

# Staff mobility - The experience lecturers and future of this activity

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**Abstract** – In this paper the history of international co-operation on the base of the programme SOCRATES/ERASMUS. It focuses on conditions and prerequisites for such cooperation, and follows tasks which were completed. In first part of this paper, the history of the international cooperation is shortly described. In the second part of this paper - the attention is paid to experience of teachers with “staff mobility”. Staff mobility – it means short stay in foreign university with 8 hours of lessons and performance for students and teachers in visited university. The authors addressed colleagues from the Czech and foreign universities and their experience are summarised in this paper. These two parts of the paper give us bilateral point of view to the short staff mobility.

**Index Terms:** Students, staff mobility, cooperation, exchange.

## INTRODUCTION

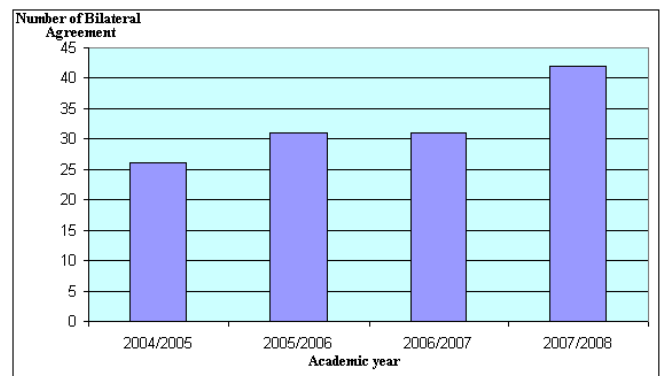
This paper is summarizing ways of international cooperation leading to the exchange of experience and professional knowledge. It evaluates goals and experience, findings and recommendations. It is important to view this sort of harmonization of higher education across the EU and emphasize each particular step leading to improving international cooperation. There are clear differences in the educational ethos, and the variation shows that the objectives of the Bologna declaration require attention beyond the use of common languages, but also that its use is the most important pre-requisite.

From the Bologna declaration of June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1999:  
“...Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system..... for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorization of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights...”

The program Socrates/Erasmus helps to effect the Bologna declaration. VŠB –Technical University of Ostrava, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering has taken part in co-operation in the area of staff mobility and international student study stays since the year 1989. On the beginning VŠB-TUO, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering has started with 5 Bilateral Agreement signed based on the TEMPUS EUC-MJEP 11596 Program covering cooperation with foreign universities. Thanks to these first contacts and the personnel contacts and recommendations of our partners the number of the Bilateral Agreements increases every year (Fig.1).

Fig. 1

Program Socrates/Erasmus have led to the 41 Bilateral Agreements for 2007/2008 academic year for VŠB-TUO, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.



Our partners are from whole EU – “new” and “old” members of EU (Fig. 2)

In this paper the attention is paid to the experience teachers with staff mobility and future of this activity. This activity gives contribution to the education process, to the improving of the international cooperation. This paper has been made on the base of the answers 15 teachers from the whole Europe.

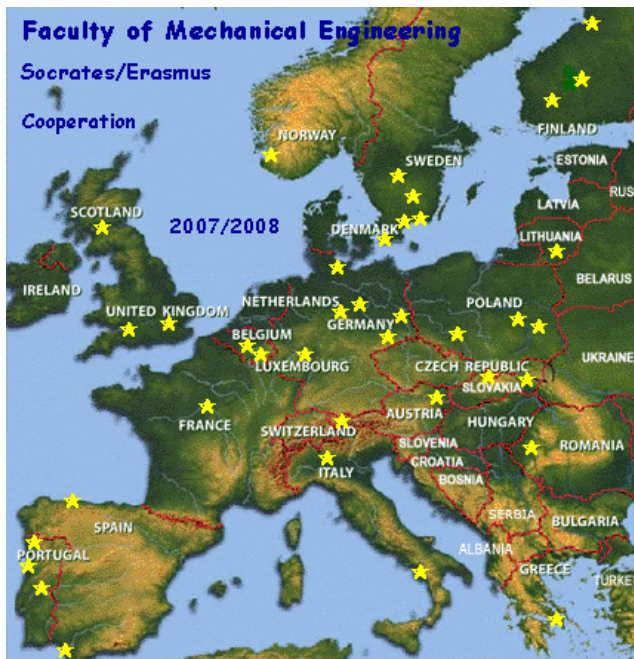


Fig. 2

### CZECH TEACHERS – STAFF MOBILITY ABROAD EVALUATION AND EXPERIENCE

The number of Czech teachers take part on staff mobility abroad has been increasing from year to year along with the number of universities, with bilateral agreements exist. The main problem on the beginning of these parts of cooperation was language restriction. In this time, the situation is changed. All addressed Czech participants of staff mobility evaluated this type of activity positively. The main positives are:

- Experience from different universities with different education culture
- Experience with foreign students
- Contact with specialists from foreign universities for possible future scientific cooperation
- Practical training with teaching in foreign language
- possibility to present their professional work, university and country
- The discovery or better knowledge in foreign country
- Possibility to visit Czech students on the course of their students study stay abroad. Usually, supervisor visits his/her Ph.D student on the course of his/her students study stay abroad.

This activity brings of course negatives too:

- It is problem to leave home university in the course of academic year.
- Financial problem (economical support from Socrates/Erasmus budget is short). It is necessary to pay part of expenditure from home university budget or from private economy. It is problem especially for young colleagues.

### FOREIGN TEACHERS – STAFF MOBILITY EVALUATION AND EXPERIENCE

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Addressed participants from several countries of EU evaluated this activity by the similar way as Czech participants.

The teacher's mobility brings:

- An opportunity for practising in foreign language
- The enlargement of the education horizon for visitor and the host
- Knowledge of foreign university, country and etc.
- Possibility of future collaboration such as common research or joint organisation of conferences
- The efficient and optimal organisation of students' mobility often depends on the personal contact.
- Personal contact and climate of confidence gives possibility for building up other types of cooperation.

The problems are the same (time, financial problems...)

### EVALUATION

From the evaluation of all addressed participants results clear contribution of the staff mobility for the professional and personal development. This activity brings a lot of interesting and important experience and information for today and future cooperation.

For successful course of staff mobility is very important:

- Good preparation of the staff mobility – the visiting teacher has to receive more information on level of students, type of study and etc.
- Visiting teacher – teaching in courses which are running at the host university (with respect to level of students). The best way is to teach small group of students. Small group gives to teacher possibility of personal contact with foreign students.
- Make staff mobility possible to young teachers or students of doctoral study program, which take part of education process
- Financial support – covering whole travelling expense is necessary.
- Support of staff mobility from the university or department management is necessary.

### CONCLUSION

The staff mobility and teachers exchange is necessary and very important area for unification and internationalization of education. This activity gives a lot of experience and knowledge to the teachers and to the students. The experience is in the professional and personal area.

Financial policy of EU should support it more. The faculty leadership should encourage and support the teaching exchange too.

In the future, bilateral exchange the teachers for longer time (one or more semesters) in normal education process would be very profitable.

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