

Report of
Utrecht Network Steering Committee Meeting
Antwerp, 14-15 February 2008

Steering Committee (SC):

Don Sparling (chair), Alain Higgins, Sabine Pendl, Gérald Zimmermann
Absent with acknowledgement: Karitas Kvaran

Executive Secretariat:

Caspar de Bok (report)

Agenda

- 1) Report Steering Committee meeting Trondheim, especially 'Actions'
 - 2) Updates
 - a) EXAMPLE
 - b) ESMU
 - c) new initiatives
 - i) research mobility (suggested by Bochum) – brief update Caspar
 - ii) internships (suggested by Antwerp) – brief update Caspar
 - iii) joint degrees MAUI (suggested by Antwerp) – brief update Caspar
 - iv) Latin America (suggested by Lille) – update Alain
 - v) summer schools – update Sabine
 - vi) EMECW – update Sabine
 - 3) Utrecht Network Charter
 - 4) Finances
 - a) draft balance sheet 2007
 - b) draft budget planning 2008
 - c) financial requests 2008
 - d) reserve fund
 - 5) Strategic Plan
 - 6) Website
 - 7) Annual meeting Cork
 - 8) Any other business
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1. Report Steering Committee meeting Trondheim, especially 'Actions'

Remaining actions:

3) Action list annual meeting

- Don will send Caspar renewed brochures of the Rectors' meeting. It will be included in welcome package for new rectors

Just sending out the brochure will not have added value. It is decided that the rectors will receive a yearly update on Utrecht Network activities, based on the updates presented at the annual meeting. This year the rectors will receive the update on activities, the Utrecht

Network leaflet, an overview of members and year of joining, the places of annual meetings, and the Strategic Plan.

Caspar will prepare the package and have it send early next academic year. Alain (as acting President) will write an accompanying letter.

- Sabine will send Caspar MAUI questions on emergency procedures and joint programmes

The questions have not been sent to all members. Caspar will do so as soon as possible. Don will meet with MAUI people on February 18 and will inform them about the state of affairs and ask them if the list of questions covers all aspects.

6) Summer Schools

- Karitas will discuss interest for a summer School on Environment organised by Reykjavik

There is no interest from Reykjavik to organise a summer school on environmental issues. Graz coordinates the development of a joint degree on sustainable development with some Utrecht Network partners. Sabine will ask the Graz group to discuss the organisation of a summer school once the joint degree runs.

2. Updates

a. EXAMPLE

As a follow up of the email communications with the Steering Committee, Astrid van Vliet discussed the position of the summer schools in EXAMPLE with Don, at a meeting in Brussels. The development of an Utrecht Network summer school on European Culture is not an efficient and effective activity. It will be more efficient to concentrate on better promotion of existing summer schools in the Utrecht Network. Therefore the President of UU will send a letter to the EC to ask for an amendment to the contract to replace the development of a brochure by a database and leaflet (the database containing all English-language Master's at member universities) and to advertise the existing summer schools of the members to international students instead of the development of a Utrecht Network Mundus summer school. She will also ask for an extension of the project without additional funding till 31-12-2008. Caspar will ask Astrid to contact the EC about this request informally as well before the letter will be send.

b. ESMU

Alain attended an ESMU information meeting to submit two LLP proposals. One proposal to develop a European platform on university leadership, governance and management and another proposal for a curriculum development project with European leadership seminars and master classes. Utrecht Network was invited to join as associate partner to provide expertise. Therefore the network was asked to sign a letter of interest. As Alain already suggested at the meeting the Steering Committee, it is not the expert network to join these initiatives. Alain will inform ESMU about the decision of the Utrecht Network not to join the projects as an associate partner.

c) New initiatives

- i. *Research mobility*: at the annual meeting in Lille Monika Sprung initiated an action to bring together members that are interested to cooperate in the support of mobility of research staff. Five members responded positive to a request to meet in Bochum to discuss options to start a Special Interest Group. However, based on the topics mentioned in the questionnaire for the Utrecht Network Strategic Plan, the Steering Committee concluded the topic has interest of the members. Caspar will suggest Monika to make a proposal to establish a Task Force at the annual meeting in Cork.
- ii. *Internships*: Patricia De Clopper was interested to make an overview of availabilities for internships. Finally she has not been able to work out a more detailed plan due to preparatory activities for the coming EIAE conference in Antwerp.
- iii. *Joint degrees with MAUI*: At the annual meeting in Lille it was discussed joint degrees with MAUI partners, as an ATLANTIS project proposal, will be initiatives of individual members.



Antwerp will try to develop an ATLANTIS project. Due to preparatory activities for the coming EIAE conference Antwerp didn't work out some preliminary ideas for the development of a joint programme.

- iv. *Latin America*: Only Lille and Coimbra expressed interest to cooperate in activities with universities in Latin America. There were no positive or concrete responses from the Utrecht Network members to re-establish the SIG. DeUsto (Bilbao) will prepare an Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) proposal for cooperation with universities in Mexico (EMECW lot 18) . Lille will participate in this project, not Utrecht Network. An initiative to start a cooperation with universities in Chile (EMECW lot 17) wasn't successful due to administrative reasons.

d) *Summer Schools*

- Graz/Seggau:

All Utrecht Network Rectors and Presidents received an announcement of the Seggau School. They were asked to award grants for participants of their universities. A call for students will be send out around February 20.

Graz would like to use the format for the on-line tool for the summer school that has been developed by the Ljubljana summer school. The Ljubljana summer school will no longer be an Utrecht Network summer school. Don will ask the organisers of the Ljubljana summer school to make the on-line software available for Graz to check if it will be useful to use it in Seggau as well.

The TS ERASMUS funding of 60€ per day plus travel will have to be covered by the home institutions of the teachers.

Sabine will coordinate an application for IP-funding.

- Belfast:

The Belfast summer school is in the 2nd year of a 3 year IP grant. It is not clear yet where the summer school will be organised next year. Antwerp is an option.

- At the opening of an Utrecht Network summer school the network will be represented by a member of the Steering Committee. Alain will do so in Seggau and Belfast.

- Sabine will check with the Task Force how the Summer Schools are promoted and how all members can or will be involved in the promotion of the summer schools at their universities.

e) *Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW)*

Graz made an inventory among the Utrecht Network members about the interest to participate in EMECW applications. Although there was interest, only Graz offered to coordinate an application (lot 11, Western Balkan), with Aarhus, Bochum, Brno, Ljubljana, Riga and Vilnius. Last year's experiences show that a lot of efforts need to be put in the coordination of a EMECW application and administrative issues (e.g. distribution of administration budget, attracting students, cooperation with non-European universities) once an application has been awarded. Sabine will prepare the matrix for the annual meeting in Cork.

f) *Joint Programmes*

At the annual meeting in Lille it was decided that the SIG Joint Programmes could be continued if it organised a concrete activity. The SIG was called Joint Degrees but Joint Programmes seems a more flexible name for the SIG. The SIG met early February in Bologna to discuss the application of a thematic LLP proposal 'Joint Degrees: best practices and skills' The proposal will be submitted by the end of February. Project partners are Bologna (coordination), Lille (co-coordination), Leipzig, Helsinki, Lund, Antwerp, Bochum, Graz, Strasbourg, Iasi, Vilnius and Brno. Confirmation is awaited from Bergen, Utrecht decided not to participate. DeUsto, Bordeaux I and Padova are non Utrecht Network members that will participate.

At the annual meeting in Cork the SIG may apply for a Task Force status.

3) Utrecht Network Charter

There is no official document for members to formalise membership of the Utrecht Network. In 1998 a Utrecht Network Charter has been written. It is not sure if the Charter has been adopted and signed by the rectors. Caspar will check the status of the Charter. With the new structure of the Utrecht Network and its Statutes and Internal Regulations it may be good to update and formalise the Charter and use it to formalise membership of the network. Because there is no urgent need to do so now it will be good to find a natural moment to adopt a Charter. The Steering Committee decided to prepare a new Charter for ratification at the 25th anniversary of the Utrecht Network in 2012.

4) Finances

a) *Draft balance sheet 2007*

The balance of the network is increasing. The expenses of 2007 (€52.619) are higher than in 2006 (€36.376,46) but still lower than the income from membership fees (€90.000). Despite a reminder from Caspar not all partners asked for a reimbursement of the travel costs for attending the annual meeting in Lille. Maybe these partners got the cost refunded from another source. Caspar will ask the members that didn't claim the cost if they still intend to do so and if they got reimbursed from another source. The refund to the Task Forces is very low. Caspar checked this and it turned out Antwerp paid costs for a Task Force meeting but didn't ask for a reimbursements yet. This will be booked on the budget of 2008.

On March 5 Matthias Johansson will do the financial audit at Utrecht University.

b) *Draft budget planning 2008*

The Steering Committee will encourage members to be more active by giving examples of ideas that may be eligible for financial support by the network, like the development of research mobility structures (by Bochum), development of LLP on Joint Degrees (by Bologna and Lille), development of administrative staff courses (by Leipzig and Graz). Since the Steering Committee wants to stimulate new initiatives and activities it accepts a budget planning that creates a deficit for 2008.

• *The Steering Committee decided that activities with a clear added value to the Utrecht Network at large and with a majority of the participants from Utrecht Network can be considered an Utrecht Network activity.*

c) *Financial requests 2008*

Activity	Coordinating university	Request	Accepted expected reimbursement
Meeting TF Degree Mobility (Coimbra, March)	Graz	€3.800	€3.800
Meeting SIG Joint Programmes (Bologna, Febr.)	Lille	€5.740	€3.840
Hospitality Fund	Leipzig	€10.500	€10.500
Meeting TF Summer Schools (Cork, April)	Leipzig	€736	€736
Meeting TF Summer Schools (Seggau, July)	Leipzig	€1.071	€1.071
Meeting TF Summer Schools (Belfast, August)	Leipzig	€4.992	rejected
Meeting TF Summer Schools	Leipzig	€900	€900



(Antwerp, Sept.)			
<i>subtotal</i>		€27.739	€19.947
			Already accepted in 2007
Meeting TF Summer Schools (Seggau/Graz, Jan/Febr)	Leipzig	€1.500	withdrawn
Organisation Summer School Seggau 2008	Graz	€20.000	€20.000
<i>subtotal</i>		€21.500	€20.000
TOTAL		€49.239,00	€39.947

All accepted reimbursements will be made on the basis of 1 person per Utrecht Network member and on actual costs.

The Task Force Joint Degrees will receive financial support for the meeting in Bologna for 1 representative per Utrecht Network partner. The expected reimbursement will be €3840. Caspar will inform Beatrice Delpouve about the conditions for reimbursement. Based on the discussions at the annual meeting in Lille the Steering Committee decided the SIG is eligible for reimbursement if it will report about the activities at the annual meeting and it will give a clear definition and goals of the SIG or Task Force.

The Steering Committee accepted financial requests for 3 meetings of the Task Force Summer Schools. Since the Task Force requested financial support for three additional meetings it was not clear what additional meeting would replace the Seggau/Graz meeting that was already accepted and actually took place in Antwerp. The Task Force will be asked to request financial support for 1 additional meeting only.

Caspar will inform all coordinators of activities about the decisions of the Steering Committee

d) *Reserve fund*

Due to administrative obstacles Caspar couldn't open a new deposit account for Utrecht Network. Regarding Dutch regulations all legal representatives of an international association have to identify themselves at the bank and/or authorize a representative. The members of the Steering Committee present signed a general letter to authorize Caspar to represent Utrecht Network in its financial matters. Hopefully this letter, together with a copy of a passport of the members of the Steering Committee and the registration at the Chamber of Commerce will be sufficient to open a deposit account. Caspar will try to open the bank account again.

5) Strategic Plan

The Steering Committee intends to present a Strategic Plan for the period 2008-2012 and an annual Work Programme that can be adopted at the annual meeting in Cork. Don presented a 2nd draft version of the Strategic Plan, based on the draft version discussed at the annual meeting and the responses (22 out of 33) on the questionnaire. Caspar will include the summary of the responses in the documentation of the annual meeting in Cork. Most relevant issues for the Strategic Plan are active membership and opportunities to develop new activities e.g. through the establishment of new Task Forces like:



- Student Mobility: to improve flexibility and university-wide approach of student mobility in the network. The Task Force will focus on the actual situation of student mobility among the members of Utrecht Network and options to make the exchange more open and flexible.
- Research staff mobility: to give administrative support to mobility of research staff.
- Quality indicators: to develop quality indicators for the Utrecht Network.

New activities will stimulate active membership as well.

In order to monitor the Strategic Plan a yearly Work Programme will be discussed and has to be adopted at the annual meeting.

The Steering Committee agreed on a final draft version of the Strategic Plan 2008-2012. This will be presented at the annual meeting. At the annual meeting also a Work Programme 2008/2009. will be determined.

6) Website

The Steering Committee agreed with the lay out and structure of the new website. It is foreseen the new website will be launched at the annual meeting in Cork. One of the new features of the website is the News section. This section can be used for announcements of Utrecht Network events as well as events and news of international interest from the members. Caspar will make a proposal for criteria and a format for the use of the news section. In the section 'About us' there will be fact sheets of the Utrecht Network members.

7) Annual meeting Cork

- The Steering Committee will meet on Thursday morning April 17, at 9.00.
 - Caspar will ask all Task Force and SIG coordinators to send him a report of activities before March 8. Besides an overview of activities it should include concrete issues for discussion at the annual meeting. Information on EMECW activities will be included in the report on Joint Programmes. Sabine will send Alain information on the EMECW activities for the report. Caspar will check with Monika Sprung if she wants to give a presentation as a SIG on Research Mobility already.
 - Don will present the draft Strategic Plan and the idea for a Work Programme
 - There will be 1-hour workgroups to discuss items for the Work Programme. Four sessions will run parallel. Each workgroup will be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. Gérald will introduce the work groups.
- It seems the most relevant items for a sessions will be 'internships', '(administrative) staff mobility', 'student mobility' and 'research staff mobility'
- Each year the Steering Committee will present an item 'What's new around us'. This year Sabine will give a kick off.
 - Caspar will present a state of affairs and the new website of the Utrecht Network. He will also hand out an updated members list with relevant contact information and the list of rectors/presidents.
 - Caspar will ask Clare Murphy to arrange internet access for the presentation of the new website and the EXAMPLE database.
 - Alain will give a kick off for the discussion on finances, with support from Caspar.
 - At the last EAIE there was a session with questionnaire to check how international your university is. Caspar will ask Bettina about the availability of this questionnaire. If possible Caspar will adapt the questionnaire for Utrecht Network and it will be handed out as a self evaluation.
 - In 2006 the last new member joined Utrecht Network. At the Rector's meeting the extension of the network was discussed. Members will be asked if they agree with extension and to prioritise countries (e.g. Turkey, Bulgaria, Croatia). Secondly they will be asked to send in recommendations for new members in the selected country/countries)

- On Saturday there will be a decision making session on the Strategic Plan and the Work Programme.
 - Sabine's term as member of the Steering Committee will end. She will not opt for another term. The Steering Committee is in favour Sabine will be replaced by a women. At the beginning of the annual meeting it will be announced there will be elections for a new member of the Steering Committee. Since Filomena Marques de Carvalho expressed interest last year already, she will be informed before the meeting by Sabine.
 - At the annual meeting in Lille several universities opted to organise an annual meeting. The 2009 meeting will be in Leipzig. Bratislava and Iasi opted for 2010, Iasi (if not 2010) and Bergen for 2011 and Utrecht and Krakow for 2012, the 25th anniversary of the Utrecht Network.
- At the meeting the schedule will be discussed e.g. 2010 - Bratislava, 2011 – Iasi, 2012 – Utrecht, 2013 - Krakow or Bergen, 2014 - Bergen or Krakow.

Provisional agenda items annual meeting Cork:

- state of affairs - Caspar
- report Task Force Summer Schools – Svend Poller
- report Task Force Degree Mobility – Astrid van Vliet
- report SIG Joint Programmes – Beatrice Delpouve
- 'What's new around us' - Sabine
- website - Caspar
- finances and audit- Alain/Caspar and Matthias Johansson
- Strategic Plan - Don
- Work Programme – Don
- extension of the network - Don
- introduction 1- hour work groups – Gérald
- 1 hour- work groups - Gérald, Karitas, Alain, Sabine
- self evaluation Internationalisation – Don
- votings on issues related to the previous part of the agenda - Don
- elections for new member of the Steering Committee– Don

8) Any other business

- It is not clear who will represent Bologna at the Utrecht Network in general and in the Task Force Summer Schools. Caspar will ask Giovanna Filippini to clarify the formal representation of Bologna in the Utrecht Network.
- Caspar will ask the representatives of Strasbourg I, II and III for an update on the situation on the merging of the three universities and the formal representation in the Utrecht Network.