

EURO Bulletin

Bulletin of the Association of European Operational Research Societies (EURO)
within the International Federation of Operational Research Societies (IFORS)

from the President-elect

Readers of the Bulletin may be interested in three initiatives which have the potential to assist OR in the newly emerging economies of Central and Eastern Europe. The first is TEMPUS.

TEMPUS

This acronym stands for "Trans European Mobility Programme for Universities". Its second year has just begun. The aim is to re-train Polish, Hungarian and other Central European teachers, in defined priority areas such as agriculture and management. As far as is known there has been only one OR project proposal within TEMPUS. This is between the Polish Academy of Sciences (Prof. Walukiewicz), the University of Copenhagen - DIKU (Prof. Krarup), the U.K. OR Society and the London School of Economics - the main contractor (Dr. Powell, Project Director). This project was one of only 10% of bids which were successful. It has now been operating for one year. Its aim is to structure a complete MBA programme for the new Polish International Business School and to produce detailed teaching notes for the Quantitative Methods part of the course. Funds for TEMPUS are very tightly controlled indeed - most bids were cut in half. The aim of those who devised the programme seems to be to provide hardware, software and language training. The next programme (ACE) is probably more suitable for O.R. people.

ACE

Another acronym - this time for "Action for Co-operation in the field of Economics". Money is available for research projects, seminars, setting up co-operative networks, etc. etc. Unlike TEMPUS there are set amounts payable for different classes of person / activity, e.g. so much per year for a Ph.D. student, so much per day for research activity, and so on. But why would I be writing about "Economics"? The answer is that in this case Economics is defined to include "business" and "economics courses" to include MBAs. Since O.R. is designed to assist business systems and decision-making, Q.E.D.

RUSSIA

A proposal has been put to the U.K. O.R. Society by Dr. Duncan Conway, Vice-President, that it should press for U.K. government grants to be made available for retraining Russian and other republican O.R. specialists in the sort of OR used in a market economy. In the short term small teams could undertake crash retraining programmes and then go out into the field to help with real life problems of the transitional market and of reconstruction. A third phase would involve the creation of long term training programmes jointly between UK universities in the republics. Finally there would be a real need to ensure that a professional OR approach becomes part of the ongoing culture in all republics.

Maurice Shutler

Season's

Greetings

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