

AGENCE EUROPE-EDUCATION-FORMATION FRANCE (A2E2F) 2008/2009 ERASMUS MOBILITY IN FRANCE

1- STUDENT MOBILITY

In 2008/2009, **28283** French students went abroad on study or placement mobility.

Their main destination country was **Spain** (22.4%), followed by the **United-Kingdom** (18.7%), **Germany** (12.1%), **Sweden** and **Italy** (6.7% each). From 2003, Scandinavian countries, Central and Eastern Europe have shown the strongest increase in French student mobility: +75% in **Norway**, +316% in **Lithuania**, +99% in **Czech Republic**.

The average length of mobility for studies was 7 months and 3.5 months for placements.

While the programme knew a global slowdown at the end of the **2000's** (Erasmus student mobility decreased in around 10 countries), the number of French student mobility increased significantly after 2006/2007, reaching **25942** outgoing students in 2007/2008 and **28283** in 2008/2009. These figures show a **9%** increase from 2007/2008, which is partly due to the growing number of students going on mobility for placements: in 2008/2009, **4723** students went on such mobility, which represents a **39%** increase from 2007/2008. Companies hosting French interns, are almost exclusively **small and medium-sized companies** (95.6%).

More and more institutions mutualise their needs and their means through consortia. In 2008/2009, **12 consortia**, representing **100 higher education institutions**, sent students on mobility for placements. Working through networks allows institutions to optimize the use of grants, to enhance their international visibility, to improve the quality and the management of their mobility projects.

Overall, **899** French higher education institutions signed an Erasmus charter. **Nantes** University sent the highest number of students on mobility in 2008/2009 (464 students), ahead of **Bourgogne-Dijon** University (330 students) and **Lille 2** University (328 students). The only Paris region university ranking amongst the « Top 15 » is **Nanterre** University (300 students). High schools in charge of “Brevet de Technicien Supérieur” (short-cycle degree) represented **12%** of all institutions which sent students on mobility in 2008/2009.

2- STAFF MOBILITY

In 2008/2009, **2459** staff went on **teaching mobility**. The average length was **5.52** days. This type of mobility stagnates, mainly because of the extra workload it implies for teachers (teaching hours in home country to catch up, preparation of lectures in a foreign language). Also, teachers lack recognition in their career path for such initiatives. And they receive little or no co-financing at all.

Between 2007/2008 and 2008/2009, staff **training mobility** rose significantly (**+73%**), reaching **378** outgoings. They essentially trained in higher education institutions and more rarely in companies. Job-shadowing was their main training activity.

3- CHALLENGES AHEAD

As in every participating country, the objective in France is to reach **20%** student mobility by 2020. In addition, the Minister for Higher Education and Research set the target of **every Master student** on a mobility during their curriculum.

However, the A2E2F wishes to point out the current difficulty with regards to funding mobility. In 2009/2010, for the first time, they could not satisfy all grant requests for study mobility (**80%**). This trend seems to be confirmed, as only **81%** grant requests for study were satisfied in 2010/2011. Besides, since 2007, the A2E2F has not been able to satisfy all requests for placement mobility (2007/2008: **17%**, 2008/2009: **20%**, 2009/2010: **25%** individual requests and **35%** consortia requests, 2010/2011: **31%** individual requests and **36%** consortia requests). There is a **growing number** of higher education institutions which participate in the programme. Also, French higher education is very **complex**. For instance, **high schools** in charge of short-cycle degrees are increasingly eager to organise student mobility (mainly placements).

As well, the A2E2F encourages institutions to **improve the quality** of the mobility they organise. A student will benefit more from a mobility experience which was well prepared before-hand (e.g. language skills and subject preparation to succeed in exams). Consequently, this approach should help **improve academic recognition**.

To increase Erasmus mobility in France and to improve its quality, the A2E2F carries out **information and promotion activities**. They organise and participate in meetings, information days, conferences, workshops, etc. They collaborate with the Bologna Experts. They also create **communication tools** to promote the programme (leaflets, A2E2F magazine...).

In addition, the A2E2F promotes Erasmus towards **teachers** as they are the key people within institutions to arouse enthusiasm for the programme amongst staff (administrative and teaching) and students.

Also, France **encourages consortia** to organise mobility through slightly higher funding rates.

But overall, the main challenge ahead remains the need **to overcome financial restraints** to mobility and to **achieve better recognition through** quality mobility.