


# Procedure file

Basic information	
CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	1998/0246(CNS) Procedure completed
TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006	
Amended by <a href="#">2000/0074(CNS)</a>	
Amended by <a href="#">2000/0111(CNS)</a>	
Amended by <a href="#">2002/0037(CNS)</a>	
Amended by <a href="#">2006/0240(CNS)</a>	
Subject 4.40.04 Universities, higher education	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<b>BUDG</b> Budgets		23/09/1998
		PPE <a href="#">CHRISTODOULOU Eftymios</a>	
	<b>RELA</b> External Economic Relations		29/09/1998
		UPE <a href="#">VAN BLADEL Leonie G.L.</a>	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Industry	<a href="#">2174</a>	29/04/1999
	<a href="#">Education, Youth, Culture and Sport</a>	<a href="#">2147</a>	04/12/1998

Key events			
17/07/1998	Legislative proposal published	COM(1998)0454	Summary
05/10/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/11/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
25/11/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A4-0464/1998</a>	
04/12/1998	Debate in Council	<a href="#">2147</a>	
18/12/1998	Debate in Parliament		
18/12/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0774/1998	Summary
02/02/1999	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1999)0052	Summary
29/04/1999	Act adopted by Council after consultation		

	of Parliament		
29/04/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
08/05/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

### Technical information

Procedure reference	1998/0246(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
	Amended by <a href="#">2000/0074(CNS)</a> Amended by <a href="#">2000/0111(CNS)</a> Amended by <a href="#">2002/0037(CNS)</a> Amended by <a href="#">2006/0240(CNS)</a>
Legal basis	EC before Amsterdam E 235
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/4/10483

### Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal		<a href="#">COM(1998)0454</a> , <a href="#">OJ C 270 29.08.1998, p. 0009</a>	17/07/1998	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		<a href="#">CDR0301/1998</a> <a href="#">OJ C 051 22.02.1999, p. 0086</a>	18/11/1998	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">A4-0464/1998</a> <a href="#">OJ C 098 09.04.1999, p. 0005</a>	25/11/1998	EP	
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		<a href="#">CES1442/1998</a> <a href="#">OJ C 040 15.02.1999, p. 0023</a>	02/12/1998	ESC	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0774/1998 <a href="#">OJ C 098 09.04.1999, p. 0483-0506</a>	18/12/1998	EP	Summary
Modified legislative proposal		<a href="#">COM(1999)0052</a> , <a href="#">OJ C 087 29.03.1999, p. 0102</a>	02/02/1999	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		<a href="#">COM(2005)0515</a>	18/10/2005	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		<a href="#">COM(2007)0420</a>	16/07/2007	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		<a href="#">COM(2010)0190</a>	28/04/2010	EC	Summary

### Additional information

European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>
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### Final act

[Decision 1999/311](#)  
[OJ L 120 08.05.1999, p. 0030](#) Summary

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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**OBJECTIVE:** to propose the third phase of the TEMPUS programme for the period 2000-2006. **SUBSTANCE:** the Commission proposes to launch the third phase of the TEMPUS programme, to run from 01.07.2000 to 30.06.2006. The aims of TEMPUS III are to promote, in line with the guidelines and general objectives of the Phare and Tacis programmes for economic and social reform, the development of the higher education systems in the non-associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe which are eligible for Phare and do not have access to the Community programmes SOCRATES and LEONARDO (viz. Albania, Bosnia and the Republic of Macedonia) and in the New Independent States and Mongolia by means of cooperation, which should be as balanced as possible, with partners in all Member States of the Community. These actions are open to the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe on the same footing as the G-24 States, Malta and Cyprus, on the basis of financial contributions of their own, to be determined. More precisely, TEMPUS III is intended to help the higher education systems of the partner countries to address: - issues relating to the development and reshaping of teaching syllabuses in the priority areas; - reform of higher education structures and establishments and their management; - the development of training leading to qualifications, with a view to making good the shortage of high-level skills needed for the period of economic reform, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry. The Commission is to cooperate with the competent authorities of each partner to determine the detailed objectives and priorities for TEMPUS III in the context of the national economic and social reform strategy. These priorities are laid down on the basis of the objectives of the programme (and the provisions of the annex to the proposal), as well as in accordance with: - the general objectives of the PHARE and TACIS programmes (with special reference to sectoral aspects of TACIS), - each partner country's policy on economic and social reform and education, - the need to strike an appropriate balance between the priority areas and the resources allocated to TEMPUS III. The measures provided for under TEMPUS are described in detail in the annex to the proposal. They comprise: -joint European projects (JEPs) associating universities and/or enterprises in the countries concerned with partners in the Community, -structural and complementary measures (technical assistance, seminars, studies, etc.), -individual mobility grants for teachers, trainers, university administrators, etc., -support actions. In the financial sphere, as TEMPUS is financed from the Community's overall budgetary contribution to the TACIS and PHARE partner countries, it is up to the latter to decide how the funding for education measures should be allocated. The Commission is responsible for implementing TEMPUS, assisted by an advisory committee and in close cooperation with the competent authorities of the eligible countries. It will constantly monitor the implementation of the activities under the programme (an annual report will be presented concerning TEMPUS). An interim report will be submitted before 30.04.2004, accompanied by proposals for any extension of TEMPUS after 01.07.2006. A final report is to be submitted by 30.06.2009.?

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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The Commission's proposal for the TEMPUS III programme extending university reform measures in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Mongolia from 2000 to 2006 is strongly endorsed by Robert EVANS (PES, UK) in his report adopted unanimously by the Committee. Building on the success of its predecessors, TEMPUS III will play a major role in helping to restructure the economies of PHARE and TACIS countries and Mongolia, targeting countries which do not yet have access to Community programmes such as SOCRATES and LEONARDO. The programme links universities and businesses in the EU Member States with partners in the beneficiary countries, provides grants for exchanges and technical support for teaching programmes and supports skills training. M. EVANS calls for funds to be earmarked in addition for professorships, courses in the language and culture of the host country and student exchanges and is keen to ensure full access to the programme for everyone. ?

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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In adopting the report drafted by Mr. Robert EVANS (PES, UK), the European Parliament warmly welcomed the proposal for a third phase of the trans-European co-operation scheme for higher education TEMPUS III to run for the period 2000-2006. The Parliament was, however, of the opinion that there should be a way of undertaking joint activities between TEMPUS III and other programmes with a training/education dimension. The programme should be able to facilitate the adaptation of higher education to the new socio-economic and cultural needs of the eligible countries. The Parliament also called for financial aid to be granted for: - the establishment of European 'chairs' in the eligible countries, along the lines of the Fulbright and Jean Monnet Programme scholarships; - support courses in the language and culture of the host country of the teachers, students or other staff in the educational/training sector, as well as in the language of teaching; - support courses in the minority languages and cultures of the eligible countries; support exchange programmes between students from the ethnic, linguistic and/or cultural minorities of the eligible countries.?

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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The Commission's amended proposal takes up 10 of the 15 amendments put forward by the European Parliament during its December 1998 plenary session. The amendments in question include: - within the programme of joint activities between TEMPUS III and other Community programmes or actions with an educational or training dimension, provision is made to encourage interactions and strengthening the added value of Community action, - giving TEMPUS III a new objective so that the programme facilitates the adaptation of higher education to the new socio-economic and cultural imperatives in the eligible countries, - guaranteeing the equal access to the programme of all groups of citizens. The amended proposal does not, however, incorporate the Parliament's proposal to provide for credits for the creation of European chairs in the eligible countries.?

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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**PURPOSE:** adoption of the third phase of the TEMPUS programme for the period 2000-2006. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Decision 1999/311/EC adopting the third phase of the trans-European co-operation scheme for higher education (TEMPUS III) (2000-2006).

**CONTENT:** This Decision covers the period 01.07.2000 until 30.06.2006. The aim of TEMPUS III is to promote, in line with the guidelines and

general objectives of the Phare and Tacis programmes for economic and social reform, the development of higher education systems in the eligible countries through the most balanced co-operation possible with the partners from all the Member States of the Community. The countries covered by the programme are the non-associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe eligible for economic aid under Phare, but which have not got access to LEONARDO and SOCRATES (Albania, Bosnia and FYROM) and the new independent States of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia which are eligible for Tacis. Member countries of the G-24, Cyprus and Malta, as well as the associated states of Central and Eastern Europe are also eligible on the basis of their own financial contribution which is to be determined. More specifically, TEMPUS III seeks to facilitate the adaptation of higher education to the new socio-economic and cultural needs of the eligible countries by addressing: a) issues relating to the development and reshaping of curricula in the priority areas; b) reform of higher education structures and establishments and their management; c) the development of training leading to qualifications, with a view to making good the shortage of high-level skills needed in the context of economic reform, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry; d) the contribution of higher education and training to citizenship and the strengthening of democracy. Particular attention will be given to adhering to the Community's general policy on equal opportunities for men and women. The Commission will also endeavour to ensure that no group of citizens is excluded or disadvantaged. In agreement with the competent authorities in each country, the Commission will define the detailed priorities and objectives for the role of TEMPUS III in the national strategy for economic and social reform, on the basis of the programme's objectives and the provisions set out in the Annex and in conformity in particular with: a) (i) the general objectives of the Phare programme; (ii) the general objectives of the Tacis programme, with particular reference to its sectoral aspects; b) the policy of each eligible country on economic, social and educational reforms; c) the need to strike an appropriate balance between the priority areas selected and the resources allocated to Tempus III. The precise nature of the actions envisaged under Tempus is provided in the annex of the Decision: - joint European projects linking universities and/or companies in the countries concerned with partners in the Community; - structural and/or complementary measures (technical assistance, seminars, studies..); - individual grants to teachers, trainers, university administrators, education planners, other experts in training, etc. from eligible countries or from the Community for visits to promote the quality, development and restructuring of higher education and training in the eligible countries; - support actions. On the financial front, Tempus III will be funded from the Community's global budgetary allocation to the partner countries in the framework of Tacis and Phare. The Commission will be responsible for the implementation of TEMPUS with the help of a committee of representatives from the Member States and in close co-operation with the competent authorities in the eligible countries and in the Member States. It will, furthermore, ensure the coherence and complementarity of actions undertaken with other Community actions carried out in this field (in particular the actions undertaken by the European Training Foundation). It will ensure the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the programme's activities (an annual report on TEMPUS will be presented to the European Parliament and the Council). An interim report will be presented before 30.04.2004, together with any proposals for extending or adjusting TEMPUS for the period commencing on 01.07.2006. A final report is also to be submitted no later than 30.06.2009. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 29.04.1999. The Decision is applicable from 01.07.2000.?

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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PURPOSE : to present the Annual Tempus Report for the year 2004.

CONTENT : The implementation of the Tempus programme in 2004 was guided, inter alia, by the conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation published in November 2003. The evaluation confirmed the relevance of the programme to support higher education reform and development as well as the validity of its intervention logic and management approaches. The following recommendations were particularly relevant for the implementation of the programme in 2004:

- The process of formulation of the country-specific priorities should be strengthened by means of a more structured dialogue with the educational authorities of the partner countries.
- Tempus funds should be used for what the programme does best, i.e. promoting mobility, exchanges and innovation of study programmes.
- The relevance and the impact of the programme should be actively promoted at the level of the national authorities.
- Field monitoring should be reintroduced on a selective basis.

Against this background, the main Tempus action lines in 2004 were:

- Maximising the impact of the programme through a reinforced top-down approach, a strengthened policy dialogue, and more structural measures;
- Reinforcing mobility by promoting individual mobility grants;
- Adapting and reinforcing selection and monitoring procedures;
- Better defining the role of National Tempus Offices.

Overall, the report indicates that the implementation of the programme in 2004 was guided by the results of the 2003 interim evaluation of Tempus III (2000 - 2006). Dialogue and consultation with the authorities responsible for higher education in partner countries led to reinforced national priorities, which should contribute to maximise the programme's impact on partner countries' higher education development.

Tempus has also been instrumental in supporting partner countries' efforts to put Bologna related issues high on their reform agenda. The increased support for individual mobility of higher education professionals and the introduction of structural and complementary activities, coupled with dialogue and national priorities, contributed to confirm Tempus as an instrument of choice for the implementation and formulation of partner countries' higher education policies.

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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The Commission presents its annual report on the operation of the third phase of the Tempus Programme in 2006. In that year, Tempus was funded through three external cooperation regional programmes: CARDS (Western Balkans); MEDA (Eastern and Southern Mediterranean) and Tacis (Eastern Europe and Central Asia ). The Tempus budget in 2006 amounted to ? 53.45 million broken down as follows between the three regions: Tacis: ? 18.25 million, CARDS: ? 17.2 million, MEDA: ? 18 million.

The implementation of the programme in 2006 was guided by the following priorities:

-Reinforcing the dissemination and exploitation of project results: the Commission discusses the activities undertaken under this heading, and states that, for the vast majority of people interviewed for impact studies, Tempus is seen as an essential door to the European academic world that has greatly helped building cooperation with European universities. Tempus has provided opportunities to work with more than one EU country and to strengthen regional cooperation. Tempus is the only programme that deals with all aspects of higher education, while other donors usually cover only single element of the system.

-Strengthening field monitoring activities: a total of 44 projects covering all regions were visited during the 2005-06 monitoring campaign by desk officers in DG EAC/ETF. 80 projects were visited by National Tempus Offices. The overall findings about the areas of investigation are positive despite some marginal weaknesses. Many projects are sound with good results. However, there are still a number of less successful projects. Limited involvement of wider target groups or end users which affects sustainability, lack of internal monitoring of changing needs and assumptions as well as lack of staff capacity building can be considered as examples of weaknesses. These issues have started to be addressed more intensively. The launch of field monitoring by National Tempus Offices is a positive development which provides a new opportunity to enrich the Tempus monitoring system, but also represents a challenge in terms of harmonisation of practices and overall coordination.

Consolidating the role of National Tempus Offices: the efforts to consolidate the role of National Tempus Offices (NTOs) continued in 2006, through a number of key initiatives, such as their active involvement in field monitoring activities. After the development of a strategy for the involvement of NTOs in field monitoring, and a specific training session delivered to them in October 2005, all NTOs started to monitor Tempus projects in their countries. The NTO of Tajikistan was temporarily closed down.

With regard to programme management, five selection procedures were concluded during 2006. The number of applications per selection round has remained consistently high, which means that the programme continues to attract the interest of the academic community. In particular, the number of applications for Structural and Complementary Measures is increasing and their content is more strongly focusing on horizontal issues which are of importance for the reform and modernisation of higher education in the partner countries. Globally speaking, it can be observed that the submitted projects are increasingly in line with the national priorities established by the partner countries. Almost all selected projects adhere to national priorities.

At a general level, during 2006, commitments and payments under Tempus proceeded in line with the established planning. Other financial commitments in 2006 included:

-grants to National Tempus Offices: 5 amounting to ? 0.31 million;

-grant to the European Training Foundation's Tempus Department that provides technical assistance to DG EAC: ? 0.87 million;

-conferences and seminars: ? 0.63 million.

Work on the elimination of the Tempus litigation files has progressed consistently throughout 2006. A total amount of ? 1.1 million was recovered in 2006 either through direct reimbursement or through the offsetting procedure.

Conclusion: the implementation of the Tempus programme in 2006 was guided by a number of strategic objectives which have all been satisfactorily achieved. The continuous dialogue with national authorities and their close involvement in the definition of priorities and the selection of projects ensures that funded activities are relevant to the country's needs and in line with national reform objectives. This ensures ownership by national governments and increases the impact of the programme's interventions. National Tempus Offices in the partner countries have been further reinforced and play an important role in liaising with national authorities and other stakeholders. Feedback from national authorities and the results of the field monitoring have confirmed that Tempus continues to be a highly relevant programme for assisting partner countries in reforming and modernising their higher education systems.

## TEMPUS III: Trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education, 3rd phase 2000-2006

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This evaluation report is presented pursuant to article 12 of Council decision 1999/311/EC establishing the third phase of the Tempus programme (Tempus III (2000-2006)). It puts forward the Commission's position on the main conclusions and recommendations.

Background: the first phase of Tempus, adopted in 1990 and initially covering the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), sought to contribute to socio-economic reform through cooperation between higher education institutions in the EU and in the Partner Countries. The 2nd phase of the programme extended the geographical coverage of the programme and also increased its ambition and expectation levels. Specific national priorities were introduced which complemented the original «bottom-up» approach whereby initiative rested exclusively with Universities. Two innovative aspects were then introduced to the third phase of Tempus (Tempus III) in 2000. In addition to the tried-and-tested country-specific approaches, particular emphasis was placed on the programme's capacity to encourage regional co-operation and more explicit reference was made to the need to ensure consistency and complementarity with other Community programmes, and also to create synergies with other forms of assistance to the partner countries. With the extension of Tempus III to the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, the programme also sought to promote inter-cultural dialogue and understanding as a means to secure sustainable growth, peace and stability and reinforce the intercultural and civil society dimension of the programme.

Tempus III came to an end in December 2006. The fourth phase of the programme began in 2007 and has been managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency since April 2009.

External ex-post evaluation and recommendations: the external ex-post evaluation aimed to gain more insight in the Tempus III programme, to provide conclusions and concrete recommendations on how the current phase could be managed to better address any identified weaknesses and to maximise its relevance and impact, as well as exploit examples of good practice. The evaluation report makes a series of recommendations, which are listed below together with the Commission comments:

- Recommendation 1 - Strengthen strategic programme orientation: the Commission agrees that policy dialogue can certainly be reinforced. In Tempus IV, a lot of effort has been deployed to strengthen the dialogue with ministries.
- Recommendation 2 - Improve effective synergy with Erasmus Mundus and other Community actions and encourage links with research: the Commission has undertaken a considerable effort to conceive TEMPUS IV and Erasmus Mundus in a complementary perspective. Encouraging links with research policies and programmes, and especially to the Marie Curie Actions, that aim at the

international mobility of researchers and the development of their careers, is also one of the Commission's priorities. A specific theme of activities in Tempus IV is to support the development of the knowledge triangle in partner countries and a study has just been launched to take stock of doctoral studies in neighbouring countries, which includes also elements linked to research policies and programmes. In fact, the recommendation regarding complementarity should not be limited to Erasmus Mundus and Research but should also cover the other bilateral support in higher education that the Commission is making available in many partner countries through the Delegations mainly (budget support, sector programme). Linking existing regional initiatives to country based policy dialogue in the area of education should be part of the recommendation.

- Recommendation 3 - Reconsider level of funding in view of TEMPUS objectives: the Commission recalls that individual project budgets have increased in TEMPUS IV. It may be useful to investigate whether all the project funds have been spent and to eventually reconsider the individual project budgets in the light of future financial perspectives for the programme. It would also be important to reflect on the idea that increased funding could also be considered at the level of all involved regions in order to avoid large imbalances between countries (such as the Russian Federation) and regions (for instance the Mediterranean countries).
- Recommendation 4 - Enrich quality of project proposals: over recent years, the Commission has been investing heavily in the training of national training officers (NTOs) and national contact points (NCPs).
- Recommendation 5 - Improve the effectiveness of field monitoring: an updated field monitoring approach has been developed for Tempus IV. Three objectives of monitoring have been defined: preventative (early stages of project), advisory (mid-term) and control (ex-post). Quantitative targets have been fixed with a strong accent on the preventative function. In addition to these instruments, Result Oriented Monitoring visits are also undertaken to projects in many of the countries.
- Recommendation 6 - Give greater support to the NCPs in New Member States: the most important actors in the new Member States, in terms of sharing their experience of recent beneficiaries of the programme, are the universities. Considering funding opportunities for the NCPs, who are the Information Points in the Member States, is not possible.
- Recommendation 7 - Better define the involvement of the EU Delegations to improve the (structural) dialogue with the national authorities on higher education: the involvement of the EU Delegations is probably the area where there has been the most improvement over the last years. They are the prime interlocutor for the contacts with Ministries and are also involved in the group of Higher Education Reform Experts and are associated to their activities.
- Recommendation 8 - Continuation of TEMPUS-like projects after accession to the EU: the Commission is investing many efforts in preparing the candidate countries for their participation in the Lifelong Learning programme.
- Recommendation 9 - More emphasis on best practices ? information on linkages with the labour market and civil society: University-enterprise cooperation is one of the priority themes under Tempus IV. More and more projects are taking place in this area and the involvement of business is encouraged in the call for proposals (multi-actor partnerships).
- Recommendation 10 - Give more priority to management reform projects: governance reform is one of the explicit priority themes under Tempus IV and more and more projects are tackling this issue. In 2010, three policy seminars will take place in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Morocco, engaging experts and policy makers in discussions on how to make university governance more transparent and efficient.
- Recommendation 11 - Give more attention to accessibility (equal opportunities) of the projects: equal opportunities are mentioned explicitly as a quality criterion in the Tempus IV call for proposals and can be mentioned more clearly during the Tempus Information Days.
- Recommendation 12 - Support additional ambitions of projects such as in the case of joint degrees or double diplomas: the Commission will explore the kind of additional ambitions and investigate the problems that projects might encounter.
- Recommendation 13 - Improve both dissemination and use of project results: dissemination is a quality criterion for the assessment of proposals and is also a major point of consideration during project monitoring. A lot has been done in this area in recent years. Thematic studies on university-enterprise cooperation, quality assurance and governance have been carried out and followed up by thematic seminars with a wide range of stakeholders attending.

Conclusion: the TEMPUS Programme remains highly relevant with respect to its main objective of promoting reform and modernisation of higher education at institutional level. The activities have at various levels contributed to reforms that otherwise would probably not have been carried out, or gained momentum at a much slower pace. At the same time it is clear that in many countries further progress in reforming the higher education sector is still needed and that important challenges in reforming higher education structures are still ahead or have just started. Tempus represents, for quite a number of partner countries, the sole window for cooperation with other institutions in other countries and it is the only working cooperation programme that the EU (and Member States) can offer to some of the countries.

The originality and the success of the programme lies very much in the "bottom-up", demand driven approach where the higher education institutions undertake their own initiatives within a call for proposals with a large framework of possibilities, as well as the strong focus on institutional cooperation. The high level of people-to-people contact has helped to promote understanding between and rapprochement of cultures. These characteristics should be kept. Tempus, through its multilateral nature, the project approach and its management mechanisms, has proven to be a very cost-effective policy instrument, in particular compared to other classical technical assistance interventions.

Lastly, the Commission notes that Tempus is an identifiable and quality brand within the partner countries. It is also a highly respected programme within the EU and the Member States institutions. The Commission could consider the possibility of increasing the funding for all the regions covered by the programme as far as the financial framework permits and without prejudice of other cooperation priorities, in order to fully support the very ambitious objectives and challenges in higher education and the significant developments underway in the international academic community.