

euinsight

THE EUROPEAN UNION & THE UNITED STATES

Cooperation in Education: Promoting Mutual Understanding, Developing Skills for the Global Economy

In June 2006, the EU and the U.S. renewed a longstanding educational partnership. Cooperative programs in higher education and vocational training deepen mutual understanding of languages, cultures, and institutions on both sides of the Atlantic while helping sharpen the cutting-edge skills necessary to compete in a globalized economy.

EU-U.S. Education Agreement

Jointly funded and managed by the European Commission, the EU's executive body, and the U.S. government, the EU-U.S. Agreement on Cooperation on Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training supports a variety of initiatives that bring Europe and America closer together through education. The eight-year agreement will increase transatlantic cooperation and understanding, and boost the continued development of the EU and the U.S. as the world's largest knowledge-based economies.

Transatlantic Degree Consortia Projects: The Atlantis Program. Supports the creation of joint or double degrees by multilateral consortia of EU and U.S. universities, focusing on post-secondary or college-level study to prepare students for work in an international context. The U.S. Department of Education and the European Commission award competitive grants under Atlantis to qualified consortia of colleges, universities, and/or vocational training institutes.

Participants in Atlantis-funded programs study both in Europe and America according to a defined curriculum with a language plan that addresses how students will be trained in the language and culture of the host country. Ultimately, students earn either a joint degree (issued jointly by two institutions) or a double degree (two degrees, one from a European institution, the other from an American institution).

The double/joint degree program allows students to earn an undergraduate/bachelors degree in considerably less time and at lower cost than would be required to obtain two separate degrees. Atlantis may be extended to the graduate level in the future.

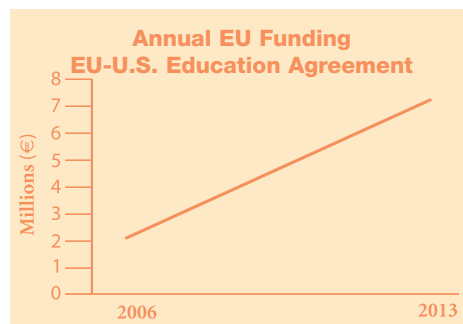
"Excellence Mobility." Provides follow-up support for further overseas study.

Policy-Oriented Measures. Addresses comparative higher education and vocational training issues, including recognition of qualifications and program accreditations at colleges, universities, and centers of vocational training in Europe and America. Projects include studies, seminars, working groups, and other initiatives focused on matters relevant to transatlantic cooperation.

2006 Initiatives.

- 7 Transatlantic Degree projects (including Economics, Chemistry, Engineering, IT, International Business and Psychology)
- 7 Policy-Oriented Measures initiatives.
- 70 European and American institutions involved €3.6 million in EU funding.

Funding. Financing of the initiative depends on matching funds from both sides of the Atlantic. The EU has allotted €45 million (roughly \$60 million) for programs under the renewed Education Agreement, in annual increments increasing progressively to €6.75 million by 2013. *Matching funding from the U.S. for the life of the eight-year program is crucial to its continued, long-term success.*



Building Ties to Strengthen Transatlantic Relations

Over the years, EU-U.S. cooperative efforts have had a remarkable impact. For students, transatlantic study abroad programs provide the opportunity to learn about another culture, become more adaptable and flexible people, and build self-confidence as they prepare to enter the global marketplace. The initiatives promote greater appreciation of the EU-U.S. partnership

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"The new agreement provides us with a stable, long-term legal framework to pursue our common objectives: to make our higher education systems more open and competitive and to promote mutual understanding between our peoples."

—Ján Figel
EU Education Commissioner

in a real and personal way as students build lasting attachments to people and places during their overseas study and residence.

Since the program's early beginnings in 1995, the transatlantic partners have funded more than 100 individual projects involving over 700 institutions, while supporting study abroad for 4,000 students. Joint curriculum development and educational "mobility" (study, research and teaching abroad) has ranged across disciplines, from international educational development and international business to environment, agriculture, engineering, and health science, among other areas of study. From 2006 to 2013, the Atlantis program will provide for over 200 projects.

EU Education Programs: Boosting Competitiveness & Strengthening the European Identity

While the EU is built on common values and commitments to democracy, human rights, and free and open economic markets, the Union takes great pride and finds strength in its diversity of people, languages, and cultures.

In the field of education, approaches and practices vary considerably from one country to another, providing a source of enrichment for all and fertile ground for innovation and creativity, but also presenting challenges in the context of an increasingly integrated and mobile Europe.

European Area of Higher Education. Against this background, the EU committed in the 1999 *Bologna Declaration* to establish a European Area of Higher Education by 2010 in order to realize “convergence” (compatibility and/or mutual recognition) of European educational frameworks and strengthen efforts to promote educational “mobility.” The *Bologna Process* has spread far beyond the EU member states, with 45 countries now participating.

Competing in the Global Economy. Like the United States, the EU places a very high priority on education, the key to competitiveness in today’s global economy and a central feature of the EU’s Lisbon Strategy—an effort to make the EU the world’s most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy.

Helping Build a Unified Europe. Education also plays an important role in European integration. EU programs make it possible for students from each of the 27 Member States to undertake post-secondary and graduate study elsewhere in the EU, strengthening ties between

the Member States and promoting a sense of European identity.

Reaching Out: Prospective EU Member States, Neighbors & the World. Looking outward, educational assistance and “mobility” are important elements of EU assistance to neighboring countries and prospective members, as well as the Balkans, Mediterranean countries, and other neighbors. EU programs also provide for trans-national educational cooperation beyond the European neighborhood.

Socrates: The European Program for Education. The Socrates program promotes the “European dimension” in education—those aspects that can supplement and provide added value to educational efforts at the Member State level—principally in the following areas: Pre-school through secondary education. Vocational education. Higher education. Adult education and other non-traditional paths. European languages (to increase worker mobility) Information and communications technologies (reflecting the EU priority on technology and innovation)

Socrates supports efforts to ensure educational opportunity for all European citizens, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or other social and economic factors.

With a budget approaching €2 billion over seven years, Socrates is a grant mechanism allowing EU citizens to study, teach, or train in another country and supporting the development of cross-border activities between educational institutions. Socrates grants can be used in 31 European countries (the 27 EU Member States plus Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, and Turkey).

Erasmus: Study Abroad within Europe.

Perhaps the most well-known EU educational initiative (and made famous in the U.S. by the movie “*L’auberge espagnole*”), Erasmus is a scholarship program for study abroad with the 31 Socrates countries. The program promotes trans-national cooperation between universities and encourages full academic recognition of studies and qualifications throughout the EU.

Named for the 15th century Dutch classical scholar Desiderius Erasmus, the program fosters learning and understanding of the host country and a strong sense of community—part of an emerging European identity—among its participants. With roughly 1.4 million students having participated to date, Erasmus has become a well-known, prestigious educational program in Europe.

Other EU Education Initiatives

Leonardo da Vinci: Vocational Training. To improve vocational training systems, boost access to training, and encourage innovation.

Jean Monnet: Study of European Integration. Named for European founding father Jean Monnet, the program promotes European integration studies at universities throughout the world, including the U.S.

Tempus: Education in the EU’s Neighborhood. Established in 1990 after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Tempus funds projects between the higher education sector in the EU and 26 neighboring countries to facilitate university modernization, mutual learning between regions and peoples, and understanding between cultures. The program focuses on curriculum development and innovation, teacher training, university management, and structural reforms in higher education, placing special emphasis on two-way “mobility” of academic and administrative staff in higher education. Tempus partner regions: the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

Erasmus Mundus

Launched in 2004, Erasmus Mundus is a European Masters program that provides scholarships to students and visiting scholars from around the world to do post-graduate study at participating European universities. Erasmus also provides for partnerships with institutions outside the EU that allow European students and scholars to study in non-EU countries.

Over five years (2004-2008), the €230 million initiative will fund:

- 110 European Masters courses.
- 6,000 grants for non-EU graduate students to study in the EU, 1,000 grants for non-EU scholars to do research.
- 4,000 grants for EU graduate students to study outside the EU, 800 grants for EU scholars to do research.
- 70 partnerships between EU and non-EU institutions of higher education.



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