

PREFACE

Global patterns of mobility in higher education are changing rapidly. Student flow within the European Community is expanding dramatically; the ERASMUS exchange programme has this year been extended to cover the EFTA member states; institutional and social transformations in the former Eastern bloc will bring far-reaching, unpredictable changes in academic relationships between what we used to think of as Eastern and Western Europe.

The current pre-occupation in Europe with the development of exchanges among neighbouring industrialised countries has implications for developing countries also. For many years, the educational institutions of the industrialised world have been a primary resource for students from developing countries, providing access to higher education of a quality often not available elsewhere. This pattern too is altering, as a result of changing national policies and resources in both receiving and sending countries.

There is a clear need to monitor these changes in the pattern of student flow as they occur, and to record the concerns and perceptions of policy-makers in governments and elsewhere. From a Commonwealth perspective, the concern is to ensure that the educational needs of its members, especially its developing member states, continue to be recognised and met in the changing world of global international education.

This publication is the outcome of a study commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat and conducted by the UK Council for Overseas Student Affairs. A shorter version was presented to a seminar at the Commonwealth Secretariat, sponsored by the Overseas Students Trust, in June 1991 on the implications in education for developing countries of the forthcoming single market. Its purpose is to make available, for the first time in readily accessible form, statistical information on the changing pattern of student flow into and within the EC; and to present a comparative picture of the policy concerns of the principal EC receiving nations towards the education of students from abroad. We hope that the study will prove valuable to Commonwealth and European Governments, policymakers and the international educational community; and that it will foster productive debate on the issues it raises.

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