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DEVELOPING JOINT MASTERS PROGRAMMES FOR EUROPE

RESULTS OF THE EUA JOINT MASTERS PROJECT

MARCH 2002 - JAN 2004

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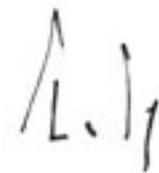
□ FOREWORD

The European University Association (EUA) believes that the Joint Masters Pilot Project was conceived and carried out at a particularly opportune moment. Joint Masters programmes are increasingly being looked to as innovative instruments to improve inter-institutional cooperation in Europe, and to respond to particularly European academic and labour market needs. This project has therefore offered the opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of the practical experiences and lessons learned from existing joint programmes being implemented by over 100 of our member universities across Europe.

At the same time, with progress towards the 2010 deadline for the realisation of the European Higher Education Area well underway, joint programmes offer a vision of integration at European level that is one step ahead of current Bologna reforms currently being implemented in their multiple national contexts. Awareness of the particular challenges that joint programmes have encountered – as models of profound Europe-wide cooperation in higher education – offers invaluable information and insight in relation to the most important issues that the Bologna process as a whole will have to face as it moves forward.

It has been a challenge for the universities involved in this project to develop such ambitious partnerships in a meaningful way in relative isolation. However, their success shows both the urgent need and potential that exists for intensifying cooperation at the European level as well as the additional benefits such collaborations bring.

EUA will make every effort to ensure that the growing level of public and political interest in joint Masters programmes act as an impetus for accelerating progress both towards the Bologna goals of increasing mobility, competitiveness and the employability of our graduates, and specifically in the realisation of joint degrees as a stable and significant feature of European higher education. The results of this pilot project show the commitment of universities to make this happen. We very much hope that Ministers for their part will fulfil their commitments as outlined in the Berlin Communiqué of September 2003.



Eric Froment
President, EUA

□ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was produced as the outcome of much hard work from a great deal of people. It is impossible to thank everyone who has contributed to the project, but EUA would first and foremost like to acknowledge the role played by the coordinators of the eleven joint Masters programmes, without whom there could have been no project. Keith Chapman deserves particular recognition for his assistance in preparing this report. EUA is also extremely grateful for the guidance and direction which has been provided by the project Steering Committee, and especially the tireless, creative and structured input and advice which has been consistently provided by the Chair, Jürgen Kohler. Special thanks also go to the graduate researchers from each network whose work enabled the project to take account of a broad range of experience and opinions within higher education communities. Finally EUA would like to thank the European Commission for showing trust and confidence at such an important stage in the Association's development to undertake such a complex project, and in particular, Peter Van der Hijden, who provided support whenever it was most needed.

David Crosier
EUA Senior Programme Manager

Kate Geddie
EUA Programme Officer

□ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EUA developed this project with the twin objectives of using the experience of joint programmes to find solutions to a range of issues in the European higher education landscape that need to be resolved for the Bologna process to be a success, and to gain deeper insight into how universities are realising a vision of European cooperation through joint programmes. By focusing upon cooperation at the level of Master programmes, the intention has been to shed light on variations in national interpretations of “new” Bologna qualifications, as well as to better understand the strategies pursued by institutions to resolve problems. Through working closely with 11 existing joint master programmes covering a wide range of disciplines and from as wide a geographical area as possible, both the benefits of joint master programmes as well as the difficulties which they face can now hopefully be better understood.

The project research has focussed on the following three main themes which were addressed through parallel processes of self-evaluation and qualitative research:

- quality assurance and recognition;
- student experience and mobility;
- curriculum integration and sustainability.

Main findings concern the benefits and added value of joint master programmes, obstacles in the European environment and opportunities which exist for future development.

The **benefits** that these structured joint programmes bestow on all higher education actors merit greater recognition. The added value of student mobility periods - in terms of the development of a range of social, linguistic and inter-cultural management skills - are often assumed, but do not occur naturally. This project has demonstrated that excellent conditions for joint study programmes have to be created through careful planning, and continually nurtured and supported by all actors, including governments and institutions. Through such positive collaboration, the learning process expands horizons not only for students, but also for academics and institutions who stand to gain in today’s competitive global landscape through European collaboration and mutual learning. As the Erasmus Mundus programme anticipates, Europe can also benefit enormously through the development of high quality joint master programmes, which have the potential to meet a wide range of European needs, and also to place European higher education as a reference for quality on the global map.

Obstacles to students, academics and institutions arise primarily from shortcomings in the existing arrangements for co-operation between European higher education systems. *The Recognition of joint degrees* is a fundamental issue, linked also to issues of *quality assurance* and *funding*. The recognition problem has been extensively discussed, and action is being taken to ensure that the Lisbon Recognition Convention is amended to include provision for fair recognition of joint degrees. This issue is also on national agendas for legislative reform following the pledge made by European Ministers of Education in the Berlin Communiqué to resolve the problem (September 2003). However, it is not only legal texts but attitudes that need to change - not merely to permit joint programmes to exist, but to encourage them to develop and flourish.

A range of issues also need to be addressed and solved by institutions - and indeed it is at the *level of institutional policy* where genuine commitment is required. Clear *internal quality assurance procedures* which are implemented across networks are needed, and *institutional responsibility* for students studying at several institutions needs to be defined. Unless institutions address these questions as part of their strategy to reform, develop and internationalise, the undoubted benefits which these programmes provide to students and academics will be clouded by a range of concerns.

It is clear from the project that there is *no one "ideal" model* of partnership: many patterns exist and are equally successful. Future networks must have the courage to create structures that work for them - whether or not they work for others. Attention to the "golden rules" provided at the end of this report should help new networks to focus their early discussions on key issues.

The *funding of joint masters programmes* is critical to their success. Bearing in mind the considerable variety in network structures, and recognising the diverse roles that partners may play in a consortium, the programme coordinators agree that the best means of ensuring sustainability would be to fund the costs for joint programmes at the level of networks. However, funding systems do not encourage this approach. Currently networks receive funding from a variety of sources (local, national and European) and funds are generally allocated for specific activities. Some of the unavoidable costs of successful network operation (international travel, administration, short-term accommodation etc) - which make joint programmes more expensive to develop and maintain than traditional programmes - have to be found from other institutional budgets. It is therefore vitally important that institutions are committed and aware of the benefits which these programmes offer.

Students face considerable costs in undertaking joint programmes, most of which must be self-financed due to the low levels of support generally available. This means that only students with sufficient personal financial means are able to participate in these courses. There is a risk that, unless targeted support for financially disadvantaged students is provided, such programmes will develop as the privilege of an elite class of students, and will fail to make much impact upon European higher education and society as a whole. The *inequity in fee structures* across Europe further aggravates these trends and needs to be tackled. These fundamental issues of inclusiveness and equity have as yet scarcely been addressed at policy level, and particular challenges arise in relation to new member and future accession states. Even if absolute numbers of students studying in joint master programmes remain small, the impact upon society can be significant if solutions are found to enable fair access to all on the basis of merit and potential.

A pioneering spirit has been used in all networks to address problems in the interests of students. Europe has now reached the stage where the results of this pioneering activity should be built upon to ensure that joint programmes are developed in a sustainable manner, and *opportunities are expanded for all* in Europe.

For further information on this project and report please contact David Crosier, EUA Senior Programme Manager (david.crosier@eua.be), and Kate Geddie, EUA Programme Officer (kate.geddie@eua.be).

1. INTRODUCTION

In early 2002 when the Joint Masters Project was first proposed to the European Commission for Socrates programmes funding, Joint Masters programmes were a poorly understood but interesting development on the landscape of European higher education. EUA had identified the promotion of inter-university cooperation as a pillar of future European higher education development in its first action plan, and wished to focus upon inter-institutional cooperation within Master programmes. The project builds upon outcomes of the EUA *Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe*, by Andrejs Rauhvargers and Christian Tauch, which highlighted the fact that Master degrees are loosely defined and vary considerably across Europe. The report also pointed to serious legal recognition difficulties for joint degrees, noting that bilateral arrangements are most frequent, and that joint degrees are more common at the Master and Doctoral level.

With interest in joint Master degrees increasing in Europe, and joint degrees seen as both potential catalyst and prototype for the future European Higher Education Area, EUA felt that it would be particularly important for institutions and supporting organisations to base policy decisions upon concrete experience, to build upon successful practice, and to focus attention on the main issues faced by joint programmes. In addition, despite the positive discourse regarding joint degrees, EUA recognised that no information source on joint programmes existed, and little research into the real benefits and challenges of such programmes had been undertaken. The EUA project therefore aimed to fill these important gaps.

During the duration of the project, the interest in joint degrees certainly heightened in Europe. This was undoubtedly due to the explicit reference made to the development of joint degrees by the Ministers of Education in their Bologna, Prague and Berlin Declarations, as well as the anticipated launch of the European Commission's Erasmus Mundus programme.

The purpose of the report that follows is manifold. Primarily, it aims to present the findings of the project, which are the experiences and practices of the participating programmes. However, understanding the growing political interest and general awareness of joint degrees has meant that the report broadens its scope to comment briefly on the proposed Erasmus Mundus programme and recognition issues that remain unresolved for joint degrees. The target audience for the report ranges from institutions and academics wishing to establish joint degrees in the future to policy makers interested in understanding the complex state of affairs surrounding joint Masters degrees in Europe.

2. PARTICIPATING NETWORKS

2.1 Selection Process

The selection phase began in March 2002 with a call for applications to consortia of institutions who offer well-established and successful programmes in partnership with at least three universities in three different countries. From 56 applications received, an independent panel of European higher education leaders selected 11 programmes in May 2002¹. The programmes were selected upon the basis of the criteria in the call - evidence of good practice in relation to Bologna objectives, a well-structured programme, transparent quality assurance procedures, a clear language policy - and particular emphasis was placed upon innovation in addressing issues in transnational cooperation. The selection also attempted to ensure wide geographical coverage; however, this proved to be difficult to achieve as very few programmes had partners in countries from Central and Eastern Europe, or from particular Western European countries - notably Greece. The selection panel also attempted to provide the project with as wide a range of disciplines as possible. This objective was largely achieved, although it was evident that the majority of established programmes came from social sciences and humanities.

The selected networks were:

- European Urban Culture (POLIS)
- European Construction
- Economics of International Trade and European Integration.
- Euroculture
- International Humanitarian Action
- International Management (CEMS)
- Law and Economics (EMLE)
- Labour Studies
- International Health Tropical Medicine
- Water and Coastal Management
- Comparative European Social Studies (MACCESS)

¹ Members of the Selection Committee: Jurgen Köhler, Former Rector, Greifswald University, Germany, (Chair); Michael Brown, Vice-Chancellor, Liverpool John Moores University, UK; Roger Downer, President, University of Limerick, Ireland; Adriano Pimpao, President, Portuguese Rectors' Conference; Andrejs Rauvhargers, Secretary General, Latvian Rectors' Conference; Carmen Ruiz-Rivas Hernando, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain; Christina Ullenius, President, Swedish Rectors' Conference.

3. PROJECT THEMES

The Launch Conference for the project was held on 20 September 2002 at the Fondation Universitaire in Brussels. The aim of this event was to introduce the project to the wider European higher education community and to give the eleven selected networks an opportunity to meet each other and discuss common issues, and it was at this meeting that the main themes for the project were finalised. 130 participants from over 100 universities, including five representatives from each of the eleven networks (including one student representative per network), presidents of many European national rectors' conferences, members of the European Commission, the project's Steering Committee members and EUA Secretariat attended this launch event.

At a meeting with the coordinators of the selected networks, it was agreed that the project should focus in detail upon three main themes:

- a) Quality Assurance and Recognition
- b) Student Experience and Mobility
- c) Curriculum Integration and Sustainability

4. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

A number of factors were taken into account in designing a methodology for information gathering and analysis that would provide useful outcomes both for the selected networks themselves, and for the wider European higher education community. It was felt important to begin by gathering basic comparative information on each programme in a form which was synthetic and transparent.

EUA also wanted to ensure that the project took account of the variety of perspectives of different actors concerned by joint programmes, including network coordinators, students, academics, administrators and employers. The project also attempted to develop a methodology which would not produce an enormous burden upon particular individuals, and which would allow dedicated staff – in particular the network coordinators – the space and opportunity to fulfil their vital functions within their network with as much enthusiasm and energy as in the past. In consideration of these factors, the following methodological tasks were devised:

4.1 Comparative Quantitative Network Information Gathering

Following the Launch Conference, a questionnaire was sent to all networks requesting basic programme information on procedures related to the project's three main themes. The outcome of the questionnaire was a comparative table, used by the networks as an internal reference document, that enabled basic comparisons of the different structures, models, and procedures of the eleven networks.

4.2 Qualitative Research

At the Launch Conference, it was agreed that practice within each network should be examined from a variety of perspectives. It was also agreed that the responsibility for an examination of each network should not fall exclusively upon network coordinators. Hence it was agreed to recruit a recent graduate of each programme, upon the recommendation of the networks, to undertake qualitative research.

The nominated joint programme graduates were invited to Brussels for a day of intensive training on the aims, objectives and practice of this qualitative research project, in particular upon methodological aspects of participant observation and to develop a commonly agreed upon interview structure. The research was undertaken from December 2002 to March 2003 and involved conducting a series of semi-structured interviews with different actors such as students, professors, institutional leaders, employers and programme administrators, working within a research framework focusing upon the three project themes. Most interviews took place by telephone, with face-to-face interviews conducted whenever possible. The information from these interviews was then analysed and collated, and presented in a report which was finalised for the inter-network meeting in Bilbao (see section 4.4).

4.3 Internal Network Meetings

Occurring concurrently to the qualitative research project, an internal meeting was organised within each network. These meetings were open to administrators and academics from each institution participating in the network, and were held between January and March 2003. The intention of these meetings was to provide network participants with an opportunity for self-examination along the project's three main themes. As an outcome of these meetings, each network produced reports highlighting examples of good practice and issues for discussion in Bilbao.

4.4 Inter-Network Meeting

Following the qualitative research and internal network meetings, a meeting involving all networks and qualitative researchers was held in April 2003, hosted by the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain. The purpose of this meeting was to compare the findings of these two strands of project activity, to identify shared good practice, as well as to highlight features of the European higher education landscape that present common challenges and require solutions.

5. PROJECT FINDINGS: BENEFITS, GOOD PRACTICE AND UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS

In addition to identifying the benefits that these programmes provide for students, academics and institutions, this report highlights good practice and problematic issues. Just as good practice may be drawn from one or several networks, not all of the “problematic issues” are relevant for all networks, and indeed in some cases issues may apply only to one particular network. Nevertheless, in case such issues may be of more widespread interest for future inter-institutional partnerships, they have been included. It is hoped that by shedding light upon such a broad range of good practice and problematic issues, the experience of these networks will prove to be valuable to the development of new programmes and the creation of the future European higher education area.

The selected networks have generally been operating for several years, and all the programmes have proved to be consistently attractive to students, as well as sustaining the enthusiasm of participating academics and administrative staff. Although many problematic issues have to be faced when examining the interaction of diverse higher education cultures, systems and institutions, the positive features of these programmes are worthy of considerable attention. All involved in these programmes tend to take for granted the quite remarkable learning opportunities which are provided to students, staff and institutions.

5.1 Benefits

From the student perspective, the benefits of participating in a joint Masters programme are immense. Studying in structured programmes that offer learning opportunities in another institution and country stimulates new ways of thinking and generates a wealth of new cultural opportunities, including the possibility to develop and extend language-learning skills and being exposed to new learning methods. Working with students and professors in multi-cultural environments enhances experiences of European culture and extends pan-European social and technological knowledge. Developing permanent network links across Europe assists future employment

prospects and, in this context, graduates’ CVs have considerable “added value.” There is no doubt that such learning experiences change lives, broaden intellectual horizons and offer new professional perspectives.

For academics, these programmes provide professional development opportunities outside their national context. The developed and tested ties within a network build solid bases for international cooperation. They can facilitate research contacts and enable exploration of complementarities in teaching and learning methods. Interaction is fostered between teaching and research in specialised areas and staff benefit from the exposure to different academic environments and traditions.

For institutions that make the choice to integrate joint Masters programmes as part of their strategic planning, they benefit from learning about policy and practice in other European institutions and countries, and place themselves at the forefront of European inter-university cooperation. They also have the opportunity to combine the diverse strengths of individual institutions, some of which may be small in size, and build a greater potential for specialised programmes with high quality teachers and infrastructure. An institution’s involvement in innovative and collaborative programmes may enhance its international reputation and attract new students.

And lastly for Europe, there are clear benefits from the further development of these programmes. They encourage the rapid implementation of all Bologna reforms, adding a sense of urgency to issues such as: comparable degree structures, degree recognition, a European dimension of QA, the use of ECTS and the Diploma Supplement. In addition, joint Masters programmes are able to respond directly to European professional development needs. They contribute to the retention of Europe’s best students, attract overseas students, and encourage cooperation with non-European institutions in the name of international understanding. Finally, they should lead to the develop-

ment of truly European citizenship and cultural understanding.

5.2 The Nature of Problems and Good Practice in Inter-institutional Cooperation in Europe

Despite these evident benefits for all actors, the history and development of these joint programmes has not been trouble-free. Networks have been obliged to find inventive and pioneering solutions to a range of obstacles thrown up by the confrontation of different systems and practices. Through encountering and tackling such obstacles, these networks are in many respects several steps ahead of the Bologna reform process in responding to a vision of integrated European higher education, and their success illustrates the potential and attractiveness of cooperation at European level.

However, the project has uncovered many problematic issues. These are generally not problems deriving from inadequate action within the networks, but rather the result of current incompatibility of European higher education structures. Individuals and groups within the networks – academic and administrative staff as well as students – have therefore been obliged to find pragmatic, ad hoc solutions to a number of issues that at best have been addressed only superficially at European level. Such solutions have generally proved successful in resolving difficulties in the short and medium term for particular networks, but if joint degrees are to become an important and sustainable feature of European higher education, considerable work remains to be done to overcome common challenges in a systematic way. At a fundamental level, the link between recognition, quality assurance and funding that is present in single degrees is much more problematical in the case of joint degrees.

5.3 Joint Degrees and Recognition of Qualifications

The EUA *Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe* highlighted the difficulties of institutions being unable to award genuine joint degrees, and as a case in point, none of the networks in this project are yet able to offer students a joint degree that is legally recognised in all its partner countries. In most cases, a national degree is awarded together with an additional certificate containing signatures from all the participating universities. The national degree has legal authority, but the certificate does not. In one network a joint degree is provided through a centralised agency; however, it is important to note that this degree is not legally recognised, but is recognised *de facto* by employers. In other cases, where the legal situation and formal regulations permit, a double degree can be awarded. There is wide agreement among actors that the current situation with the diversity of degrees and solutions is not appropriate. A European joint programme should surely lead to the award of a legally recognised joint degree.

Properly recognising joint degrees that are awarded through collaborating European higher education institutions should not be an insurmountable challenge. The main obstacle at the moment clearly lies at the level of legislation and regulations. While Ministers of Education have fully supported and encouraged the development of joint degree programmes, many have not succeeded in amending national legislation to enable institutions to award joint degrees. These changes need to be made immediately. However, even if all national legislation were to permit institutions to award joint degrees, it would not mean that all recognition obstacles have been removed, as some unanticipated obstacles have only recently become evident. For example, usual practice requires that a student be enrolled in *one* (and only one) institution in order for a qualification to be awarded. For “normal” study paths this condition is entirely reasonable. The inability to be enrolled in two institutions, however, creates a problem for

students participating in joint degrees. This example illustrates the need for careful consideration of the ways in which national legislation and institutional statutes interact, and to resolve problems that arise through the confrontation of systems that have developed without taking account of the potential development of joint programmes and degrees.

Significant work has already been undertaken to address these issues since they were first highlighted in the *EUA Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees*. Notably, the ENIC/NARIC networks have developed a draft Recommendation that seeks to codify the main recommendations of the *EUA Survey* into legal provisions applicable in the context of the Lisbon Recognition Convention as an appendix document to the Convention. This text was submitted to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee for adoption in June 2004.

The project also discovered that currently institutions are not taking full advantage of the Diploma Supplement as a tool to improve transparency and ensure a common understanding of programme content. As the Berlin Declaration in September 2003 made it a requirement for all institutions to use the Diploma Supplement by 2005, the widespread introduction and usage of the Diploma Supplement should help to clarify any recognition issues faced by institutions and employers. Nonetheless, there remains a need for much more information to be available to students and academics about the Diploma Supplement².

² *Special Measures for the promotion of ECTS and the DS*, European Commission's support mechanisms for ECTS and the Diploma Supplement, http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/ECdoc_on_the_promotion_of_ECTS-DS.1068807686692.pdf

6. DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING JOINT MASTERS PROGRAMMES

6.1 Curriculum Development

The first question that should be posed when considering the development of a new joint Masters programme is what subject would be proposed, and what academic value would be gained from approaching this field from a collaborative European perspective. The list of participating programmes in this project indicates a current tendency for joint programmes to address interdisciplinary topics. The considerable extra time and effort required to establish joint programmes is justifiable to advance knowledge and train students in a thematic issue that is not adequately addressed in one national context or from the perspective of a single institution.

The experience of this project also shows a tendency for joint Masters programmes to serve a particular professional need. The articulation of joint Masters programmes with future Doctoral studies seems a secondary issue to filling a specialised labour market role. The academic or vocational orientation of joint Masters is an issue to consider when proposing a new programme.

An additional issue not raised by the networks involved in the project, but clearly made by several Central and Eastern European participants of the final project meeting held at the Cluj conference, was that participating in joint programmes is an opportunity to benefit from the experience of others to modernise teaching and learning methods and new curricula, as well as to develop valuable inter-institutional contacts (see section 10).

6.2 Structural Models: Shape and Size

One of the questions faced in developing a new joint Masters programme concerns the ideal structure and number of partner institutions for a network. From the experience of this project, it seems clear that it is misconceived to expect to find a single, ideal model. A wide variety of issues need to be considered when developing appropriate structures for joint programmes. Each programme needs to maintain the goal of

providing rewarding academic and cultural experiences for students, and the main challenge is to create a coherent study programme which draws additional benefit from the diversity of academic systems and traditions. The chosen model and size of a network clearly has important implications which need to be considered thoroughly at an early developmental stage.

Within the networks in this project several structural models exist and a number of common features are displayed:

a) Larger networks (over 10 institutions):

- Students generally spend time at their home institution studying similar “modules” or “core courses”, before travelling abroad – usually for a semester;
- Programmes often feature a short “Intensive Programme” for all students;
- The level and intensity of involvement of different partner institutions ranges considerably. It is common practice to have several core universities offering basic courses, with partner institutions involved in recruitment and providing specific expertise.

b) Smaller size networks (less than 6-7 institutions):

- The structures of larger networks – core modules and intensive programmes, may also be found;
- In other programmes, which involve fewer institutions and a smaller student cohort (e.g. 20 students), the students move together to each of the participating institutions for a period of one semester throughout the programme.

Despite the small and diverse nature of the sample of programmes, certain patterns of network development have been identified. The majority of these programmes have tended to begin relatively small, and to expand – rather than to begin with a large number of partner institutions, and then to lose some along the way.

Network Administration and Communication

In the early stages of network development, communication and administration tend to be fairly informal among the small number of individuals involved. However, as issues arise within the programme, and as new partners show interest in joining, the need is perceived for more formal structures and procedures to be put in place, in order to ensure that high standards are maintained, and that programme administration is professionally managed. While such “informal” networks certainly bring advantages – in particular encouraging relationships of trust between different actors and partners – more formal structures seem unavoidable if networks are to survive in the long term. Formal structures provide a framework for regular meetings on such key issues as network coordination, curriculum planning, evaluation of student progression, and information dissemination. Especially with large networks, regular meetings are essential to monitor different aspects of the programme, and without regular human interaction of all partners, it is difficult to sustain enthusiasm and commitment. Particular attention should be paid to the machinery of administration to ensure that complex international and inter-institutional systems run smoothly.

Dynamic communication and regular meetings are important for another reason: European higher education institutions and systems are all in a process of transition, but a process which is moving from different points at somewhat different speeds. Institutions, academics, students and administrators involved in joint programmes will be among the first to be affected by change in national systems, and such shifting contexts affect the ability and means for different actors to play their role. For a programme to be able to chart a course of sustainable and coherent development in a period of such transition is a challenge not to be underestimated. Without a well-developed communication strategy, and the possibility for regular meetings, the challenge would be impossible to accomplish.

6.3 Common Standards

While all of the programmes develop their core modules using a credit-modular system, specifically ECTS in all networks, a number of common challenges are apparent in the use of a system which is not applied in a standard fashion across all institutions. ECTS has not solved all the difficulties of reaching a common understanding of learning objectives, and clearly there are significant differences in institutional behaviour to which students are sensitive. Occasionally there is felt to be repetition of contents during mobility periods, and more commonly students perceive that workload and grading standards are uneven across institutions. In the absence of joint degrees, this poses particular problems in terms of which institution(s) awards the degrees, as the difficulty of assuring common assessment standards - especially across larger networks - are significant. The use of an independent external assessor, whose role is to ensure compatibility of standards across courses and modules, has been found to be of benefit.

6.4 Length of Courses

Considerable debate is taking place in European higher education regarding the minimum and maximum length, expressed in terms of ECTS credits, for a Master’s degree. This debate is clearly far from being finally “resolved”, and is complicated by problems of terminology. For example, the diversity of interpretations of the term “Masters” in a period of rapid transition in Europe poses problems when combined with a relatively low level of awareness of differences in higher education systems and cultures. Hence a common terminology of “Masters” may often be hiding different realities, and assuming a common understanding where in fact what is signified is quite differently conceived.

While it is beyond the scope of this project to attempt to resolve these issues in the European arena, nevertheless many of the problems encountered by the different networks shed light

upon the nature of this wider “Bologna issue”. Moreover the problematic issues for particular networks cannot be adequately resolved unless these questions are better understood and addressed. Currently, an existing joint Master programme may produce quite different outcomes in terms of qualification according to the national system where the qualification is delivered or used, although some national systems attempt to standardise the level of the award in terms of its characteristic outcomes.

While the Bologna seminar in Helsinki (March 2003) agreed that the length of Masters degrees in Europe should normally be between 90 and 120 ECTS credits, and no less than 60, the joint Master programmes in this project range between 60–75 ECTS, generally taking 12–13 months for students to complete. Whether or not this pattern is likely to extend to future programmes is a matter of conjecture. However, it would seem wise at this moment for European governments to set a broad and flexible framework within which a variety of structural models can develop. Moreover, it should be the institutions in Europe that establish the relevant structural models on the basis of commonly agreed needs that the programmes set out to address. The overall framework should not be prescriptive nor restrict the capacity for institutions to act creatively in developing joint programmes. Within such a framework the institutions should be vested with the key role in deciding appropriate course structures, admission criteria and learning outcomes.

It would also be wise for discussion at European level to focus more upon reaching agreement on shared understanding of the level of a Masters qualification – addressing issues such as admission criteria and learning outcomes - rather than focusing upon a narrow discussion of length of programmes.

6.5 Funding Joint Masters Programmes

Funding for joint Master programmes is clearly a decisive factor affecting their success. The programmes within this project have all suffered in varying degrees both from inadequate funding, and from relying upon funding sources which are not adapted to their specific needs. If joint programmes are to become a significant feature of the European higher education landscape, funding issues will need to be addressed both at European level, but also in terms of national and institutional priorities.

One of the most critical issues regarding funding of joint programmes concerns distribution of resources. All of the networks suggest that it is principally at the level of the programme that funding could best be managed. This would allow those with relevant knowledge and experience of the resource expenditures in the programme to have more direct responsibility for financing. Administrative and academic staff working on the programme are the actors best able to identify where funding should be prioritised and where the greatest efficiency gains could be made.

Yet European, national and institutional funding structures currently dictate otherwise. Until now, European funds have been largely provided for particular activities – such as mobility – rather than for the broader costs of cooperation entailed within a joint programme. Meanwhile national authorities are essentially concerned with supporting national priorities for higher education. In times of fiscal restriction, “expensive” joint cooperation initiatives can be regarded as an easy target for reducing funding. In relation, many national authorities will not fund programmes that have not been nationally accredited, making their financial existence extremely difficult if not impossible. Institutions are increasingly judged upon success in meeting national performance criteria, and in such a context may find it hard to justify funding for seemingly elitist programmes which are only partially the responsibility of the institution.

Within institutions there is therefore a very real danger that joint programmes are marginalised, and regarded as peripheral activities.

Joint programmes incur specific, added expenses for activities such as: international meetings for curriculum development, planning, examinations and grading; funding of network support structures; short-term accommodation costs; travel costs to address course problems which may arise; as well as various university administration and overhead costs. The result of current funding structures is that the necessary financial support and needed flexibility is usually not available.

Current funding structures also fail to provide networks with incentives to involve institutions that are unable to make a substantial financial contribution – even if in other academic respects the institution would be an ideal partner. This has led to a situation where institutions in Central and Eastern Europe have so far been excluded from many of the networks. Likewise, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are also those who are least likely to benefit from joint programmes (see section 8.7). In planning a future European higher education area where joint degrees are a vital component, it is absolutely critical that measures are taken to ensure that the negative effects of a very uneven European higher education playing field are minimised.

The financial challenges facing existing and future joint Master programmes can be summarised as follows:

- There has been a tendency for joint programmes to be marginalised as peripheral activities inside institutions. Support at the level of institutions, and full integration at faculty level is essential;
- Specific funding for the development of joint programmes has been provided neither in national systems nor on a European level. Realistic strategies are therefore needed from institutions wishing to pursue such programmes;
- Due to lack of legal recognition of programmes in certain participating countries, national

funding may not always be available. This also necessitates realistic strategic measures from institutions;

- Lack of output-based incentive financing may restrict networks from developing, and hence their true worth and quality are not always fully recognised;
- Budgets between institutions vary greatly, as do the amount of resources (human, physical and financial) dedicated to programmes. Acceptance of the challenges of having a common programme across such diverse conditions is required from all partners, and support measures within networks to enable full participation from disadvantaged institutions is vital;
- At faculty level, extra departmental money to pay teaching staff or fund particular programme costs is difficult to procure;
- External sources of money, if obtained, may add administrative or “political” burdens or pressures, affecting the intrinsic goals and objectives of the programme;
- Stable and secure long-term funding of joint Masters degrees remains a major challenge.

6.6 Access Issues

At the level of institutions in Europe, it is crucial to address the effects of the diverse socio-economic conditions in which European higher education institutions operate. Access issues, however, extend beyond these questions of inequitable resource distribution for institutions and programmes, and also apply with regard to equal opportunities for individual students. If joint programmes are to be developed widely in Europe, mechanisms are needed to facilitate greater equality of opportunity, and to ensure that participation in joint programmes is not determined strongly by socio-economic considerations rather than by the individual’s potential to benefit from the opportunities such programmes afford.

Currently, and despite the considerable diversity in admissions practice (see section 6.8), the “social profile” of students recruited tends to be

rather homogeneous. While all Masters-level programmes in Europe tend to be dominated by middle-class students, such tendencies are even further exaggerated in joint programmes, which require significant financial contributions from individual students. Joint Masters programmes favour single, mobile and affluent students (de facto), and the marginal nature of joint programmes within institutions has perhaps contributed to the absence of compensatory support measures for students with particular needs (e.g. financial support for those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, child-care support).

6.7 Additional Costs to Students of Joint Masters Courses

Clearly joint Masters courses entail additional costs for students which have to be met either from public or private sources: mobility costs need to be covered, and relatively short-term accommodation costs have to be borne, which tend to be relatively higher than longer-term housing options. In addition, courses may charge fees which are higher than those for “traditional” courses in a national system. These financial considerations and constraints affect academic decisions of students in important ways:

Tuition Fees

The experience of many of the networks at this stage in their development is that local/national rules concerning tuition fees are adopted – rather than a common fee structure for the programme. As a consequence student fees vary greatly within as well as between networks. These differences in levels of tuition fees clearly affect students’ decisions to apply to programmes, as well as to which institutions they may wish to study during mobility periods. Students within these programmes are particularly sensitive to the unfairness of current tuition fees and funding arrangements in Europe, finding them neither comparative nor coordinated. For the programme management, the differential fees may cause uneven numbers of

enrolments, causing difficulties for future financing of the programme.

Mobility Periods

An issue often coupled with the consideration of different tuition fee levels is the variation in costs of living in Europe for the participating students. This financial consideration may be the primary factor dictating the choice of where (or whether) to go abroad, rather than the consideration of which institution offers the best academic opportunities for the student. Again, the uneven enrolments figures that this factor may provoke are problematic for the long-term viability of many programmes.

Financial Support to Students

Many anomalies and restrictions exist in current student funding arrangements. For example, due to the variance in fees and costs and eligibility conditions based on home of residency or “home” institutions, students studying at the same two institutions but in a different order may experience considerable difference in costs.

In general, Erasmus funding is the only source of support to mobility costs. While very welcome, it is generally perceived to be insufficient and unreliable. In addition, Erasmus funding tends to lead to social and regional selectivity and is often received by students after the period of study in which they need it. The Erasmus Mundus programme supported by the European Commission will be a welcome source of funds for non-European students. Undoubtedly, however, there remains a lack of secure and reliable funding sources for European students to participate in such programmes.

6.8 Admission Criteria

Some networks operate successfully with one set of entry criteria, application forms and admission procedures, often available through a common website. However many networks currently use decentralised admissions systems. It is

clear that such decentralised procedures for joint programmes pose a number of problems. They tend to result in considerable variation in entry conditions and different interpretation of admission criteria across institutions. Decentralised administration is also seen as a main reason for difficulties in obtaining clear information on the available programmes, particularly when partial or variable information on the same programme is found on several university websites. Moreover, as has been outlined earlier, different interpretations of first and second cycle degree structures across countries make comparable admission criteria difficult to establish.

Students are certainly very sensitive to unfairness in such systems – as it is commonly perceived to be easier or more difficult to gain access in some institutions/countries than in others. A centralised admission process or harmonised procedures across institutions is therefore a strong recommendation to emerge from the project.

6.9 Language Policy

Wanting to support European language diversity but struggling with the practical implementation of curriculum and administrative issues in multiple languages, especially with given financial constraints, has meant that most networks in this project have elected to use one main language, namely English, for instruction. Many networks nonetheless strive to offer additional courses in the various “local” languages, and students must find solutions to research material needs in varying linguistic environments. Language learning is considered an important aspect for most students participating in these programmes, and irrespective of the language of instruction, it is agreed that networks should strive to support language learning before and during mobility periods.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE

7.1 Significance for Joint Masters Programmes

Questions regarding quality assurance procedures and practice posed considerable challenges within the project. Indeed even the issue of whether quality assurance should be a priority theme was itself the subject of considerable discussion at the outset of the project. The divergence of views on whether or not quality assurance merited priority consideration is undoubtedly related to the diverse experience of systems of quality assurance across European countries. Academic experience of quality assurance systems in Europe is also relatively recent. Most national quality assurance systems have been set up during the last decade and are still evolving, at a time when the majority of the joint programmes within this project were also being established. Consideration of interaction with national quality systems was understandably not a matter at the forefront of thinking for the academics and institutions involved in setting up these programmes. Meanwhile the development of internal "quality culture" within some institutions is also at a relatively early stage along the path of becoming embedded within core institutional policy and practice.

By the end of the project, however, the reflection on quality assurance had deepened and the views within the group of coordinators had evolved considerably. Yet it would also be fair to say that this is the thematic area where it was most difficult to find agreement about what action should be taken at European level. There was, nonetheless, consensus that some form of accreditation should be developed that could at least testify to the "Europeanness" of the programmes.

Quality assurance of joint programmes is recognised as being important for the same reasons as with all other forms of higher education provision and services. Firstly it is required to ensure confidence in the standard of qualifications awarded, and to improve the quality of academic provision. In addition, quality assurance plays an important role in giving public accountability that funds invested in the university are being correctly used.

External quality assurance should also assure the university that it is performing at the correct level - a matter which is increasingly important in the European context. Quality assurance systems can also play an important role in ensuring transparency to the labour market.

7.2 Responsibility for Quality of Joint Programmes

In the case of single degrees awarded by single universities the responsibility for quality assurance is simple to pinpoint, and indeed the Berlin Communiqué highlights the fact that the primary responsibility for quality rests with the institution awarding the degree. The institution is of course obliged to act in conformity with national regulations and work with relevant quality assurance agencies. However, national quality systems are very differently conceived, and actors take diverse approaches to their tasks, depending on how they answer such basic questions as "what is quality in higher education, and how can it be improved?"

This poses problems with regard to joint programmes. To date, no national agency has developed principles and practice which can be applied to quality assurance of joint programmes, taking into account the specific transnational nature of these programmes, and the shared responsibilities for matters such as course development, delivery and student services. In addition, most quality assurance agencies accredit/evaluate programmes rather than the institutions that offer them.

Given this reality, the principle which has been applied to the joint programmes in this project is that the university awarding the degree is responsible for the quality assurance of the course, although in one programme this responsibility is held by the programme committee, which has representatives from the partner universities.

Regarding internal quality assurance, all of the programmes have developed mechanisms to ensure feedback from students. Student views are canvassed and carry considerable importance in developing all aspects of the programme. Such

positive student participation is a good practice feature of these programmes which merit particular attention in the European higher education arena.

As long as legally recognised joint degrees are not being awarded, current practice with regard to quality assurance would appear to be sufficient - and many within these networks believe that the added value of joint programmes is not being sufficiently recognised in current quality assurance procedures. The question therefore arises as to what kind of quality assurance system should evolve if joint degrees - and not just joint programmes - are to become a reality in Europe.

One reason that a new approach to quality assurance for joint degrees would be desirable is that it may help to address the vexed problem of level of qualifications. At the moment, although European systems are all aiming to provide easily readable and understandable higher education qualifications, lack of transparency in national systems makes comparable understanding difficult. While projects such as the Tuning Project have achieved a great deal in demonstrating that it is possible to reach broad agreement across institutions in Europe on learning outcomes to be expected from first cycle qualifications, there is much more to be done before automatic acceptance of qualifications in Europe is the norm³.

Equally, the question "what is a Master degree?" poses enormous difficulties. Although some countries have a defined set of descriptors for this level of qualification, many countries in an early phase of structural reform towards the Bologna model still have a tendency to consider the Master degree as the second phase of an integrated Bachelor-Master programme. In such systems, joint Master programmes are often viewed as leading to a specific qualification which is outside the traditional range of national qualifications, and therefore of relevance only to graduates who have completed a "normal" Master programmes. Yet if this understanding is not shared across all participating countries in a programme, confusion

arises. For the same programme, some institutions will be recruiting students who have completed a bachelor degree, and others students who have already completed a Master degree, and clearly this has an impact on all other aspects of course provision. At a time when the European higher education landscape is in this process of flux, and there are such different national interpretations of terminology, joint programmes often find themselves trapped by the confusion.

While these wider questions need to be addressed at European level, for joint programmes at the moment it is recommended that:

- The principle is upheld that the institution(s) awarding the degree is/are responsible for quality - in line with the principles stipulated by their national systems;
- Partners are bound by jointly agreed requirements.

It is also recommended that further work should be pursued by interested university partners, preferably under the auspices of EUA, to examine how European quality assurance for joint programmes could be developed.

³ For more information on the Tuning Project, refer to: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/tuning/tuning_en.html

8. GOLDEN RULES FOR NEW JOINT MASTERS PROGRAMMES

The EUA Cluj Conference in September 2003, where the preliminary results of the Joint Master project were tentatively presented for the first time, highlighted the fact that interest in joint degrees is extremely high and growing among European universities. This may be partly the result of much “high level” talk about the importance of developing joint degrees, and in part the effect of anticipating the launch of the European Commission’s Erasmus Mundus programme⁴. Many universities in Central and Eastern Europe also expressed their desire to become active partners in new joint programmes, and to use such opportunities to modernise their curricula and improve cooperation with western European institutions.

It can be expected that many universities will be looking to develop new joint Master degree programmes. It is hoped that this report will be of some assistance to those starting this process. Encouragement mixed with some cautious advice is offered in the following golden rules:

1 Know why you are setting up the programme

New programmes should think very carefully of their motivation. Is there a gap at national or European level which needs to be filled? Is a joint programme the most appropriate mechanism? What is the anticipated academic value-added?

2 Choose your partners carefully

There can be many different ways of finding institutional partners, and the choice may have extremely important effects, extending beyond the initial reasons for establishing a programme. Strong communication and trust is essential to develop common learning objectives and standards. Communication is also important in ensuring that all study periods at partner institutions are fully recognised. Consider issues such as how many institutional partners would make sense for the programme, and how similar or diverse the institutions should be.

3 Develop well-defined programme goals and student-learning outcomes with your network partners

For a network to be balanced, it is important that all partners are involved in developing and defining the programme goals. As well as being part of a common learning process, it is much easier to identify with a programme in which all intellectual contributions are valued - rather than simply taking part in the implementation of a ready-made concept/product. This implies the establishment of an effective joint curriculum, tailor-made for its purpose. It is important to ensure, through curriculum arrangements, that all students have the opportunity to study in at least two different countries.

4 Make sure that all the institutions (and not just academic colleagues) fully support the goals and objectives of the programme

Institutional support of all partners is essential from the outset if a programme is to have a long-term future. At an absolute minimum this should require a letter of support from the Rector outlining the tangible contributions which will be made by the institution, such as commitment to staff and students in the programme and financial support. Such a letter of commitment should be renewed periodically.

5 Ensure that sufficient academic and administrative staff resources are involved in the programme

The burden of work should not fall entirely upon the shoulders of a minority of dedicated staff. Involvement of a wider group of staff within an institution will help to maintain institutional commitment. Since teaching staff mobility is also fundamental to these programmes, consider the effects of staff absences upon normal curricula. Consider the consequences if a key player within the institution were to change post. Would the institutional commitment remain? If not, the staff

⁴ For more information on Erasmus Mundus, please refer to: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

base for sustainable development is certainly not sufficiently broad.

6 Ensure that a sustainable funding strategy for the programme is in place

Such a strategy should think about resource-management issues not at the level of individual institutions but across the network as a whole. Are resources within the network sufficient? Are they equitably distributed? Is it possible to do more to support partners facing particular difficulties?

7 Take care that information about the programme is easily accessible to students

Comparable information should be provided to students from all participating institutions. In addition to course information and admission criteria and procedures, requirements in terms of mobility should be specified, including how issues such as accommodation should be addressed, and clear information should be provided about the qualification/degree that will be awarded. Consideration should be given to accessibility for economically disadvantaged and physically disabled students.

8 Organise and plan sufficient meetings in advance

Developing a joint programme takes time. Sufficient meetings should be foreseen for network partners to develop ideas together and to assess collaboratively the coherence of the study programme. Make sure that there is agreement on learning outcomes, use of ECTS (including a common value of a credit), and use of the Diploma Supplement. Where there are doubts about how to use these instruments, make sure that learning processes are in place and information is available.

9 Develop language policy and encourage local language learning

The programme will need to make decisions about the language(s) of instruction, as well as about how to best exploit opportunities for students to learn languages during their programme. Questions about language should not be an afterthought of curriculum planning, but a central consideration. Linguistic preparation of mobility periods is an effective way of involving colleagues and departments within institutions, and a variety of language-learning techniques and approaches are possible.

10 Decide who is responsible for what

A clear division of tasks and responsibilities will help networks to function effectively. Not all institutions need to have the same level of involvement in programmes, and diversity of contributions can allow the network partners to focus upon particular strengths. A clear division of labour will help to ensure that there is minimum duplication of tasks as cost and time efficiency will be important to achieve. Often this may be achieved by the establishment of a centralised agency to administer the programme, operating under the generalised control of the network partners.

9. ATTRACTIVENESS OF JOINT MASTER PROGRAMMES OUTSIDE EUROPE

9.1 Potential

One of the factors driving the interest in developing new joint programmes is the belief that such programmes will be extremely attractive to students from outside Europe. While this issue has not been an explicit concern of this project – the primary interest being rather to examine the actual and potential role of joint programmes to enhance cooperation within Europe – there are several points which merit consideration in this context.

Firstly, a number of the programmes within the project already attract considerable numbers of applications from students outside Europe. While statistical information on relative student numbers from outside Europe has not been collected, such interest is often related to the subject matter of the programme, as well as the information strategies of the programmes and institutions involved. Master programmes with an explicit international vocation are, for example, more likely to attract overseas interest than programmes which aim to address a specific European professional objective. While the content of programmes should have universal relevance, it is worth bearing in mind that the focus of some European programmes may not necessarily attract large numbers of non-European students.

A second reason for the majority of programmes to have focused more upon students within than outside Europe is that students outside Europe often face additional administrative obstacles. While it may be straightforward (albeit time-consuming, burdensome, and costly) to organise a visa for one country of study, it can be extremely complicated to organise a visa for travelling to a second country for a period of study, for example, of one semester. When European countries are so demanding with regard to visa requirements, it is not surprising that international students would choose more straightforward study options, and that institutions offering joint programmes would not prioritise international students.

Although the main interest of the networks within this project has been to promote joint Masters programme development and inter-institutional cooperation within Europe, it is true that effort is needed to improve information and marketing. The network coordinators all agree that a central information point and database for joint Master programmes is needed in Europe, and EUA has been encouraged to pursue this question. Not only students outside Europe, but also students outside European Union countries, face particular difficulties in obtaining clear information about courses, as well as precise information about matters such as tuition fees, the general cost of living, procedures for visa application, sources of grants and scholarships etc. Lack of information, combined with the high tuition and mobility costs in some countries for third-country applicants (non-EU students) undoubtedly has a major deterrent effect on potential students. The need for clear and simple procedures and information is evident.

The situation is clearly set to change with the launch of Erasmus Mundus. While there is a great deal of positive potential, it is to be hoped that no damage will be done to those European programmes whose main target audience is within Europe, which are of great worth and merit European support. Altering the nature of such a programme as a result of pressure to attract students from outside Europe may not be the best rationale for curriculum development.

9.2 Challenges for Erasmus Mundus

While this EUA project was conceived and developed independently of the Commission's concept for the Erasmus Mundus programme, nevertheless the findings of this project may be useful in the early stages of development of Erasmus Mundus - not least through illustrating what is currently possible to achieve through joint Masters programmes, and where existing potential needs to be strengthened. EUA welcomes the opportunities that will be provided through Erasmus Mundus to increase institutional cooperation

both within Europe and with the wider world. A programme focused upon the role of European higher education in the global context is extremely timely - recognising the central role that higher education needs to continue to play in the future development of a Europe of knowledge.

New opportunities for developing inter-institutional cooperation in Europe are extremely welcomed. However, given the high costs of developing and running joint programmes, it is nevertheless regrettable that such a small share of the resources in the Erasmus Mundus programme has been set aside to assist institutions with additional running costs, and to help academics in the process of joint curriculum development. The annual sum of 15,000 for each selected network will make little impact into the additional costs incurred by a network to provide high quality courses, and will probably be insufficient to stimulate and sustain major programme development. As joint Masters programmes currently provide opportunities only for a small minority of students, it is therefore quite possible that, without funding incentives and opportunities for institutions, the phenomenon of joint programmes may prove to be relatively short-lived, rather than a central feature of a European Higher Education Area.

As an outcome of this EUA joint Masters project, three key challenges for Erasmus Mundus can be identified:

■ **Challenge of Equity**

As Erasmus Mundus is being launched in a year when the European Union opens up to ten new member states - mainly in Central and Eastern Europe - it provides an important opportunity to make this new European reality visible in the global context. However, this can only be achieved by addressing questions of equity, as many institutions and students from these accession countries are currently excluded from such joint programmes solely because of financial disadvantage. Indeed one of the notable features of this Joint Masters project was that the response to

the call came overwhelmingly from networks of institutions in Western Europe.

Specific attention is therefore required to address the challenge of how to ensure that Central and Eastern European institutions and students are fully integrated into European higher education programmes, and this is particularly important for a flagship programme launched at a time of European expansion. While many countries of Central and Eastern Europe are economically under-developed, higher education has many strengths which deserve to be more better known. Moreover the number of talented students with the ability to benefit from learning opportunities in other European institutions is as high in the east and the south as it is in the north and the west. Bearing these factors in mind, a number of measures should be considered:

- **Geographically balanced selection of networks:** Erasmus Mundus selection should encourage an overall geographical balance of institutions. There is no reason why this should not be possible while also maintaining a focus on high standards of academic quality;
- **Targeted financing for students from low socio-economic status backgrounds within Europe:** The Erasmus Mundus programme proposes to spend considerable public funds on third-country student grants (i.e. for students from countries outside the European Union), irrespective of students' financial needs. While this policy can be justified on many grounds – especially to make European higher education attractive to third-country students – it may also pose problems by exacerbating inequitable student funding within programmes. As existing funding for European students is likely to amount on average to less than one-tenth of the resources provided for each third-country student, the perception of unfairness to which students are extremely sensitive may develop even further. It is therefore vital for a number of reasons to address the question of how talented but financially disadvantaged students within Europe, and especially those

from Central and Eastern Europe, can be supported to participate in the new “European Masters” programmes.

■ Challenge of Transition

The relationship between joint Masters degree courses and the proposed Erasmus Mundus Masters courses is one which requires consideration. It is possible that in some respects many well established networks will not comply with the selection criteria developed for Erasmus Mundus and this is likely to be most obvious in areas where legal obstacles prevail in national systems, for example in the offering of joint or double degrees. It would be unfortunate if the systems developed by the networks to find ways around these obstacles were found to be incompatible with selection criteria. It is important that no damage is done to long-standing joint programmes that have developed their own innovative solutions to various obstacles, and yet initially may not comply with the criteria imposed by Erasmus Mundus.

■ Challenge of Quality

Erasmus Mundus is intended to become a world-wide-recognised symbol of high academic quality for European Masters courses. The concept of a European Masters is innovative and will be developed during the programme, yet it is clear already that selection of high quality courses will provide major challenges. How is quality to be recognised? Who is capable of recognising it? What features need to be looked at? Can quality be seen from paper applications? Is it possible to compare the quality of joint programmes addressing different disciplinary and thematic areas? These are just a sample of the difficult challenges which any selection process will confront.

The EUA Joint Masters project has examined in considerable detail the issues regarding quality assurance for joint programmes. It is clear that institutional responsibility for ensuring the quality of programmes needs to be strengthened, and thought also needs to be given as to how

the value-added of European cooperation can be adequately recognised. At the same time, care should be taken to avoid the creation of separate quality assurance systems for European joint programmes which are expensive to operate, and impose a burden of bureaucratic requirements which would stifle the enthusiasm and creativity of staff. On the contrary, it is to be hoped that the pioneering work of such staff will now be adequately rewarded.

□ APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: RECOMMENDATIONS ON JOINT DEGREES MADE TO MINISTERS IN BERLIN

Berlin Conference of European Higher Education Ministers, 19 September 2003

Recommendations of the working group “Joint Degrees: A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area”

Chair: Professor Roderick Floud, Vice-Chancellor, London Metropolitan University, EUA Board member

The working group, attended by governmental, university and student representatives, was informed by presentations of the EUA Joint Masters Project by David Crosier and the perspective of ESIB (National Unions of Students in Europe) by Birgit Lao. The discussions reached the following recommendations which were reported to Ministers in the final plenary session:

1. Ministers should endorse the ENIC/NARIC proposals to supplement the Lisbon Recognition Convention to define and incorporate joint degrees. This implies that all Bologna countries should now ratify the Lisbon Convention and modify it according to the ENIC/NARIC proposal.
2. In most countries, amendments to legislation will still be required to permit the awarding of joint degrees. We recommend that Ministers should take immediate action to do this. This will avoid in future the current situation in which several degrees may have to be awarded to a student for the same programme of study.
3. We recommend that Ministers should encourage joint degrees where they offer added value above single institution programmes. However, Ministers should recognise that development and maintenance costs are high and will need support. Ministers should consider mechanisms to assess and cover these additional costs. Such assessment needs to be done on a transnational scale to ensure that resourcing is roughly similar in all participating institutions.
4. Mobility is expensive for individuals as well as for universities. We ask Ministers to support the portability of grants and loans for students and the transfer of social benefits for staff. This may require action by other ministries, such as those concerned with social security.
5. We consider that joint programmes are not required in all fields. Ministers may wish to work with universities to identify specialist fields in which the European need and benefit is particularly strong, but where only a small number of people will participate in each country: an example is the successful Masters course in International Humanitarian Assistance. Other examples are likely to be in similar professional or vocational areas, where student mobility may be limited. We therefore have to be flexible in determining periods of study abroad, while recognising that study in other learning environments is a major benefit of joint degree programmes.
6. We therefore urge Ministers to define the “European dimension” in terms of meeting the European need for educated, trained and employable people. This links with the need to develop European scientists to meet the requirements of the ERA. It also requires specific encouragement to develop joint degrees, on a basis of equal partnership, with countries in central, eastern and south-eastern Europe.”

APPENDIX II: MAIN EVENTS DURING THE PROJECT

Call for projects

The call for networks was launched in March 2002, with a deadline of 15 June 2002.

Selection Committee

The Selection Committee met on 12 July 2002 in Brussels to assess the 57 network applications received by EUA. During the day, the Selection Committee which was comprised of Jurgen Köhler, Former Rector, Greifswald University, Germany, (Chair); Michael Brown, Vice-Chancellor, Liverpool John Moores University, UK; Roger Downer, President, University of Limerick, Ireland; Adriano Pimpao, President, Portuguese Rectors' Conference; Andrejs Rauhvargers, Secretary General, Latvian Rectors' Conference; Carmen Ruiz-Rivas Hernando, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain ; and Christina Ullenius, President, Swedish Rectors' Conference, selected the 11 networks to participate in the project.

Launch Conference

130 participants from over 100 universities attended the Launch Conference in Brussels on 20 September 2002. Among this group included five representatives from each of the 11 networks, including one graduate student, members of national rectors' conferences and the Bologna Follow-Up Group, other interested university leaders, and media met to launch the project and discuss the main issues upon which to focus the project.

Research Training Day

The 12 graduate researchers met in Brussels on 9 December 2002 for a day to explore the methodology and elaborate a common research structure for their individual qualitative research projects.

Internal Network Meetings

Each project held a meeting between January and March 2003 to explore the main issues within the project.

Inter-Network Meeting

The Inter-Network Thematic meeting gathered representatives from all 11 networks and the EUA Steering Committee at the University of Deusto, Bilbao 14–15 April 2003. Each network had three representatives, and in addition the authors of the qualitative research reports also participated. The meeting was organised into plenary and workshop discussions, and compared experience on all of the main project themes, based mainly upon the 22 network reports (1 internal network meeting report + 1 qualitative research report x 11) prepared in advance.

Coordinators Meeting

Following the Inter-Network meeting in Bilbao, the Network Coordinators were keen to follow up discussion of common issues which had become apparent through the project. They were also interested in exchanging views on the future Commission Programme, Erasmus Mundus, and hence a meeting was organised on 20 June 2003 in Brussels. The morning session of this meeting was largely devoted to a discussion of the development of a concept of a "network of networks" to extend beyond the lifetime of the project, as well as to organising contributions to the content of this report and other findings of the EUA project. Officials from the European Commission responsible for the Erasmus Mundus Programme were invited to the afternoon session for a discussion upon the conception and development of this programme.

EUA Conference on Joint Degrees

This conference held in Cluj-Napoca, Romania at the Babeş-Bolyai University 23–25 October 2003 offered an opportunity for members of the European higher education community to share information and experience in developing collaborative work together. It also offered the coordinators an opportunity to pursue their discussion of the contents of this final report, to develop the "network of networks" concept, to update discussion upon future programmes such as Erasmus Mundus and to consolidate ideas to be reported as findings of the project.

APPENDIX III: EUA JOINT MASTERS NETWORKS

1. European Urban Culture (POLIS)

The MA in European Urban Cultures (POLIS) offers a specialised programme aimed at graduate students from Europe and elsewhere with undergraduate degrees in subject areas such as social sciences, cultural and leisure studies, art, design and architecture, urban theory and planning, and cultural marketing and management. The minimum requirements for entry are a related undergraduate diploma or degree, together with good proficiency in English.

It is a full-time postgraduate degree (1 year MA of 70 ECTS) jointly developed by four universities; the University of Tilburg, (Netherlands); the Flemish Free University of Brussels (Belgium); the Manchester Metropolitan University (UK) and the University of Art and Design Helsinki (Finland). The programme is organised through four residency periods in each of the four universities to which the students travel and one thesis period.

The Department of Geography in Brussels introduces the element of European Studies (an introduction to contemporary European development, social and political change), European Social Geography and the European Institutions in Brussels through lectures, field work and excursions. The Department of Leisure Studies at Tilburg University introduces the perspective of Global Urban Culture (global economic and cultural restructuring), Culture: Consumption and Management (cultural participation and social inequality) and introduces cases of cultural projects in relation to urban regeneration that the students study through field work. The Department of Sociology in Manchester introduces the aspect of Culture, Conflict and the City (production and consumption of culture in the city) and Popular Urban Cultures. Finally the University of Art and Design Helsinki introduces the notion of project and process in relationship to urban form and the perspective of 'what if' thinking through scenarios in planning.

At Masters level, the course creates a synergy between different existing disciplines that only together can contribute to the contemporary praxis of urban development, particularly to urban regeneration projects. The philosophy behind the development of the MA EUC was to address the need for a programme which brought together the interdisciplinary expertise to examine contemporary issues relating to the importance of cultural change in urban development and regeneration in Europe. At the same time, cities carry the major part of the burden of the transformation of Western European cultures into poly-cultural societies.

In order to fully exploit the innovative and supportive role of culture in European urban development it is necessary to develop new knowledge and a new professionalism, able to cross the boundaries between a variety of disciplines normally kept apart. Here, one might think in particular of the disciplines of art and design, culture and leisure theory, urban and spatial planning, and marketing/management.

Finally, in order for this professionalism to promote an open, poly-cultural attitude, it needs to be based in a cross-cultural educational experience. At the same time, such an experience contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and skills across Europe with regard to the role of culture in urban development policies.

Quality assurance is provided through the system of an external examiner, who takes part in the theses presentations and the board meeting that awards the final marks.

Contact point:

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(University of Art and Design Helsinki)

2. European Construction

This programme originated in 1988 and was derived from the increasing impetus for the construction industry to become pan-European. Construction companies, supply chains, professional designers and engineers now operate in an international environment and need to adopt a European approach to their operations. There is a need for construction personnel to be truly versatile in European operations and to understand national operating characteristics.

The course requires periods of residence and study in more than one country to undertake learning organised by staff from several countries. The overall intention is to strengthen the European construction industry in relation to world-wide competition and a further aim is to develop contacts between European construction professionals through staff mobility, thus enabling the development of joint research and development projects. The programme's objectives are to develop in students the following attributes:

- technical and management skills in order to hold directive posts in European construction;
- knowledge of European construction practice and issues and solutions to common construction problems;
- knowledge of the legal and economic framework of the European construction industry;
- awareness of the environmental context of the European construction industry's operation;
- awareness of construction practices in countries other than their own;
- abilities in independent investigation and research;
- multi-cultural teamwork skills, thus facilitating the mobility of construction professionals across Europe;
- communication skills, developed in part through the use of English as a common technical medium.

The course requires full-time attendance for a twelve-month period or, through a mix of full-time and part-time attendance, for eighteen

months. In the full-time mode, students study for notionally 45 weeks, spread over three academic terms. The programme is divided into two stages.

Stage 1 is delivered over thirty weeks of full-time study. It consists of two twelve-week terms and a six-week period of supervised private study. Successful completion of Stage 1 entitles the students to a Postgraduate Diploma. Stage 2 is completed by the submission of a Project Dissertation. This requires full-time attendance for a further 15 weeks, or it may be studied part-time over thirty weeks. Attainment of the requisite number of credits from Stage 1 together with the successful completion of the Stage 2 Project Dissertation entitles students to the Masters degree.

The partners in the network (as at March 2004) are: Coventry University (United Kingdom), Universidad de Cantabria (Spain), Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain), Universidade do Porto (Portugal), Politecnico di Bari (Italy), Fachhochschule Nordostniederachsen, Buxtehude (Germany), and Universidad Politecnica de Valencia (Spain).

Staff from these universities devise the curriculum and deliver the programme, either during the taught modules at the two centres for the first two terms (Coventry and Valencia), or in their own universities through supervision of the project dissertation. The input from each partner is not necessarily equivalent. Some, for example, host the students, others do more teaching, and others solely supervise projects. The differing inputs are accounted for in the financial sense by a redistribution of the surplus of income over expenditure at the year-end, in accordance with an agreed formula.

European students pay a standard tuition fee of around 4000 Euros. This fee contributes towards the costs of course operation and secretarial support. The course is supported by the Socrates/Erasmus programme of the EU which means that

students can benefit from financial support for their mobility, where appropriate.

The course is operated by a centralised European Construction Masters Agency, based at Coventry University, which is staffed by a permanent coordinator. Her responsibilities include the organisation of staff and student mobility, preparation and submission of examination papers and assignments, arrangements for student applications, information, enrolments, and other documentation. The programme operates under standard UK quality assurance systems, which involves the use of external examiners, preparation of programme specifications, and other matters.

On successful completion of the course, the MSc in European Construction from Coventry University is awarded, together with an additional certificate signed by the partner universities and identifying the locations of study.

Contact point:

Keith Chapman – k.chapman@coventry.ac.uk
(Coventry University)

3. Economics of International Trade and European Integration

As a result of fundamental changes in the international trading environment associated with European integration and economic renewal in Central and Eastern Europe, the universities participating in the programme acknowledged the need for their economic and management faculties to develop European joint educational initiatives. The programme is essentially geared to students interested in careers in research, in government and international organisations, and in research and strategy departments of large banks and industrial and commercial corporations.

The programme is presently organised by a consortium of 7 partner universities: University of Antwerp (Belgium), Free University of Brussels, VUB (Belgium), Prague University of Economics (Czech Republic), Staffordshire University (UK),

Universidad de Cantabria (Spain), Università degli Studi di Bari (Italy) and Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille, Lille 1 (France).

The programme leads to an *MA in Economics of International Trade and European Integration*. The diplomas are jointly awarded by the partners and are signed by the Rector, President or Vice-Chancellor of each partner university. The programme was recognised as an innovative and high quality course by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the UK when they reviewed Staffordshire University's postgraduate and undergraduate Economics Programmes and ranked them as "excellent" with a maximum score of 24 out of 24.

In the first term students may study at either Staffordshire University in the UK or Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille, Lille 1 in France. At the end of the first term the two groups move from the UK or France to Belgium where the courses of the second term are taught at the Universiteit Antwerpen in cooperation with the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. For the third term the whole group moves to the Czech Republic for the third part of the course, which is taught by Czech and West-European professors at the Prague University of Economics in Prague. The fourth term is spent at the students' home institutions to write a dissertation.

The programme consists of 60 credits: the taught part of the programme consisting of 40 credits, two credits being roughly equivalent with 15 hours (lectures and assignments), and the dissertation having a weight of 20 credits. The subjects covered by the programme are the following: Economic Theory (Advanced Microeconomics, Advanced Macroeconomics, International Trade: Theory & Policy, Economics of European Integration - part I, Economics of European Integration - part II - Transition Issues, Open Economy Macroeconomics), Selected Topics in EU Policy (seminar), Econometrics and Dissertation.

The programme is oriented towards students having graduated in regular economics, applied economics or management studies, and proven proficiency in English. Apart from the admission criteria with respect to the required previous degree of the candidates, each partner may apply additional selection criteria of its own.

The partners are responsible for checking the proficiency of the candidates in English. Students of the participating universities enrol at their home university. Students studying at a university different from the participating universities, enrol at the partner university of their country, if any. Students from a university in a non-partner country can enrol at the partner university of their choice.

The tuition fee is to be paid at the university where the student enrolls. The fee is fixed by each of the partner universities. Information concerning the amount of the tuition fee can be obtained from the partner universities. Besides this tuition fee, the student has to finance the cost of living at each of the destinations and the transport cost. The cost of study materials is completely at his/her expense. This degree is supported by the Socrates/Erasmus programme of the EU. This means that the students can benefit from financial support for part of the transport and subsistence costs they incur.

Contact point:

Mieke Vermeire – mieke.vermeire@ua.ac.be
(University of Antwerp)

4. Euroculture

The Euroculture MA programme addresses the question of whether the much-cited “European culture” actually exists and what this question has to do with European integration. In light of the ongoing transformation of Europe, universities have a particular responsibility to disseminate knowledge about European culture and history and to equip students with the competencies necessary to successfully – and critically – negotiate these changes. This programme offers students the opportunity to analyse the process

of European integration from the perspective of five different disciplines while studying at two different European universities. The programme represents a commitment to helping students meet the standards of an increasingly European labour market; as European integration progresses, university graduates with strong foreign language skills, intercultural competence and interdisciplinary knowledge of a particular field are more and more in demand. The Euroculture Master of Arts programme enables students to gain mastery in these key areas and gain qualifications relevant for a labour market that increasingly transcends national borders. The programme is highly relevant for those students who wish to pursue a career in teaching, journalism, business and religious or governmental institutions (local, regional, national or international).

The programme was developed in 1997-1998 by six well-established European universities as a Socrates project, and three more universities have joined the network in the meantime as of September 2004. This one-year interdisciplinary Masters programme for advanced students will be offered by a network of nine European universities. These universities are: University of Deusto (Spain), University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom), Ghent University (Belgium), University of Göttingen (Germany), Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (the Netherlands), Jagiellonian University (Poland), University of Strasbourg (France), University of Udine (Italy), University of Uppsala (Sweden).

The duration of the program is 12 months (60 ECTS credits) and consists of two semesters, linked by a 10-day ‘Intensive Programme’ (IP) at one of the participating universities, where students and professors from the nine participating universities meet for an international conference. The first semester focuses on courses in the fields of five disciplines: history, law, theology, linguistics and international relations. The second semester can be spent at one of the partner universities: Students are thus able to gain insight that goes beyond the perspective of their home universities. In the second semester each participating university offers a 10 ECTS credit specialisation

course and supervises the writing of the Masters thesis (20 ECTS). As for the first semester, some universities offer the programme in English, others in their own native language. In the second semester, the language of instruction is English at all universities. The partner universities work together to guarantee a common curriculum and a truly international character in the programme. After successful completion of the programme, students will receive an MA in Euroculture, a national degree from most participating institutions.

Contact point:

Luc François – Luc.francois@rug.ac.be (Ghent University)

5. International Humanitarian Action (NOHA)

The European Masters in International Humanitarian Action is a one-year inter-university, multidisciplinary postgraduate programme that provides high quality academic education and professional competencies for personnel working or intending to work in the area of international humanitarian assistance. This Masters Degree was created in 1993 as a result of concerted efforts on the part of the Network On Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA) Universities, working in close collaboration with the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and Directorate-General for Education and Culture. The initiative was a response to a growing need from the humanitarian assistance community for higher educational qualifications specifically suited to addressing complex humanitarian emergencies. In addition to collaboration and support from the European Union, the programme has the backing of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Inter-governmental Organisations (IGOs), and other actors of the humanitarian relief community with whom the Network has strong collaborative links.

The European Masters Programme in International Humanitarian Action has the following components:

■ **Intensive Programme** - IP (5 ECTS Credits).

This is a 10-day initial inter-university joint course that serves as a unique forum where participants from different parts of the world and with different backgrounds, perspectives and expectations, share knowledge and experiences on current issues and problems in the area of Humanitarian Action.

■ **Core Course** (25 ECTS Credits): A fundamental component that is taken by NOHA students at all NOHA universities. It covers the following topics: Geopolitics in Humanitarian Action; Anthropology in Humanitarian Action; International Humanitarian Law; Management in Humanitarian Action; and Epidemiology, medicine and public health.

■ **Orientation Period** (30 ECTS Credits): It consists of options at one of the Network universities as follows:

- (a) Post-conflict Rehabilitation (Université catholique de Louvain -UCL, Belgium);
- (b) International Institutions in Humanitarian Emergencies (Ruhr-Universität Bochum -RUB, Germany);
- (c) Legal and Geopolitical Approach of Humanitarian Action (Université de Aix-Marseille III Paul Cézanne, France);
- (d) Societies in Transition (University College Dublin - UCD, Ireland);
- (e) Comprehensive Security; Circumstances of Decline, Disappearance and Reconstruction (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen - RUG, The Netherlands);
- (f) International Law and Management of Humanitarian Action (Universidad de Deusto -UD, Spain); and
- (g) Conflict Disaster and Peace Building (Uppsala Universitet, Sweden).

■ **Research and Work Placement** (30 ECTS Credits): It consists of an (i) **internship** in organisations and institutions working in the area of Humanitarian Action and (ii) a **Masters thesis**.

Contact point:

Julia Gonzalez-Ferreras – jmgonzal@relint.deusto.es (Universidad de Deusto)

www.noha.deusto.es

6. International Management (CEMS)

CEMS was created in 1988 by four European Business Schools with the intention of educating students at graduate level with high academic skills and multi-cultural abilities. A common curriculum was designed and a joint degree created to be granted to students in addition to their home degree. The first CEMS students graduated in 1990. A number of international companies in Europe were closely associated with the project from the outset.

CEMS now has 17 member university institutions (three of them in Central and Eastern Europe), four Associate Academic Members (in Canada and Latin America) and 45 Corporate Partners. It has over 3000 alumni and 500 students currently in the programme. European member schools are: HEC (France), ESADE (Spain), Università Bocconi (Italy), Universität zu Köln (Germany), LSE (UK), Universität St. Gallen (Switzerland), Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam (Netherlands), Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium), Stockholm School of Economics (Sweden), Norwegian School of Economics (Norway), Copenhagen Business School (Denmark), Universität Wien (Austria), University of Economics, Prague (Czech Republic), Warsaw School of Economics (Poland), BUESP (Hungary), Helsinki School of Economics (Finland) and Smurfit Business School (Ireland). Non-European member schools are: Fundação Getulio Vargas (Brazil), Tec de Monterrey – EGADE (Mexico), Universidad Torcuato di Tella (Argentina), Richard Ivey Business School (Canada).

CEMS legal status derives from the French law on associations. Representatives from all stakeholders have voting power at the legal decision-making body, the Annual Meeting. There is an Executive Board that meets twice a year to prepare proposals for this Annual Meeting which is comprised of the 17 schools' representatives, 10 Corporate Partners, one representative for Associate Academic Members, one for students, one for alumni and two for coordinators. The Chairman of the Executive Board, a university representative, is elected

for 2 years. He works with a team of Vice-Presidents who hold specific portfolios in research, curriculum, communication, corporate relations and globalisation, and may initiate projects in their respective fields.

CEMS has a European Office based in both France and Germany which implements decisions, supports members and takes initiatives in areas such as communication, web development and corporate relations. Written material is issued from this office so that all partners have access to the same information.

A Programme Committee consisting of academic and administrative members pilots the curriculum and quality assessment procedures with the help of students. Ten Faculty Cooperation Groups in various specialised fields such as Marketing and Logistics gather teachers from member institutions to share ideas, develop courses and joint research projects. Within the individual schools, CEMS issues are coordinated by the Rector or Dean, the CEMS Academic Director, the CEMS Coordinator for relations with students, and the Corporate Relations Coordinator for the involvement of companies in the curriculum. Each institution is free to organise these roles as it thinks best.

Students are organised on a pan-European level in the Student Board and locally in CEMS Clubs. Alumni have formed local committees in Europe and other continents. At the global level, an Alumni Executive Committee deals with strategic issues. Stakeholders have regular meetings throughout the year to coordinate their activities and a four-day pan-European event brings everyone together once a year in a member school for the Annual Meeting, the Graduation Ceremony, Careers Forum and for networking opportunities.

The main income for CEMS comes from annual fees paid by the member schools, Associate Members and Corporate Partners. Students do not pay a fee to CEMS, but there may be a local fee to be paid at their home university. Enrolment to the

CEMS programme occurs 6 to 9 months before the programme starts, in accordance with jointly-defined admission criteria and similar admission procedures are used at all institutions. ECTS is applied throughout.

The programme is one year in duration and consists of one semester in the home institution and one semester in a partner university, with obligatory elements developed by schools according to jointly-defined criteria, for example courses, projects and seminars. Students must complete 66 ECTS and an period of study abroad and must master three European languages to a common standard.

CEMS has recently initiated a globalisation strategy to attract students from overseas. The first third-country students from an Associate Member school will start the CEMS curriculum in 2004-2005.

Contact point:

Nicole de Fontaines – nicole.defontaines@cems.org
(Bocconi University - CEMS)

7. Law and Economics (EMLE)

Economic Analysis of Law (also called Law and Economics) uses economic tools to study the impact of legal rules on human behaviour. The model of rational choice, which underlies much of modern economics, is also very useful to explain (and predict) how people act under various legal constraints. Positive economic analysis seeks to explain the behaviour of legislators, prosecutors, judges and bureaucrats. The positive aspect of Law and Economics informs the normative branch of the discipline. If effects of divergent legal rules and institutions are known, the normative analyst will be able to discern efficient rules from those that are inefficient and formulate reform proposals to increase the efficiency of the law. In the past decades, an impressive literature has developed, showing the strength of both positive and normative economic analysis in various areas of law. Students participating in this programme study

this literature and learn how to apply the relevant economic insights to their own legal system.

The Law and Economics programme covers one academic year, which is divided into three terms. The first two terms each include 4 mandatory courses. During the third term two additional courses must be followed and a Masters thesis must be written. The courses of the first and second term are almost identical at all partner universities. The third term is a specialisation, related to the expertise of the network partner. Successful students are awarded a Masters degree by the third term universities. Some partner institutions award an additional Masters degree to students who are enrolled and/or spend one term at that university. This leads to a double degree.

The unique international and interdisciplinary character of this programme in Law and Economics is secured through an intensive cooperation between lawyers and economists at ten European universities, all teaching units in the programme. In addition, renowned universities from outside Europe are involved in the programme: Haifa (Israel) and Berkeley (USA). Haifa is a teaching centre in the third term. In addition, selected students can spend four-six weeks month during the 3rd term at the Law and Economics Centre of the University of California at Berkeley, USA.

The following table gives an overview of the study places by term:

- 1st term** Bologna, Rotterdam, Hamburg.
- 2nd term** Bologna, Ghent, Hamburg.
- 3rd term** Aix-en-Provence, Bologna, Haifa, Hamburg, Linköping & Stockholm, Madrid, Man-ches-ter, Rotterdam & Berkeley, Vienna.

Each year approximately 105 applicants are admitted to the programme, of which on average 85 – 90% graduate at the end of the year. Roughly 60% of the graduates come from an EU country, 10% from (non-EU) Europe, 5% from North and South America, and 25% from Asia.

Contact point:

Roger van den Bergh - r.vandenbergh@frg.eur.nl
(Erasmus University Rotterdam)

8. Labour Studies

This network aims to develop women and men who will play a key part in the economic and social future of Europe. They learn about the mechanisms that regulate Europe's employment and social security policies and can take control of their own career in European and other international companies by building on a solid education. These are the challenges to which this network is trying to rise.

The network is coordinated by the Institut des Sciences du Travail at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, and it includes leading universities from across Europe. The following European universities are members of the network: Université des Sciences Sociales de Toulouse (France), Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur les Ressources Humaines et l'Emploi; University of Warwick (UK), Industrial Relations Research Unit; Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium), Institut des Sciences du Travail; Universität Trier (Germany), Università degli Studi di Firenze (Italy), Dipartimento di Scienza Politica e Sociologia; Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (Portugal), Departamento de Sociologia; l'Università degli Studi di Milano (Italy), Instituto di Studi del Lavoro; London School of Economics and Political Science (UK); University College Dublin (Ireland); Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain); Universität Bremen (Germany); and, l'Universiteit van Amsterdam (Netherlands).

The European Masters in Labour Studies provides an education that is both novel and specific; the programme has been jointly developed by the member universities in the network with the objective of responding to contemporary challenges. On the basis of a common programme across the member universities, students have the opportunity to compare the approaches to employment issues in different countries, and are exposed to

different national cultures by taking part of their coursework (the second semester) in a foreign university through the Socrates Programme. The European dimension naturally pervades the programme.

The programme of study takes place over the course of one academic year and is composed of mandatory courses and a final assessment. During the first semester, the students stay at their home university. The curricula include courses, seminars and/or folders of readings in the following subjects:

■ Analysis of the European context

Political, economic and social systems in Europe

■ Analysis of labour issues

Labour, employment, and industrial relations issues, drawing upon various disciplinary fields, such as:

- Labour Economics
- Sociology of labour
- Psycho-sociological approach to the analysis of organisations
- Social and labour law
- Human resource management

At the end of January, the students leave their home university for a study exchange programme in one of the European universities which are part of the network, in order to follow the comparative and supranational courses.

■ European comparative analysis

Courses on the following subjects:

- Comparison of Industrial relations systems in Europe
- Comparative analysis of employment and training schemes
- Comparative analysis of worker protection schemes
- Analysis of EU instruments and policies in the fields of labour and social affairs

Finally, the students write their dissertations.

Students who have successfully completed the Masters and who have participated in the exchange programme will receive a double qualification: a national diploma and a European Masters in Labour Studies which is a certificate from the European network.

Point of Contact:

Marie-Lousie Gustin – gustin@trav.ucl.ac.be
(Université Catholique de Louvain)

9. International Health Tropical Medicine

The tropEd Network

TropEd is an association of 26 European institutions of higher education in international health. tropEd provides postgraduate opportunities for education and training contributing to sustainable development. International health includes the promotion of health, prevention and treatment of diseases and rehabilitation. Knowledge, skills and the ability to critically analyse and draw implications for practice related to the major endemic diseases, health systems research, health economics, health policy and management of health services are essential.

The tropEd Masters Programme in International Health

The Masters Programme in International Health is offered across tropEd member institutions. The modular programme for full-time or part-time study consists of an introductory core course, specialised optional modules and a research project submitted as a thesis. It is intended for completion within a minimum of one year (full-time) up to a maximum of five years (part-time). A total of 60 ECTS credit points must be accumulated for successful completion of the programme.

Students are recruited from a variety of backgrounds including medical doctors, nurses, social scientists, health educators, and health manag-

ers. Applicants must hold a first degree - at least equivalent to a Bachelor's degree - in a relevant field.

Students normally carry out their studies as follows:

- Registration at their home institution which will provide tutorship for students throughout the programme.
- Completion of the *core course* at the home institution which is equivalent to three months of full-time study.
- After successful completion of the core course, students select *optional advanced modules*, which may be taken at various partner institutions and are collectively equivalent to 3-6 months of full-time study. Modules are selected from a list of tropEd-accredited courses according to the interests and experience of participants.
- Students carry out a *research project* submitted as a thesis, equivalent to a further 3-6 months of full-time study, normally at their home institution.
- Students obtain a Masters degree from their home institution when all three stages and an oral examination have been successfully completed, studies have taken place at a minimum of two member institutions in different countries, and they have gained some professional experience – including field experience in low- or middle-income countries - by the time the degree is awarded.

Degree

Master of Science (MSc) in International Health awarded by the home institution.

Quality Assurance

The tropEd Network has developed a stringent accreditation and evaluation system for the assessment of institutions and of course eligibility based on inter-network peer review and site visits. A written recognition of the Masters-level training is provided to each successful student by the tropEd secretariat as a statement about

standards in education and training in the tropEd member institutions.

Contact Point:

Carsten Mantel – itm.studies@charite.de
(Humboldt-University Berlin)
www.troped.org

10. Water and Coastal Management

This Masters degree is designed to train professionals for integrated river-basin management, coastal zone management and research. Special modules consider the European environmental legislation such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) implementation.

The programme is 18 months long and consists of a total of 90 ECTS credits. The taught course is 1 year (60 ECTS credits), after which there is a research project and thesis for 6 months (30 ECTS credits).

The course results from the collaboration of an existing and expanding network of 36 universities in European countries, coordinated at present by the University of the Algarve, Portugal. The course is hosted by different participating institutions every year, thereby promoting teaching staff mobility. Student mobility is also fundamental as students must gain a minimum of 30% of their credits in a participating university in another European country. ERASMUS student mobility grants are available for European students.

An international, integrated curriculum group lectures into specialist modules on particular fields of expertise in environmental, water and coastal management, as well as a wide range of regional case-histories. The course is recognised as providing an important link between research and education. Examples and applications of results from EU research projects are emphasised especially from MAST (Marine, Science and Technology Programme) and the ELOISE (European Land Ocean Interaction Studies) projects of the 4th, 5th and 6th Framework Programmes.

The modules offer a lot of choice and flexibility so that students may pursue fields of particular interest to their professional training. The Diploma Supplement gives details of the specific choice of modules that were chosen by the student. Assessment is based on student output rather than examinations. The main form of assessment is submitted work and presentations by the students on topics set by the lecturers.

Most lectures are in English but the importance of learning more than one European language is recognised. The host university provides a language school during the summer prior to the programme as well as language training in the language(s) of the host country during the course. The programme promotes better cross-cultural understanding and will seek Erasmus Mundus funding for non-European students in 2004.

Contact point:

Alice Newton - anewton@ualg.pt
(Universidade do Algarve)
<http://www.ualg.pt/EUMScWCM/>

11. Comparative European Social Studies (MACESS)

The Hogeschool Zuyd and the London Metropolitan University, in cooperation with an extended network of 28 universities and colleges all over Europe, offer the MA Comparative European Social Studies (MACESS). This course is intended for graduate social professionals (social workers, social pedagogues, care workers, etc.) and offers the opportunity to conduct a comparative study and research in the field of social professional practice and/or social policy within a European context. Successful completion of the course is awarded by a UK MA degree. MACESS is delivered under the auspices of Mr. Walter Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Degree

MA Comparative European Social Studies awarded by London Metropolitan University.

Course Management responsibility

Hogeschool Zuyd, location Maastricht, Faculty of Social Sciences

Duration**Full time**

One year

Part time

Two years minimum, seven years maximum

Credits

135 M level / 75 ECTS

Mode

FT/PT

Pattern of Attendance

FT 6 modules (25 hours per week for 2 weeks each module) 1 September to 1 March

Dissertation preparation (private study and supervised tutorials)

2 March to 31 August

PT by negotiation with Course Director

Structure**4 core modules**

Introduction to European Institutions and Policy
Comparative Social Research
Comparative Social Policy
Social Professional Practice in Europe

2 out of 6 optional modules

European Network Development and Intercultural Theories
Management of Change in a European Context
Marginalisation and Social Exclusion in Europe
Political Philosophy and European Welfare
European Welfare Law
European Family Policy and Law (new module)

Dissertation**Intake**

40 FTEs

Contact point:

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Fachhochschule Berlin)