

*REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UTRECHT NETWORK
Helsinki
4 and 5 May 2001*

Participants:

Utrecht Network

Poul Bonde (Aarhus), Kaja Noergaard Christensen (Aarhus), Patricia de Clopper (Antwerpen), Gérald Zimmermann (Basel), Judith Eve (Belfast), Bjorn Einar Aas (Bergen), Stian Hoffslet Thowsen (Bergen), Monika Sprung (Bochum), Gianni Galloni (Bologna), Giovanna Filippini (Bologna), Don Sparling (Brno), Veronika Barankova (Brno), Andras Benczur (Budapest), Ana Ferreira (Coimbra), Marita Foster (Cork), Sabine Pendl (Graz), Diana Afrashteh (Graz), Markus Laitinen (Helsinki), Michael Wintle (Hull), Mirosław Klimkiewicz (Kraków), Svend Poller (Leipzig), Ulrike Renker (Leipzig), Béatrice Delpouve (Lille), Katja Cerjak (Ljubljana), Jenny Hällén Hedberg (Lund), Renée Valeri (Lund), Fernando de Hipolito (Madrid), Jean Killick (Malta), Karitas Kvaran (Reykjavik), Björg Eysteinsdóttir (Reykjavik), Michèle Debay (Strasbourg I), Rebecca Rogers (Strasbourg II), Danièle Alexandre (Strasbourg III), Elena Koutousi (Thessaloniki), Ioanna Georgiadou (Thessaloniki), Raimonda Markeviciene (Vilnius University), Jeroen Torenbeek (Utrecht, chairman) Bettina Nelemans (Utrecht, minutes).

Observers

Joel Glassman (University of Missouri at St Louis), Pamyła Yates (University of Missouri at St Louis).

Friday, 4 May

1. *Welcome and practical matters*

The Vice-Rector of the University of Helsinki, Thomas Wilhelmsson, addresses the members of the Utrecht Network. He is very pleased that this year the Utrecht Network is meeting in Helsinki. The number of outgoing and incoming exchange students at Helsinki is increasing, and the Utrecht Network is playing an important role in student mobility. The Vice-Rector briefly goes into the history of the University of Helsinki, and explains that Turku used to be the capital of Finland, and was home to this university for many years. The University of Helsinki has existed in two cities and three countries (Finland, Sweden and Russia). This explains why the institution is bilingual and international. All subjects are taught in Finnish and Swedish. Thomas Wilhelmsson wishes everyone a successful meeting.

Jeroen Torenbeek welcomes everybody to the annual meeting of the Utrecht Network 2001, this year organised by the University of Helsinki. The representatives of the two new members, Belfast and Budapest, are welcomed in particular. Joel Glassman and Pamyła Yates will attend the meeting as observers. The difference between members and observers is that observers are not entitled to vote. All participants briefly introduce themselves. Jeroen announces the steering committee election. Bjorn Einar Aas has finished his three-year term, and has decided to be available for another term. Should anyone be interested in joining the steering committee too, they must inform Jeroen by the end of the first meeting day. The agenda is set for the meeting. The minutes of the Malta meeting (April 2000) are accepted.

2. *State of the Art presentation*

Bettina Nelemans gives a presentation on what the Utrecht Network has achieved in the past few years and what it is currently involved in. The complete text is included in these minutes as an Appendix (Appendix 1).

3. *Expansion of the Utrecht Network*

The steering committee presents The Proposal for Limited Expansion Part II (Part I appeared in 1995). It should be noted that this Proposal is meant as a basis for discussion, and its contents should by no means be regarded as prescriptive. The proposals that are laid down in the document are based on the idea that the Utrecht Network must keep its European identity and should not become too big ('its members must fit into one coach'). The participants are invited to vent their ideas. When Markus Laitinen is wondering why it is proposed that Latvia could join the Network as early as 2002 and Estonia not until 2006, Jeroen explains that

by drawing up a list with dates and countries, the steering committee only intended to come up with some suggestions. Markus is in favour of moving Estonia up the list and place it before Latvia.

Béatrice Delpouve is worried about the large number of Utrecht Network students going to Madrid each year, and wonders if perhaps we need another Spanish member. Fernando de Hipolito assures Béatrice that Madrid is still able to cope with the flow of incoming students.

Mirosław Klimkiewicz stresses the importance of East-West balance. Kraków has a number of partners (such as Bratislava) that it is willing to work with in the context of the Utrecht Network. Gianni adds that North-South balance is essential, too.

Svend Poller would like to know if we want to expand at all, or whether we should give preference to integration of new members and the like. Personally, Svend is in favour of the latter. Sabine Pendl agrees that quality is more important than quantity and we can always wait for one or two years until we seek further expansion. Jeroen emphasises that there is no need to expand, if it turns out that most people are against it. Raimonda Markeviciene believes that we ought to make sure that eventually student flows reach some state of equilibrium. There is too much of an imbalance right now. In response to that, Rebecca Rogers asks UK and Irish universities if they believe an extra partner in the UK is needed. Marita Foster states that to Cork, bilateral partnerships are more important than Utrecht Network links, in terms of student mobility. Michael Wintle of Hull is sorry that for political reasons his university is not participating in MAUI and AEN exchange and he therefore believes that in that respect Hull isn't a very good partner. To Malta exchange within Europe is now becoming more important than it was.

It is becoming clear that if there is to be expansion, the process should not take place too fast. Attention has to be paid to East-West balances, integration of new members, and to a better overall balance in the student mobility programme. When Jeroen says that the rectors and presidents have asked the steering committee to prepare an outline on the expansion of the Network, Judith Eve remarks that we should not let ourselves be guided by the university leadership too much. Poul focuses the discussion on what the need for networking really is. Why is networking profitable? What is the identity of the Utrecht Network? He goes on to say that we are a European network and Poul therefore prefers to expand to the Baltics or the Balkan, rather than to yet another university in the UK.

If we decide to expand the following five countries have to be included in the list: Bulgaria, Rumania, Slovakia, Estonia and Latvia. Since the majority are in favour of slow expansion or no expansion at all, it is clear that if we decide to expand we should not include more than one university per year. Right now, it is obvious that there is no expansion in 2001, since Strathclyde has said it is not interested in Utrecht Network membership, or at least not for the moment. In 2002 we might invite the best institution in Estonia to join the Utrecht Network. A year later a university in the Slovak Republic (Bratislava?) could become a member. If the hospitality scheme that we are trying to set up turns out to be successful, we can then expand to the remaining countries on the list.

4. Hospitality Scheme and Utrecht Network Summer School

At the rectors' and presidents' meeting in Kraków it was decided that east-west mobility must be stimulated. Before the Helsinki meeting then, a draft proposal was circulated, describing a twofold approach: introducing a Utrecht Network hospitality fund and a Utrecht Network summer school. Bettina presents the outline of the proposal.

- Hospitality scheme

The idea is that Utrecht Network institutions in the west contribute a given amount (for example € 150 per month) to incoming students from partner universities in the east. If necessary, the Utrecht Network can then add a maximum of € 50 per month per student. The student would have to cover the remaining costs. The hospitality scheme must, above all, be a flexible scheme, allowing individual institutions to set their own rules and decide how much they wish to contribute.

Poul Bonde thinks this is an excellent idea. Only last week, Aarhus decided to set up a system for top-up grants for incoming students. Bjorn Einar says that as yet there are hardly any students from Eastern Europe in Bergen, so he very much welcomes the proposal. Hull has funds available, says Michael, but the University does already have a number of schemes for incoming students. The same goes for Malta, which is unable to contribute to the Utrecht Network scheme since it is already spending funds on incoming students in different programmes. Coimbra has a grant system too, for students from Poland. The faculties pay for students'

accommodation. Rebecca Rogers remarks that only one or two students can be financed by Strasbourg II, to which Bettina replies that it is really up to each individual university to decide how much money can be earmarked. Markus Laitinen is interested to know how and when Utrecht Network funds will be transferred. Bettina suggests to keep the system as simple as possible and not make payments until the end of the year when it is clear how many students have actually made use of the programme. Raimonda Markeviciene wonders if it is necessary to differentiate per country. Students, after all, receive different grants in different countries, and some may need more than others. As for the financial details with regard to Utrecht Network contributions, Poul says that the steering committee has the legal right to decide on how much is to be donated and in what way.

Jeroen concludes by saying that the Utrecht Network hospitality fund should be characterised by flexibility (respecting different standards of living in sending and receiving countries. It is not likely that we will be able to start as early as September 2001, but September 2002 should be feasible. The overall response is positive. The steering committee will come up with a more detailed plan. Katja Cerjak will collect data on the basis of which a more detailed proposal can be made. Members are invited to come up with selection criteria. Selection should preferably take place at the sending institution, but the receiving end has the right to accept or reject.

- Utrecht Network summer school

Setting up a Utrecht Network summer school organised and hosted by a member in Central Europe will stimulate intra-Utrecht Network-mobility. The organiser will receive a minimum of € 5,000 and a maximum of € 10,000 out of the Utrecht Network budget to help finance the course. Poul Bonde is very much in favour of launching a Utrecht Network summer school. He says this is something that should have been done some years ago already.

Organisation and finances

Michael believes the course should last for three to four weeks and must be held in July - August. Rebecca asks if the school will be rotating. Jeroen explains that the idea is that each year one university sets up a course, so that after five years, there may be as many as five Utrecht Network summer schools. There has to be sustainability in the sense that each summer school should last more than one year. Sabine fears that there may not be enough students to attend the course if there are no grants. Jeroen says that fees should be waived, so that Utrecht Network students will only need to pay housing and subsistence. Don Sparling thinks that Utrecht Network subsidy may not be enough to cover the costs, especially if tuition fees will have to be waived. Another problem is that many teachers do research in summer, so they will hardly have the time to teach.

subject matter and credits

Judith asks if credits are awarded, to which Jeroen responds that the course should be credit awarding, and that it is up to the home university of the student to accept these credits. The topic of the summer school should not be too specific, since large numbers of students can only be attracted if the subject area is rather general. In one way or another the subject of the course will have to be related to the new Europe. Katja wonders if we have to start from scratch or whether use can be made of courses which are already in existence, such as language courses. Danièle Alexandre says she thinks that a language and culture course is too narrow.

teaching staff and student target group

The summer school should attract a reasonably large number of students. Svend proposes to include MAUI students as well, and not just confine the target group to Europe. Everyone supports this idea. The course must be offered to international as well as local students.

Béatrice stresses the importance of involving as much Utrecht Network staff as possible. Danièle thinks it is good to involve teachers from Western Europe, but Katja Cerjak on the other hand is scared that bringing in teachers from the West may mean that the Central European identity is easily lost. Another problem that is signalled by Katja is that in the summer there are hardly any local students. Béatrice states that in normal mobility too, it is difficult for students to mix. Therefore it would be good if we could mix the teachers.

Michael agrees that it is not a bad thing to bring in foreign teachers, as long as there is plenty of local teaching staff. According to Gianni students need not attend a summer school in order to meet local students. Also, he thinks the idea of having a summer school that is partly taught by foreign teachers is imperialistic. In response to that, Jeroen says that the involvement of foreign teaching staff is not done

because the local staff is thought to be inferior. The prime responsibility for the organisation of the course lies with the host. However, foreign teaching staff can be used to fill certain gaps (if there are any).

Jeroen concludes by saying that even if there are still a number of obstacles to be overcome, we will go ahead. The steering committee will, together with two colleagues from Central Europe, work out the details. The project will last for three years. Its main aim is to attract students from the Utrecht Network and associated consortia, thereby raising the profile of the universities in Central Europe. The first university to set up a summer school will have to come up with a business plan.

The topic of the summer school is then discussed again on Saturday.

On behalf of the Utrecht Network members in Central Europe, Don Sparling is saying that maybe it is not such a good idea after all to set up a Utrecht Network summer school. Don explains that the situation in the east is rather different from the west. There are summer schools already and the actual costs of these courses are considerably larger than Utrecht Network support can ever be. Another thing is that in Brno for example, courses are run by a separate unit. The idea is appreciated though. Perhaps the members in Central Europe ought to be more active in other ways. They may send a representative to the next steering committee meeting to discuss matters further. Jeroen is mentioning the imbalance in student flows between east and west again. The steering committee and individual members are invited to come up with creative ideas which will definitely be taken on board if possible.

5. Student Mobility within the Utrecht Network

Student mobility was, and to an extent still is, the prime activity of the Utrecht Network. Mobility hasn't been discussed at Utrecht Network meetings for a number of years, since everything was running smoothly. There are now some reasons for putting student mobility back on the agenda: the introduction of the bachelors/masters system in Europe and problems with regard to the organisation of student placements within the Utrecht Network.

The statistics show that the multilateral and multidisciplinary approach of the Utrecht Network still works. Each year at least 700 students are exchanged. The main disciplines of students exchanged through the Utrecht Network are languages, law and social sciences. It is true that there are imbalances between institutions, but these do not always have to be a problem. However, with the start of the Socrates programme in 1997, the so-called bilateral agreements were introduced. Different Utrecht Network institutions now have different ways of organising their mobility. Some universities issue agreements at central level only, others have organised student exchange at faculty level and there are institutions that have a combined central/decentral approach. This sometimes leads to problems when a central office of one member is told by an international office at a partner institution that they can no longer exchange students in certain fields, since no agreements have been concluded. This may result in nasty situations, when students have been told that they can choose for any discipline, whereas in fact only a very limited number of fields are available for purely bureaucratic reasons. Universities that strongly adhere to paper agreements may cause problems when students in different fields wish to study at each other's universities. Monika Sprung is glad that the issue is raised. The Student Mobility Task Force hasn't been very active for a while and it is good to hear about these problems. Monika believes that within the Utrecht Network we should not stick to Socrates regulations too much. Gianni explains that in 1997 bilateral agreements were extremely important in Bologna, but now there is a new head of the Int'l Office this has changed, fortunately. There is more flexibility these days. Gérald Zimmermann agrees that Utrecht Network flexibility is an asset. Bilateral agreements often don't fit students' wishes. Bjorn Einar is even of the opinion that these agreements can be like straitjackets, so therefore he is more in favour of framework type of agreements. There is no way Bergen and any other university abroad can exchange students of Norwegian on a bilateral basis, since no student will want to study Norwegian outside Norway. Madrid too is in favour of differentiating between bilateral agreements and Utrecht Network framework agreements. Rebecca asks for a clear statement on how we operate. Flexibility is fine with her. Jeroen finishes by saying that it looks like no one is against flexibility. This afternoon one of the working groups will be dealing with student mobility.

6. Working Groups

a) Bachelors/Masters - Bjorn Einar Aas

Among the conclusions of discussions on this topic are that the Network has to be present at meetings like

EAU (European Association of Universities, formerly known as CRE) in order to follow what is going on. Also, we should exchange experience on issues like credit transfer and reshaping of the curriculum.

b) Joint and Double Degrees - Poul Bonde

International offices can play a pro-active role in setting up joint and double degree programmes, one of the advantages of which is the sharing of resources. There are only few experiences, and Utrecht Network international offices might profit from knowing details and results of future programmes involving partners.

c) Summer school - Gianni Galloni

An update is needed on summer courses that are organised by Utrecht Network institutions. A selection of these can then perhaps be adjusted and transformed into a Utrecht Network interdisciplinary summer school. A problem with summer schools is that they need a lot of time and effort to prepare, and next year the course may be dissolved. Also, a number of students (German students for example) cannot get credits for taking part in summer courses.

d) Internships - Rebecca Rogers

We should try and produce a catalogue of internship possibilities by this time next year. Placements inside and outside our universities can be advertised on the website and via e-mail. Guidelines are needed for finding internships in partner countries (Who does what? What do students need in terms of residence permit, insurance? etc). Internships may be offered in combination with a study period (Socrates). We can use international student organisations as they often have experience in arranging placements.

e) Student mobility - Sabine Pendl

Despite the impressive numbers of students that are exchanged within the Network each year, there are problems regarding the availability of placements. Graz is willing to prepare a chart with information on the accessibility of fields of study and the number of places that are available per partner institution. Certain subject areas can then also be recommended. The chart will have to create more transparency with regard to the possibilities for students to study at a Utrecht Network member university. Information on the extent to which universities have to stick to bilateral agreements will be included. The chart should indicate a certain commitment on the part of the institutions and should therefore be signed by the contact persons.

f) Hospitality fund - Svend Poller

Now that we have decided to set up a hospitality scheme for students from Central Europe we need more information on the national grant systems in Central Europe and on the standard of living in Western Europe. We can either decide to operate on a needs basis or on a performance basis. Other details that will have to be worked out are: the willingness of receiving institutions to allocate grants; number of places that are available, in what subject areas and at what level; procedures for selection of students (do sending or receiving universities select?). Perhaps a special Task Force is needed to draw up an outline and supervise the scheme while it's running. Jeroen and Bjorn Einar remark that the steering committee together with Central European members will have to be responsible for this new initiative. Katja Cerjak will collect data before the next meeting. One or two members from Central Europe will be invited to take part in the next steering committee meeting.

7. *Task Forces and interest groups*

- Student mobility: the group has not met in the past year, so apparently there is no longer a need for this task force. It is dissolved. Graz will prepare charts giving detailed information on member institutions for exchange students.
- Internships: Co-ordinator: Strasbourg. Members: Belfast, Coimbra, Helsinki, Lille, Madrid.
- Summer School: Co-ordinator: Bologna. Members: Antwerpen, Bochum, Leipzig, Ljubljana, Strasbourg, Thessaloniki.
- USA: Co-ordinator: Antwerpen. Members: Bochum, Lund, Reykjavik, Strasbourg.
- Australia: Co-ordinator: Lille. Members: Bergen, Bochum, Leipzig, Lille.
- Latin America - interest group: This group is asked to set up a proposal for a joint programme or a degree programme within a time frame of six months. The group will explore the possibilities to strengthen Utrecht Network links (and notably those of Latin America centres) with Latin America. Since the Commission is about to launch a new programme for collaboration with Latin America, Patricia de Clopper is wondering if we can find a consortium over there that is willing to strengthen contacts with

the European Union. Perhaps an inventory can be made listing all the existing contact with universities in Latin America. Co-ordinator of the interest group: Aarhus. Members: Antwerp, Bologna, Brno, Helsinki, Hull, Lund, Reykjavik, Strasbourg III, Utrecht.

- Asia - interest group: The aim is to exchange information on programmes for co-operation with Asia such as the ones mentioned by Jenny. Co-ordinator: Lund. Members: Aarhus, Bologna, Lille, Hull, Strasbourg III, Utrecht.

Saturday, 5 May

8. EU - US co-operation

Renée Valeri gives a historical overview of student exchange between MAUI and the Utrecht Network between 1995 and 2002. It is obvious that in most years students from Europe studying in the US outnumbered the American students studying in Europe. There are also differences between institutions: some universities are only receiving, others are merely sending. During a TF meeting on Thursday, the idea was raised to establish ground rules to ensure a better balance between receiving and sending.

In his short presentation Joel Glassman takes the opportunity for thanking the network again for inviting him and Pamyla Yates to the annual meeting. All MAUI directors send their regards to the Utrecht Network members. Christian Civardi (Strasbourg II) is currently teaching at UMSL and is sending his regards too. Joel informs the Utrecht Network members that recently a staff member from Complutense also spent a semester teaching at UMSL. Faculty exchange can be an enormously good way of stimulating student interest in studying abroad. The MAUI schools are very keen on extending the co-operation between MAUI and the Utrecht Network. When Rebecca Rogers is asking Joel if it bothers the MAUI schools that there are imbalances, Joel replies that he is very much in favour of increasing the number of American students going to Europe rather than to decrease the number of Europeans coming to the US. Therefore there is definitely an interest on the American side in summer schools offered by Utrecht Network universities. Two summer places would then equal one semester placement. Internships could also be attractive options for his students. Pamyla Yates, responsible for the clearinghouse on behalf of the MAUI schools, thanks Renée Valeri for all the work that she's done with regard to the statistical overview of the exchange. Pamyla attended the TF meeting that Renée was referring to, and has come to the conclusion that it is indeed important to put more effort into academic advising during the pre-placement process. Although the questionnaires that universities complete each year prior to the start of the new exchange cycle are very important, they do not always give sufficient information at subject level. Academic co-ordinators of the home institutions should be more intensively involved in preparing the student application. These co-ordinators can make use of the website and of course catalogues.

Renée Valeri is wondering if the nomination deadline can be moved to 1 February instead of early March. Since this would pose too many problems for a number of universities, the proposal is not accepted. Béatrice asks if it is possible to shorten the clearinghouse process. Bettina replies that it now took about five weeks from the moment the nominations were sent to the two co-ordinating institutions. Utrecht and St Louis will do their best to bring this period back to three weeks next year. Patricia de Clopper would like to have two rounds of applications per year. As a kind of compromise Pamyla and Bettina will aim to fill all the vacant places in the course of the year. This can only be done if they are notified of all withdrawals.

9. Australia

Béatrice Delpouve gives a presentation on the collaboration between the Utrecht Network and AEN. The first students were exchanged in January 2001. 15 students were sent to Australia, 15 students were received in Europe. In the second round 31 European students have been placed at AEN institutions and 25 Australians are coming to Europe for a study abroad period. At present 7 Australian and 12 European universities are participating. All students that came first on the list were placed at their first options. Edith Cowan created more places in order to accommodate as many Utrecht Network students as possible. Due to the fact that Australian and European academic years start at different times of the year, the so-called semester approach has been adopted. For the exchange it is easier to have one-semester-exchanges only. However, if students prefer to go for a full year, Lille will certainly do its best to arrange this. Béatrice is proposing to combine the

MAUI and Australia questionnaires in order to save time. They contain similar information anyway. Finally, Béatrice informs the Utrecht Network members that a conference is to be held in Perth in September 2002. John Wood and Vincent Cordonnier are the co-ordinators. Australian and European researchers will be invited.

10. EU-China programme

Jenny gives an update on what is going on in the EU-China programme. The scheme has now entered its final year and will come to an end on 31 December. An impact assessment will be carried out in order to determine what the influence of the programme has been on European Studies in China. Jenny mentions the junior alumni association, workshops and familiarisation programmes, all of which are elements of the EU-China programme. A CD-ROM and a booklet will appear soon. In July there will be a workshop on European Studies in Beijing. Some striking data: the UK has turned out to be the most popular country with Chinese scholars, followed by Germany and France. Among the top 10 European universities is Strasbourg III (number 8). A total of 200 institutions in Europe and about 100 institutions in China have participated in the programme. Beijing is the university that was most actively involved and where most activities took place. A total of 439 Chinese scholars have come to Europe. Most scholars came to Europe on six-months fellowships. By now it can be said that the programme has run smoothly, even though at the beginning there were certain teething troubles. Lund has been very happy to run the programme on behalf of the Utrecht Network.

Jenny says that now three new programmes for co-operation with Asia are in the pipeline:

- a. EU-China 2000 scholarship programme
- b. European Studies Programme
- c. EU-Asia Link, governed by the European Commission and involving a number of countries in Asia.

Strasbourg III is informed about this scheme and will keep other members posted.

None of the three programmes have been officially announced yet, even though December is thought to be the deadline. DGI (External Relations) will be the Directorate General that is directly responsible for the new projects.

Poul Bonde remarks that Aarhus is very much interested in these programmes. If there is to be an Asia Task Force, Aarhus will certainly be a member. Poul draws people's attention to a programme for collaboration with Latin America that is now coming up. Aarhus would be very much interested in setting up a joint programme in Latin American studies with other Utrecht Network institutions.

On behalf of the Utrecht Network, Michael Wintle wishes to pay tribute to Jenny Hällén, Nina Brand and Roger Greatrex since they have made the programme so successful. Michael himself was involved in a six-month fellowship right at the beginning when everything was still rather disorderly. However, he was very impressed by the familiarisation programme in Lille that he attended.

11. Budgetary matters

Expenditure 2000

The income for 2000 was $24 \times \text{€ } 2,000 = \text{€ } 48,000$. Expenses consisted of the annual meeting in Malta (€ 21,422) and Task Forces, Staff Mobility, Web site and Leipzig Information Market (€ 14943,24).

On 31 December 2000 the Utrecht Network had built up a total reserve of € 62,198. The income and expenditure statement 1999 and 2000 is included as an Appendix (Appendix 2).

Expenditure 2001

A draft budget for the year 2001 is presented to the members and accepted. Since we have two new members, this year's income will be $26 \times \text{€ } 2,000 = \text{€ } 52,000$ Euro's. The money is earmarked for four main items: the annual meeting; staff mobility; task forces; and communication/new initiatives. Money unspent will automatically go into the reserve fund.

Financial audit.

In March 2001 Markus Laitinen visited the TAO in Utrecht in his capacity as financial auditor to check the accounts of the Utrecht Network. Patricia de Clopper (who is the Network's second financial auditor) and Markus then drew up a financial report. Markus reassures everybody that the financial administration of the Network is in order. All proposal and receipts are there. The reserve fund is fairly sizeable.

Don Sparling wonders if anything is known about costs in kind, to which Markus replies that no such

calculations have been made as yet. Jeroen adds that it may be a good idea to make an estimate as our university administrations could be interested in these. Markus agrees, since if we ever apply for EU money, it is most likely that the Commission requires extensive financial data. Costs in kind would comprise office costs (TAO and all member institutions) and travel expenses paid for by steering committee and Task Force members.

Poul remarks that about 50% of the total budget is spent on the annual meetings, whereas the other 50% goes into other activities and the reserve fund. Apparently, the number of activities that we embark upon is strikingly low. Poul suggests having a deadline for applications a few times per year, and not just once. There should be more creativity to ensure that the available money is used. Markus adds that in a number of cases activities that have been allocated funds never actually materialise.

In 2002 either Patricia or Markus will step down as financial auditor. The other will remain auditor for one more year in order to guarantee continuity. A new auditor will be elected at the next annual meeting in Iceland.

The report of the financial audit is included (Appendix 3).

12. EAIE - Tampere

This year the annual EAIE conference will take place in Tampere (5 - 8 December).

Information market

We were rather visible in Leipzig and we hope to attract some attention again in Finland. By promoting the Network we hope to raise the profile and ensure that we are known in Europe. The question is how we can present ourselves in Finland this year. Anyone with original ideas is asked to put these forward in the coming months. The steering committee will then see how we might best 'sell' the Network. Markus is offering to organise the traditional dinner and anything else that might come up.

Sessions

Bjorn Einar has submitted a proposal for a roundtable session on university networking.

13. Election steering committee

Bjorn Einar Aas has now served on the steering committee for one term (three years). He is willing to stay on the committee for another term. There are no other candidates to replace Bjorn Einar. On behalf of the Network, Jeroen thanks Bjorn Einar for his loyalty to the Network and is glad that he will remain active in the coming three years.

14. Set place and date for meeting next year

It was announced last year that the 2002 Utrecht Network annual meeting will take place in Reykjavik. It will be held on 19 and 20 April.

15. Any other business

- Markus draws people's attention to the restructuring of the IC-process that the Commission is working on at the moment. The Finnish National Agency is involving the universities and has asked for suggestions. National Agencies in other countries may well do so too.
- Patricia says that National Agencies meet regularly and are sometimes accompanied by national experts. Since Belgium will soon be the chair of the European Union, Patricia has been invited to attend a NA-gathering in Stockholm.
- Svend Poller is suggesting that in Tampere we should all try and stay in the same hotel. Svend recommends the Tammer Hotel.
- Poul asks for an update of the list of Task Forces and for Terms of Reference. Bettina says that the list will be distributed via e-mail soon. Terms of Reference can be found on the website of the Utrecht Network.
- Michael thanks the steering committee and Utrecht University for preparing the meeting.
- Jeroen directs words of gratitude to Markus Laitinen. Thanks to him this Utrecht Network meeting has become an enormous success. Everything has been splendidly organised. Everyone is now looking forward to the sauna that we will be visiting later in the day.

