop conclusions 2: Preparing a good project proposal

This session looked at two aspects of proposal preparation. Firstly the content: ensuring that a proposal meets the requirements and seizes the attention of the assessors. This covered general information about the proposal; eligibility and award criteria; tips and tricks – how to ensure your proposal stands out; using correct and relevant terminology, and the best ways of presenting your ideas and consortium.

Secondly, how to do it: the best collaborative methods to involve partners effectively so as to create a truly joint proposal.

A number of clear steps were identified for proposal preparation: read all documents before the proposal writing; support the objectives of the call, national and regional

At this event there are many people with ideas but perhaps less experience of project involvement. These are the sorts of people who need practical advice. We have just attended an ad hoc meeting with partner universities from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and France. National Tempus Office (Armenia)
priorities; identify the beneficiaries and stakeholders; needs analysis / collaborative approach; provide clear methodology: what will be done, how, when and with which resources; check the capacity of your institution to participate in the project (sufficient resources, linguistic competences, financial capacity).

Above all the workshop stressed the importance of keeping three key ideas at the forefront of a proposal: to ensure it is relevant for the programme and the project’s beneficiaries, that its objectives are feasible for the partners capacities and operating environment, and that it is sustainable in terms of the benefits that can continue once the finding has come to an end.

**Workshop conclusions 3: Forming and running an international consortium**

The workshop sessions were arranged around three keywords of initiative-taking, commitment and interaction. Discussion covered a range of aspects of forming and running a consortium and using the network for dissemination of ideas. Key elements of successful consortia were felt to be communication, clear responsibilities for all players, and a strong management plan.

Delegates were keen to look at the positive and negative aspects of cultural differences, and ways of resolving potential or actual conflicts. Differences in practice or regulation between different countries (legislation, banking rules) could also represent major challenges for consortia.

Discussion also centred on how to find new partners, how to make one's own university more "attractive" on the international stage, and how to put together strong proposals to cement the consortium in a specific project. Here delegates agreed that most of the aspects of strong consortium management mirrored the strengths of strong project management.

It was recognised that universities experiencing problems with the regulatory environment should take the initiative to share their ideas with government and encourage the authorities to introduce change. They should also be more prepared to disseminate good practice among their peers. Universities should also be more motivated to focus on training their own staff in key skills required for international cooperation: management, communication and language skills, as well as proposal-writing.

*The University of Algarve is a coordinator and partner in a number of Erasmus Mundus projects. I am here on behalf of our international office to meet existing partners and extend our network for Erasmus Mundus, as well as explore the possibilities under Tempus. University of Algarve (Portugal)*
Workshop conclusions 4: Student and staff mobility

The workshop on student and staff mobility considered the value of mobility and best practices in mobility management. Mobility is a key factor in the wider agenda for internationalisation of higher education and its reform.

A number of barriers to effective mobility were identified, as well as ways of tackling these problems. A need to more harmonisation of higher education systems in EU and Eastern Partnership countries can only be addressed by national and regional authorities devoting more attention to recognition and quality issues. Here universities often take the lead and help set the pace by adopting practices and procedures for recognition of qualifications and study periods.

This requires trust between university administrations, and greater acceptance by academic staff. Differences in course content between different universities and countries were considered a positive rather than negative factor. The problem of brain drain is a challenge: developing joint or double degree programmes can be a way round this.

Social networking was seen as an ideal way of developing "post-mobility" feedback and alumni activities, thereby extending the individual impact of mobility to a wider group.

4.3. Closing session

Mr Jose Roman Leon Lora, First Counsellor, EU Delegation in Kiev

On behalf of the EU Delegation, Mr Jose Roman Leon Lora recalled the EU’s outstanding political partnership with Ukraine and with the other countries within the Eastern Partnership. He underlined that the EU proposes a comprehensive partnership that also covers various dimensions, many very close to citizens. Erasmus Mundus and Tempus are clear and concrete examples of the EU’s ambition to work not only at the diplomatic level, but also with citizens, students, professors, intellectuals, representatives of the civil society, trade unions, etc.

Mr Gilbert Gascard, Director of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

The Agency’s Director first introduced the EACEA’s role and mandate. He summarised the specific missions of the Executive Agency as regards Tempus & Erasmus Mundus (customer-oriented services, efficient management of EU taxpayers’ money); the challenges the Agency has to face in the management of Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes (relevant financial procedures – e.g: the use of flat rates, project monitoring, budget absorption capacity) and the future priorities of the Agency.

Eastern Partnership countries are particularly interesting for Swedish universities. We are developing contacts as part of our plans for organise a mission of universities to visit Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in October 2012. This is one of a series of missions we carry out as the Swedish Tempus NCP to form new relationships and cement existing ones. The 2011 mission was to Central Asia, with visits from 15 HEIs.

Erasmus Mundus National Structure/ Tempus National Contact Point (Sweden)
(expertise in project management, analysing development in higher education, streamlining of procedures, sharing good practice).

**Mr Jordi Curell Gotor, Director, Lifelong learning: higher education and international affairs, Directorate-General for Education and Culture**

Mr Curell concluded the event. As Chairman of the Eastern Partnership Platform IV, dedicated to the ‘people to people’ dimension, he underlined the EU’s priority for policy dialogue between the EU and its Eastern Partners and referred to the Commission’s initiatives and outcomes in this framework. He also explained in detail the objectives, scope, challenges - including budgetary perspectives - and architecture of the future programme entitled **Erasmus for All**, for the period 2014-2020. He insisted on the mobility component and common treatment for higher education institutions and individuals from both within and outside the EU.

**Conclusions**

The conference provided opportunities for exchange of ideas, and proved to be a source of inspiration for participants: new opportunities, new ideas, new contacts and new projects. It also provided instruction and detailed advice on the best ways of giving shape to these ideas and projects within the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes.

While there will soon be changes in store for the EU’s higher education policy, a clear focus on Eastern Partnership countries will remain in the years to come, and this domain will continue to be fertile ground for developing fruitful cooperation between the two regions.

In general, this conference gave a great deal of inspiration: all participants were very grateful for this and they all hope to take part in similar occasions in the future.
5. Feedback from the conference

All participants were asked to complete an on-line evaluation of the conference and their experiences.

47% of the participants replied after the conference, many adding additional comments, showing a high level of interest. Their assessment was very positive: 3.5 out of 4 was the average score given by participants for the conference arrangements and workshop sessions. 68.1% rated the conference as very good, and 27.1% as good.

The comments focused on timing, content of the workshops, presentations, networking, logistics and general appreciation. All the replies on timing suggested that participants would have welcomed more time, both to network and to focus on more specific areas for workshop discussion.

Content of workshops / presentations

Participants felt that the topics were interesting and covered the core components of the two programmes. As the programmes are built around Calls for Proposals, and selection is extremely competitive, a recurrent request was to receive practical and technical advice on how to prepare a good project proposal.

Networking

All participants appreciated the networking opportunities created; it was one of the rare events where time was specifically dedicated to such an important element for consortia-based projects. The comments include some suggestions for improvements in methodology and requests for opportunities for structured networking in the future.

Logistics and general appreciation

Both newcomers and higher education institutions with more experience in the two programmes expressed their satisfaction and appreciation.
Annex: Conference programme

“Tempus & Erasmus Mundus: Opportunities for the Eastern Partnership”

KIEV - 5-6 December 2011
Hyatt Regency Hotel
5, Alla Tarasova Street, Kiev (Kyiv), Ukraine 01001

Monday 5th December 2011

08:00–09:15  Registration and welcome coffee
09:15–10:15  Introductory Session chaired by Ms Helene Skikos, Policy Officer,
             Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

Welcoming addresses by

Mr Borys Zhebrovskyi, Deputy Minister, Acting Minister of Education and Sciences, Ukraine

Ms Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, European Commission

Mr Marcus Cornaro, Director of Neighbourhood Policies, Directorate-General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, European Commission

10:15–12:30  Presentations of the Programmes chaired by Ms Lika Glonti, Director
             of National Tempus Office, Georgia

10:15 -11:00 Tempus – Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit, Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Brussels

11:00–11:45  Coffee break
11:45–12:30  Erasmus Mundus – Mr Joachim Fronia, Head of Unit, Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Brussels

12:30–14:00  Lunch
14:00–15:15  Parallel workshops (see back page for details)
15:15–16:00  Coffee break
16:00–17:15  Parallel workshops (see back page for details)
17:15–18:00  Networking

Stands providing information about Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and other EU programmes, as well as a National Tempus Offices stand will be open as of the afternoon.

Discussion corners related to the four workshops will also be available.

19:00  Dinner - Restaurant Monaco - 20 A Velyka Zhytomyrska St, Kyiv
Tuesday 6th December 2011

09:15–10:30 Parallel workshops (see back page for details)
10:30–11:15 Coffee break
11:15–12:30 Parallel workshops (see back page for details)
12:30–14:00 Lunch

Networking

14:00–15:30 Outcomes from the rapporteurs chaired by Ms Svitlana Shytikova, Director of National Tempus Office, Ukraine

15:30–16:15 Concluding remarks chaired by Mr Jordi Curell Gotor, Director, Lifelong learning: higher education and international affairs, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

Mr Jose Roman Leon Lora, First Counsellor, EU Delegation in Kiev

Mr Gilbert Gascard, Director of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Brussels

Mr Jordi Curell Gotor, Director, Lifelong learning: higher education and international affairs, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

16:15 Farewell coffee

Stands providing information about Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and other EU programmes, as well as a National Tempus Offices stand will be open until the end of the conference.

Discussion corners related to the four workshops will also be available.
Parallel workshop sessions

Workshop themes

**Impact of international cooperation**
Chair: *Mr Volodymyr Shatokha*, National Metallurgical Academy of Ukraine, Ukraine
Facilitator: *Mr Artur Schmitt*, University of Granada, Spain
Rapporteur: *Ms Irine Darchia*, Tbilisi State University, Georgia

**Preparing a good project proposal**
Chair: *Mr Siarhei Piashkun*, Polotsk State University, Belarus
Facilitator: *Ms Christina Akrivou*, France
Rapporteur: *Ms Oksana Krayevska*, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine

**Forming and running an international consortium**
Chair: *Mr Stefan Ignar*, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Poland
Facilitator: *Ms Carina Jensen*, Lund University, Sweden
Rapporteur: *Ms Jala Garibova*, Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan

**Student and staff mobility**
Chair: *Mr Alexandr Hakobyan*, Yerevan State University, Armenia
Facilitator: *Mr Juan Carlos Duque*, University of Deusto, Spain
Rapporteur: *Ms Tatiana Lucinschi*, Technical University of Moldova, Moldova

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