Rotterdam Network Meeting, Vilnius
10-13 May 2007
Mykolas Romeris University

Chairman: Prof. Jaap de Zwaan

Present:
Teija Isotalo (Helsinki), Dr. John Finlay (Glasgow), Veronique Christophe (Ghent), Birgitta Edebalk (Lund), Marie Brink (Lund), Dr. Christopher Bisping (Warwick), Dr. Christine Byron (Manchester), Prof. Eduard Somers (Ghent), Dr. Anthony Chamboredon (Paris), Prof. Josef Bejcek (Brno), Dr. Maria Patakyova (Bratislava), Dr. Edith Hainisch (Bratislava), Laura Ripoll (Girona), Prof. Francine Esteve (Girona), Prof. Alberto Maffi (Milano), Corti Cinzia (Milano), Marcus Merkel (Konstanz), Prof Jaap de Zwaan (Rotterdam), Anette van Sandwijk (Rotterdam), Augustina Dumitrascu (Bucharest), Dr. Irmgard Rath-Kathrein (Innsbruck), Prof. Gérard Legier (Aix en Provence), Majken Hjort (Copenhagen), Helle Nørregaard Thulstrup (Copenhagen), Prof. Marta Dezso (Budapest), Andrea Robotka (Budapest), Paulo de Souso Mendes, Prof Suzana Kraljic (Maribor), Jan Erik Hatling (Bergen), Anne Lise Arnesen (Bergen), Asta Edda Jonsdottir (Reykjavik), Dr Jakub Urbanik (Warsaw), Prof. Haluk Kabaalioglu (Istanbul), Dr Oleg Fedosiuik (Vilnius), Audra Dargyte Burokiene (Vilnius),

Absent:
Stockholm, Salamanca, Sofia (all with notice)

1. Opening:
Welcome by professor Juozas Zilys, Dean. He emphasized all the positive aspects of having an Erasmus Programme and having this network. For Mykolas Romeris University, internationalization is very important.

Prof Jaap de Zwaan opens the 12th meeting of the Rotterdam Network Meeting. He suggests the idea of adding a new component to the Rotterdam Law Network. For example a yearly conference; Rotterdam is willing to host a first conference on a joint topic.

2. Assessment exchanges:
After the agenda was established, each representative of the present universities introduced himself/herself, explained his/her role and informed those present regarding the exchanges of students. For most universities the number of incoming and outgoing exchange students is imbalanced and there is a decline in the number of students going to Europe. Other problems indicated were the levels of the students (background) and level of language. Many universities stressed the importance for exchange students of starting at the beginning of the semester.

This meeting is very good for (maintaining) personal contacts. Many universities showed and shared the interest of organizing a conference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner university</th>
<th>Balance/inbalance</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris Descartes</td>
<td>Number of outgoing students is going up, number of incoming students is fluctuating.</td>
<td><strong>New name: Paris Descartes.</strong> All courses are open to exchange students. Common Law, a degree programme is taught in English (tuition EUR 400). Students can also follow modules without paying, they will then receive a certificate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innsbruck</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;outgoing</td>
<td>Irmgard Rath-Kathein is the Erasmus coordinator. Courses are taught in German. They offer a Law and Economics programme. They also offer Italian Law and many more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;outgoing</td>
<td>They offer a joint LL.M. degree with a German university and a Summer programme in cooperation with Suffolk University (Boston), 3 summers = ll.m. degree. Courses in English sometimes French and German.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;Outgoing</td>
<td>Wide range of law courses. Morna Roberts will be advising incoming students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>± balanced</td>
<td>60 courses taught in English. They offer Finnish language courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;Outgoing</td>
<td>Offer courses in French.</td>
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<td>Brno</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;outgoing</td>
<td>25 courses in foreign languages (of which 20 in English). Housing is guaranteed.</td>
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<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Incoming&gt;outgoing</td>
<td>They can only send 2nd year students (due to the fact that 2/3 of 3rd year is used for the grade point average –GPA– for students). Expectation is that many of the agreements will stop in a couple of years because of this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeditepe</td>
<td>± balanced</td>
<td>Turkish and English Law courses. American University summer school in Istanbul. They also organize a 2-week EU law programme with Nice. Erasmus students can also participate in the ll.m. programmes. Many external programmes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girona</td>
<td>± balanced</td>
<td>Expressed interest in TS mobility within the network.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maribor</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;outgoing</td>
<td>10 courses taught in English. They also offer the possibility of individual courses in German and French. Every year they receive a Fulbright professor from the USA who teaches a course in English. International Business Law is jointly taught with KFU Graz.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
<td>Incoming&lt;outgoing</td>
<td>All courses are open to Erasmus students. Accommodation can be a bit problematic. They sometimes have problems receiving e-mail due to spam filter (please resend your emails).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>± balanced</td>
<td>Students can go abroad in 4-year programme and only for a year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vilnius</td>
<td>Incoming&gt;outgoing</td>
<td>Have a joint programme with Ghent. The number of outgoing students is lower because students have jobs etc. Exchange students can choose subjects from all departments, not only law.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>Incoming&gt;outgoing</td>
<td>56 courses taught in English, 2 in French. Will do a partner evaluation. Some accommodation problems. Danish students tend to choose exchange destinations outside of Europe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
<td>± balanced</td>
<td>Courses taught in English (about 30 ects). TS mobility is problematic.</td>
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3. Aims for student and teachers mobility
Experiences regarding student mobility were discussed. Paris and Yeditepe submit outgoing students to language test. In this context the meeting confirmed that the preparation of outgoing students, also with regard to language skills, is the responsibility of the sending university. Denmark pointed out that they require 30 ECTS from their students otherwise they cannot go. For Poland this is no less than 20 ECTS. Warwick mentions that it is difficult to determine what ECTS entails, i.e. how many lectures, reading etc. It was concluded that because there are different systems, it might be wise to make bilateral agreements for this. Every university will provide information on the information sheet of how many ECTS a
student is expected to take. It is also important to provide students with information about the educational system at the beginning of the year.

**Note:** According to the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) each country and/or each institution can decide how many ECTS a student should obtain during an exchange. It is important that the ECTS taken abroad should be “recognized”. The European Commission does not require a minimum or maximum number of ECTS.

In order to facilitate TS mobility the idea of organizing concentrated courses could be interesting (2/3 weeks) or making a bilateral agreement with regard to common courses in the curriculum of 2 universities. Most universities agree that lecturers are still somewhat reluctant to go abroad.

Paris has a comparative law programme that involves staff exchange (many seminars). At the University of Ghent it is compulsory for Ass. Professors to go abroad.

It was agreed that we should make more use out of this network regarding TS mobility (joint courses, joint programmes).

5. **Network extension or reduction?**

One of the goals set earlier for this network is to have partners in every European (candidate) member state. So far we do not have members in Ireland, Luxemburg, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. (A Greek partner, who never showed up during meetings, left the network). It was agreed that Paris will contact their Irish partner about participation in the network (which does not mean that they will have to conclude cooperation agreements with all partners, however, it might be useful to learn about the Irish educational system). Maribor will contact their partner in Zagreb, Croatia. Rotterdam will (at a later stage) contact their partners in Riga, Estonia and Tartu, Latvia.

6. **2008 Annual Meeting**

The meeting of 2008 will be hosted by Paris Descartes from 9 (Wednesday) –12 (Sunday) April. (Thursday: annual meeting, Friday conference, Saturday social programme). A small promotional fair could be organized. One of the items on the agenda could be exchanging experiences and then make a proposal to the EC of changes to be made within the programme. The topic for the conference will be announced.

Other (law) networks in Europe: ELPIS¹, ELFA², Coimbra³ group.

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¹ ELPIS: The “European Legal Practice Integrated Studies” partnership is co-ordinated by the University of Hannover, and has 29 other participant universities. The majority are law schools of the major national universities in each country. Other members include prestigious universities of international level such as Fribourg and Leuven. The partnership is the major “law only” grouping in the SOCRATES programme. The group has been in existence since 1987.

² The European Law Faculties Association (ELFA) was founded in 1995 in Leuven by more than 80 Faculties of Law located in different universities across Europe. The organisation now has about 160 members from countries within the E.U. and beyond. Currently, the most important focus of ELFA’s activities is the reform of legal education in Europe. Through this website and the European Journal of Legal Education (EJLE), it provides information about the current state of legal education in Europe and an international forum for the discussion of the impact of the Sorbonne-Bologna Declaration on the study of law.

³ Coimbra is an association of long-established European multidisciplinary universities of high international standard committed to creating special academic and cultural ties in order to
7. Life Long Learning
The new programme was discussed. Most of the mobility programmes remain the same. New: the institution can decide on the amount of Erasmus scholarship per country (i.e. based on the living standard). The Leonardo Da Vince internship programme is now incorporated into the Erasmus programme (however, not many Law Schools will make us of this as an internship is usually not a mandatory part in the curriculum).

There is a new form of mobility: mobility of administrative and other staff. (short stay/ job shadowing, i.e. to work with somebody in a similar job for a week etc). Partners should provide a plan with: - goals, to be expected results and programme).

Most universities showed interest in this programme.

8. Miscellaneous

Aix-en- Provence experienced problems with a Spanish university who said they could not accept an Erasmus Student, being exchanged for a second time, without an obligation to pay. Within the network everybody is willing to accept 2nd time Erasmus students (without an Erasmus Scholarship) and provide the same services as to “regular” exchange students.

Note: After consultation the website for the European Commission this seems to be the right attitude:

“What if I don't receive an ERASMUS grant?”

The status of "ERASMUS student" does not depend on the student being awarded an SOCRATES/ERASMUS mobility grant. Even without a grant, you will receive full academic recognition at home of your study period abroad. In addition, every ERASMUS student can benefit from the support provided to incoming students in the form of welcome events, introduction to the host university, language courses, academic advice to students or assistance with practical matters, such as finding accommodation, etc. This kind of support depends entirely on the host university."^4

The chairman closes the meeting.

Next meeting: 9 - 12 April 2008: Paris

promote, for the benefit of its members, internationalization, academic collaboration, excellence in learning and research, and service to society. It is also the purpose of the Group to influence European educational policy and to develop best practice through the mutual exchange of experience.

^4 http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/faqs_en.html#30