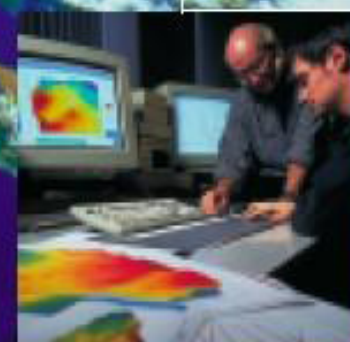
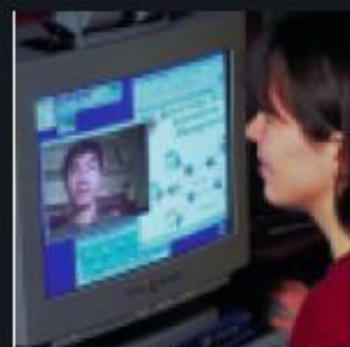


HUMANE Bulletin No. 15

July 2005



Heads of University Management
& Administration Network
in Europe

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Ruud Bleijerveld, (leaving) Chairman

Colophon

The HUMANE Bulletin is distributed 2 times a year
Brussels, No. 15 July 2005
Edited by Hans van Dam (Network Manager) and Tim Evans (Secretariat)

HUMANE
31 Rue Montoyer (Box 2)
B-1000 Brussels
Tel.: +32 (0) 2 513 8622
Fax: +32 (0) 2 289 2467
E-mail: info@esmu.be
www.humane.eu.org

Message from the Chairman

On the eve of the mass migration known as the summer holidays, this is the final message from this Chairman reporting developments, which may be of importance to our members.

This is my last message because a new Chairman of HUMANE was elected at the meeting of the Round Table held at the Sorbonne in Paris at the end of May.

When I was re-elected in 2003, I did state that I would only be in a position to accept the post for a period of two years rather than the statutory three. The Round Table was kind enough to agree to that. It is with great pleasure that I can inform you that, at the suggestion of the Executive Committee, **Rafael Zorilla** has been elected as my successor. He is "Gerente" of the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. I will hand over the chairmanship to him at the meeting of the Executive Committee to be held in Vienna on 21 October 2005, immediately prior to the seminar on information management.

Rafael Zorilla has an impressive career in Spanish higher education to his name. It is thanks in large part to his efforts that the Universidad Carlos III has built up such an excellent reputation in this sector. And his dedication to highly structured management development has not been confined to Spain. Within HUMANE, Rafael has made strenuous efforts to give our seminars and courses a European dimension, both in his direct contributions and through his membership of the Steering Committee of the ESMU/HUMANE Winter School. As for his work on the Executive Committee, he has mastered the challenges – and the threats – facing us so effectively that I have no hesitation in entrusting him with the day-to-day management of our organisation.

The May meeting was also the last for two of our founding members: Andrée Turuban of the Sorbonne and Leif Lindfors of Stockholm have both stepped down as members of the Round Table. Andrée is leaving the academic world, whilst Leif has made way for another Swedish representative. As a result, the RT now includes just three members who were present at the establishment of HUMANE at Bocconi University in Milan back in early 1997. They are Anne-Marie Kumps of Belgium, Roger Broo of Finland and John Fürstenbach of Sweden. John is also Chairman of the Round Table.

The seminars held in Groningen, Warwick and Stockholm/Kiruna during the first half of this year were all very successful. In terms of its dual location, the event in Sweden was an experiment. The first day was spent in Stockholm, the second at Kiruna, more than 250km north of the Arctic Circle. Thanks to the organisational skills of our Swedish hosts, all the arrangements passed off without a hitch. The experiment was a success!

Once again, March's ESMU/HUMANE Winter School in Barcelona was oversubscribed. And the course itself unfolded entirely as hoped for. As we should expect from a management programme for senior administrative staff, everybody worked extremely hard. As a member of the panel of judges which had to assess the assignments prepared by the participants, I was once again reminded that our ranks include many highly talented and motivated people who – thanks in part to the knowledge acquired at the Winter School – have been able to advance in their careers. I am told that three former participants have now been appointed as Head of Administration. An excellent result!

I am pleased to be able to report to you that preparations for the HUMANE study trips are proceeding very well. The first two trips will be to Helsinki. Hosted by the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki School of Economics, the first will take place between 30 November and 3 December this year and the second at the end of January 2006. The principal topics to be addressed will be facility management, the application of ICT in university management and effective administration. You will receive more details about the trips very soon.

There is also interesting news to report in respect of the seminars. One addressing developments in sustainability is to be held at Napier University in Edinburgh on 7 and 8 October. Prepared by our former member Luciano de Galan of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, this will be open to specialists in that field as well as HUMANE members.

On 9 and 10 December, a seminar about the results of the recent conference of EU education ministers in Bergen, Norway, is to be held at the University of Bonn. This is aimed primarily at our members from Germany and the adjacent countries. Importantly, it is being organised in co-operation with the Federal Republic's Directorate for Education and Science, Christoph Ehrenberg, and with the German Higher Education Administration Working Group. The seminar's organiser is our member Johann Peter Schäfer, of the University of Siegen.

The final news I can report to you in this area is a proposal to organise a joint seminar with the Deans' Network about the evolving role of the dean of faculty in university management. This is planned for early February next year and will be held in Berlin at the Charité, the medical faculty of the Freie Universität Berlin and Humboldt University. The Chairman of the Deans' Network, Martin Paul of Berlin, and I have agreed that we will prepare this event together.

It only remains for me to wish you a pleasant and well-deserved holiday. I hope to meet you at one or more of the activities which HUMANE is organising during the next six months.

Ruud Bleijerveld
Chairman, HUMANE.

1. 2005 / 2006 HUMANE Seminars and Round Table Meeting

HUMANE is organized in regions. The members of the Executive Committee each represent a region (also called constituency) and they are elected by the members of the Round Table from their midst per region. The last years the custom grew to organize a seminar in each region each year. Next year this will be the case as well. The Round Table agreed the 2006 venues:

- 24/25 March Universada de Lisboa, Portugal
- 21/22 April Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University Copenhagen, Denmark
- 19/20 May Universität Zürich, Switzerland
- 15/16 September SISSA, Trieste, Italy
- 13/14 October Cork University, Ireland
- 10/11 November University of Veszprém, Hungary

The topics next year are:

- Finance: Funding / profile / research
- Governance: Extra European Cooperation
- HRM: Pay- Frameworks
- Student Affairs: Following Bologna
- Quality: Performance management
- ICT: Facilities at home

The topics and the venues still have to be matched. With the change in the Chairmanship of HUMANE and maybe other changes in (tasks in) the Executive Committee it still is too early to finish the matching, since the members of the Executive Committee chair the seminars. In the October meeting of the EC the matching will be finished and published at the website and in the December Bulletin. For the moment you can already block the dates.

The meeting of the Round Table was in 2004 for the first time extended, and this year open for Friends and non-RT members at the Saturday (country-reports). While the members of the RT have their business meeting at Friday the other participants have an own programme. Next year we will have the same format in Brussels hosted by Jim van Leemput (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) at 16/17 June. Announcements will be send in May using the HUMANE mailing list.



Andree Turuban and Ruud Bleijerveld at the cruising dinner during the Round Table 2005 in Paris

The topic Sustainable Development (also called **Environmental management**) seemed to be too specialized for Head of Administrations and we had in the seminars support of Heads of Departments. HUMANE participated in the SAVE-project together with 13 universities and with Copernicus in the lead. HUMANE will care for dissemination of the results of the project. Combining we decided to organize an **extra seminar** open to specialists on Energy saving and non-HUMANE partners in the project. The seminar will be hosted at **7/8 October** by Napier University in **Edinburgh**. You can find the description of this seminar in section 4 of this Bulletin.

Our member Johann Peter Schäfer will organize an extra **regional seminar** (in Germany) in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry of Education where Friend Christoph Ehrenberg is the senior official, and with a German organization that organizes seminars for Kanzlers and Public Officers. This seminar will deal with the follow up of the Bergen conclusions concerning the Bologna process and is due in **Bonn at 9-10 December**. This seminar will be open to non-HUMANE German members.

And in **January 2006** HUMANE and DEAN (an ESMU-network of Deans) will have a joint seminar in **Berlin**. More details will follow at the website and in the next Bulletin.

The remaining seminars in 2005 are already mentioned in Bulletin no. 14. They are:

WARSAW SEMINAR: MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE 23-24 September 2005

The central discussion topic at the Warsaw Seminar will be the effect on universities of the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the EU.

The introduction of the Bachelor-Master system, though not directly related to this expansion, has implications for us all – including the new member states. So, how will it affect university management? An issue still to be discussed by HUMANE is how the business community will respond to the new degree system. Will it make universities more transparent to the companies who employ our graduates? One intriguing question is whether the Bachelor's degree will become embedded in society and, if so, how? Will many students leave university once they have gained it?

The second topic for the seminar relates primarily to the universities in the new EU member states. How much of an impression is Brussels really making? Have the 'old' EU member states become more accessible to researchers and students? How is the new set-up influencing relations with the former Soviet republics? Have these non-EU states become less accessible? Are more students and researchers coming to other EU countries than in previous years? And is there an influx of students and researchers from other EU countries to the new member states? What obstacles are hampering this two-way mobility and how can they be resolved?

When these new countries joined the EU, the Tempus Programme – which had helped to form many inter-university partnerships – was replaced. The positive and negative effects of this transition can be discussed at the seminar.

In another few years the EU will again welcome new member states. Clearly, it is important that we use the experience from the present expansion to prevent the same mistakes from occurring all over again. The seminar will present an excellent opportunity for formulating university-related recommendations for Brussels and the newcomers.

As you see, this seminar covers a broad range of important issues. We would therefore greatly appreciate papers and presentations relating to your experience with the European Union.

The next regular seminar is **21/22 October in Vienna**. The theme is **ICT and Information management**, especially Front-office / Back-office, and exchange of data with others. At the moment no further description available, but soon at the website and the mailing list.

The last regular seminar is **18-19 November in Valencia**. The theme is **Internal Structures & Quality**. As subtopic are mentioned: Benchmarking & Audits, Public or Private Auditor, role of the State Auditor and QA in Administration.

As usual we publish in this Bulletin some former presentations in past seminars on the same topics. You can find them in section 5.

2. HUMANE Seminars – How to Register?

Please read ANNEX 4 (which is in the ANNEX Download section), which lists the terms and conditions of participating in a HUMANE Seminar. If you wish to register for a HUMANE seminar you can register on-line at: http://www.humane.eu.org/members/Registration_form.htm or send an e-mail or fax to Tim Evans in our Brussels secretariat: <mailto:tim.evans@esmu.be> fax: +32 (0) 2 289 2467

You will receive a written confirmation from the HUMANE Secretariat. Important – if you do not receive a written confirmation within 7 days please contact tim.evans@esmu.be . A registration is not to be considered as confirmed if you do not have written confirmation.

Once you have received written confirmation from the HUMANE Secretariat that you have been registered for a HUMANE Seminar, cancellation fees will be applied as follows:

- From 21 to 7 days before the Seminar, 50% of the fee.
- Within 7 days of the Seminar, 100% of the fee.

A registration form is in the ANNEX Download section as ANNEX 5.

3. HUMANE Study Visits

At the beginning of last year the idea arose to develop a new activity within HUMANE: the organization of HUMANE study visits. The plan is to visit a university which has gone through a very successful process or who has achieved a very high quality standard in certain fields of university management.

A questionnaire was set out among the HUMANE members to hear their opinion about this idea and how they would like to have the study visits organized. The report was published in February 2005 and sent to you by mail. You can find it also at the website in the members intranet.

The positive results gave reason to the decision to organize two pilot study visits in 2005: one for members only and one for small teams per university. Both will be in Helsinki, hosted by the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki School of Economics. The trip for members only will be from 30 November till 2 December 2005, and the trip for teams from 30 January till 3 February 2006. During the trips the following topics will be covered thoroughly:

- The application of ICT in the management of the University
- Financial Management

The trips will be announced further by a mailing next month, and at the website.



Helsinki

4. Environmental Management in HUMANE universities

Extra seminar 7/8 October at Napier University, Edinburgh

During the past few weeks, or even months, we have begun the day by listening to the news. Mid-July, the price of oil reached the record level of 60 dollars per barrel. Again, energy is defining the political agenda of many countries not only in relation to the price of oil but also because of the problems of resulting CO₂ emissions. It is not just the politicians who are worrying more and more about the increasing uses of energy sources and immense dependency on electricity. Influential international organizations that have the capability to predict economic growth indicate that their data are tied to oil prices. Today, energy is a key issue, and the emphasis is on two aspects: use and production costs on one side and CO₂ emissions and sustainability on the other. In both cases, economic and environmental aspects should be considered.

As energy consumers, universities are also affected by these developments. We are responsible for teaching students, who must also be made aware of issues relating to the supply and use of energy. In 1973, during the oil crisis, people in the USA used to say: "A country that runs on oil cannot afford to be short". The modern world is dominated by human needs and, as a consequence, we are heavily – and increasingly – dependent on the world's resources.

Universities have a major responsibility in this respect because they are educating a new generation of students who, in the near future, will use the knowledge from their studies – and their individual experiences with the HUMANE example – to deal with one of the most important problems relating to the development of the human race. Sustainable and environmentally friendly management is one of main challenges for the future. The other, of course, is to eradicate hunger in the world.

As citizens, we share these responsibilities, but as members of the HUMANE network we also have the responsibility to take tangible action. We must strengthen our focus on environmental management, in the first place by supporting the development of new teaching models and curricula that incorporate environmental issues and sustainable development. In the second place, we must aim for the sustainable management of our universities in the context of day-to-day activities and operational responsibilities. Special emphasis should be placed on conserving energy supplies and primary resources.

The members of HUMANE are aware of their responsibilities in this field already and have been taking action for many years. Environmental management has been incorporated in our activities since 1998. In that year, more than 40 members met in Madrid to map out a strategy for the next five years. Since then, we have held a themed seminar every year. In 1999 the meeting was hosted by Trinity College in Dublin, where the theme was Energy Conservation (best practices and recent experiences). The following themes were dealt with in subsequent years: Transport Policy in 2000, Spatial Management in 2001, Best Practices in 2002, Corporate Social Responsibility in 2003, and Historical Buildings in 2004.

Now, after seven years, it is time to draw up the balance sheet, analyze the costs and benefits, and plan for the future. During the past few years, there have been many changes at the universities and in the environment. Many things that were exceptional seven years ago are normal today in our universities. It would be difficult to find a university in the EU that does not have a department responsible for managing the campus environment. Most institutions have buildings with ISO certification for sustainable practices, and responsible waste processing is a priority.

Nevertheless, to a certain extent, environmental management, as part of Corporate Social Responsibility, has suffered the same treatment as Information and Communication Technologies. Both subjects bring benefits and are necessary – even vital – but because these subjects are very complex and cover different fields they involve technological advances that present challenges for traditional areas of university management at the highest level. Here we are referring to areas of management such as human resources and finance. This situation will change, but for the moment it is best to accept the situation as it is. In response to this, the HUMANE partners who have responsibilities in this area came up with the idea of specific seminars on environmental management, designed by and for specialists at all levels within the universities.

With this objective in mind, and with all the information available, we have decided that 2005 should be devoted to re-assessing energy provision, energy efficiency in universities, and energy-saving measures. When, in 1999 in Dublin, we analyzed energy efficiency in universities, we considered the following main costs: heating, air conditioning, lighting, and laboratory equipment. We recognized that other factors would have to be considered in the future. Many things have changed in the six years since 1999. One of the most remarkable developments has been the exponential growth in the use of ICT systems in all work areas of the universities. In some universities today, ICT accounts for most of the expenditure on electricity. Recent

studies have shown that savings of up to 50% are possible. This fact, together with the permanent need to review the way in which university consumers make use of energy resources, led us to conclude that we should again discuss issues relating to energy conservation.

Environmental management in our universities can and should result in tangible measures similar to those that are planned or already in place. We will inform you about this in due course. We must also use Corporate Social Reports to present our results to the wider community. These reports should be regarded not only as an administrative instrument for internal consumption, but also as a channel for communicating the fact that Europe's universities have adopted an approach that addresses the needs of today's society.

The universities must be aware that certain characteristics set them apart from other organizations and social groups. A recent seminar held in Bordeaux under the title *Une ville dans la ville* ("A city within a city") demonstrated that the universities are uniquely placed to develop and communicate experience. In France, activities have been geared towards improving the environment and, in a more tangible way, to saving water, gas and electricity. The methods used to achieve this in French universities have also been applied in homes, hotels, offices and government departments.

The experience gained by the universities of the HUMANE network is extremely valuable for the wider community. We have a twofold responsibility: we must encourage, and we must provide a platform for the development of knowledge that can be applied on a day-to-day basis in all areas of life.

Now that we are working to create the European Higher Education Area, we must ensure that environmental management is incorporated into the convergence process. We must develop and share common and unique experiences in order to prevent, reduce – and, if possible, eliminate – the environmental impact of activities carried out by the universities. Compliance with local and EC legislation should be another subject for discussion. The HUMANE partners must obey the law, and must ensure that others do so too. We must inform, educate and raise the awareness of university staff with regard to environmental objectives. The promotion of a sustainable model for universities is a matter for us all, and for senior management in particular. This should be reflected in a permanent campaign to promote the efficient use of energy and other natural resources. The campaign should include the recycling, recovery and reuse of materials, and aim to reduce all types of waste – inert as well as toxic. The quantitative results of actions taken should be reported every year in the context of Corporate Social Responsibility. Without this context, and without quantifiable results, our good intentions are nothing more than rhetoric. The price of oil is increasing and, at 60 dollars a barrel, the implications are more far-reaching than they were when the price was 50 dollars or below.

Every year, the universities have to set cost targets, including staff costs. But that is not all. Society requires us to implement environmental measures that are also costly. We must achieve a balance between all these requirements if we are to realise an effective and coherent process of convergence, as we stated in Lisbon.

The HUMANE partners are conscientious and aware of the needs discussed above. We have decided to continue our policy with regard to training and sharing experiences, and we are responding to the new situation. We have entered a new era in which we will work more closely with specialists, based on a quantitative approach. We have therefore developed new seminar models for university staff in departments that are responsible for environmental management in the broadest sense of the world.

The experience of recent years has shown that the initial focus on natural resources, energy, waste and recycling has extended to a much wider field of work. This includes the management of space, which may currently be the most valuable asset of many universities. Security issues were discussed at the Prague seminar in 2003. The focus also extends to working conditions, and occupational health and safety. Other areas will become relevant in the near future.

We would ask you to co-operate, not only by sending staff to the seminars and meetings, but also by sending us your comments and ideas, which we can use as input for future meetings and seminars. Our aim is to address issues that affect us all, not just a limited group. We aim to incorporate environmental considerations in our day-to-day responsibilities, and we can provide access to information on specific subjects of interest.

We must also refer to the fact that we are in a strategic period from two points of view:

1. The development of the new Europe is based on the networking concept.
2. The period 2005 – 2014 has been declared as the decade for the education for sustainable development.

The structure, the history and the working model of the HUMANE network, so far has permitted us to consolidate adequately a model of doing activities together; not only seen from the technical or training point of view, but also and mostly from the point of view of the government of the network. The implementation of

democratic systems for the direction of the network, taking into account countries, persons and social and cultural characteristic, has proved to be very effective and efficient. This aspect of government and management of networks is becoming more and more important in order to obtain the goals and objectives aimed in the projects. We have these capacities in the heart of HUMANE.

The declaration of the United Nations for the next decade as mentioned above, is another challenge for the members of the HUMANE network. The declaration not only stresses our ideas, but also, and even more important, the declaration enforces us to a new way of thinking about this passionate field and to the necessity of creation of new ideas and projects. We expect to find all members of HUMANE working with us in this fascinating field in order to achieve a more sustainable society.

Environmental management within the HUMANE network is entering a new era. We all want the network to be successful and contribute to improving our universities. However, we also want to be an example to other European universities, which, for whatever reason, are not yet members of the network. All proposals are welcome and will be considered, and we will make every effort to respond appropriately.

Luciano Galán (luciano.galan@uam.es)
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

5. Past seminars

In the past seven years of existence HUMANE organized many seminars, and you can find an overview based on topics at http://www.humane.eu.org/2_sem_themes.htm. In Bulletin 13 (July 2004) we started to look back at seminars on the same topics as those for the seminars next half year, and to publish one or more of the full text contributions in one or more of the seminars held. In this edition we will use the contribution of Mats Ola Ottosson (http://www.humane.eu.org/members/3_fulltxt_ottosson.doc) Salamanca 2003, Juan José Pérez Y Valverde (http://www.humane.eu.org/members/3_fulltxt_perez.PPT) Lund 2003, Since the presentation of Juan José is in PowerPoint we use in this Bulletin the abstract instead see http://www.humane.eu.org/5_down_lund_2.doc#scanet.

**ESMU benchmarking exercise on Management Information Systems;
and a case of a decentralised management information systems with light central coordination in the University of Uppsala.**

Dr Mats Ola Ottosson, University Director, Uppsala University

The word benchmarking according to my sources comes from the profession of land surveying. A benchmark is a mark that the surveyor puts in a bench, that is in an embankment, which could be of sand or earth or other material. He puts this mark in the bench in order to indicate a fix point with which he could compare other measurements.

Benchmarking has become a fashionable in-word that roughly means systematic comparison of functions, procedures and processes. It could also mean comparisons of performance and results, but in the world of organisations that is less frequent Benchmarking allows organisations to compare themselves with others from an efficiency point of view, to identify their comparative strengths and weaknesses and learn how to improve. It should not be about creating league tables but seen as a way of finding and adopting good practices.

It is not easy to compare academic institutions. Universities make a virtue of their academic freedom and often develop different cultures. A hundred years ago a Swedish poet wrote the following about the relativity of truth in the field of philosophy at the universities: "The highest truth taught in Jena or Berlin, Is just a pointless joke in Heidelberg" (*G Fröding 1860-1911*).

In spite of these difficulties, benchmarking has been attempted both at national and international levels. In Sweden, the registrars have discussed how to organise benchmarking on some administrative processes, but the programme we have in mind has not yet been started.

I think it is fair to say that research and education activities traditionally have been evaluated more thoroughly than the administrative and support activities. But this is perhaps about to change. There are

today several examples of transnational programmes where processes of more administrative nature are being benchmarked. One example is a programme within the so called European Consortium of Innovative Universities and another one is the ESMU benchmarking programme.

I will now come to the ESMU benchmarking programme and first I should perhaps say something about ESMU (European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities). It is an association with the aim of assisting European universities in strategic management areas. The HUMANE network is one of the activities of ESMU and the benchmarking programme is another one.

The ESMU benchmarking programme which I will present briefly started in 1999 and it was based on a similar programme by a benchmarking club of the Universities of the Commonwealth. This ESMU programme does not look at performance indicators but rather at processes and it is therefore important to identify generic and relevant processes.

The purpose of the ESMU benchmarking programme is stated as follows:

“To measure and promote excellence in university management.

THE PROGRAMME AIMS TO HELP PARTICIPANTS

To identify and promote best practice.

To share ideas and increase awareness of alternative approaches.

To gain benefit from an international base of experience and innovation.

To learn from others what works and what does not.

To research, and continually improve, ways of comparing with each other.

THEREFORE, THE PROGRAMME WILL:

Provide frameworks for annual assessments and reviews.

Analyse participants’ responses and provide feedback in relative performance and best practice.

Arrange a forum for participation to discuss and debate improvements in performance”.

Although the general framework of the programme is stable it is nevertheless developmental in the sense that each year the participants review the methodology and refine it further.

The areas chosen for the four year period 1999-2003 are

Academic year 1999/2000:

Human Resources and Staff Development

Managing Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Research Management

Commercialisation of Academic Activities

Academic year 2000/2001:

Strategic Planning

Financial Management

Management of Teaching and Learning

Marketing the University

Academic year 2001/2002:

Management Information Systems

Internal Quality Assurance

Students’ Services

Estate Management

Academic year 2002/2003:

E-learning

External Funding

Institutional Research

The European “dynamics” in Higher Education and Research

A university may participate in three or four processes. If you participate in three you pay 6 000 Euro and you pay another 2 000 Euro if you choose to participate in all the four areas.

My university was a participant in the programme during the academic year 2001/2002, which included Management Information Systems (MIS) as one of the areas. Why did we decide to participate? I guess that the invitations to the benchmarking programme are sent out broadly and I remember having received them since the beginning of the programme without becoming really interested. I also listened to a presentation of one of the first year’s participants which was not very encouraging.

Nevertheless, when the third year programme was announced I started a serious discussion about it with my senior colleagues in the university administration. We found that for three of the four areas there was a definite interest and for each of these three areas it was possible to identify a colleague, who was responsible at home and who agreed to do or oversee the necessary work. I would call these persons the champions. Each area had its champion and they formed, together with me and the head of planning, an informal group for our participation.

The programme has the following stages:

- A programme handbook is sent to each university with questionnaires for the 3-4 areas. 3 months are reserved for the preparation of the responses.
- ESMU reviews the responses and compiles an initial set of draft statements of good practice.
- For each subject area an assessor is appointed by ESMU. These assessors further review the responses and produce draft reports based on the original submissions from the participating universities. They also finalize the draft list of statements of good practice for each process and provide provisional scores related to what they see as good practice.
- The universities receive these drafts and meet in a workshop to discuss and agree what is good practice in each area. At the workshop a few presentations are also made from some of the universities.
- An amended set of good practice statements is used by each university to make a self-assessment on a five-point scale.
- The assessments, statements and workshop documents are summarized in a final report (about 200 pages).
- Universities circulate the report within their institutions and use the information about good practice to make changes.

Benchmarking in the area of Management Information Systems (MIS)

In order to be able to talk about management information systems you need a definition. When I saw the expression management information systems in the ESMU invitation to the benchmarking exercise I thought that it referred to information systems being used by high-level management of the university, but then I found the following definition in the papers: "MIS = Information Technology Systems, Management Data Systems etc". In this broad sense MIS are all the regular computer-based administrative systems, which handle the operations of the university irrespective of who the users are.

The submissions from the universities showed that they had much in common and the assessor pointed to the following:

- Weak relation between the MIS strategy and the university's overall strategy. Development funding does not necessarily flow into application systems related to the university's key priorities.
- Most core operational systems are installed and work reasonably well. However, meeting high level management information needs is a problem only beginning to be solved (drill-down and data warehousing systems).
- Absence of collaboration with those involved in institutional planning. Planning staff can be MIS users with great demands and asking for novel ways of analyzing or presenting data.
- Most institutions followed a strategy of relying on externally developed software. Student record systems are however often "home made" applications e.g. by consortia of universities.
- Operational systems are being moved to the web (intranet) so that they can be easily accessed by staff and students.

The assessor also found two striking differences in the implementation approach.

The first was the degree of centralization in the field of implementation of operational systems. Some universities have very small central IT or MIS units and expect the user departments (e.g. personnel division or finance division) to manage, implement and operate their own computerized operational systems. At the other end of the spectrum there are centralized structures where the management and technical implementation is with a central IT function.

The second difference is that a few institutions mention a growing interaction between MIS and academic learning and teaching whereas others were silent on that point. Increasing use of e-learning tools by academic staff is likely to have implications for central MIS in terms of student records, assessments systems etc.

What is good practice in the area of Management Information Systems? The ESMU Secretariat found 114 statements of what was felt to good practice in the submissions from the seven universities that participated in the benchmarking in this area, an they were divided as follows:

1. Developing the MIS Strategy	28 statements
2. Implementation of the MIS Strategy	30 statements
3. Management of the MIS	22 statements
4. Measuring MIS Outcomes	19 statements
5. Communicating MIS Activities and Features	15 statements

For each statement of good practice each university can be awarded a number of points (1 to 5) as a measure of how well good practice is adhered to and followed. On the basis of the submissions made by the universities the assessor makes a draft report giving a preliminary overall mark. These figures for the overall scores looked like these:

University no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Score:		3.8	4	2.8	3.6	3.6	2.8	2.8

My university is number 8 here and given the bad score you may wonder how I dare present this exercise. But let us return to the issue of decentralization. In a decentralized model the owners of management information systems have their own project managers but most often buy the implementation services from a central IT department. The centralized model is more common in the participating universities. The two models can be characterized as follows:

Decentralized model:

Advantages: Users decide about developments and get systems that suit their purpose.

Drawbacks: Staff in user divisions is not trained to be project managers. Insufficient integration with other systems in the university.

Centralized model:

Advantages: Easier to protect data definitions and to avoid duplications of entries or codes.

Drawbacks: Weaker coordination with users' operational responsibilities.

In the ESMU handbook for the benchmarking exercise you could read the following advice for the responses: "Using the items for consideration to help you, consider and describe as simply as you can what actually happens in your university. Do not invent what you think should be happening, in an attempt to gain credit against some assumed ideal. For example, there is no assumption that a centrally driven approach is better or worse than a devolved one. Where a management process is delegated, e g to faculties or departments or programme directors, or simply not dealt with on any university-wide basis, please make this clear in your description".

I have the feeling that in spite of this statement there was a bias towards a centralized model in the marks given by the assessor, and when we made our self-assessment in relation to all the statements of good practice we arrived at an average of 3.8 points rather than 2.8.

Decentralized Management Information Systems (MIS) with light central coordination

What does it mean that my university has a decentralized MIS with light central coordination? As an illustration to what I mean, I would like to give the following examples:

- Information technology and information technology applications are the subject of education and research in several faculties. It has been discussed to group them together into a real information technology faculty, but in the name of decentralization it has been decided to have a much lighter structure, a "virtual" information technology faculty. This virtual faculty serves as cooperative and coordinating body in the area of information technology including its applications. Its board is made up of teachers and students from the other faculties. It has only a limited budget of its own and it operates by means of recommendations and proposals in matters of education and research, but also in MIS matters. Sometimes it addresses itself to the vice-chancellor with a proposal if it feels that its advice must be turned into binding directives.
- The individual administrative departments own the systems which are used to support their specific activities. E g the Finance Department owns the financial system (which is called Raindance), the Personnel Department owns the personnel administration system (Primula) etc. But a model for system ownership/administration shall be drawn up for every system using a centrally developed standard university template.

- Every administrative system is operated on its own server but the servers are normally placed at and operated by the central IT support department.
- The personnel administration system is a good example of decentralized use of a system, which has been developed centrally (in fact in collaboration with three other universities). It has a payroll administration but it also supports many other personnel administration routines and processes like the hiring of staff, sick leave registration, collective salary bargaining, career planning instruments etc. The academic departments can choose to use the full capacity of the system or only the basic elements of it. In the latter case the central personnel department takes over where the academic department stops.
- Every academic department has a person with special responsibility for information technology matters and together these persons form a network animated by the central IT strategy unit. There are very few instructions from the central administration as to what these persons must do or must not do. Only recommendations are issued but there are normally no sanctions if they are not followed.
- A central purchasing function enters into agreement with vendors of hardware and software, but there is normally no obligation on behalf of the departments to use e.g. a particular software. Instead, the choice of both software and hardware is left to the individual department.

Decentralization is not always idyllic as I have described it here. I will just relate an example where we should perhaps have exerted a stronger coordination. It is about a student web portal that was developed two years ago. It has what we call a profiled homepage for each student into which information on all for the student relevant courses is automatically transferred from the student record system and other systems. The portal also serves as a means of communication with the teachers and fellow students following the same course etc. One idea was that whatever course a student takes, he or she will always be able to use the same portal. That was a great idea, and more than half the students use the portal today. But, at some departments there were teachers who felt that this common portal was not good enough, not simple enough or not sophisticated enough so they started to develop their own portals and the students are today exposed to at least five or six different systems. A stronger coordination would probably have been worthwhile in this area.

Before finishing I need to explain why my university discontinued our participation in the benchmarking programme after only one year. When the invitation came to the fourth year programme we had the same discussion as we had one year earlier. Being a participant in the third year programme we had also had the opportunity to make suggestions for areas suitable for the fourth year programme, but when the programme arrived we hesitated about our participation and in the end decided not to join this time. The subjects were interesting and topical but our experience in some of them was quite limited and it was not obvious to identify the local champion. So we decided to abstain. But we may well come back another year.

At the end of my talk, I briefly showed some elements of a general management information system (GLIS), in which are brought together data from a number of decentralized systems such as the personnel system, the financial system, the student record system and the system for data on premises and rooms. In addition to presenting data from these separate systems, GLIS can also calculate and present certain indicators based on combinations of data (number of students per teacher in different areas etc), GLIS can be accessed by management at all levels and in fact by anyone in the university.



Participants Salamanca seminar

The SCANet project

Juan José Perez y Valverde, Universidad de Cordoba (ES)

The presentation consists of an explanation on a Spanish project called SCANet that aims to become a European Standard for communication on academic administration, as follows:

1. The project SCANet: Aims and reasons

The aim is to provide a tool for systematic comprehension of information contained in university curricula. Since it is regarded to be a necessary element for mobility and European convergence in such items as transfer to another university, standardization of courses, etc.

2. What it is

It's an administrative tool composed of a conjunction of codes and codified information useful for transmission of curricula information among universities, students and other agents related to the university system.

3. Attributes

- Clarity
- Reliability
- Versatile media
- Widely designed: It's modular structure makes it suitable to comply with every requirement on curricula codification and other processes
- Fulfills the requirements to hold the information of the European Degree Supplement
- Provides systematic definition and implementation to the European Transfer Credit System (ETCS)
- It complies with international standards: ISO, EAN, XML

4. How information is kept

Information is kept by a structured codification based on international standards and internal system regulations (for instance: Norma 1.01/02E for a standard unified student-identification code).

5. Who are on it

SCANet was formerly conceived at Lleida University (Spain) in April 2001. Later up to 49 Universities in Spain have joined the project, that was undertaken by the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) in 2001 and nowadays is being incorporated by the Spanish Government to the regulations on university administration as a tool for the codification of the European Degree Supplement.

SCANet was already presented to the European Universities Association.

6. About the near future

The aim is to provide European universities a tool to share a standard for curricula managements.

Discussion afterwards:

Since the Scanet project aims to provide a standardised code-system (and is not an IT-system) the expenditure is very low, and exists mostly in people freeing time to work for the project. At the moment the project is in this way sponsored by the 40 participating universities. It isn't a project for only administrators, and a committee of vice-rectors governs it.

The protection of data and privacy is a part of the implementation of university systems. The codes of countries, universities, curricula are open. The exchange of information between universities of ECTS points gathered by students has a privacy-aspect, but that is the same in sending letters instead of data-files.

The aim of the project is the core-business of administrators: creating order out of chaos, and reducing costs in fulfilling administrative procedures

Since Scanet uses the local code-systems the only things to agree on are:

The length in digits of the codes for courses and students-identification-numbers

The country-codes (most likely to use the phone-codes)

The codes for universities within a country (mostly done by the national offices for statistics)

Scanet only eases exchange of information. It does not solve the existing portfolio-problems, or the certification of courses in another curriculum.

6. RAUMA

As Russia is overcoming a period of ongoing societal reforms, the Russian system of higher education being one of the most fundamental elements of society is also on the way to new structural models and academic standards. The main aim of these reforms is to adapt Russian higher education to the new social and economic environment, to align the national higher education system with the global trends and, on this basis, to provide higher academic and scientific standards and a new degree of openness. The accomplishment of this aim is possible by combination of different measures and one of the most important among them is modernization of administrative processes and management system at Russian HEIs. Traditionally, the system of governance in Russian higher education was highly centralized (as an organic reflection of centralized structure of the communist society). But, after the collapse of the Soviet regime, dismantle of its administrative system and opening of society for the integration into global community, the new horizontal democratic links between university administrators are urgently needed. The main factors influencing the emergence of these needs are as follows:

-It has been recognized that further integration of the Russian HE into the global system of HE following the Bologna process is not only an academic issue and impossible without aligning governing principles, administrative and managerial mechanisms, further democratisation;

-Russian universities are now given a higher degree of academic, administrative and economic freedom which opens new opportunities for administrative reforms and global networking;

-Russia is a vast country with a huge number of universities and that is why regional, professional and other horizontal links are stronger and more efficient than centralized ones;

-Several previous initiatives in the field of networking in higher education (in Russia, in Europe and globally) have demonstrated real advantages of networking and professional associations. These experiences have encouraged university communities and proven the feasibility of such networks.

Since 2000 the Tempus scheme has provided strong support to networking activities in Russian higher education by introducing a new instrument - networking project. Several of them addressed the needs of university administrators (e.g. EURUSNET, CROSSUM). Their positive effect, especially with regards to learning and benchmarking European experiences in University management, went far beyond expectations and the projects demonstrated an added-value of networking. CROSSUM (www.eurice.de/crossum) was the first to raise a question of creating a nation-wide sustainable professional network in the field of university administration and management and the potential role of this network in the integration of Russian HEIs into Bologna process (CROSSUM Conference in Rostov in March 2004). This network based on the solid fundament of relevant networking experiences obtained in Europe and Russia, unites university administrators working in different areas providing synergetic effect for stimulating Bologna trends in different University administrations. CROSSUM has not only shown the added-value and viability of such a network, but also proven that its sustainable and effective operation is possible only in the institutional framework including organizational and information infrastructures. Experiences of Association of University Administrators (AUA), Heads of University Management and Administration Network in Europe (HUMANE) confirm this conclusion.

So, the overall objective of the proposed project is to support the process of reforms in Russian higher education by fostering its democratic institutes and to create a Russian Association of University Managers and Administrators as a non-governmental public organization which unites professionals working in various areas of university administration with the aim to support integration of Bologna principles into higher education governance in Russia. The project will take-up very positive experience obtained in the previous projects in the field of university management and ensure a sustainable continuation of these activities beyond the Tempus programme. The Association will complement other relevant networking initiatives which are underway in Russia, such as the Rectors' Union and several regional Associations and address Bologna objectives. The purpose of RAUMA is to build mutually supportive network of professionals, who can learn from each other's best practices and so enhance the quality of university management.

The project idea is to institutionalise and further promote an informal network of university managers which was created as an outcome of the previous Tempus Networking Project CROSSUM. Therefore, the consortium of the present pilot project has not been brought together artificially, but represents an existing partnership. As Russia is a huge country, the association will be built upon three poles of excellence: Tver State University and Tver State Medical Academy in North-West & Central Russia, Tomsk Polytechnic University for Western Siberia and Rostov State University for the South of Russia. Besides, commitment of the Ministry of Education (Department of International Cooperation- a service responsible for implementing Bologna principles in higher education in Russia) to participate in the project will guarantee nation-wide recognition and high visibility of the project results. Belonging to the top ranking tables of Russian universities, the Russian academic partners will be a showcase for other members which will join the association in the future.

Rostov State University is well-known in Russia in the context of Bologna process related activities running at the national level (hosting of various seminars and conferences, running special training programme for university administrators, etc.). RSU also has the capacity to maintain the network's head office and ensure

its operation and has indicated its commitment to take the lead in preparation and hosting of the summer school to be organized.

The University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, UK) has been a partner of the University of Rostov for over 10 years now (also in the framework of a Tempus JEP-08545-94). Being a member of HUMANE, University of Strathclyde can further contribute its networking experience and reinforce traditional cooperative links with the consortia. In the framework of dissemination seminars held representatives from Strathclyde have delivered speeches on the current state of affairs with regard to Bologna process, internationalisation and quality assurance as well as a number of other topics that have been met with a great interest by their Russian colleagues and will furthermore provide their support to future networking activities.

HUMANE network has been taken as a European model for a sustainable and actively operating Russian Association of University Managers and Administrators (RAUMA). A meeting between the consortium partners and HUMANE Executive Board took place in Brussels in February 2004 during which the similarities in both networks were identified and the strategy for cooperation was defined. HUMANE will be a source of expertise and competence for the management of the Association, planning and running networking activities, ensuring sustainability, etc. HUMANE is seen by the Russian colleagues as a gateway to the European community of University managers and administrators and as an instrument to catch up with the activities running in Europe with regards to Bologna process. In general, HUMANE will be coaching RAUMA from the present moment on and also beyond the project end.

7. H. E. E. Consulting Group

H.E.E. Consulting Group has been established to offer services provided for and in universities, and conducted by experienced members of university staff. H.E.E.experts offer knowledge and relevant experience in their field, and are able to lead complex innovative projects. On request of universities and other clients they set up projects to develop and implement innovation, if possible and preferably in close cooperation with clients' staff. Therefore, H.E.E. projects are to be seen as part of a management development programme since the staff has the possibility to develop their knowledge and expertise.

As reported before, H.E.E. is leading a project to develop the MBA programme *Management in Higher Education and Research*. The programme will start in January 2006. De degree awarding universities will be London (Institute of Education) and Maastricht (Business School). The Hochschule fuer Verwaltungswissenschaften and the Zentrum fuer Wissenschaftsmanagement (Speyer) also participates in the programme. We have found a new and active participant in the Universidad Politecnica de Valencia. ESMU will carry the central secretariat and has started a marketing campaign. You may receive a brochure on the MBA soon. Otherwise you can find it on: www.esmu.be.

In the past months, H.E.E. conducted a comparative study in the fields of finance, HRM, universities performances and governance. This was done by order of the National Audit Office of Iceland in Reykjavik. The report is now ready, and experts will be invited to discuss the findings on these issues and to develop relevant supportive programmes for universities.

As a result of a tender, H.E.E. is commissioned to develop and manage a European research network in the field of international law. The project is coordinated by IPR Verlag (München). The T.M.C. Asser Institute (The Hague) is partner in the project.

H.E.E. designed a project for the development of a *European Masters Guide*. This Guide aims to inform bachelor-students who want to do a Masters degree abroad. It will contain quantitative comparisons in the field of educational quality and student facilities and support. Negotiations about the funding of a pilot study will be finished soon. H.E.E. will do this pilot together with a Dutch research organization (EIM).

The Dublin Institute of Technology asked H.E.E. to support the development of a new administration. Esa Ahonen and Jon Baldwin will participate in this project.

In the past years, a number of H.E.E.-experts (Elisabeth Freismuth, John Fürstenbach, Jürgen Schleicher, and others) were involved in international audits of Music Colleges. H.E.E. supports the development of a specific benchmark programme for universities in this field.

ESMU and HUMANE, the shareholders of H.E.E., have invested in the start-up phase of the company. It is expected that the shareholders will receive a return on investment as from 2006.

For further information about H.E.E. or its projects and activities: please contact the director: ajnijssen@wxs.nl

8. ESMU-HUMANE Winter School for senior administrators

The third edition of the ESMU-HUMANE Winter School was another great success. It took place at the Fundació Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, from 6th to 12th March 2005.

These are only a few comments from the 30 participants from all over Europe:

Thank you for a challenging, stimulating week and the opportunity to meet colleagues from across Europe.

The School had a very good and useful combination of topics important to senior administrators.

A wonderful experience – extremely useful. I've learned a lot.

The "mix" of people was very good with respect to a) different nationalities, and b) different professions. The introduction of the right mix into the different working groups during the weeks was also well managed.

The course has been absolutely fantastic. The organisation, before and during the programme was first class

The target audience for the School is fast-rising administrators who are seen as having outstanding potential for future leadership, and the capacity to become influential senior managers. They were nominated by their head of administration, and selected by the School steering committee

With prominent experts in higher education management from across Europe, participants had the opportunity to get acquainted with different management approaches and leadership styles from different cultural contexts. Selected themes reflected current priorities in higher education management at national and European levels, like for example the Bologna Process. European policies in higher education and research which have more and more an impact on the management of European universities featured highly in the School, which was greatly appreciated by participants.

Participants' feedback is strongly valued and used to adapt the School on a regular basis in terms of content, topics and style. As an innovation in 2005, participants were asked to bring Human resources cases/problems from their university. This session worked very well under the leadership of Inès Fabbro and her team from Bologna on the HRM day.

Both HUMANE and ESMU bring their expertise to the programme in terms of teachers selected and of their knowledge gained through their project and networking activity. As an example, the expertise gained in the ESMU Benchmarking programme on university management processes (in which several HUMANE members have been very active) is fed back in the School, for example in the field of financial management (with Esa Ahonen and Helsinki School of Economics, being very active both in HUMANE and the ESMU Benchmarking programme) and Human Resource Management (with Bologna joining the ESMU Programme in 2004).

Participants also value strongly the work for a case study and interaction with other participants in small groups to propose decisions and a course of action to solve the problems of a university in major trouble. Presented as a written report and a verbal exposé to a Jury made of a former German Minister, the HUMANE Chairman and Winter School Steering Committee, this exercise is testing both participants knowledge acquired during the School and their management skills. It is a very effective learning experience.

Participants developed close contacts with one another in Barcelona which are followed up both informally and formally in the framework of the alumni network set up in 2003. With 90 senior administrators trained already in the School, this alumni network promises to become a very powerful network in Europe.

The School steering committee has already started preparations for the fourth edition of the School. A pre-announcement will be placed on the HUMANE discussion list before the end of June, with further information available at the end of August.

Nadine Burquel
ESMU-HUMANE Winter School Manager

9. HUMANE Friends

The first meeting of HUMANE Friends was attached to the HUMANE Round Table in Paris, May 27 and 28. 9 Friends had a tour on Friday and joined the Saturday afternoon session of the HUMANE Round Table, as well as the dinner on the Friday evening, and the dinner cruising at the Seine. The next gathering of HUMANE Friends will take place in Brussels from Friday 16th to Saturday 17th June 2006

HUMANE Friends

PT Mr. Jorge Baptista Lopes
UK Mr. Roddy Begg
DE Mr. Ignaz Bender
NL Mr. Henk Bruins
BE Prof Roland Caudano
DE Mr. Christoph Ehrenberg
UK Mr. Trevor Field
HU Prof Csaba Forgacs
PT Dr. Maria José Freitas
UK Ms. Jill Grinstead
FI Mr. Matti Halonen
DE Dr. Jürgen Hess
IS Mrs. Edda Magnúsdóttir
PT Mr. Pedro Meireles
FI Mrs Sinikka Mertano
UK Mr. Eddie Newcomb
DE Dr. Klaus Peters
UK Mr. Ian Powell
NO Mr. Tor Saglie
IT Dr. Gaetano Serafino
BE Prof. Karel Tavernier
UK Mr. Mike Wilkinson
HU Prof Zita Zoltay Paprika



Friend Ian Powell addressing Ruud Bleijerveld at the RT cruising dinner

10. Winter School Alumni Network

Here is a short report on the further development of the ESMU/HUMANE Winter School alumni network, as a follow-up to the report in the last bulletin.

The organisational structure of the alumni steering group will be set up according to tasks: Chairman with coordination and representation (that will be me), Secretariat (with all reports, etc;), Finances, Seminar, Communication and website, Study visits and working groups.

The WS alumni steering group (SG) decided that the strong link to HUMANE should be continued and the triangular approach intensified. The output of the WS alumni seminars should be fed into the HUMANE network and the Winter School. A working group will continue to develop the output of the seminar in Bologna which could lead to a best practice guide on the topic Change management/Merger and used by HUMANE.

The first presentation at a HUMANE seminar of an alumna on student fees in Europe received very positive response. Ideally this presentation could be given at the Winter School 2005 in Barcelona (if the agenda would allow this.) At the same time a very short presentation about the alumni network could be given, so WS III alumni could be involved straight away.

At each Winter School in Barcelona a short slot for a presentation of an WS alumna and the presentation of the WS alumni network should be reserved. The travel costs for this should be paid from WS income.

The Round Table discussed the funding of the WS-Alumni Network. The RT approved to support the WS-Alumni in the year 2005 with a gift of 750€ from HUMANE and, in accordance with the SC of the Winterschool, 750€ from the surplus of the Winterschool.

The EC will in October decide how to support the WS-Alumni in the future. In the RT –discussion 2 possibilities were mentioned:

- (1) introduce a subscription to HUMANE information sources, and the WS Alumni News-letter, and eligibility to WS alumni Seminars with the fee calculated on an institutional basis
- (2) prompt the WS to annually add a provision for the Alumni to the WS fees.

Annexes

As a move to maximize the possibilities of the HUMANE web site (www.humane.eu.org) the annexes to the Bulletin will be available as a download only. If you have trouble to download or to print them please contact the Secretariat and ask to send it to you by mail, or the Network Manager when you get error messages

Annexes to this Bulletin are:

- Annex 1 – Contacts for Executive Committee and Round Table Members
- Annex 2 – Election procedures and news
- Annex 3 – Membership evolution, which tracks membership numbers over a number of years
- Annex 4 – The conditions for seminar attendance
- Annex 5 – Seminar registration form

HUMANE
31 Rue Montoyer (Box 2)
B-1000 Brussels
Tel.: +32 (0) 2 513 8622
Fax: +32 (0) 2 289 2467
E-mail: info@esmu.be
www.humane.eu.org