Summer Schools in Europe

The culmination of a trend or the start of another?

By Jeroen Torenbeek & Edwin van Rest

e-book series

About the authors

Summer schools are booming business for universities today. In this article, **Jeroen Torenbeek** (Director of Utrecht Summer School, co-founder of www.SummerSchoolsInEurope.eu, former President of the EAIE, and winner of the 2013 EAIE Bo Gregersen Award for Best Practice) and **Edwin van Rest** (founder and CEO of www.StudyPortals.com, Board Member of the EAIE Expert Community *Marketing & Recruitment* and 2013 EAIE Rising Star Award winner) teamed up to analyse this phenomenon and to raise questions for further research.

About the EAIE

The EAIE (www.eaie.org) is the European centre for expertise, networking and resources in the internationalisation of higher education. It is a non-profit, member-led organisation serving individuals actively involved in the internationalisation of their institutions. It has over 2500 members from Europe and around the world.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and background

Introduction

Summer schools have seen phenomenal growth in recent years. A large number of new summer schools have opened their doors in Europe, Asia and elsewhere, while the existing schools have expanded tenfold in less than a decade. In the United States, new models have joined the now familiar ‘third semester’ and ‘faculty-led’ programmes on campuses abroad. Throughout the world, summer education programmes are developing with astonishing speed.

Many of the existing summer schools have formed new alliances. Some offer exchange programmes in the traditional mould, but other forms of cooperation are becoming increasingly common. There are programmes that include modules in two or more different countries, coordinated by a single summer school or a group of institutions working in partnership. The first such programmes were confined to a single continent: ‘Doing Business in Europe’, for example, took students to three hotspots of commerce and enterprise, while ‘Highlights of European Art’ visited cities known for their high concentration of world-class museums. We now see the first intercontinental partnerships, principally between institutions in Europe and Asia. In short, much is happening in the world of the summer school.

The summer school is, for several reasons, a remarkable feature of higher education today. First, it entails a relatively short course, taken during the summer break by students mainly from other institutions and other countries. That is the near exact dictionary definition of a summer school. The second aspect is perhaps more interesting. After the explosive growth of exchange programmes, both European and global, we now see the rapid emergence of self-financed education whereby course fees are paid directly by students (or their parents). Although this has long been common practice in the United States, it is little short of revolutionary for Europe.

Self-financing, and the associated consumer choice, may well represent the summer school’s greatest potential. The past 25 years have been marked by the emergence and rapid development of exchange programmes. The trend has been one of ever shorter periods abroad, because of growing demands of compulsory curricula at the home university, budget cuts on grants, other financial constraints, and perhaps also a general trend towards a search for short, intensive experiences of the modern ‘Generation Zap’.

The first exchange students would spend an entire year at another institution, or at the very least six months. Of course, a calendar year is not the same as an academic year; a full year abroad usually entails no more than eight months of actual study, and a half year perhaps as few as three months. Nevertheless, the trend continued and eventually prompted the development of short summer courses, which, like their longer counterparts, carry credits towards a degree. The summer school thus emerged as a viable alternative to the exchange programmes, and many believed that it represented the culmination of the trend of ever-shorter study periods abroad.

While the summer school can indeed be seen as the end result of one trend, it is perhaps more exciting to view it as the beginning of another: ‘higher education as a takeaway commodity’, an interesting part of the development of more customised education in order to provide a quick solution to the need for individual profiling. Of course, even the costs of an exchange programme are eventually borne by the ‘education consumer’. In Europe, higher education is often funded from the public purse: the taxes paid by the parents’ generation. Sooner or later, we all pay for our own education but we do so in such an indirect way that students regard their education as almost free. That impression is reinforced when the student is able to spend an exchange period in another country, enjoying yet more free education without the prospect of a bill landing on the doormat. In fact, the student may even receive a grant to offset any additional expenses.

The summer school is different. Here, the student chooses his or her ideal course, which may be offered by a partner of his or her own university, but more often is not. The student then pays a fee, which has been calculated to cover the costs of running the course. The student must also pay accommodation and living expenses. Last but not least, there are the costs of international travel. As a percentage of the overall cost, travel and accommodation expenses for a short course are much higher than for a one-year exchange period.

Over the past 15 years, the summer school has undergone a major transformation. Only a decade ago, the majority of summer courses in continental Europe were entirely free, the running costs being covered by government subsidies, and many were concerned with the local language and culture. They were often part of an inter-university exchange programme, and few carried course credits. This has all changed: today’s students ‘buy’ a course that is relevant to their degree programme and which will allow them to gain the required number of credits. They demand value for money. Is this the end of a trend? Perhaps, but it is also the beginning of another. This ‘education consumer’ is no longer solely interested in short courses, a growing number of universities discover. The student also seeks courses of a longer duration – one semester or perhaps a whole year – for which he or she is willing to pay.

In short, the summer school can be seen as the culmination of one trend – that of ever-shorter periods abroad – but also the start of another: education for which the costs are directly visible and directly paid; possibly one of the consequences of the international trend to consider education more and more as a commodity. It is therefore appropriate to examine the quality and quantity of today's European summer schools in an international context.

Background

Studying in the summer: it all began in the United States, where self-financed education has been commonplace since the 19th century. By contrast, higher education in Europe followed the tradition of Von Humboldt and his Bildungs ideal. The recently established and consolidated nations of continental Europe saw education as a government responsibility, essential for the development of their future leaders and captains of industry. That responsibility extended to paying the costs. While European students were encouraged to pursue greater breadth and depth of knowledge, their American counterparts had no time to lose. They were expected to graduate as quickly as possible or face significant extra costs. Studying during the summer break was the solution: the 'third semester' was born. Students could use that semester as part of their regular programme, or could attend a summer course at a foreign institution, usually under the supervision of staff from their home university. Harvard introduced this form of summer programme in 1823.

By the turn of the 20th century, universities in the United Kingdom had also started to open their doors during the summer months. Here, however, the target audience was not students who needed to catch up on courses. They ran their summer programmes in the interests of public enlightenment, welcoming people who would otherwise never set foot inside a house of learning. The courses focused on culture, literature, art and other worthy pursuits. Oxford and Cambridge were the market leaders from the outset. The fact that their ancient and expensive-to-maintain college buildings could be put to good (and profitable) use during the summer break was a bonus.

It was only in the latter decades of the 20th century that the summer school concept began to take hold in mainland Europe. Its development was parallel to that of the exchange programmes. Some summer schools were established to help launch the host institution's exchange programme. Later, the same summer schools helped to maintain the balance of the exchange programmes. It was soon obvious that a summer school presented an ideal way of maximising returns from the infrastructure created for the exchanges, with its rooms reserved for international students. Numerous other motives emerged, whereupon the summer school was often seen as a panacea, the answer to all of a university's problems. For example, in an effort to fulfil the university's ambition for internationalisation, the summer school became a means of accomplishing

Internationalisation at Home, as well as cutting the expense of empty student rooms in the summer.

In the 21st century, the summer school phenomenon extended to Asia, where it is gaining ground by the day. At first, and particularly in China, the summer school was seen mainly as a source of revenue: a cash cow. More recently, the character of the Asian summer school has been brought more into line with that of its European counterparts by focusing on numerous aspects of the universities' internationalisation strategy.

The circle is almost complete. Alongside the now traditional third semester, an increasing number of American universities are offering summer programmes very similar to those of the summer schools in Europe and Asia. They are not only offering their standard courses to make up for credits lost, but also offering additions to their regular curricula, open for enrolment by fee-paying international students.

Europe

In the past decade, the European summer school has enjoyed phenomenal growth. Almost every university now offers some form of summer activity, from a single special interest course to a complete programme with a comprehensive curriculum: the university in microcosm. In some cases, the courses are devoted to the local language and culture, while in others they are based on the university's own profile and areas of excellence, such as Life Sciences or Linguistics. Courses are available at every level, from open access Bachelor programmes to specialised PhD courses.

This article is concerned with:

- Programmes offered during the summer months
- Short courses
- Courses provided by an accredited institution of higher education
- Education from Bachelor to PhD and post-academic level
- Courses for which a fee is charged, usually (but not necessarily) calculated to cover running costs
- Courses which carry ECTS credits (with some exceptions)

We are, therefore, not concerned with summer programmes run by secondary schools, summer activity camps or any form of tuition provided by profit-driven companies.

CHAPTER 2

Expansive growth

No further consideration of the prehistory of the summer school is necessary. This article confines the attention to the development of summer schools in recent years. By drawing on data from two websites – StudyPortals (www.ShortCoursesPortal.eu) and Summer Schools in Europe (www.SummerSchoolsinEurope.eu), it is possible to form an accurate impression of the development of expansive growth.

StudyPortals was launched in 2007 under the name MastersPortal. The site lists details of numerous higher education programmes and courses for international students. Since 2009, StudyPortals has included a section devoted to 'Short Courses', including those of the summer schools. The Summer Schools in Europe website does exactly what the name suggests: it provides details of the summer courses available in Europe, and has done so since 2008.

Both sites list all courses upon request and free of charge. Universities can enhance their visibility by means of banner advertising, pay-per-click and other online marketing tools.

Methodology

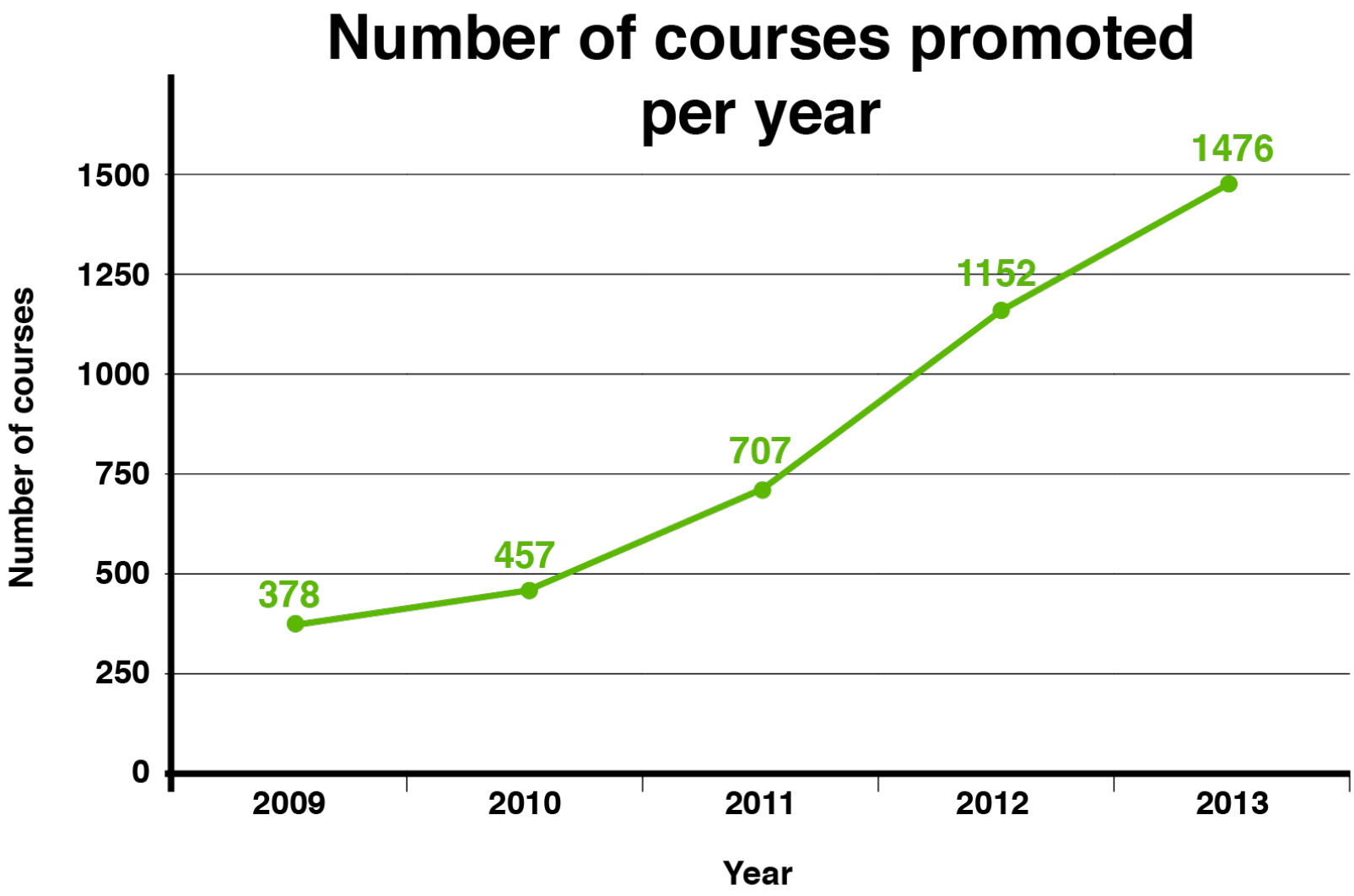
This article draws on data from the two websites. The courses in the StudyPortals/Short Courses database that are not run during the summer months were excluded. The two datasets used relate to the courses offered during the summer of 2013 and promoted on one or both sites. Duplicates were removed manually, leaving a list of 1476 summer courses.

The same procedure was applied to the datasets for previous years (2009–2012) to produce the graph on page 7.

The trend seems to be clear: the number of courses is increasing, although some levelling out can be seen. Closer investigation reveals that some large providers opted not to list their courses on the sites because they had already filled their maximum housing capacity. Further research examining all sources of information about the total number of courses available, *ie* not restricted to these two sites, will give a more conclusive result.

The next question relates to the validity of the data from these two websites. How representative are they? Do they list all or most courses? A sample was conducted with respect to four smaller countries: Finland, the Czech Republic, Portugal and the

Netherlands. The findings were that slightly fewer than 50% of courses available in Finland are promoted on the portals, while over 90% of the many available in the Netherlands are listed. Both portals are maintained by Dutch companies, so this is perhaps not such a surprising finding. A cautious estimate suggests that on average 65% (between 55% and 75%) of all courses available are listed on one or both portals. Applying a factor of 65%, an extrapolation of the 2013 figure of 1436 listed courses then arrives at a total of 2270. Accordingly, the best possible estimate at this time (for the purpose of simplifying future calculations in this article) is that approximately 2300 summer courses were offered by European institutions in 2013.



If we then interpolate the data for the previous four years, in the first instance we see that the number of (listed) courses rose from 378 to 1544: an increase of 308%. However, the coverage rate of the sites can be assumed to have been lower in their early days, whereupon the actual growth percentage is also somewhat lower. Based on information from providers themselves, growth is more likely to be in the order of 200%.

CHAPTER 3

The numbers in 2013

What was the situation in 2013? In the previous section, we focused on the number of summer courses offered in Europe that year. We now turn to the institutions that ran those courses. By ‘institution’ we mean the organisations that presented themselves to the outside world as responsible for running the summer school. In some cases, the summer school is a coordinated activity undertaken by, and under the banner of, the host institution in its entirety. Examples include the summer school of the Freie Universität Berlin (FUBIS), and the summer school of Charles University in Prague.

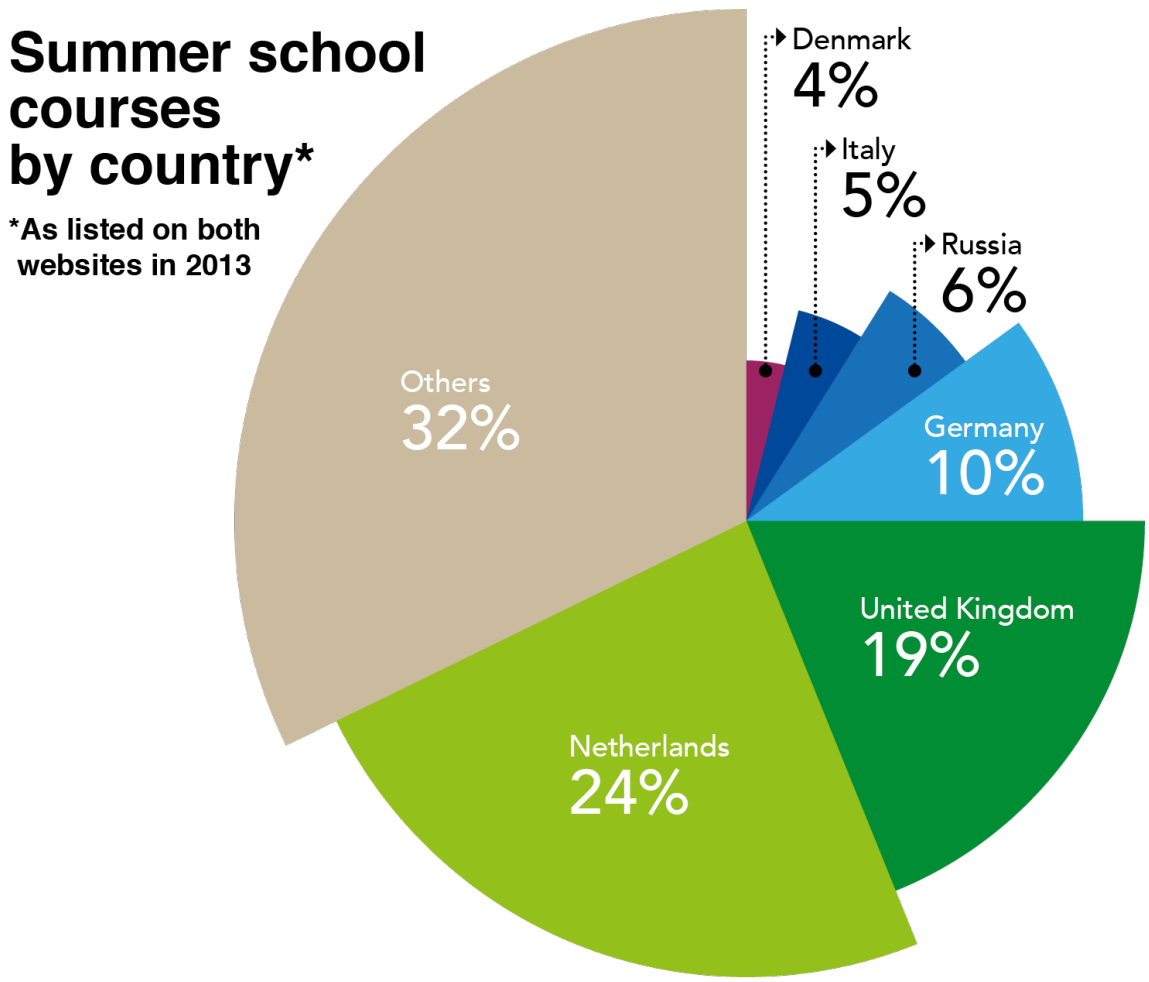
However, there are also universities in which the various faculties, colleges and departments run their own summer schools independently of each other. In the United Kingdom, for example, Pembroke College Cambridge has its own summer school, which is not part of the Cambridge University Summer School. Another example is the University of Amsterdam, which co-founded the Amsterdam–Maastricht Summer School several years ago. Several Amsterdam faculties have since developed their own initiatives, which are promoted individually.

At the other end of the scale, we find the summer schools that are organised as a joint venture between several, perhaps all, institutions of higher education in a city. The Helsinki Summer School is one example; the Utrecht Summer School is another.

In short, the landscape is so diverse that establishing the number of summer schools reveals only part of the picture. One summer school may offer only three short courses with a handful of students, while another may have 200 courses and attract several thousands of students.

The table on page 9 shows the ranking of countries by the number of summer courses available through the previously mentioned portals. The middle column shows the number of institutions (summer schools) in each country.

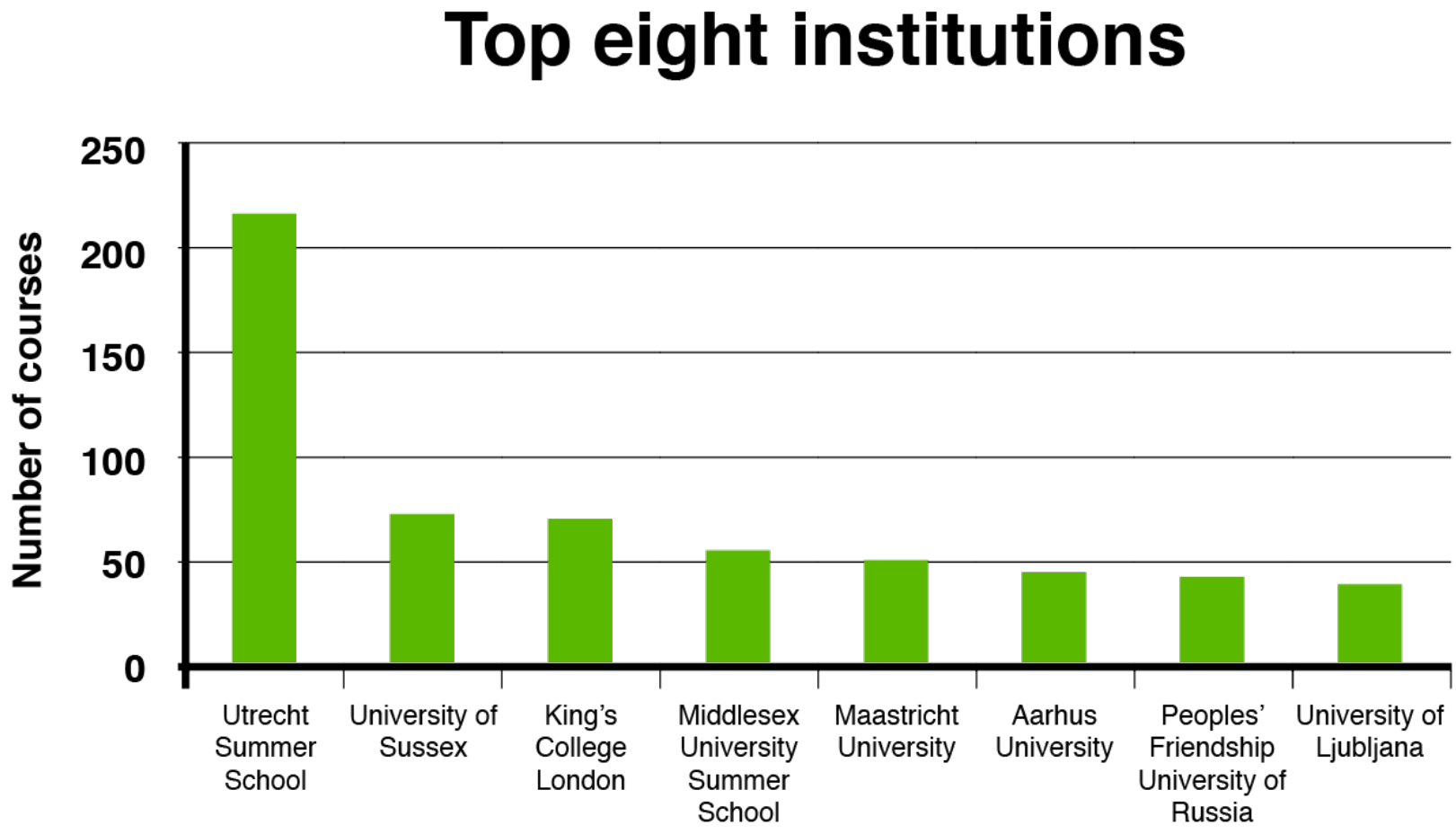
Country	Institutions	Courses	Country	Institutions	Courses
Netherlands	20	346	Ireland	4	15
United Kingdom	28	286	Sweden	4	13
Germany	44	154	Lithuania	4	12
Russia	13	83	Turkey	3	10
Italy	25	79	Serbia	1	6
Denmark	8	63	Belgium	5	5
France	22	56	Israel	2	4
Austria	8	48	Latvia	4	4
Hungary	5	47	Romania	3	3
Slovenia	3	39	Ukraine	1	3
Spain	8	33	Poland	3	3
Estonia	3	31	Norway	1	3
Switzerland	12	29	Macedonia (FYROM)	1	2
Greece	9	27	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	2
Czech Republic	9	25	Croatia	1	1
Portugal	8	22	Iceland	1	1
Finland	2	20	Monaco	1	1
TOTAL				**268**	**1476**



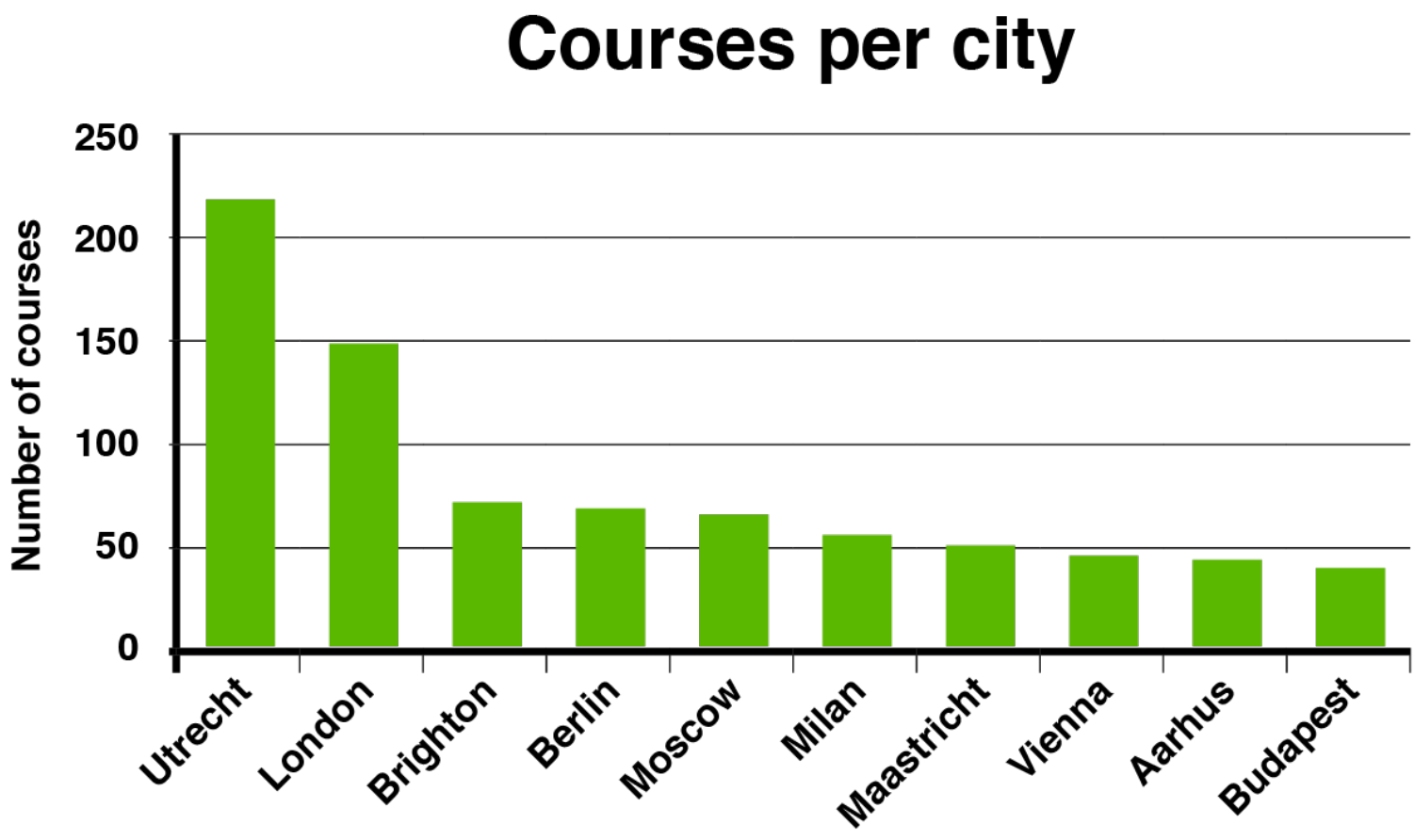
It is interesting to note that two comparatively small countries feature in the top six: the Netherlands (in first place) and Denmark (sixth). The United Kingdom and Germany also account for a large number of summer courses, followed at some distance by Russia and Italy. If we zoom in to examine the number of courses offered by individual institutions, we arrive at the following ranking:

Institution	Country	Total
Utrecht Summer School	Netherlands	217
University of Sussex	United Kingdom	70
King's College London	United Kingdom	68
Middlesex University Summer School	United Kingdom	52
Maastricht University	Netherlands	48
Aarhus University	Denmark	42
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia	Russia	40
University of Ljubljana	Slovenia	36
University of Vienna	Austria	34
Tallinn University	Estonia	28

NB: These figures are based on data derived from one or both of the websites. Although it is enough to offer a general indication, there is a significant margin for error.



Based on the ranking of institutions by the number of courses, the cities of Utrecht, Brighton (Sussex), London (King's College and Middlesex) and Maastricht appear to be the most popular destinations. But is that actually the case? In fact, Berlin, Moscow and Vienna also attract large numbers of students, but those students are divided among a greater number of institutions. When the numbers are broken down by city rather than institution, the following picture emerges:



Milan has six summer school institutions; London has nine, while Berlin has no fewer than 10.

Top 10 Summer School cities

City	Institutions	Courses
Utrecht	1	217
London	9	147
Brighton	1	70
Berlin	10	67
Moscow	5	64
Milan	6	54
Maastricht	2	49
Vienna	4	44
Aarhus	1	42
Budapest	4	38

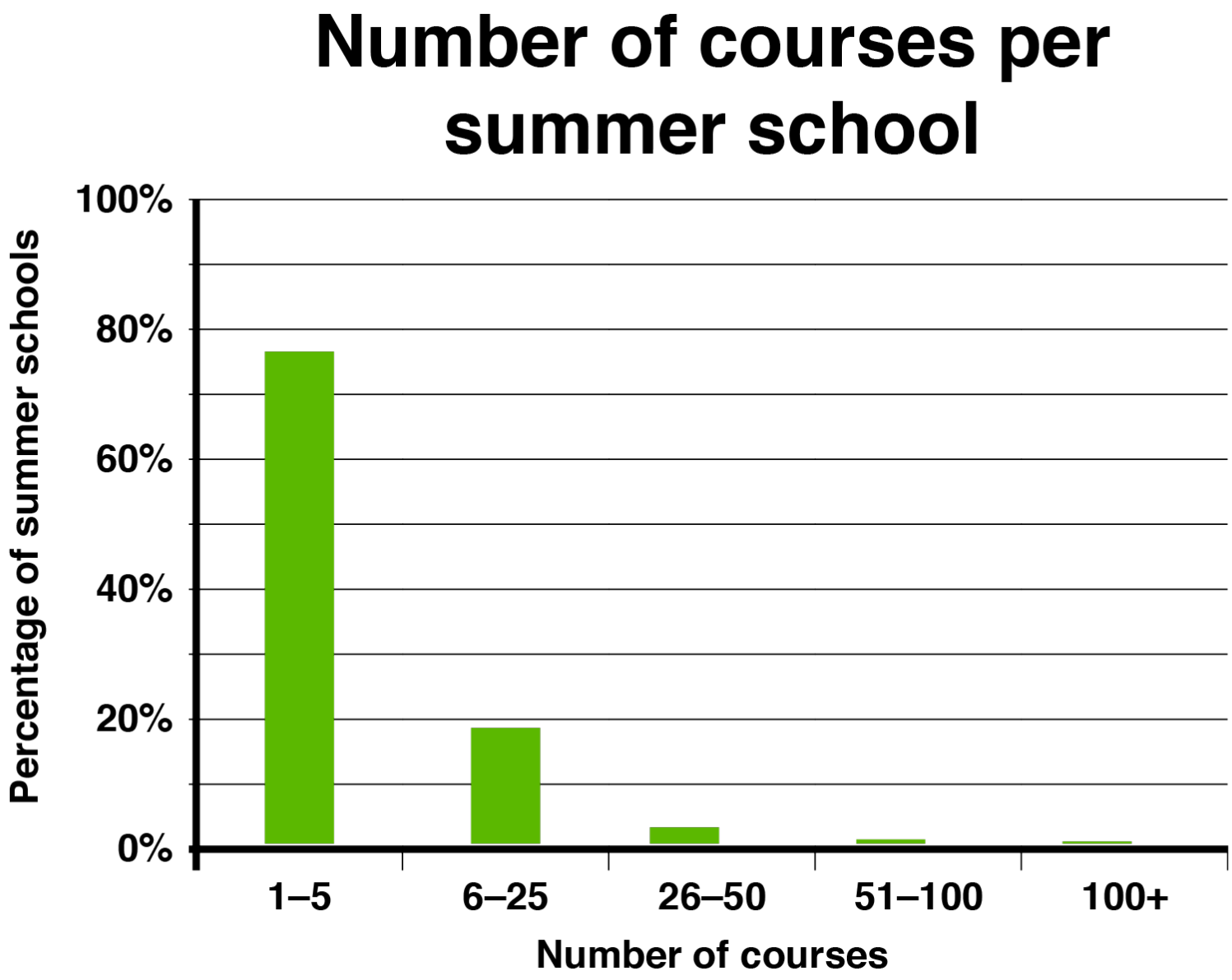
Lastly, we must consider the size of the target group: how many students are there? Figures by course or school are not available but a small survey of a few providers, both large and small, suggests that each course attracts an average of 15 to 20 enrolments. Based on our estimate of 2300 courses offered in 2013, total attendance is therefore in the order of 40 000.

To compare two disparate quantities: in 2013, some 200 000 students took part in the Erasmus exchange programme (for which they received a grant), while there were 40 000 summer school students (most of whom would have paid a fee).

CHAPTER 4

Typology

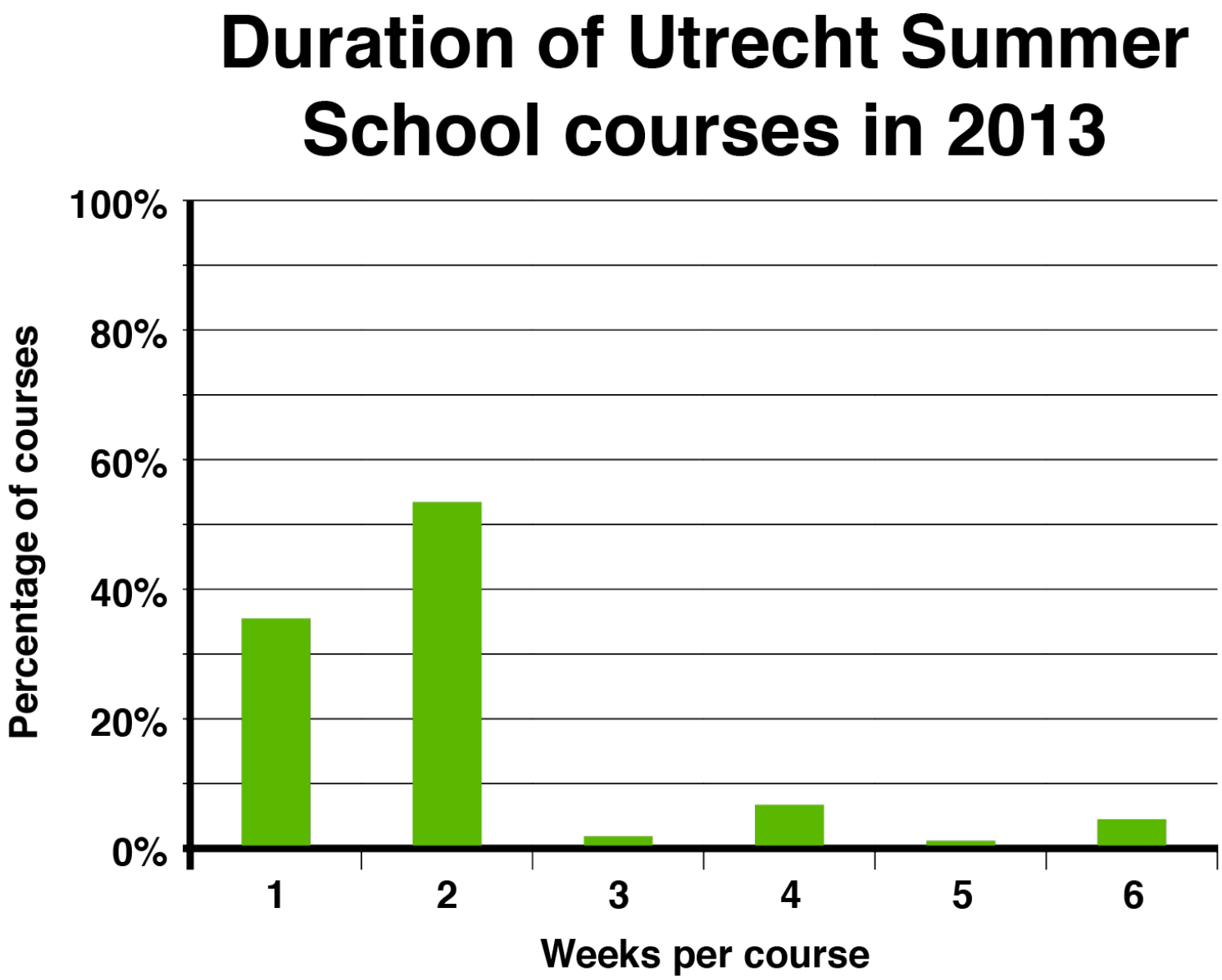
As we have seen, there are now some 500 summer schools in Europe, in various shapes and sizes. Many of the smaller schools offer only a few courses, while the largest have programmes of over 50 courses.



Needless to say, the smaller summer schools cover only a limited number of disciplines. The larger schools, by contrast, can be a faithful reproduction of the host institution, offering all or most disciplines in their curricula. A medium-sized summer school is likely to restrict itself to a relatively small number of subjects, such as language courses, regional topics or the discipline of the institution's most prominent faculty. The summer school curriculum is thus based on the key strengths of the host institution, perhaps influenced by location and the local culture. However, based on information from summer school

directors, participants in numerous EAIE summer schools training courses and shifts in course offerings, those influences now appear to be waning: the profile of the institution is becoming the decisive factor.

A summer school course can last between one and eight weeks, with an average between two and four weeks. Because the website datasets do not include information on course duration, by way of exception we base our statements on the programme of the Utrecht Summer School with over 200 courses.



The overall picture is influenced by two factors. First, many summer schools, particularly those in mainland Europe, now apply a modular system. Two course modules, each of two weeks, can be combined to form one four-week course, while three two-week modules make up a six-week course. Often, the title of the course will vary: the four-week course combines the content of both two-week modules, but may have an entirely different name. For this reason, the number of two-week courses shown in the above figure does not correspond with the number of students who spend only two weeks at the summer school. Although the two-week courses do exist, they are often just one component of a longer course. This must also be taken into account when calculating the average size of

the groups. Three two-week courses can, in various combinations, be covered by up to six different course titles in the prospectus. Merely dividing the number of students by the number of courses listed will give a distorted result.

Another factor is that, in the English-speaking countries in particular, it is common practice for two half-time courses to be offered in parallel. One six-week course is therefore not quite the same as another.

The length of a course is generally determined by its content. Language courses generally last at least three or four weeks, while those dealing with technical disciplines are rarely longer than two weeks.

Lastly, we see that the duration of a course is very much influenced by its level. Post-academic courses usually last one week, sometimes two. Those at Master's or PhD level are mostly of two weeks' duration. Only the undergraduate market seems to demand longer courses. In this respect, US undergraduates, specifically those at the junior level, form a distinct market segment. All, without exception, attend a summer school to obtain course credits. Most require at least six credits, the equivalent of 12 ECTS. This means that they must complete a six-week course. It may be possible to pare this down to five, but certainly no less, otherwise it will be impossible for the university to consolidate the number of credits.

The number of credits that a student can obtain from a course varies greatly. It is not only dependent on the length of the course; there are differences by country, discipline and level. Further research is required before any useful statements can be made. In any event, the study burden cannot be measured in terms of the length of the course or the total number of contact hours. There may also be preparatory assignments, perhaps distributed online, or papers to be completed at home once the course has concluded. All such aspects have a significant influence on the number of credits a course may bear.

CHAPTER 5

Students

Where do the summer school students come from? And what are they looking for? There are no straightforward answers. Although there has been no large-scale research, data from the two websites can provide some insights. We base our findings on the search terms used by visitors to the portals.

The late 1990s and early 2000s saw ever larger numbers of US students enrolling in European summer courses. Most were undergraduate (Bachelor's) students who opted to spend a summer in Europe rather than an entire 'Junior Year Abroad'. Doing so would enable them to maintain the pace of their studies while also gaining international experience, all at relatively low cost. This target group remains important and continues to grow. In the last 10 years, however, there has also been a significant influx of Asian students, most notably from China, Taiwan and Korea. As a result, American students now represent a slightly smaller percentage of the overall summer school clientele.

American students are particularly well represented on the longer courses. The shorter, two-week courses tend to attract students from various European countries, including Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The statistical data derived from the two websites enables us to draw some conclusions about the nature, scope and level of the summer schools and their courses. It is, however, not possible to do so at the level of individual enrolments. Once again, we therefore turn to the Utrecht Summer School. With an average of 3000 students enrolling in over 200 courses each year, Utrecht accounts for approximately 6% of the European total.

The majority of visitors to the websites are from Europe, the United States or Asia, in that order. Examining actual enrolments, however, we see a lower percentage of Europeans and a somewhat higher percentage of Asian students. This is probably because many Asian students attend a summer school as part of inter-university partnership arrangements (as do the Americans to a lesser extent). This is not an exchange programme as such. The agreements between the institutions may include a small discount on the course fees, but the main object of the exercise is to familiarise the 'sending' university with the quality and content of the host institution's education.

Of course, the two websites are by no means the only channels through which American and Asian students can seek and find European summer schools. Social media such as Facebook and simple word of mouth are also important sources of information.

Next we must consider the students' motives. What are they looking for? Does supply match demand? Here, information is so scant that it is impossible, or at least scientifically imprudent, to offer any firm conclusions. We nevertheless present some initial impressions with the explicit remark that further, more thorough research is needed.

There are some disciplines, such as Business and European Studies, in which supply and demand do appear to have achieved a good balance. Based on the search terms used by visitors to the two websites, a relatively large number of students are interested in Law, Engineering and Life Sciences, areas in which current course availability may fall short, while the number of language courses exceeds apparent demand. Further research is likely to reveal important information.

The next question is: what do students actually gain from their attendance at a summer school? We refer not (only) to intellectual stimulation and a priceless experience, but more specifically to tangible results in the form of grades and credits. What is the pass rate? Once again, no reliable statistics are available and further research is required.

That research could usefully examine the performance of summer schools against that of the more traditional exchange programmes. We do have some information about the available credits, since this is often (but not always) included on the providers' own websites. However, the differences between courses are so great that it would be imprudent to make any statements without first having undertaken more thorough research.

There are numerous guidelines that establish the appropriate study burden of a course, and often the number of contact hours per week. Of course, this will vary greatly from one discipline to another. In some cases, students are required to spend virtually all their time in the laboratory. In others, they are expected to read vast quantities of literature, something which is best undertaken away from the classroom. Two factors that do not vary greatly are the number of credits which students are expected to obtain in any one year and the length of the academic year, *ie* the actual time spent in tuition. Assuming a credit requirement of 60 ECTS per year and an academic year of 40 weeks, a summer course of two weeks' duration should in theory carry three or four credits. In practice, this number can be far higher, not by packing more contact hours into the usually already very intensive programmes, but perhaps because the course requires students to complete a number of preparatory assignments, or to produce a paper once they have returned home in order to receive their final grade. Once again, further research is necessary.

CHAPTER 6

Cooperation

It seems that students always want more. At one time, a few weeks spent at an international summer school was seen as challenging enough. More recently, there has been increasing demand for an even more diverse range of courses, particularly among students from other continents. In the past, these ‘intercontinental’ students required the summer school to allow ample free time so that they could enrich their experience in, say, Berlin with weekend visits to Rome, London or Paris. Before long, no two-week course in European Studies was complete without an excursion to Brussels, and preferably at least one other European capital.

For their part, the providers came to realise that – depending on the discipline – an international component would not only be academically meaningful but would also make the course more attractive. Some students come all the way from the United States to spend six weeks studying European art. How worthwhile is the experience if all the museums and buildings they visit are in the same country – or even the same city – and they are expected to study the remainder of the material from PowerPoint slides? The added value is then limited since they could do that at home. A course that takes them to three different cities, where they can see art and architecture first hand, is far more attractive. Similarly, a course in European business skills can usefully include training and experience in two or three different centres of commerce. The benefits are obvious and relatively easy to organise by collaborating with international partner universities to offer these programmes.

A number of European summer schools have already discovered the advantages of cooperation. Some help each other to organise excursions, others offer coordinated modules with a common theme. A student need enrol with only one of the partner summer schools. Should he so wish, he will receive a single certificate issued by one of the participating universities rather than two or three separate transcripts.

The student’s thirst for international experience knows few bounds. We now see a trend confirmed through interviews with students and their academic advisers whereby American students wish to split the six weeks they have reserved for their international experience between two or more continents. The first cooperative alliances between European and Chinese universities have already been formed. The original target group comprised Chinese and European students wishing to spend part of their study period ‘at home’ and the remainder at the partner university. These partnerships gave rise to

complementary, coordinated programmes in areas such as Global Health, Good Governance and various other disciplines in which the combination of contrasting locations represented added value. We now see the first American students enrolling for this Euro-Asian experience, a development which only a few years ago would have been dismissed by many as improbable and largely futile.

CHAPTER 7

Motivation

To conclude this overview, we turn to the providers: the universities, faculties, departments and research groups that organise the summer schools. And we must not forget the staff who actually provide tuition, from professors to student assistants. If our estimates are correct and there are indeed some 2300 summer courses available in Europe each year, and the portals show that on average two lecturers are involved per course, it means that over 4000 people give up at least part of their summer break to teach the courses. Of course, they do not do so entirely out of the goodness of their hearts, and they are by no means reluctant contributors.

This article opened with the contention that the summer school is not so much the culmination of one trend but the beginning of another. If this new trend is to materialise and flourish, the institutions and people involved (both staff and students) must have some strong incentives. The statements made in this section are not based on statistics derived from the websites or selected summer schools. They are based on practical observations and experience.[1]

Let us discuss the added value that having a summer school brings: the advantages, both tangible and intangible, for the institution. First, a successful summer school will enhance its image and reputation. There are also practical benefits in terms of helping to get a new partnership off the ground or restoring balance to existing exchange programmes. There are financial benefits too: the institution can earn revenue, or at least offset losses, by renting out the short-stay accommodation (dorms), which would otherwise stand empty during the summer break. Depending on the business model applied, some of the revenue from the summer school can be channelled into central university funds. And as long as the usual quality control systems also apply to the summer programmes, there is no need to worry about how financial incentives might affect the academic quality. As icing on the cake, a summer school can also strengthen relationships with other institutions in the city or region (the summer programme is often the only project in which all interests can be fully reconciled because they appear to strengthen each other rather than be contradictory), while the local retail and hospitality industries will also have reason to be grateful. After all, the general tourist market is concentrated within a few major cities and regions. Most university cities have little to offer the casual tourist, whereupon the influx of summer school students can make a real difference.

Precisely the same considerations apply to the faculties, research groups and other departments of the institution. Many administrative arrangements are decentralised within a university, whereupon it is not unusual for faculties to be charged for the use of facilities and accommodation. They, too, will face losses if that accommodation stands vacant.

In addition, the summer school is often a useful recruitment and selection instrument for new Master's or PhD students, and can help to resolve any deficits in the knowledge of existing students. In short, there are many good reasons to have a summer school.

Are there any arguments against running a summer school? One possible objection is that it requires additional commitment from the staff. After all, "who wants to spend their summer holiday working?" True enough, not everyone is keen to do so, least of all those with school-aged children. However, experience suggests that staff who become involved in the summer school are hooked for life. They enjoy the experience so much they wish to repeat it year after year. They find the students to be motivated, keen to learn and hard workers. If the summer school invites guest lecturers, there will be opportunities to discuss joint research projects. The atmosphere on campus is often more relaxed and congenial during the summer months.

With regard to remuneration, no one is expected to work for nothing. Some summer schools pay their staff directly (over and above their regular salaries), some offer time in exchange to be taken at another time of year, while others provide a 'reserve fund', which the faculty members can use for various activities and resources. Moreover, anyone who does not wish to take part does not have to do so. To date, there have been no reported cases of 'conscription' or professors chained to their desks.

In short, there are many incentives and no significant disincentives. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that the summer school is a 'flash in the pan'. It is here to stay, a fact which provides every reason to pursue further quantitative and qualitative research into this interesting phenomenon.

Endnote:

1. Jeroen Torenbeek runs several courses, seminars and workshops on summer school organisation each year, as well as presentations for larger groups. The information in this chapter is largely drawn from his interaction with the field on these occasions.

CHAPTER 8
Conclusions

In Europe, the summer school has developed along its own lines. Because of the uniquely close connection to internationalisation strategies in European higher education institutions, there are clear differences between European summer schools and the traditional American third semester, and they are certainly not the same as the British 'extension model' schools. The European model is becoming dominant: short courses that are financially self-sufficient but not money spinners, and which carry credits towards a degree so that timely graduation and international experience go hand in hand.

The newly identified element – paid education rather than the exchange model – is what makes it so important to monitor and research the phenomenon further. This research should examine:

1. The precise number of summer courses being offered by accredited institutions of higher education and, where possible, the number of students they attract.
2. Ways in which quality can be assured.
3. The effects in terms of internationalisation: is the summer school supplanting the traditional exchange programme, or does it represent an additional influx of international students?
4. The appropriate credit value of courses.

Whether summer schools have been successful is not the question. Whether their growth will continue is not the question either. What must be determined is whether the summer school is taking the place of other instruments. Can their development be extrapolated and, if so, to what extent? And are there any bad apples in the barrel that require further work to maintain the quality of education for international students in Europe?

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