University Networks as a Framework for Credit Mobility

HERE Study Visit, 12 June 2015

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The CG in a nutshell

- A network of compatible institutions
- Geographical and cultural common roots
- Regional importance and collaboration
- Research-based teaching
- Working groups on central issues
- Project involvement on central topics
Network of 38 European Universities

4 main characteristics:
- high quality research universities
- long-established
- in university-dominated cities
- multi-disciplinary, comprehensive

(membership by invitation only)
Coimbra Group Members

Austria: Graz
Belgium: Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve
Czech Republic: Prague
Denmark: Aarhus
Estonia: Tartu
Finland: Åbo, Turku
France: Lyon, Montpellier, Poitiers
Germany: Göttingen, Heidelberg, Jena, Würzburg
Hungary: Budapest
Ireland: NUI Galway, Dublin University Trinity College
Italy: Bologna, Padova, Pavia, Siena
Lithuania: Vilnius
Norway: Bergen
Poland: Kraków
Portugal: Coimbra
Romania: Iași
Russia: St Petersburg
Spain: Barcelona, Granada, Salamanca
Sweden: Uppsala
Switzerland: Genève
The Netherlands: Groningen, Leiden
Turkey: Istanbul
United Kingdom: Bristol, Edinburgh
From the Coimbra Group
Mission Statement

The Coimbra Group is committed to the promotion of academic collaboration between its members at three levels:

- mutual exchange of experience
- development of best practice
- influencing European policy

As experienced stakeholders we receive early first-hand notice of news at the European Commission, easy access to those who run the programmes, and our critical mass places us as an important stakeholder, hence provides potential influence on policy.
Coimbra Group in Practice

- **General Assembly** (all rectors)
  1 meeting/year at the Annual Conference

- **Executive Board** (8 elected members)
  1 meeting/month

- **Rectors’ Advisory Group** (7 members)
  2 meetings/year with the Executive Board, and **Rectors’ meeting** (all rectors) one meeting/year plus policy seminars once a year

- **Working Groups** (11) meet several times a year; ensure grassroots level activities and transversal approaches
Coimbra Group Origins

Created as a network of universities with similar profiles and similar challenges (strong impact on region, historical buildings, academic traditions, ...)

- 1985 Louvain-la-Neuve & Leuven invite potential network members
- 1986 first General Assembly in Coimbra (19 members)

... next General Assembly in Poitiers, 7-10 June 2016 (38 members)

CG exchanges before the Erasmus Programme and still very active in Erasmus+ mobility

- Today about 16.3 % off all Erasmus students are from or go to a CG university, representing 1.1% of HEIs

CG strongly represented in Erasmus Mundus master programmes

- 40 % of all Erasmus Mundus master courses have one or more CG Universities as partner(s)
Coimbra Group Mobility

Contact net of international relations offices, most developed as the CG developed. Student mobility started before there were credits, with mutual academic agreements.

Share of Erasmus students has been ± 20 per cent, now with more HEIs participating around 16 per cent of total.

2013-2014: 35,930 students, i.e. 16.3% of the estimated total Erasmus study mobility = one Erasmus student in six “sees” a CG university.
CG Mobility in Practice

- added value of a network for mobility for students as well as for researchers
- trusted and well known partners, regardless of discipline (STEM, Humanities, Life Sciences, etc.)
- easy access to the right people, be they international relations people or research support officers
- mobility facilitated before there were and regardless of credits, e.g. CG SEN (= student exchange network, ‘free movers’) and doctorates
Intra-Group study mobility

3488 students in 2013-14, i.e. 18.4% of outgoing

CG Us total outgoing mobility (2013-14) showing intra group mobility (red part) percentages show the relative amount of the red part
Distribution of mobility over the cycles

• with respect to the previous (2012-2013) survey:
  – study mobility: “pre-Bologna” component decreased by 18% which mostly went to “first cycle”
  – placement mobility: “first cycle” decreased by 9%, which mostly went to “second cycle” (+3.9%) and “one-tier long” (+5.1%)

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Comparison with Erasmus area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>level of studies</th>
<th>Erasmus area 2012-13</th>
<th>Coimbra Group 2013-14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>study</td>
<td>placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctorate</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- CG Universities privilege placement mobility at MA level (+24%)  
- Study mobility shows involvement at MA level larger than Erasmus area 

LF Donà dalle Rose, Università di Padova, June 2015
Common Cultural Roots

- Academic traditions
- Regional impact and collaboration
- Entrepreneurial traditions
- International orientation
- Historical collections – scientific, cultural
- General outreach policies – buildings, gardens, museums, libraries, collections
Strategic Alliances

- by type of institution, public or private
- by subject area according to project demands, locally, regionally, nationally, e.g. technology, archaeology ...
- to promote entrepreneurship in research and education, transferable skills courses, encourage spin-offs, start-ups
- to ensure mobility, horizontal and vertical
- working groups for the setting up of projects of common interest, joint degrees, i.e. the special grassroots that ensure a transversal approach
- to improve institutional environment and outreach.
“It Begins at Home”

Traditions are many things – and so is collaboration

- Creation and preservation of knowledge – e.g. museums, botanic gardens and other collections; research centres
- Transmission of knowledge and experience, libraries, IT centres, “clouds”, doctorates
- Buildings, of architectural and/or historical interest – open to the public or not (for visits, for practical use)
- Student clubs/unions/nations/fraternities/etc.
- Choirs and orchestras
- Local alliances, collaborative projects, long-standing partnerships, alumni, “friends of …”, etc.
- And never forget that it all hinges on people.
Thank you for your attention.

For more information: www.coimbra-group.eu