



Berlin, 21-22 September 2006  
Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the  
European Higher Education Area?

## Official Bologna Seminar

CONFERENCE REPORT AND  
RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst  
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German Rectors' Conference

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Official Bologna Seminar

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Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the  
European Higher Education Area?

Editor

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## Introduction

In the Bergen Conference of 2005, the Ministers responsible for Higher Education in the Bologna Member States defined the awarding and recognition of joint degrees at the Bachelor, Master and Doctorate level as one of the fields in which they will look for progress in their next Bologna Conference in London 2007. In this context the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) organised the official Bologna seminar "Joint degrees – a hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?" on 21/22 September 2006 in Berlin. Higher education experts from more than 30 Bologna signatory countries attended the conference. The conference participants underlined the importance of joint degree programmes for intensifying the inter-institutional cooperation and increasing the number of mobile students in the European Higher Education Area and for making Europe more attractive to students from other parts of the world. However, the discussions clearly showed that the number of "true" joint degrees is still rather low and further progress is needed especially regarding national legal provisions, recognition, quality assurance, and funding to make the joint degree programmes a real key element of the Bologna Process. The conference participants also stressed that more and better information and support should be given to European higher education institutions when developing joint degree programmes.

The main results and recommendations of the Bologna seminar in Berlin are contained in this conference report. In addition, the background documents on joint degrees for the Berlin seminar are included. We do hope that the conference results and recommendations (also available on the official website of the British Bologna Secretariat: [www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna)) will be useful for the discussions of the European Ministers responsible for higher education in the London Ministerial Conference on 17/18 May 2007.

Last but not least, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Professor Hans Rainer Friedrich for his excellent conference report and to all seminar participants for their contributions in making the conference a success. Special thanks go out to the European Commission and our Federal Ministry of Education and Research for funding the Bologna seminar.



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# Final Report of the Bologna Seminar „Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?”

Rapporteur General,  
Prof. Hans R. Friedrich

Under the auspices of the German Rectors Conference (HRK)<sup>1</sup> and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)<sup>2</sup> and financed by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture<sup>3</sup>, and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research an official Bologna seminar<sup>4</sup> on questions and strategies related to the awarding of “Joint Degrees” in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was held on September 21-22, 2006 in the Ludwig Erhard Haus<sup>5</sup>, Berlin.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The seminar agreed on the following conclusions and recommendations.

- (1) There is already evidence that joint (integrated) programmes are a step forward to a truly bottom-up process in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and thus largely contribute to the establishment of a European identity of a specific, higher-education-related kind. They combine international experience, enhanced linguistic, cultural and social competence. If these contributions to the coherence of a European Higher Education Area are in fact considered as valuable and appreciated, there must be some kind of specific funding for them, either on the national or on the European level or perhaps even as a combination of the two. This demand is justified because – at least in the initial phase – there are additional (overhead) costs that are specific to such programmes. On the other hand, there is an added value of these programmes and in the long run and with more experience gained, there could even result lower costs or greater capacity options by the (international) pooling of resources.
- (2) Since there are still comparatively few joint degree programmes with a small number of students and there seems to be a recruitment problem in terms of attracting the “right” students, additional funding is needed to ensure the desperately needed enhanced marketing and information campaigns on the added benefit of joint degree programmes which are still virtually unknown.

- (3) Competent authorities at the national and the European level should be asked to compile a survey and describe existing double, multiple and joint degree programmes to better illustrate the benefit of these programmes and their European value both in terms of globally competitive academic education and employment perspectives. Such studies could be initiated simultaneously at national and European level.
- (4) There are different criteria proposed for the design and development of integrated European (joint) *programmes*. It is suggested to set up a final list of “good criteria” (or “golden rules”) that can be derived from the Stockholm, Mantova and Berlin seminars and other relevant documents in this connection. Such a list should then be published as a Bologna document of reference and relevance.
- (5) As regards the legal definition of a “true” joint degree there is no broad consensus and it may be difficult to achieve it with a formula that covers all aspects; it is probably not even necessary. All ministers whose countries have already ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention (currently amounting to 39) have at least in general agreed to the formulation chosen for the Lisbon Subsidiary Documents<sup>6</sup> of UNESCO and the Council of Europe (which is broader in terms of the design and description of joint integrated programmes). Therefore, the ministers are asked to incorporate in their national legislation on higher education at least the written option for the awarding of joint degrees with a reference to the Lisbon Convention descriptions and make sure that they are quality-assured according to national standards and European principles and guidelines already agreed upon.

In addition to legal provisions allowing for joint degrees it is also of utmost importance to make extensive use of a precise and informative Diploma Supplement. The single or multiple diploma document could also be combined with a joint diploma supplement in such a way that the different parts or sheets cannot be separated any more. In the meantime, the ministers should encourage institutions to continue and enhance their work for the preparation and design of integrated joint programmes.

- (6) Ministers should encourage institutions engaged in joint study programmes to make use of mutual tuition waivers for study periods spent at the foreign partner institution.
- (7) Ministers are asked to make sure that the procedures for obtaining visas and other necessary documents or

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1 Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK), Ahrstr. 39, D-53175 Bonn, [www.hrk.de](http://www.hrk.de) and [www.hrk-bologna.de](http://www.hrk-bologna.de)  
2 Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), Kennedyallee 50, D-53175 Bonn, [www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de)  
3 European Commission, B-1049 Brussels, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/>  
4 Official Bologna Seminars are an instrument of the Bologna Process towards a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by the year 2010. Bologna Seminars are used to discuss and further develop actual topics that arise in connection with the convergence of the European higher education systems ([www.bologna-bergen2005.com](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.com), [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) and [www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna\\_process/](http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna_process/))  
5 Ludwig Erhard Haus, Fasanenstr. 85, D-10623 Berlin, [www.ludwig-erhard-haus.de](http://www.ludwig-erhard-haus.de)

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6 Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region: “Recommendations on the Recognition of Joint Degrees”, adopted on 9 June 2004

permissions will not produce obstacles for the development of joint study programmes.<sup>7</sup>

- (8) In terms of quality assurance, the implementation of the ENQA Standards and Guidelines<sup>8</sup> passed in Bergen and the further development of a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies facilitating mutual recognition of QA decisions in the Bologna signatory countries remain essential in order to make quality assurance of joint degrees easier and more transparent within the Bologna context and to avoid multiple QA procedures. Furthermore, specific criteria aiming at the assessment of the added value of joint degrees as opposed to national degrees need to be developed.

## 1. Summary

### Background

The ministers responsible for higher education of the 45 Bologna member states gave the following mandate for this Bologna seminar in their Bergen Communiqué<sup>9</sup> under chapter IV which is entitled "Taking stock on progress for 2007".

In this chapter they said:

"..In particular, we shall look for progress in:  
..– the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level."

There is already a "joint" history of endeavours to clarify what joint degrees are and how they could best be put into practice. This history has to be taken into account. This concerns primarily the Stockholm Conclusions of May 31, 2002<sup>10</sup>, the final report on the Mantova seminar of April 11-12, 2003<sup>11</sup> and the Stockholm seminar "Joint Degrees – Further Development" of May 6-7, 2004<sup>12</sup>.

The Stockholm 2002 Conclusions make explicit reference to the Lisbon Recognition Convention of 1997<sup>13</sup> on the recognition of degrees and study phases in higher education with a proposed amendment to include joint degrees dating from 2004<sup>14</sup>.

In the Bergen Communiqué under the chapter entitled "Recognition of degrees and study periods" the ministers state:

"...We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA."

The Stockholm 2002 Conclusions also contain a list of 9 criteria which could be useful as common denominators for the design of joint (or integrated) study programmes (this list is very much compatible with the criteria that TAUCH and RAUHVARGERS listed in their survey on master degrees and joint degrees<sup>15</sup>).

Three of these nine criteria should be mentioned here again, namely:

- the duration of study outside the home institution should be substantial, e.g. 1 year at bachelor level
- joint study programmes require to be settled on by cooperation, confirmed in a written agreement, between institutions
- full use should be made of the Diploma Supplement (DS).

From the Mantova Final Report 2003, two statements might be worth being highlighted: "Joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula are one of the major priorities for the building of a European identity" (including cultural, linguistic and social aspects) and "Joint doctoral programmes educating for research professions in Europe are a cornerstone for greater cooperation between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). Synergy between the two areas is viewed as an essential prerequisite for the creation of a Europe of Knowledge."<sup>16</sup>

The Stockholm 2004 Report and Conclusions<sup>17</sup> stress the need to map the experience of higher education institu-

7 See also: Maria KELO, Ulrich TEICHLER, Bernd WAECHTER (eds.): „EURODATA – Student mobility in European higher education“, Lemmens Publications, Bonn 2006 (ISBN: 3-932306-72-4)

8 European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA): "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area", Report for the Ministerial Meeting in Bergen, Helsinki 2005 ([www.enqa.net](http://www.enqa.net) and [www.enqa.net/bologna.lasso](http://www.enqa.net/bologna.lasso))

9 "The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals", Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen (Norway), 19-20 May 2005 ([www.bologna-bergen2005.no](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no))

10 Ministry of Education and Science, Stockholm, Sweden: "The Stockholm Conclusions – Conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar on Joint Degrees within the framework of the Bologna Process", Regeringskansliet, Stockholm, 31 May 2002

11 Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca: Seminar on "Integrated Curricula – Implications and Prospects", Final Report, Mantova, 11-12 April 2003

12 Ministry of Education and Science, Sweden: "Bologna Follow-up Seminar Joint Degrees – Further Development", Stockholm, May 6-7, 2004

13 "Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region", Lisbon, April 11, 1997

14 The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region: "Recommendations on the Recognition of Joint Degrees", adopted on 9 June 2004

15 Tauch C. / Rauhvargers A. (2002): Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe. Geneva: European University Association ([http://www.unige.ch/eua/En/Publications/Survey\\_Master\\_Joint\\_degrees.pdf](http://www.unige.ch/eua/En/Publications/Survey_Master_Joint_degrees.pdf))

16 See also: "Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society", Report on the EUA doctoral programmes project 2004 – 2005, European University Association, Brussels ([www.eua.be](http://www.eua.be))

17 Pavel ZGAGA: "Bologna Follow-up Seminar Joint Degrees – Further Development. Report by the Rapporteur", 7 pages, Stockholm/Ljubljana, May 2004 ([www.bologna-bergen2005.no](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no))

tions and students and to anchor the possibility of awarding joint degrees in the national legislation on higher education.

### *Summary of the Berlin Seminar*

The discussions and contributions at the Berlin seminar made clear that all over Europe there are various models of joint study programmes with different types of degrees in place (integrated programmes with double, multiple or joint degrees). Irrespective of the type of the final degree, in all models of joint programmes students have to spend a substantial part of their study programme at a host university abroad.

The seminar participants agreed that it might be useful to distinguish more precisely between joint or integrated study *programmes* as a procedural work on the one hand and the awarding of a joint *degree* that recognises and reflects the new contents and the added European value on the other hand.

There are already some definitions of what a joint degree is or within what framework it can be defined. We have definitions of this kind on the Bologna-Bergen homepage, provided by the Council of Europe (CoE) and UNESCO within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and by ESIB (these definitions are wider) and one by the ERASMUS-MUNDUS-Programme (which is narrower and closer to a "true" joint degree of the *one* certificate or diploma type).

These definitions are partly contradictory, even though all of them were officially agreed upon at different points in time. Since there are obviously concerns in some countries of too narrow definitions of joint degrees being integrated in their national legislation, it could be advisable to start with a wider and more liberal definition of the Lisbon/ UNESCO/ Council of Europe type.

The Lisbon/UNESCO/CoE-definition of a joint degree is:

"A joint degree should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as

- a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
- a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,
- one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of joint qualification in question."

However, universities should be encouraged to implement "true" joint degrees (being understood as single certificates jointly awarded by more than one university) as

recommended by the Mantova Bologna Seminar (2003) and implemented by many countries and universities in the framework of ERASMUS Mundus.

However, reality has proven e.g. in the ERASMUS Mundus programme that a real joint degree can be realised only as a single certificate jointly awarded by two or more universities.

In any case, it is important that ministers commit themselves to making the necessary legal steps to allow the awarding of joint degrees in their respective national legislation.

It might perhaps be helpful to compile the legal provisions for joint degrees of those countries which already have them and present them to all ministers, perhaps with a brief additional (legal) comment. This would be a task to be initiated by the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG).<sup>18</sup>

In the Berlin seminar five working groups discussed specific aspects of joint degrees:

1. Recognition
2. Quality assurance
3. Designing legal frameworks
4. Mobility
5. Financing and funding

Some of the working groups' results are taken into consideration in the conclusions and recommendations.

## **2. The thematic area in a broader description and analysis**

### **2.1 *The Bologna Process: historical and political background***

Forty-five European states [all of them members of the European Cultural Convention<sup>19</sup> of the Council of Europe and – from January 2007 onwards – twenty-seven of them members of the European Union (EU)] are currently experiencing the process of convergence of their national higher education systems towards a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by the year 2010 with principally similar and compatible basic structures, great mobility chances and increased attractiveness for interested people from other parts of the world. This process is unique in terms of its (liberal) structure and the remarkable dynamics it has nevertheless developed. Starting with the Bologna Declaration of 30 (29) European states in June 1999 in Italy – using the preceding Sorbonne Declaration

18 See also: UNESCO/CEPES: "New Generations of Policy Documents and Laws for Higher Education: Their Thrust in the Context of the Bologna Process", Report of the International Conference on Nov 4 – 6, 2004 in Warsaw, Poland ([www.cepes.ro](http://www.cepes.ro) and [www.bologna-bergen2005.no/seminars](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/seminars))

19 Council of Europe, F-67075 Strasbourg, France: "European Cultural Convention", <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/018>



of only four European states (F, GB, I, D) as a catalyst –, the process rapidly grew to now 45 signatory states which presently form (after the United Nations and the WTO) one of the largest convention areas in the world.

One of the underlying motives for the creation of the European Higher Education Area was – besides the expectation of academic and structural “economies of scale” – the vision or the idea that this area is marked by cultural cohesion through “diversity in spite of proximity” and that it embeds certain human rights and civil values that have been developed and achieved in mutual cooperation over centuries.<sup>20</sup> It is probably this “family factor” that stands for the attractiveness of the Bologna Process as an idea for which the time had come. It is, however, not based on public international law or a supranational treaty – it is just a declaration of will by ministers responsible for higher education that is based on mutual trust in the interest of a common positive development.

It might be interesting in this respect to point out how the Bologna Process is perceived abroad rather than alluding to a disquisition by a Bologna member itself. The Australian Ministry for Education, Science and Training has fairly recently published a document entitled “The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps” and initiated a consultation process with Australian universities.<sup>21</sup>

In EU meetings with Latin America, the United States and Canada and with China the Bologna Process was also on the agenda.

## 2.2 Main objectives of the Bologna Process

In the Bologna Process, the “basic law” (the Bologna Declaration) and the subsequent amendments (the communiqués of the bi-annual ministerial meetings in Prague, Berlin and Bergen on the progress achieved and the necessary future steps) set up ten main objectives (10 Bologna Process action lines) to be met in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA):

- (1) Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
- (2) *Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles*
- (3) Establishment of a system of credits (ECTS)
- (4) *Promotion of mobility*<sup>22</sup>
- (5) *Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance (QA)*
- (6) Promotion of the European dimension in higher education

- (7) Focus on lifelong learning
- (8) Inclusion of higher education institutions and students (including the social dimension of the Bologna Process)
- (9) Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- (10) Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA) – [the third cycle of the Bologna science and study system].

The three action lines printed in italics have been identified by the Berlin (2003) and Bergen (2005) ministerial meetings as “priority areas” in which rapid progress is necessary to achieve the common goals in the European Higher Education Area and that can also be perceived and recognised by teachers, young scientists and students in the EHEA. Such a development is necessary to keep the momentum and the carrying force of the Bologna vision.

## 2.3 How can Joint Degrees contribute to the objectives of the Bologna Process?

### 2.3.1 Create a “European identity” and “European added value” in higher education; pool European expertise and capacities

In bi-national or multi-national cooperation joint degree programmes can contribute in a favourable way to achieve all the goals that we expect to characterise the everyday reality of the European Higher Education Area by the year 2010:

- unhindered mobility through compatible structures and mutual recognition of study programmes and examinations
- mutual trust in the quality of the study programmes offered by partner institutions
- added value through bilingualism or multilingualism and access to the culture of the partners
- exchange of ideas as well as of students, teachers and young scientists
- easier access to a globalised labour market.<sup>23</sup>

By doing so, they can also substantially contribute to create a “European identity” which will complement and enhance the national European identities.<sup>24</sup>

20 Nuria SANZ and Sjur BERGAN (eds.): “The Heritage of European Universities”, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, Sept. 2002 (ISBN: 92-871-4960-7);

21 The Australian Ministry for Education, Science and Training: “The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps”, Canberra 2006 [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/Bologna\\_Process\\_and\\_Australia.htm#publication](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/Bologna_Process_and_Australia.htm#publication)

22 See also: Sjur BERGAN (ed.): “Recognition Issues in the Bologna Process”, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, June 2003 (ISBN: 92-871-5150-4)

23 These points are derived from the opening address by State Secretary Johann KOMUSIEWICS, Ministry of Science, Research and Culture of the Federal State of Brandenburg on Sept. 21, 2006

24 Para. 1 of the “often forgotten” Article 151 (“Culture”) of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty Establishing the European Community (Treaty of Nice) reads as follows: “..The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the cultural heritage to the fore” (Treaty of Nice, Feb. 1, 2003; EU-Doc. C 325 of Dec. 24, 2002)

On the basis of a growing experience in the design of integrated study programmes, such offers might eventually also help to save (or increase) study capacities by pooling the expertise available in different member states in one single (joint) project.

### 2.3.2 *Keep a high level of mobility in a (shorter) two- (three-) cycle system*

With the increasing introduction of a two-(resp. three-) cycle study system in the Bologna area, there have been concerns that this might lead to a reduction in student mobility. The argument was that in the shorter period of the first cycle (i.e. a three-years-bachelor), there was – for reasons of a sound academic education – not enough time left for an extended study period abroad. You would then perhaps have to choose between two effects: a prolongation of the average duration of studies (undesirable) or a reduction in the scope of student exchanges and mobility (also undesirable).

Joint degree courses with fully integrated study programmes are well suited to avoid this dilemma. Since they are integrated, there is almost no need for additional study time while at the same time the personal, linguistic, social and cultural experience of studying in a foreign country is maintained.

### 2.3.3 *Strengthen European co-operation in quality assurance (QA)*

One *conditio sine qua non* is the commitment of all partners involved to deliver education programmes of highest standards. Since there is indeed competition in a global education market and there is high pressure on institutions to reach academic reputation as there is a paramount interest on the part of the graduates to know that they get “value for money” in terms of their entry into the labour market, there is a demand for an approved system of quality assurance.

In almost all countries it started with certain forms of evaluation, often followed by the accreditation of study programmes and/or institutional accreditation. In all cases it is important that independent external experts (peers) are deployed and that the students participate in the process, too.

For a joint integrated study programme taking place in several different countries but forming one project as a whole, it doesn't appear sensible or economical to maintain several different accreditation or quality assurance institutions in each country. The nature of integrated joint degree programmes requires a close cooperation or an integrated approach on the part of the quality assurance institutions in the countries concerned.

Joint degree programmes thus have an integrative effect on the emerging European quality assurance system and bring us yet one step closer to the realisation of the European Higher Education Area.

### 2.3.4 *Enhance labour market perspectives for graduates*

In many professions, experience in a position abroad is helpful or important for future career perspectives. In a globalised world the increasing internationalisation of the labour markets is a fact and a reality. The national and the European labour market only make part of this global labour market.

Many future European graduates will have to work – at different stages in their career – in different places in Europe and perhaps also in other parts of the world. An early study experience in a foreign country including the acquisition of enhanced linguistic and social competences will most probably make easier the access to these future labour markets. This applies not only for working places in the traditional economic sense, but also for international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and all other places where the future development and sustainability of our societies will depend on mutual understanding, the will to cooperate, social competences and a sound academic education as a basis. Joint degree programmes can help to develop these qualifications.

## 2.4 *UNESCO / Council of Europe definition of Joint Degrees in the context of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary documents and other definitions*

There are – as almost always in complex contexts – different “definitions” of what a Joint Degree Programme in Europe could or should be.

In terms of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the most desirable is probably this one:

*“A Joint Degree course is an integrated study programme in which two or more academic partners from different countries combine their efforts and knowledge to design and produce a coherent academic programme leading to a (first or subsequent) degree. The programme will be based on reliable written contracts between the participating institutions taking into account existing national and international laws and other relevant regulations. It will be quality-assured by one or more accreditation agencies operating in an integrated approach (with external peers and the participation of students) and following the European “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance of the EHEA”. The resulting accreditation will be recognised automatically in all participating countries and, perhaps later, in Europe and in other parts of the world. The (joint) degree issued by the two or more participating universities is written on a single document and signed and sealed by all universities at which the graduate spent considerable parts of his or her studies. The “diploma” is set – by national law – equivalent to a (traditional) national diploma and offers the same rights and access opportunities. It is accompanied by an enhanced diploma*

*supplement (DS) which specifies in a major European language the specialities of this European study programme.*" So much for the lead idea.

In a couple of countries – not yet in all, neither in the EU nor in the other Bologna countries – there are already legal provisions allowing the awarding of joint degrees as one certificate which is authoritative for all participating countries and has the same status as a national diploma. For (general) agreements on recognised procedures for the accreditation of transnational study programmes and/or several institutions in different countries, this is not yet the case. Specifications of what should be contained in an enhanced European diploma supplement still need to be developed.

Taking into account these different stages of legal and other developments, the UNESCO, the Council of Europe and some other organisations chose a somewhat wider definition of Joint Degree Programmes in order to not hinder the further development of integrated study programmes and make sure that the graduates have something reliable in hands when they finish their studies. Therefore, these definitions also include the possibility of awarding a joint degree in the form of double or multiple degrees issued separately or combined as national diplomas.<sup>25</sup>

These forms are, at present, – due to the legal situation prevailing in national higher education laws – still the most common way of awarding "joint degrees".

There is, however, a fairly broad consensus that the further development of joint degrees in the EHEA should head towards the "one certificate or diploma type".

## 2.5 Prerequisites and conditions for successful integrated study programmes leading to joint degrees

This section is meant to give – in addition to links and sources already presented in the footnotes – a brief survey of characteristics and criteria that should be met when starting to develop a European joint degree project.

<sup>25</sup> Some of these definitions are contained in the "Relevant Documents" prepared by DAAD for the Berlin Seminar on 21 – 22 September 2006 and included in this publication. Other helpful documents are: The Coimbra Universities Group: "Glossary of Relevant Definitions About Joint Degrees", March 10, 2003 Draft, Coimbra, (Portugal); ENIC Network (Council of Europe/UNESCO), NARIC Network (European Commission): "Draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Draft Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees", 10<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting of the ENIC and NARIC Networks, Vaduz (Liechtenstein), 18 – 20 May 2003 ([www.cepes.ro/](http://www.cepes.ro/)); Ulrich SCHUELE: "Joint and Double Degrees within the European Higher Education Area", Consortium of International Double Degrees, CIDD-Papers No 1 (2006), Paris ([www.CIDD.org](http://www.CIDD.org))

To begin with, it could be helpful to recall the six points listed in the already mentioned "ENIC/NARIC Explanatory Memorandum":

- The programmes are developed and/or approved jointly by several institutions
- Students from each participating institution physically take part in the study programme at other institutions (but they do not necessarily have to study at all cooperating institutions)
- Student's stay at the participating institutions should constitute a substantial part of the programme
- Periods of study and examinations passed at the partner institutions are recognised fully and automatically
- The partner institutions work out the curriculum jointly and cooperate on admission and examinations. In addition, staff of participating institutions should be encouraged to teach at other institutions contributing to the joint degree
- After completing the full programme, students either obtain the national degree of each participating institution or a degree awarded jointly by the partner institutions.

To continue (and in order to try and avoid mistakes), it would be worth reminding the EUA's "10 Golden Rules" for developing programmes that will lead to joint degrees:<sup>26</sup>

- (1) Be sure of your motivation
- (2) Select your partner carefully
- (3) Develop clear goals with your partner for the joint degree programme as well as learning goals to be achieved by the students
- (4) Make sure that the necessary institutional support for the programme is provided
- (5) Make sure that sufficient academic and administrative personnel capacity is provided for the programme
- (6) Make sure that sustainable financial planning exists for the programme
- (7) Make sure that information about the programme is easily accessible
- (8) Schedule an adequate number of meetings with the partners
- (9) Develop a common language strategy for the joint degree programme and encourage learning the local language(s)
- (10) Clearly define the responsibilities between the partners

In addition, the already mentioned CIDD-paper<sup>27</sup> contains a six-pages check list for joint and double degree pro-

<sup>26</sup> According to recommendations from the final report of the EUA on their Joint Masters Project ([www.eua.be/](http://www.eua.be/))

<sup>27</sup> Consortium of International Double Degrees (CIDD), Paris ([www.cidd.org](http://www.cidd.org))

grammes that provides a lot of helpful practice-oriented questions in its three main chapters “fundamental decisions”, “curriculum development”, and “quality assurance”.

### 3. What needs to be done ?

#### 3.1 *Create reliable legal provisions for “true” joint degrees*

To reach the desired plain and easy “one-certificate-form” of European joint degrees it appears to be necessary that also the national legal provisions for higher education “converge” a little bit to this end. Perhaps it would be worth the effort to invest in a “best practice project” and compile the legal provisions for the awarding of joint degrees of those member states which claim to have them already.<sup>28</sup>

#### 3.2 *Map experience of successful integrated study programmes*

Sound European joint degree programmes could perhaps be regarded as a kind of “flagship product” of the European Higher Education Area. In this respect, a survey could be helpful illustrating a number of good examples of operational joint degree programmes in all or in a majority of the Bologna member states. Such a survey could well be used for the increasing “External Dimension-Demands” of the Bologna Process, too.<sup>29</sup>

#### 3.3 *Install a specific financial promotion programme for the preparatory and overhead costs of European integrated study programmes*

As hopefully has become clear by what has been previously stated, the design and realisation of sound European joint degree programmes requires more efforts and input than just new national study programmes. Whilst the first generation of “Joint Degrees” had to be carried mainly by vision and European enthusiasm, with financial promotion for additional costs still being scarce, it should now be the time for a more systematic support for the second generation of integrated joint degree programmes as an EHEA brand in higher education.

#### 3.4 *Further develop the “Diploma Supplement” towards a really functional “European document” for academic and employment purposes*

The Diploma Supplement (DS) is well on the way to be broadly introduced and develop as a valuable instrument that is informative and useful both for academic and labour market purposes. It is international from its basic idea and issued in a major world language.

There do not exist many regulations yet concerning diploma supplements in national laws on higher education (that is the advantage of a fairly new instrument). By its nature, it is an instrument that is subject to the autonomy of universities rather than that of the state, and the support of the autonomy of universities is one of the main obligations declared in several communiqués of the Bologna Process.

It would therefore be a good idea to further develop the diploma supplement and allow for it to take up elements of specific European developments in higher education in the EHEA (i.e. in all Bologna states). Being derived from the universities’ autonomy sphere, this would be a matter of efficient coordination among European universities rather than of legal implementation.

Nevertheless, it combines both spheres by including a description of the relevant system(s) of higher education, a reference to the qualification framework(s) and it meets the increasing demands of employers in a more international labour market to know better what the qualifications of a graduate are. Therefore, all parties mentioned should have an interest in this further development of the DS.

<sup>28</sup> A similar project of the “best-practice type” in legal affairs is currently under way in Germany and financed by the Donor’s Association (Stifterverband). It compares the existing laws on higher education of the 16 single states (Laender) of the Federal Republic of Germany under the question “which one has the best and most modern law on higher education” following a set of criteria ([www.deregulierung.stifterverband.de](http://www.deregulierung.stifterverband.de))

<sup>29</sup> See also: Pavel ZGAGA: “Looking out! The Bologna Process in a Global Setting. On the “External Dimension” of the Bologna Process”, Report for the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, Draft, Oslo, October 2006





# Definitions of Joint Degrees

- **Glossary of the Bologna-Bergen Homepage**

"A joint degree should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by two or more higher education institutions on the basis of a joint study programme.

A joint degree may be issued as

- a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
- a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,
- one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question".

- **Erasmus Mundus**

"A joint degree is defined as a single diploma issued by at least two of the institutions offering an integrated study programme.

(A double or multiple degree is defined as two or more nationally recognised diplomas issued officially by two or more institutions involved in an integrated study programme.)

Erasmus Mundus Master Courses are integrated study programmes. What does course integration mean? Delivery of a jointly developed curriculum OR full recognition by the Erasmus Mundus consortium of modules which are developed and delivered separately, but which together make up a common standard master Course".

- **Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees (Council of Europe/UNESCO)**

"A joint degree should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as – a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,

- a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,
- one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of joint qualification in question".

- **Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe (by C. Tauch and A. Rauhvargers)**

Joint degrees are normally awarded after study programmes that correspond to all or at least some of the following characteristics:


- the programmes are developed and/or approved jointly by several institutions;
- students from each participating institution study parts of the programme at other institutions;
- the students' stays at the participating institutions are of comparable length;
- periods of study and exams passed at the partner institution(s) are recognised fully and automatically;
- professors at each participating institution also teach at the other institutions, work out the curriculum jointly and form joint commissions for admission and examinations;
- after completion of the full programme, the student either obtains the national degrees of each participating institution OR a degree (in fact usually an unofficial 'certificate' or 'diploma') awarded jointly by them.

Joint programmes DO NOT necessarily lead to joint degrees. Different practices:

- real joint degree – single degree certificate awarded in the name of both or all participating institutions very rare (UK, IT);
- double (multiple) degree as the award of two/more separate degree certificates most common;
- award of single degree certificate in the name of the participating institution at which the student is registered also present.

- **ESIB (Joint Degrees in the Context of the Bologna Process)**

A joint degree is ONE degree given by two or more higher education institutions together, for one study programme jointly developed and implemented by all participating higher education institutions. (A double degree is TWO or more degrees given by two or more higher education institutions for the same study programme, in one way or another separately developed by and implemented in every participating higher education institution.)



# Results of questionnaires on the institutionalisation of Joint Degrees sent to Bologna Follow-Up Group members

German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

## Summary of Results

A questionnaire on the institutionalisation of Joint Degrees in the Bologna member states has been prepared to supply the conference with additional empirical insights. Furthermore, we wanted to get an overview on the progress achieved since the last Bologna Seminar on Joint Degrees in Sweden in 2002. The questionnaire was sent to the members of the Bologna Follow-Up Group by the German representative Dr. Birger Hendriks.

14 countries responded positively to it. The majority has already taken considerable measures to facilitate the awarding of joint degrees. Additionally, they legally accept both double and joint degrees. As a result, a number of legal changes were introduced after the last seminar in 2002 as can be seen in table 5, summarizing the legal provisions passed in the individual responding Bologna states. However, concerns are also voiced regarding the award of a joint degree without issuing a national degree at the same time to accompany it. Especially, the question of how to exercise effectively state authority causes some worries.

Concerning recognition issues, they do not seem to be a major problem to the award of joint degrees, neither for employment in the public sector (table 7) nor for academic recognition (table 9).

The same picture evolves regarding quality assurance issues (table 11), though here more concerns have been voiced (table 13). But in the majority of cases, QA mechanisms are comparable to those employed in national degrees. Unanswered questions and issues remain the assessment of the study period abroad (here are also dif-

ferences between partner countries from EU and non EU countries in this respect).

For the majority of responding countries the award of joint degrees is part of their national Higher Education strategy (table 17), even though there are still very few special funding mechanisms foreseen (table 18)

When asked about their view on the three major concerns regarding the issue of joint degrees, answers range from a general awareness about challenges among the HEIs in countries and problems in funding, specifically in terms of quality assurance mechanisms and some recognition issues. In general, there still seems to be a need to increasing the legal compatibility in the Bologna countries to facilitate the award, quality assurance provisions and recognition procedures of joint degrees (table 21).

Finally, it is not overstating to note that at least some (in few cases even considerable) progress has been achieved since 2002. But a number of problems and challenges continue to press. The seminar's organising team hopes that our discussions in Berlin will move these issues forward and that the data compiled in this short questionnaire will give some useful background information thus causing some thought-provoking statements.

We would like to extend our warm thanks to all those taking the time to answer the questionnaire and wish all participants a successful seminar and a nice stay in Berlin.

## Answers

### Question

How many joint degree programmes exist in your country?

Table 1

Country	Answer
Poland	no answer
Cyprus	1
Norway	4 part of Erasmus Mundus, 2 accredited by our National Quality Assurance Agency. There are more but the Ministry does not have the number.
Sweden	no answer
Czech Republic	approx. 30 including double degree programme
Italy	310 (survey completed in 2004)
Lithuania	no answer
Austria	30+
Netherlands	7 Erasmus Mundus, several at transnational and cross border
France	No overall statistical data are currently available for all the FR HEI. 296 Joint masters, 254 double Masters (Data based an answer rate 50 %)
Spain	very few
UK	no answer
Germany	no answer
Lichtenstein	Zero

## Question I: Legal situation

I.1 Has your country taken explicit legal measures to facilitate joint degrees?

Table 2

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	11	78,6
No	2	14,3
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

I.2 Is it legally permitted in your country to award

a. Double or multiple degrees (i.e. students receive two or more degrees for one programme, which is run by an institution in your country and another institution in another country)

Table 3

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

b. Joint degrees (i.e. students receive one single degree for a programme which is run by an institution in your country in co-operation with at least one other institution in another country)

Table 4

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	10	71,4
No	2	14,3
No answer	2	14,3
Total	14	100

Please outline briefly the legal provisions for the awarding of joint degrees:

Table 5

Country	Answer
Poland	Base is Prawo o szkolnictwie wy szym (Law on Higher Education) – art 167 ust 3 pkt 3 and Decree of Minister for higher education (now in the preparation).
Cyprus	The awarding of joint degrees is not, at the time, regulated by national law. At the University of Cyprus, however, the rules and regulations governing the operation of the University, provide for the awarding of joint degrees. Main points include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– An integrated or a joint programme of study is expected to attest additional value than the same programme conducted under normal circumstances at the University of Cyprus</li> <li>– Mobility is a compulsory element in the implementation of such programmes unless infrastructure and other means are provided for distance learning</li> <li>– For the implementation of a coherent integrated or joint programme of study the signing of a consortium agreement between the two parties is required.</li> </ul>
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act relating to Universities and University Colleges of 1 April 2005, chapter 3, section 3-2 (1) "The Ministry may issue regulations concerning the institutions' right to award degrees and professional training qualifications in cooperation with other institutions."</li> <li>• Regulation No. 1040 of 8 September 2005 relating to Accreditation, Evaluation and Recognition under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, chapter 4.</li> </ul>

Country	Answer
Sweden	<p>In answering these questions we have understood that you by “joint degree” mean one single degree for a programme which is run by an institution in your country in cooperation with at least one other institution in another country, <b>without being accompanied by any national diploma</b> (Council of Europe definition). Sweden has been aiming for the possibility to award joint degrees according to this definition for several years but we have run into problems concerning the legal person of our higher education institutions. Our institutions are state authorities and to award a degree is an exercise of state authority. It is probably not possible for two authorities to exercise joint authority in relation to an individual. All officially recognised Swedish degrees are also included in the Degree Ordinance, decided by Government. In order for a degree to be officially recognised it needs to be included in the Swedish Degree Ordinance or be an officially recognised degree in another state that has ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention.</p> <p>There is no problem, however, for the institutions to arrange joint programmes or courses with other institutions nationally or internationally and to award a double degree <u>or</u> one officially recognised degree from one of the participating countries based on mutual recognition of the programme.</p> <p>Parliament and Government have decided to implement a new structure for higher education starting July 1 2007. The new structure will be divided into three cycles along the lines of the Bologna Process. This will facilitate the cooperation with other countries concerning joint programmes and courses. When presenting the reform the Government also said that it will investigate the issue of joint degrees further, and that – in the meantime – the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education should formulate the Diploma Supplement so as to describe more clearly national degrees awarded following joint programmes between two or more institutions. Diploma Supplement is issued for all degrees automatically, in English and free of charge for the student.</p>
Czech Republic	<p>The awarding of joint degrees is regulated by Act no. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on the Amendment and Supplement to Some Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), particularly by section 47a:</p> <p>“Section 47a</p> <p>(1) Studies in Bachelor’s, Master’s and doctoral programmes may also be carried out in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions that offer degree programmes with related contents.</p> <p>(2) The conditions for cooperation are specified in an agreement between the higher education institutions involved, pursuant to subsection 47a (1) and pursuant to the provisions of the Act.</p> <p>1) Graduates of studies in degree programmes offered in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions are awarded academic titles pursuant to subsections 45 (4), 46 (4) and 47 (5) and in addition, according to the circumstances, academic titles of the foreign higher education institutions pursuant to current legislation in the relevant country. The diploma includes the name of the foreign higher education institution with which the cooperation was carried out and may include the information that the foreign academic title is a joint title also awarded simultaneously at the foreign higher education institution.</p>
Italy	<p>a) “Further to agreements in this regard, Italian universities may award first and second degrees (as well as all of the other qualifications envisaged by the new rules) also in conjunction with other Italian or foreign universities” (Art. 3, paragraph 9 of Ministerial Decree-MD 509/1999, and Art. 3, paragraph 10 of Ministerial Decree 270/2004).</p> <p>b) The rules governing the “procedures for the award of joint qualifications “ are delegated to the general academic regulations of individual universities (Art. 11, paragraph 7, letter h) of DM 509/1999, and Art. 11, paragraph 7, letter o) of DM 270/2004].</p> <p>c) In the case of joint degrees with foreign universities, the procedures for the award of the qualifications concerned should be expressly regulated in the respective inter-</p>



Country	Answer
	<p>university agreements, given the differences in the national rules among the various countries.</p> <p>d) The same legal provisions have been adopted also by H.E. institutions (HEIs) of the non-university sector ranking at university-level (institutions of the AFAM System (system of higher education in the arts, dance, and music) [Art. 3, paragraph 8 of Presidential Decree 212/2005).</p>
Lithuania	General requirements for joint study programmes are outlined in the Minister's of Education and Science Order No. ISAK-85 (January 17, 2006). The main provisions are connected with general provisions, requirements for preparation, implementation and awarding of joint study programmes and final provisions.
Austria	<p>Universities Act, definitions:</p> <p>"Joint diploma programmes" mean degree programmes which are jointly conducted under agreements between one or more Austrian universities and one or more recognised post-secondary educational institutions abroad. Such agreements must specify the work to be performed by the students concerned at the institutions which are parties to them."</p> <p>Analogously in the Fachhochschule Studies Act and the Act on Schools of Teacher Training.</p>
Netherlands	The new legislation sent to Parliament in June explicitly mentions the possibility of joint degrees. Up to the present the concept of joint degrees is not mentioned in the law. Some legal advisors in the institutions interpret that it is forbidden, which it is not.
France	<p>Specific legal provisions were made by the 11th May decree published in 2005 just before Bergen. Indeed, in the French system where the State guarantees the quality of degrees by entitling French institutions to award them after a cyclical national evaluation every 4 or 6 years, the notion of joint degrees between a French institution and a foreign institution didn't exist.</p> <p>The new legal provisions which make the award of genuine joint degrees possible can be summed up as follows:</p> <p>The principle is simple; when a French institution is recognized by the French system as competent to award a State-guaranteed degree at a given level and in a given field, from now on, it can make an agreement with a foreign institution which in its own country can also award a degree at the same level and in the same field, in order to organize the training courses together and to award a genuine joint degree (ie : a single degree). But HEI could still stick to the double-degree formula if they wish so. The quality of the partnership will be assessed during the next cyclical national evaluation.</p> <p>This approach is based on trust in arrangements for the quality assurance organization in the different countries without having to make these arrangements uniform. Conclusions from this new policy will be of course drawn by the Ministry of national education, higher education and research.</p> <p>The 2005 May 11<sup>th</sup> decree sets this new overall framework. It is completed by a specific decree for the doctorate (that is, the co-supervision of thesis &gt; 2005 January 6<sup>th</sup> decree).</p>
Spain	In terms of "university diplomas", Institutions are free to enter into arrangements with other Institutions with a view to issuing a joint diploma in a single documents. However, regarding "official degrees" until the approval of Royal Decree 56/2005 in January 2005, it was not legally possible to award a joint degree. Article 7 of this rule opens, for the first time, this possibility. Nonetheless this will require complementary legislation regulating all necessary details before joint degrees can become a full reality. This legislation which will likely take the form of a Ministerial Order is presently being prepared and is expected to be approved before the end of 2006.
UK	The ability to award a joint degree depends on each institution's degree awarding powers and the provisions made in its Charter, or other founding document. UK institutions that have a royal charter have no in principle difficulty in collaborating with other institutions with similar powers to jointly award a degree, but there is a view that even so the power might need to be expressly written into their charter. Universities established under the

Country	Answer
	1988 and 1992 statutes are subject to ultra vires. Whilst the FHE Act 1992 does provide for the award of a joint degree between two institutions it is not clear whether this extends to awards made jointly with two or more institutions, and to awards made jointly with one or more overseas institutions. The legal issues are not entirely resolved.
Germany	Legal provisions differ from Land to Land in the federal system of Germany. The students have to spend a substantial time at one university in each country (one year or 60 ECTS for the Bachelor, only 30 for the Master). The whole study programme has to be accredited in advance.
Lichtenstein	Die Verleihung solcher Grade ist in Lichtenstein gesetzlich nicht geregelt, aber dadurch nicht ausgeschlossen, sofern die liechtensteinischen Bedingungen erfüllt sind, die für die entsprechenden Grade per Gesetz bestehen.

## Question II: Recognition

II.1 Are transnational joint degrees recognised by your government (in case your country is not involved in the JD) as equivalent to national degrees?

Table 6

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Are they recognised for employment in the public sector?

Table 7

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Are they recognised for employment in a state regulated profession?

Table 8

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	86,7
No	1	6,7
No answer	1	6,7
Total	15 <sup>1</sup>	100

<sup>1</sup> One country has given yes and no as an answer as the situation is different for different state regulated professions.

Are they recognised for academic purposes (further studies)?

Table 9

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Please outline briefly the major issues concerning the recognition of joint degrees:



Table 10

Country	Answer
Poland	There are no formal obstacles to recognise joint degrees. It is, however, difficult to say how they will be recognised in the labour market.
Cyprus	The issue of quality is of paramount importance with regard to the recognition of joint degrees. The establishment of quality assurance mechanisms in all participating countries is, for that reason, imperative.
Norway	The joint degrees must be in accordance with the national regulations, and in state regulated professions, they must follow the regulations set by the national authorisation agency for the specific profession. At present, there are not many joint degrees in state regulated professions.
Sweden	The answer to all the questions above is that it all depends on whether the degree is officially recognised by the authorities in the countries concerned (the countries that the issuing institutions belong to). If it doesn't concern a state regulated profession it is up to the employer to judge the qualification. When it comes to academic recognition it is both a questions about the recognition of the degree in the countries concerned and the level and content of the degree. This has to be decided by the individual institution evaluating the degree.
Czech Republic	It is necessary for academic purposes to have certificate of equivalence, it is possible to ask for it at particular higher education institution in the Czech Republic. This certificate is not obligatory for employment (neither for public sector nor state regulated professions). The certificate can be issued by the Czech institution participating in the respective joint degree or if there is no Czech participation by a HEI providing a similar degree programme.
Italy	a) When a joint degree is awarded by an Italian HEI in the respect of the legislation mentioned above under point I, letter a), no recognition problem should arise: the attached certification should mention the specific corresponding degree (e.g. Laurea, or Laurea Specialistica, etc.) of the Italian H.Ed. system. b) When no Italian HEIs is involved in the awarding of a joint degree, its recognition takes place by applying the Lisbon Convention, which since July 2002 has been the common rule for the evaluation and/or recognition of all foreign academic qualifications.
Lithuania	No answer
Austria	A recognition of joint degrees in the meaning of foreign degrees is not necessary, because the concept is that joint degrees are Austrian ones or, resp., have an Austrian component. In case that the Austrian degree involved is sufficient for any legal purpose (e.g. admission to regulated professions), the character of the programme as a joint degree programme does not in any way disturb this right.
Netherlands	No answer
France	2 main issues should be addressed from this point of view : ✓ how to assess a joint degree involving a country from EU and another from outside the EU? ✓ the duration of a valid accreditation necessary for the automatic recognition of a joint degree by all the partner countries involved.
Spain	Since they are in legal terms foreign degrees, they need to go through the system of recognition of foreign degrees following the same conditions as other degrees issued by foreign institutions. Once recognised they will have same validity as national degree as determined by our legislation.
UK	No answer
Germany	No answer
Lichtenstein	Solche Grade sind im Rahmen der bestehenden Zulassungsbedingungen anerkannt.

### Question III: Quality Assurance

III.1 Are there any legal measures/provisions for the quality assurance of joint degrees?

Table 11

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	9	64,3
No	4	28,6
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

If yes, please outline them briefly:

Table 12

Country	Answer
Poland	The same as in the case of regular degrees
Spain	Once become a reality will have to follow regular evaluation procedures in the same way as other national degrees. Evaluation guidelines may require small adaptations in order to take into account their specific nature.
Norway	Regulation No. 1040 of 8 September 2005 relating to Accreditation, Evaluation and Recognition under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, chapter 4.
Czech Republic	If a Czech HEI participates directly in the joint degree it has to have the study programme accredited. Up to now there were no special provisions for JDs. At present there are special measures concerning joint degree study programmes discussed.
Netherlands	It is in the task of NVAO to attune internationally.
Austria	The universities are obliged to introduce a quality assurance system for each programme of studies.
Lithuania	Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education evaluates foreign qualifications giving access to higher education in Lithuania as well as all types of higher education qualifications acquired abroad.
Germany	Same as for national degrees
Italy	Joint degrees awarded by Italian universities have to go through the same accreditation process as all other Italian degrees of the same cycle and typology (bachelor-level, master-level, etc.), under the control of the CNVSU (Italian NQA).

If no, please outline the major concerns:

Table 13

Country	Answer
Cyprus	At the time being only the educational evaluation-accreditation of programmes of study offered by private institutions, constitutes a means of quality assurance. The Ministry of Education and Culture, however, has taken significant steps for the establishment of a National Quality Assurance Agency which is going to be dealing with both institutional and programme evaluation (for public and private institutions of higher education). Within this framework, mechanisms concerning quality assurance of joint degrees are going to be discussed and examined.
Sweden	No such measures have been taken since the Swedish institutions are not allowed to issue „real“ joint degrees. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (the quality assurance agency) has, however, led an EUA project concerning methods for the quality assurance of joint degrees.
France	Our main concern currently is how and who should evaluate the educational part which is provided abroad, for example with Erasmus Mundus? Indeed Erasmus Mundus is built on the mutual trust which is given for granted from the start, as long as with double or multiple degrees, the degree eventually awarded in a country 'X' is recognized by this country 'X'. In other words, each country can guarantee the quality of the learning path provided at home for its own degree but nobody actually can tell about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the genuine quality of the same courses provided in a foreign language for an Erasmus Mundus student ;</li> <li>– and the whole learning path an Erasmus Mundus student actually goes through in 2 or more European higher education institutions.</li> </ul>

III.2 Are there special domestic procedures for quality assurance of joint degrees in your country?

Table 14

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	2	14,3
No	9	64,3
No answer	3	21,4
Total	14	100

III.3 In case there are special domestic procedures for quality assurance, do they take the transnational aspects (i.e. the part of the programme that is studied in another country) into account?

Table 15

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	3	21,4
No	4	28,2
No answer	7	50,0
Total	14	100

Please outline briefly how the responsible accreditation/quality assurance bodies handle the accreditation/quality assurance of joint degrees:

Table 16

Country	Answer
Poland	Accreditation/ quality assurance bodies handle joint degrees similarly as regular degrees
Cyprus	No answer
Norway	In Norway, an institution can have modules in a joint degree accredited by the National Assurance Agency. These modules are accredited in accordance with our national regulations for degrees.
Sweden	No answer
Czech Republic	Czech Accreditation Commission has to accredit all study programmes.
Italy	<p>Since 1999 the Ministry of University and Research has promoted the internationalisation of the Italian H.Ed. system by cofinancing suitable international projects submitted by Italian HEIs; one of the activities eligible for funding is the design and establishment of integrated study programmes resulting in multiple or joint degrees. Here are two of the indispensable conditions for the allocation of ministerial funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the integrated curriculum and joint/multiple degree must have been approved by the evaluation unit of the Italian HEI concerned;</li> <li>– the whole project must envisage an external evaluation, both in progress and final.</li> </ul>
Lithuania	Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education evaluates qualifications connected with higher education, other qualifications and partial studies; fulfils functions of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) – gives information, consultations and recommendations for research and higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania, and other juridical and natural persons, when it is necessary to estimate, how diplomas of higher education, certificates or study programmes and their parts in foreign countries meet the higher education system and requirements of higher education of the Republic of Lithuania; collects and analyses information, which is necessary to evaluate and recognize qualifications acquired abroad; Providing international information exchange within the Network of European National Information Centres for Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC) gives information for analogous institutions abroad, fulfils functions, which are necessary that qualifications acquired in Lithuania could be evaluated and recognized abroad.
Austria	No answer
Netherlands	Programmes upon request by the institutions.
France	Currently the CNE („Conseil national d'évaluation“) and the CTI („Commission des titres d'ingénieurs“) are working with peer reviews involving international experts.
Spain	All new official degrees will have to follow quality assurance evaluation guidelines within a certain period of time. However, it is not possible to say anything concrete since it is something which has not been done up to the present time, as new degrees have only very recently been established.
UK	<p>The Quality Assurance Agency for higher education has produced a Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 2 of this code deals with Collaborative provision, and Precept 13 of this Section says:</p> <p>„An awarding institution that engages with another authorised awarding body jointly to provide a programme of study leading to a dual or joint academic award should be able to satisfy itself that it has the legal capacity to do so, and that the academic standard of the award, references to the FHEQ (the SCQF in Scotland) meets its own expectations, irrespective of the expectations of the partner awarding body.“</p>
Germany	No special procedures available.
Lichtenstein	No answer

## Question IV Promotion of JD

IV.1 Does the national strategy for higher education involve a promotion and an increase of the number of joint degrees?

Table 17

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	9	64,3
No	4	28,6
No answer	1	7,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

IV.2 Do you have special government funding schemes for the development and implementation of joint degrees?

Table 18

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	5	35,7
No	8	57,1
No answer	1	7,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

IV.3. Do you have public-private partnerships in the financing of joint degrees?

Table 21

Country	Answer
Poland	<p>GENERAL COMMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Idea of joint degrees is still not wide spread in Poland.</li> <li>2. New law on higher education and other regulations as well as promotion of joint degree study programmes should substantially increase the number of students involved in this type of education;</li> <li>3. It is difficult to say how joint degrees will be recognised on the labour market;</li> <li>4. There are financial obstacles which make it difficult for students to participate in joint degree study programmes. In the moment it is difficult to expect special state funds promoting joint degree.</li> <li>5. Many higher education institutions are interested in the development of joint degree study programmes which gives a hope that this form of education becomes popular in Poland in the near future.</li> </ol>
Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <u>Quality Assurance</u>: Establishment of mechanisms and transparent procedures for quality assurance and enhancement of access to information regarding the quality of institutions and programmes in participating countries are crucial for quality assurance</li> <li>– <u>Curricula</u>: participants in joint degree programmes need to establish mechanisms for better managing any curriculum inconsistencies, safeguarding, thus, the unity and coherence of the joint degree programme as a whole.</li> <li>– <u>Adapting to the new culture</u>: Host institutions need to provide assistance to students for easy adaptation to the new culture, avoiding thus, culture shock (i.e. special programmes, mentoring etc.)</li> </ul>

Table 19

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	2	14,3
No	9	64,3
No answer	3	21,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>


IV.4 Are the national student grants or loans in your country portable for mobility purposes?

Table 20

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	11	78,6
No	2	14,3
No answer	1	7,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

Please, outline from your view the three major concerns in the field of joint degrees as well as realistic scenarios to overcome them:

Country	Answer
Norway	In Norway, there are no legal hindrances for joint degrees, but there are in many other countries.
Sweden	There are no national strategies for the promotion of „real“ joint degrees, but in a Government Bill from June 2005 the Government has encouraged the development of joint <u>programmes</u> and <u>courses</u> both nationally and internationally. The major concern for Sweden is the question regarding the issuing of joint degrees in relation to the exercise of state authority as outlined in question I.
Czech Republic	Increase of the number of joint degree programs is one of the priorities of „The Long-Term Plan for Educational, Scientific, Research, Development, Artistic and Other Creative Activities of Higher Education Institutions for 2006 – 2010“ issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. And the same priority was also often included into long-term plans of particular HEIs. Ministry set up Development Programs, from which HEIS can gain money for preparing joint degree programs, mobility of students and other developing activities as well. Czech HEIs are also involved in many joint degree programs created within EU programs (Socrates / Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, EU programs for cooperation with non-EU countries etc.).
Italy	a) The 1 <sup>st</sup> experimental phase has been characterised by the fully autonomous initiative of university institutions. There is now a need for some standard typologies defined on the basis of a few general guidelines. b) Quality assurance in the provisions of integrated curricula may be a matter of concern. The experiences carried out within the Erasmus Mundus Programme are especially significant and may help elaborate adequate criteria for quality evaluation and assurance. c) No doubts about the advantages that European H.Ed. institutions have received from their efforts to design and set up joint curricula (universities have progressed considerably in the definition of „European“ curricula), but not sufficient data are available on the effectiveness of double/joint degrees from the point of view of their actual spendability in the labour market, either national or European.
Lithuania	No answer
Austria	Problem of the title and its legal effects → One of the titles concerned should in any case be a national one so that the legal effects can be dependant on it. Organizational problems to execute the curriculum → Have to be solved at institutional level. Financial problems for the students → Have to be solved in the context of study loans.
Netherlands	No answer
France	✓ All Bologna countries should make their own legal framework compatible with joint degrees. ✓ In order to facilitate a mutual understanding about joint degrees, a minimum set of common references for the accreditation/evaluation of joint degrees) should be found out in Europe. ✓ The renewal of joint degrees' accreditation is also an issue to be addressed with a necessary degree of flexibility, meaning that in this case of renewal, each higher education institution needs to alert its partners well in advance and gives the right legal information before the next academic year before students get registered.
Spain	No answer
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifying the legal basis for such awards</li> <li>• The need for clarity between the responsibilities of the various partners</li> <li>• The need for compatibility between institutional and national systems</li> </ul>
Germany	Very important is a sufficient quality assurance comprising both the home university and the foreign university involved in a study program.
Lichtenstein	No answer



# Results of the Survey on Study Programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees

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### 1. Context of the Study

In the context of the Bologna project "Joint Degrees – a Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area" supported by the European Commission the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) aims at exploring the extent of implementation of double, multiple and joint degree programmes. As one of the means for the collection of relevant information, DAAD undertook a survey in selected countries which have signed the Bologna declaration.

The study was carried out from April 2006 until August 2006 by DAAD in cooperation with the Association for Empirical Studies (GES) in Kassel, Germany.

### 2. Methodological Approach

#### 2.1 Methods of Data Collection

For the collection of data about characteristics of study programmes awarding double, multiple or joint degrees, a highly standardised questionnaire was employed and sent to universities in 33 out of 45 Bologna countries. For the distribution of questionnaires in the individual countries different modes of operation were employed by DAAD:

- a) *Direct mailing of questionnaires via e-mail to central coordinators of universities:* Germany, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Russian Federation, Switzerland and Turkey.
- b) *Distribution of questionnaires by partner countries in the Bologna project "Joint Degrees – a Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area":* Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy\*, Norway and Slovak Republic.
- c) *Distribution of questionnaires by National Agencies in charge of ERASMUS Mundus:* Belgium (French), Cyprus, Estonia, France, Greece, Iceland, Latvia,

\* no answers from universities available

Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

In general, the questionnaire was provided in English. Russian and German versions were made available to universities in the Russian Federation respectively in Germany. The questionnaires were sent out on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006, and the recipients were requested to return the completed questionnaires by the end of June either directly to DAAD or to the coordinating agency in their individual country. After all, 303 questionnaires from 24 countries were filled in and could be used for the following analysis.

As no data is available about the total number of study programmes awarding double, multiple and joint degrees in individual countries, an assessment of the representativity of responses is not possible. Besides, due to the complete lack of responses from some of the countries and large imbalances in the number of participating programmes, the validity of results has to be regarded with caution. Nevertheless, indications in terms of plausibility of figures give rise to the assumption that respondents to the survey do not belong to an exclusive group of programme providers completely different from the total population of integrated study programmes in the geographical area covered by the study. Thus, the characteristics of those double, multiple and joint degree programmes described in the following sections give, at least, an impression about the possible range of these kinds of programmes and, at best, an almost realistic picture of the current stage of implementation.

#### 2.2 Definition of Terms and Abbreviations

In order to ensure a common understanding of the results of the study it might be helpful to define some key terms used in the following chapters:

- *Integrated Study Programme:* All types of programmes which include periods of study abroad in at least two universities in two different countries.
- *University:* In this study the term "university" covers all types of higher education institutions.
- *Home university:* The university where students first enrol in the study programme, i.e. where they begin their studies.
- *Partner university:* Universities in the consortium offering an integrated study programme.
- *Host university:* Partner university where a student spent a period abroad.
- *Programme director, respondent:* Person in charge of the integrated study programme at one of the universities in the consortium; typically the person who responded to the questionnaire.
- *EU countries:* The 25 member states of the European Union.
- *EU-15 countries:* The 15 EU member states prior to the extension in 2004.



- *New EU members*: The 10 Central and Eastern European countries entering the EU in 2004.
- *EFTA*: The four countries belonging to the European Free Trade Area: Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Switzerland.
- *Non-EU/EFTA countries*: Countries which neither belong to the European Union nor to the EFTA.

### 3. Results of the Study

#### 3.1 Basic Profile of Study Programmes

##### *Country of participating universities*

Altogether, slightly more than 300 programme directors participated in the survey and returned the filled-in questionnaire to the German Academic Exchange Service

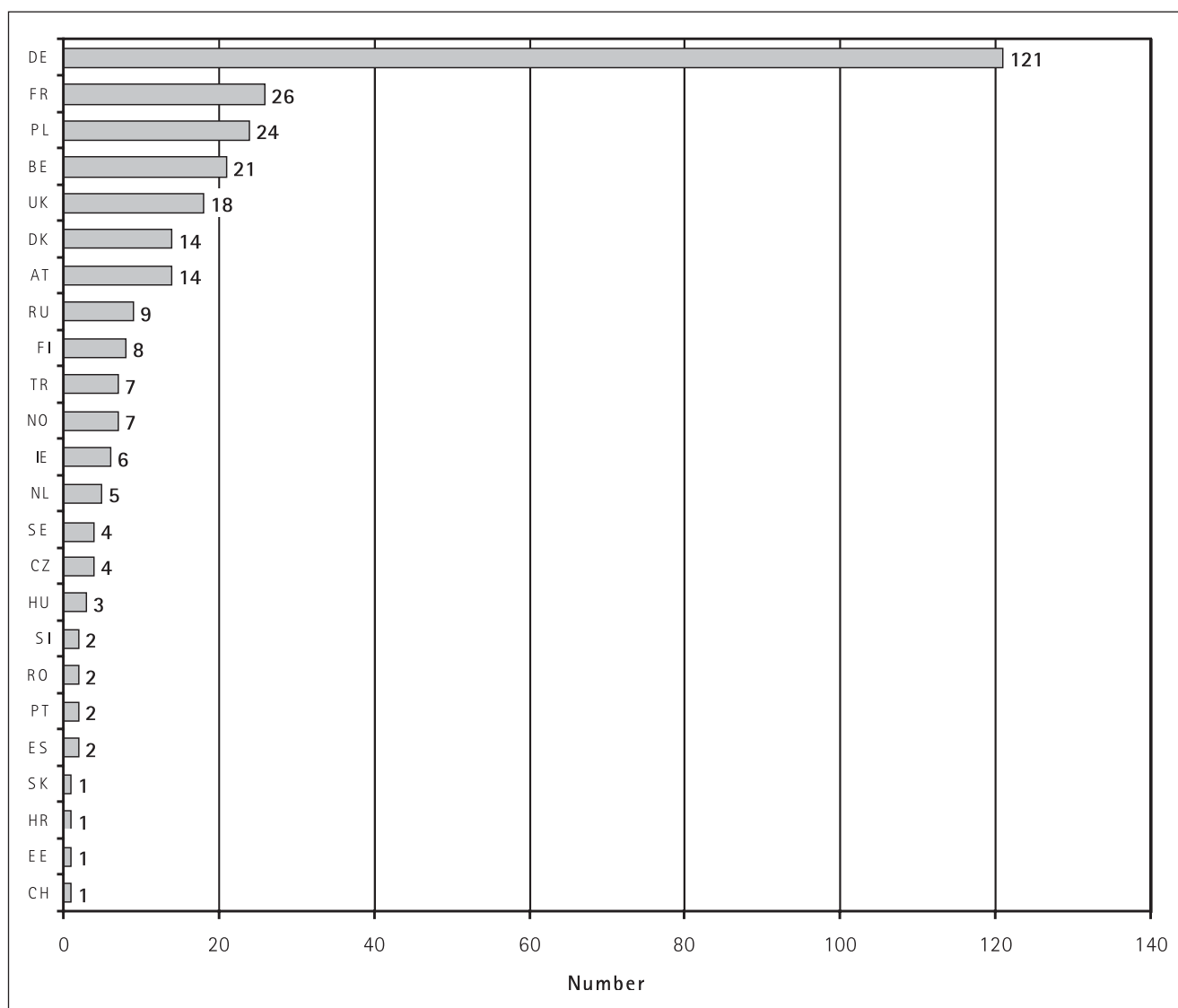
(DAAD) by the end of August, 2006 (see Chart 1). About 40 percent of the respondents were from Germany, about 8 percent from France, Belgium and Poland respectively, and 6 percent from the United Kingdom. All other countries are represented by less than five percent of the participants. The outstanding number of Germans taking part in the survey might be a result of the high commitment of German universities to support the activities of DAAD, the most important German actor in the field of the internationalisation of higher education.

##### *Year of implementation and financial support*

One quarter of the integrated study programmes was set up prior to the start of the Bologna process, i.e. before the year 2000, while the majority was started from 2003 onwards. As Table 1 shows, the proportion of programmes

Chart 1

Number of programme directors participating in the survey – by country of university



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 1.2: Country of your university

implemented prior to 2003 is nearly twice as high in the former EU-15/EFTA countries as in the new member states. Although the statistical basis of the study is not very solid, differences might be a result of the longer tradition of integrated study programmes in Western European countries, fostered mainly by the 1976 Joint Study Programme (JSP) of the European Union.

More than two thirds of the programmes of universities from EU-15/EFTA countries were developed with support of external funds. Respective proportions in the new EU member states (54 %) and in non EU/EFTA countries (37 %) are considerably lower.

Funds were mainly provided by national or regional governments but also frequently by the European Union. About one sixth of the programmes was supported by ERASMUS Mundus, one fifth by other European programmes (see Table 2), such as curriculum development projects under SOCRATES or TEMPUS.

#### *Subject area of study programmes*

According to the ERASMUS classification of subject areas, most of the study programmes are concerned with engineering and technology (29 %), closely followed by management sciences (28 %) and social sciences (19 %).

**Table 1**  
Year in which the study programme was set up - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Until 1999	25	15	22	24
2000 - 2002	21	9	17	19
2003 - 2004	26	41	39	29
2005 and later	28	35	22	29
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(235)	(34)	(18)	(287)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 2.2: Year in which the study programme was set up

**Table 2**  
Receipt of financial support for the development of the study programme – by country of university (percentages, multiple replies possible)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
No financial support	33	46	63	36
National/regional government	36	26	11	33
ERASMUS Mundus	16	6	0	14
Other financial support from the European Union	18	23	21	19
Private organisations	0	9	5	2
Other sources	5	6	11	5
Total	109	114	111	109
(n)	(242)	(35)	(19)	(296)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 5.1: Did your university receive financial support for the development of your study programme?

However, about one quarter of programme directors stated that more than one subject area is offered by his/her university's programme.

It might be interesting to notice that in new EU member states management sciences (51 %) as well as social sciences (29 %) are the most common study programmes analysed. This is also the case in a substantial proportion of programmes in non-EU/EFTA countries (see Table 3).

**Table 3**  
Subject area of the study programme (according to the ERASMUS-classification) – by country of university  
(percentages, multiple replies possible)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Agricultural Sciences	4	6	0	4
Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning	3	0	5	3
Art and Design	1	0	5	1
Management	24	51	26	28
Education, Teacher Training	3	3	11	3
Engineering, Technology	31	20	26	29
Geography, Geology	1	3	5	2
Humanities	9	3	5	8
Languages and Philological Sciences	6	3	0	5
Law	7	3	0	6
Mathematics, Informatics	6	17	5	7
Medicine, Health Sciences	6	3	5	5
Natural Sciences	12	6	0	11
Social Sciences	16	29	47	19
Communication and Information Sciences	6	3	5	5
Other areas of study	2	3	0	2
Total	136	151	147	139
(n)	(249)	(35)	(19)	(303)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.3: What is the subject area of your study programme (according to the ERASMUS-classification)?

**Table 4**  
Number of students enrolled in the study programme in the academic year 2004/2005 – by country of university  
(Median and Mean)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Number of students in 2004/05	24	26	16	24
Proportion of domestic students	57,8	75,5	85,8	61,7
Proportion of students from partner universities	41,9	24,5	14,2	38,0
(n)	(175)	(23)	(15)	(213)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.4: Please state the number of students and graduates enrolled in your study programme in the academic year 2004/2005:

### Students enrolment

About two thirds of the programmes provided information on the number of students enrolled in the academic year 2004/05 and the regional background of students. The median number of only 24 students underlines the exclusivity of integrated study programmes leading to double, multiple or joint degrees. No significant differences in this respect could be observed between countries and regions participating in the study.

On the other hand, the composition of the student body varies considerably in respect to students' regional background. While on average more than 40 percent of students enrolled at universities in EU-15/EFTA countries were incoming students from partner universities, the respective proportion is only one quarter in new EU member states and only about one seventh in non-EU/EFTA countries (see Table 4).

### Level of academic degree and duration of study

The majority of programmes are designed for students who wish to obtain a second cycle qualification, i.e. a master level degree. Two thirds award solely degrees on a Master level, another 10 percent offer two options, the award of a first cycle degree on a Bachelor level and the degree on a Master level. Programmes leading solely to a Bachelor level degree were most common in non-EU/EFTA countries (32 %), as Table 5 shows.

The duration of the standard period of study differs by level of academic degree. Programmes leading to a Bachelor level degree had an average standard length of 40 months, short master programmes a duration of 22 months, long master programmes a duration of 54 months and doctoral studies a duration of 40 months. None or only small differences in the length of standard periods could be observed in the different groups of countries.

Table 5  
Degree awarded in the study programme - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Bachelor level	22	12	33	21
Master level	68	68	44	66
Bachelor + Master	9	18	11	10
Only Doctoral studies	2	3	11	2
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(246)	(34)	(18)	(298)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.10: Degree awarded in your study programme, standard period of study (months) and number of credits.

Table 6  
Number of countries participating in the study programme – by country of university (percentages, multiple replies possible)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Two	41	63	58	45
Three	19	14	16	18
4 - 5	23	17	11	22
6 and more	16	6	16	15
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(249)	(35)	(19)	(303)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.5: Please state the name and the country of each partner university involved in your study programme.

### *Number and countries of partner universities*

In almost half of the study programmes partner universities from only two countries cooperate with each other. Another 40 percent of study programmes collaborate with partners from three to five countries, and the remaining seventh include six or even more countries. As Table 6 shows, universities from former EU-15 or EFTA countries more often specified three or more partner countries than universities from new EU member states or from non-EU/EFTA countries.

The vast majority of programmes in the sample cooperate exclusively with universities from member states of the European Union or from EFTA countries (85 %). Only two

percent identified partner universities solely from non-EU/EFTA countries and the remaining 13 percent mentioned partnerships with universities from both regions.

Cooperations with universities from France were most common (40 %), followed by Germany (26 %), Spain (17 %), United Kingdom (17 %), Italy (16 %), Sweden (8 %) and Poland (7 %).

Due to the strong participation of German universities in the survey, however, Germany might be clearly under-represented in its role as a partner in joint and double degree programmes while other countries will be over-represented.

**Table 7**  
Country of partner universities – by country of university (percentages, multiple replies possible)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Austria	3	6	6	3
Belgium	7	3	11	7
Czech Republic	4	0	0	3
Denmark	6	6	0	6
Finland	5	6	0	5
France	43	26	17	40
Germany	22	41	44	26
Hungary	3	6	17	4
Ireland	6	6	0	6
Italy	17	9	11	16
Netherlands	11	6	11	11
Norway	3	6	0	3
Poland	9	0	6	7
Portugal	6	3	0	5
Spain	20	3	6	17
Sweden	9	3	6	8
Switzerland	4	3	6	4
United Kingdom	17	18	11	17
United States	5	3	17	6
Other EU/EFTA countries	4	9	11	5
Non-EU/EFTA countries	10	6	6	9
Total	217	168	183	209
(n)	(246)	(34)	(18)	(298)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.5: Please state the name and the country of each partner university involved in your study programme.

## 3.2 International Dimension of the Curriculum

### 3.2.1 Curriculum design

Programmes leading to the award of a double, multiple or joint degree are characteristically offered by a consortium of at least two partner universities from different countries and require student mobility as a mandatory part of the curriculum. Furthermore, it could be assumed that partners offering the study programme would, in advance, agree on educational goals, learning outcomes, i.e. competence profiles of graduates. Actually, the learning paths of students and the contribution of each partner are organised in different ways. Principally three models can be distinguished:

- Identical structure and content of the complete curriculum in each participating university*, i.e. parallel and contemporaneous offer of the same courses and modules and sharing teaching, learning and examination methods.
- Comparable courses in the study programme and different offers of specialisation by each partner university*, i.e. the core of the curriculum or the initial part is similar in structure and content but each partner university offers a unique area for specialisation.
- Complementary courses as mandatory part of the study programme offered by different partner universities*, i.e. the learning paths of students, respectively the curriculum, are divided into two or more separate parts offered by only one of the partner universities.

In terms of flexibility and mobility of students and teaching staff, efficiency of international work-sharing, or promotion of international cooperation in teaching and research etc. each of the models has its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the highest flexibility concerning timing of student mobility and exchange of teachers could surely be reached if the curriculum in each participating university was identical in structure and content.

However, in this case student mobility has no added value for the academic outcomes of the study programme.

With respect to second or third cycle higher education might be particularly attractive for universities to strengthen their profile by designing study programmes which are not only based on their own personnel capacities but also make use of the resources of domestic and foreign partner universities. Joint curricula based on the expertise of different universities would allow the design of 'tailor-made' curricula for the advancement of specific graduate competence profiles and would prove efficient in terms of national and international work-sharing. However, it cannot be denied that a high degree of specialised work-sharing might be an obstacle for cooperation of staff members from partner universities beyond organisational issues, i.e. with respect to teaching and research.

Curriculum design of the majority of study programmes is equivalent to the second model, i.e. the core of the curriculum or the initial part is similar in structure and content but each partner university offers specific components (59%). Only one tenth of the programmes is characterised by identical structures and content of the curriculum in each partner university, and slightly less than one third is built on complementary components from different partners. A special case of the latter are arrangements mainly between universities from non-EU/EFTA countries with partner universities in the European Union but also in the United States for enrolment of a limited number of second cycle students at a late stage of their studies, i.e. in their fifth or sixth year. These arrangements can hardly be considered as joint programmes in the sense of commonly agreed educational goals and curriculum design but nevertheless lead to the award of double degrees and thus were not excluded from the study. The comparably high proportion of study programmes with a complementary design from non-EU/EFTA countries reflects these kinds of arrangements (see Table 8).

Table 8

Design of the local curriculum as compared to the curricula of partner universities – by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Identical structure and content	10	16	6	10
Comparable courses and different offers of specialisation	61	52	50	59
Complementary courses as mandatory parts of study programme	29	32	44	31
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(238)	(31)	(18)	(287)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.6: To what extent does your curriculum agree with the curricula of your partner universities?

### 3.2.2 Language of instruction

The vast majority of study programmes do not only offer courses in the national language but also in the languages of partner countries or in a third language (see Table 9). With only a few exceptions of programmes concerned with language studies this third language was English.

On the whole, about 40 percent of courses are taught in the national language, about one third in the language

of partner universities and one fifth in a third language. The highest proportion of courses taught in the national language were reported by study programmes from United Kingdom (81%) while respective proportions were lowest in new EU member states but also in smaller EU/EFTA countries. The latter most often used English as a third language for the instruction of students (see Table 10).

**Table 9**  
Language of instruction in courses offered in study programmes - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Only national language	15	6	6	13
Only language of partner university	17	29	24	19
Only third language	14	21	12	15
National and language of partner university	27	15	41	26
National and third language	12	6	6	11
Language of partner university and third language	2	9	6	3
National, language of partner university and third language	13	15	6	13
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(243)	(34)	(17)	(294)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 2.8: What are the languages of instruction in courses offered in your study programme?

**Table 10**  
Percentage of different languages of instruction in courses offered in the study programmes – by country of university (mean of percentages)

	Country of university							Total
	BE	DE	FR	PL	UK	Other EU-15/ EFTA	Other	
National language	56,4	47,2	50,0	31,9	80,7	22,7	26,4	41,5
Language of partner university	26,2	34,7	36,7	40,1	19,3	38,1	48,5	35,9
Third language: English	17,4	17,6	12,6	24,4	0,0	36,9	23,0	21,4
Third language: Other	0,0	0,6	0,7	3,6	0,0	2,4	2,1	1,3
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
(n)	(21)	(118)	(23)	(23)	(15)	(60)	(28)	(288)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 2.8: What are the languages of instruction in courses offered in your study programme?

### 3.2.3 Characteristics of student mobility

#### Number of host institutions and length of study abroad

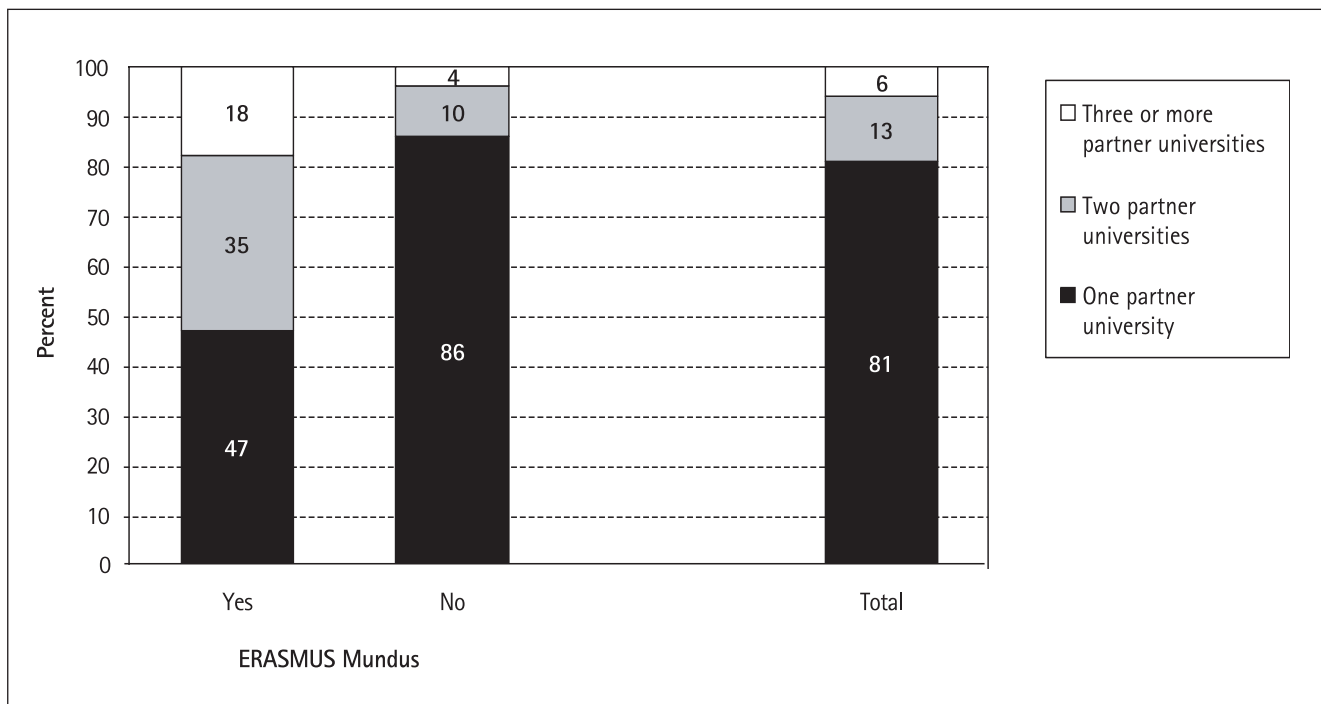
In most integrated study programmes students are obliged to spend a study period abroad at only one partner university (81 %). In 13 percent of the programmes,

however, students have to take courses at two partner universities and in 6 percent at three or more host universities. As Chart 2 shows, ERASMUS Mundus programmes noticeably more often oblige students to study at two or more partner universities than other programmes (53 % as compared to 14 %).



Chart 2

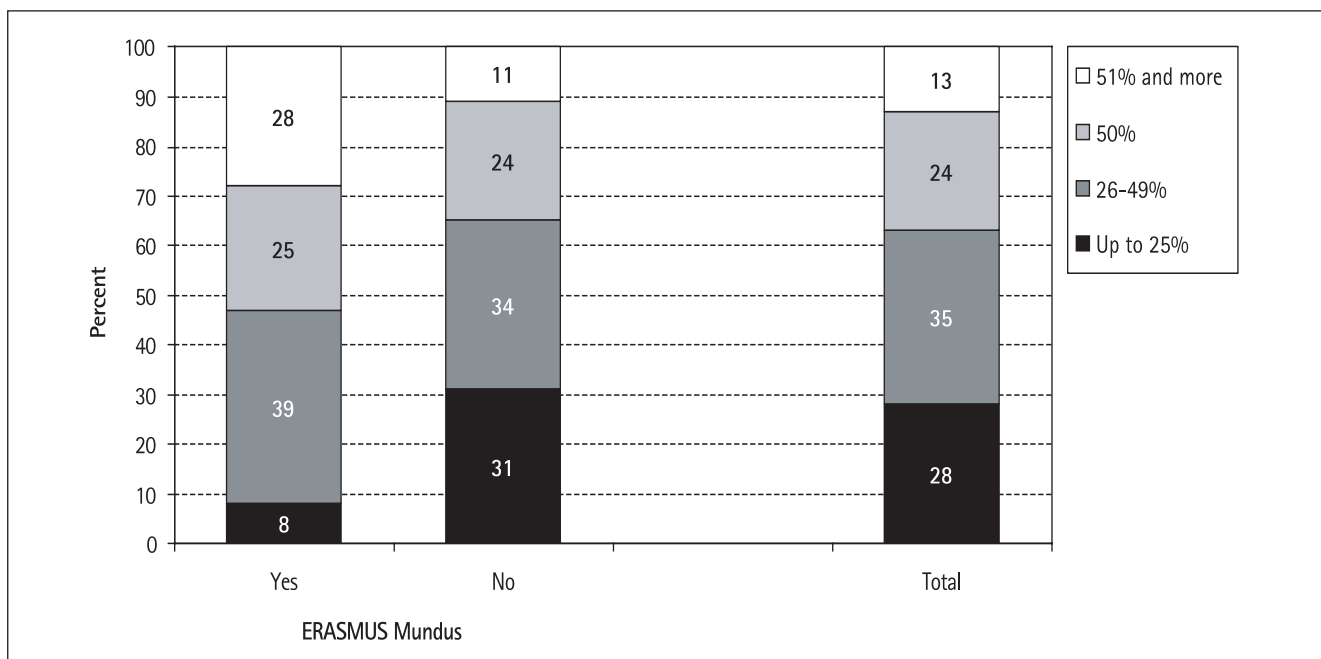
Number of partner universities at which students are obliged to spend a study period abroad -  
by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 3.2: At how many partner universities students are obliged to spend a study period abroad?

Chart 3

Percentage of the standard period of study students have to spend abroad in order to get the degree -  
by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 2.11: How much of their time do students have to spend abroad in order to get the degree?



The average overall duration of periods spent abroad is 12 months which corresponds to 40 percent of the overall duration respectively the standard duration period of the programmes. However, there are large differences in this respect between individual programmes. In more than one quarter not more than 25 percent of the workload has to be taken abroad and in one third of the programmes it is less than 50 percent. Fifty percent of the overall duration of studies has to be spent abroad in one quarter of study programmes and an even higher proportion was mentioned by 13 percent of the programme directors.

As Chart 3 shows, ERASMUS Mundus programmes require a clearly higher proportion of time abroad than other integrated study programmes.

### Activities abroad

In almost all programmes students attend lectures, and in the majority of programmes they worked on their thesis during the stay abroad. Internships or professional training were considered as possible activities by about one half of the programme directors and research training by slightly more than one third. As Table 11 shows, ERASMUS Mundus programmes more often enable students to work on their theses or to take part in research training while other programmes had a stronger focus on internships and professional training.

**Table 11**  
Activities of students during their stay abroad - by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages, multiple reply possible)

	ERASMUS Mundus	Other	Total
Attendance of lectures / courses	100	98	98
Work on thesis	90	67	70
Internships / professional training	28	50	47
Research training	65	33	37
Other	13	10	10
Total	295	258	263
(n)	(40)	(259)	(299)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 3.1: What are the students' activities during their stay abroad?

### *Flexibility of students in timing the stay abroad, choice of host university and selection of courses and modules*

In one seventh of the programmes students have the flexibility to go abroad at any time they want while other programmes have more or less preset mobility paths. ERASMUS Mundus programmes more frequently leave the decision to students than other forms of integrated study programmes (27 % as compared to 16 %).

As Table 12 shows, the highest proportion of programmes leading to a degree on Bachelor level oblige their students to stay abroad in the third year of study. In short term Master level programmes students most often have to spend a period abroad in the first year. In long term Master programmes mobility usually starts in the third year.

In the majority of programmes consisting of more than two universities students can choose their host institution from a range of available partner universities (58 %). However, there is also a high proportion of respective programmes which oblige their students to study at one

particular partner university (42 %). Programme directors from EU/EFTA countries more often reported students' free choice than programme directors from non-EU/EFTA countries (see Table 13).

Only in a small minority of programmes students are completely free in the selection of courses and modules to be undertaken abroad (5 %). A slight majority of programmes allows their students to choose at least parts of the course programme on their own, while in a considerable proportion of programmes learning paths are completely pre-defined by the curriculum. Differences between country clusters are rather small as Table 14 shows.

None of the curricula of ERASMUS Mundus programmes are completely flexible but a higher proportion as compared to other programmes include optional elements allowing students to select at least part of the courses and modules to be attended at the host university (see Table 15).

Table 12

Flexibility of students in their decisions about timing of the period abroad – by level of academic degree and duration of study programme (percentages)

	Level and duration of study programme			Total
	Bachelor level	Short master level programmes	Long master level programmes	
At any time	14	20	9	16
First year	12	50	0	30
Second year	24	20	0	17
Third year	41	9	57	27
Fourth year	9	0	11	4
Fifth year or later	0	0	24	5
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(58)	(123)	(46)	(227)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 3.3: How flexible are students from your university in their decisions about timing of the period abroad, choice of the host university and selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad?

Table 13

Flexibility of students in their decisions about the choice of the host university – by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Only one partner university available	42	58	33	43
Students have free choice between several partners	35	26	17	33
Students are obliged to study at a certain university	23	16	50	24
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(243)	(31)	(18)	(292)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 3.3: How flexible are students from your university in their decisions about timing of the period abroad, choice of the host university and selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad?

Table 14

Flexibility of students in their decisions about selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Completely free to students	5	10	6	5
Partly free	57	55	50	57
Completely pre-defined by the curriculum	38	35	44	38
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(242)	(31)	(18)	(291)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 3.3: How flexible are students from your university in their decisions about timing of the period abroad, choice of the host university and selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad?

**Table 15**  
Flexibility of students in their decisions about selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad – by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages)

	ERASMUS Mundus	Other	Total
Completely free to students	0	6	5
Partly free	72	54	57
Completely pre-defined by the curriculum	28	39	38
Total	100	100	100
(n)	(39)	(252)	(291)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 3.3: How flexible are students from your university in their decisions about timing of the period abroad, choice of the host university and selection of courses/modules to be taken abroad?

### 3.3 Type of Degree Awarded

The majority of study programmes award double or multiple degrees to students after the successful completion of the study programme (71 %), i.e. two or more national diplomas, sometimes accompanied by a joint certification from all partner universities in the consortium. A joint degree either signed by universities where students have studied (8 %) or by all universities involved in the study programme (8 %) is awarded by only about one sixth of the programmes covered by the study. A small group of universities stated to award a single national degree sometimes with and sometimes without a joint certification from partner universities.

As Table 16 shows, universities in non-EU/EFTA countries and in new EU member states more often award only a single national diploma than universities in the EU-15/EFTA countries. However, differences between the three country groups with respect to Joint Degree Programmes are rather small.

It should be noticed that joint degrees are much more common in ERASMUS Mundus than in other integrated study programmes. Nearly half of the participants in ERASMUS Mundus stated the award of a joint degree for successful graduates while the respective proportion is only about one tenth in other programmes (see Chart 4).

**Table 16**  
Type of degree awarded to students after successful completion of the study programme - by country of university (percentages)

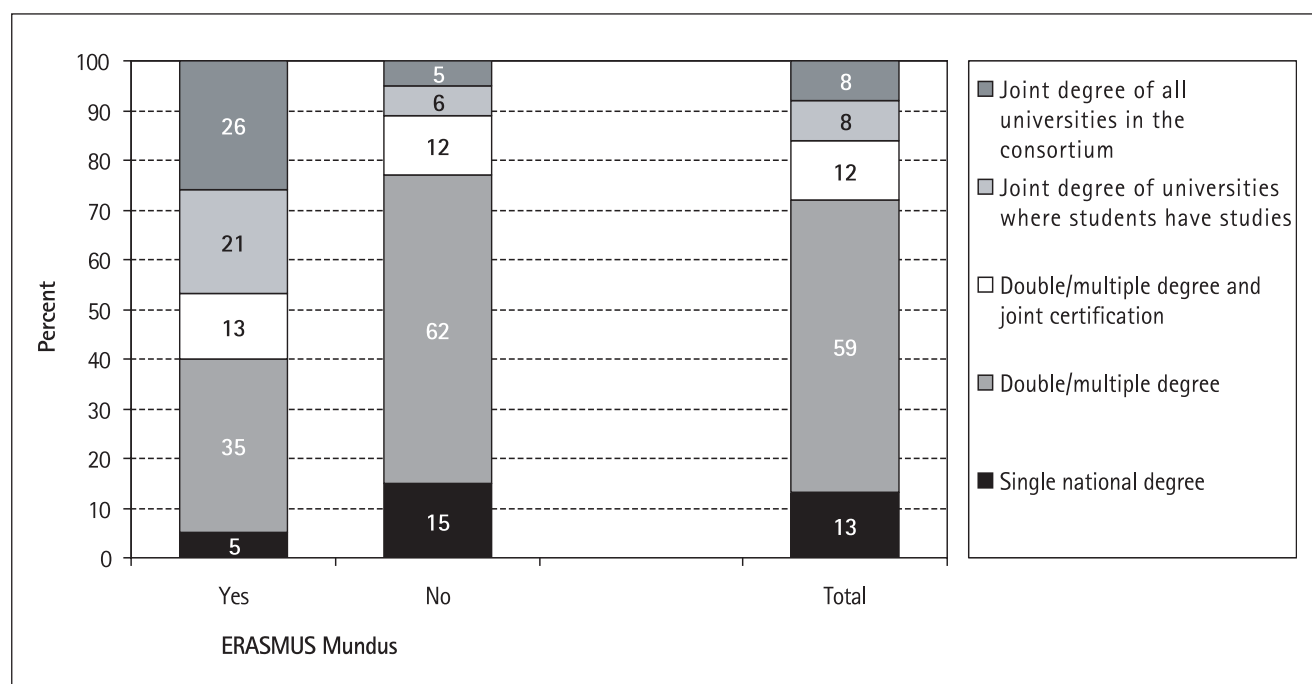
	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Single national degree	11	20	35	13
Double/multiple degree	61	57	35	59
Double/multiple degree and joint certification	13	6	12	12
Joint degree of universities where students have studied	7	11	12	8
Joint degree of all universities in the consortium	9	6	6	8
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(246)	(35)	(17)	(298)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.12: Which of the following types of degrees is awarded to students after successful completion of your study programme?

Chart 4

Type of degree awarded to students after successful completion of the study programme - by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.12: Which of the following types of degrees is awarded to students after successful completion of your study programme?

Table 17

Reasons for not awarding a joint degree – by country of university (percentages, multiple replies possible)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Legislation of your country does not allow the award of a joint degree	34	72	33	39
Legislation of a partner country does not allow the award of a joint degree	22	17	0	21
It is easier for graduates to find employment with a national academic degree	41	6	67	38
Double degree is easier to organise	10	0	0	8
Other reason	13	22	0	13
Total	120	117	100	119
(n)	(126)	(18)	(6)	(150)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 2.13: If a joint (one single) degree is not awarded, what are the reasons?

As reason for not awarding a joint degree, more than half of the programme directors referred to restrictions of the legislation of their own (39 %) or the partner country (21 %) which do not allow the implementation of this type of degree. However, a substantial proportion emphasized that a double degree was more attractive to stu-

dents and would make it easier for them to find employment on the national labour market.

Beyond the reasons listed in the questionnaire, a remarkable proportion of programme directors added further aspects under the category "other". Most often, complicated procedures of quality assurance or the organisa-

tional burden related to the implementation of joint degrees was mentioned as a major obstacle. In other cases, differences between curricula of the partner universities were seen as too large to award a joint degree. A small number of respondents, however, is preparing a joint degree for the near future.

As Table 17 shows, legislative reasons play a very important role in new EU member states, while the decision against a joint degree in EU-15/EFTA countries more often is led by possible disadvantages of graduates on the national labour market or by complicated and timeconsuming organisational procedures.

More than three quarters of programmes provide a diploma supplement as an attachment to the higher education diploma.

### 3.4 Quality Assurance Measures

Almost all universities participating in the survey had undertaken specific activities to assure the quality of their joint and double degree programmes. Nearly two thirds of the programmes are accredited or in the process of accreditation either by national bodies (46 %), by

international bodies (8 %) or by both, national and international bodies (10 %). As Table 18 shows, accreditation most often was reported by universities from non EU/EFTA countries and by new EU member states. About one third of the programme directors confirmed an accreditation of the programme in all countries involved.

A further mean to assure quality is the evaluation of programmes by internal experts from the university or by external experts such as professors from partner universities. Overall, about two thirds of the respondents stated an evaluation of the programme in which, in most cases, not only internal but also external experts were involved. However, evaluation of programmes in non-EU/EFTA countries and in the new member states is slightly more often executed by internal experts alone.

The performance of teachers is also evaluated in most of the programmes (69 %). Universities from EU-15/EFTA countries place particularly high emphasis on this mean of quality assurance (72 %).

Participants in ERASMUS Mundus programmes less often stated an accreditation by national or international bodies than other programmes but more frequently made use of evaluation measures.

Table 18  
Means of quality assurance – by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
<b>Accreditation of the study programme</b>				
Only by national accreditation body	43	48	71	46
Only by international accreditation body	8	9	6	8
By national and international accreditation body	9	15	12	10
Not at all	40	27	12	37
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>Regular evaluation</b>				
Only by internal experts from the university	30	36	41	31
Only by external experts	16	3	12	15
By internal and external experts	21	24	18	21
Not at all	32	36	29	33
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>Evaluation of the performance of teachers</b>	72	61	53	69
(n)	(237)	(33)	(17)	(287)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 4.1: Which of the following means of quality assurance applies to your study programme?

Table 19

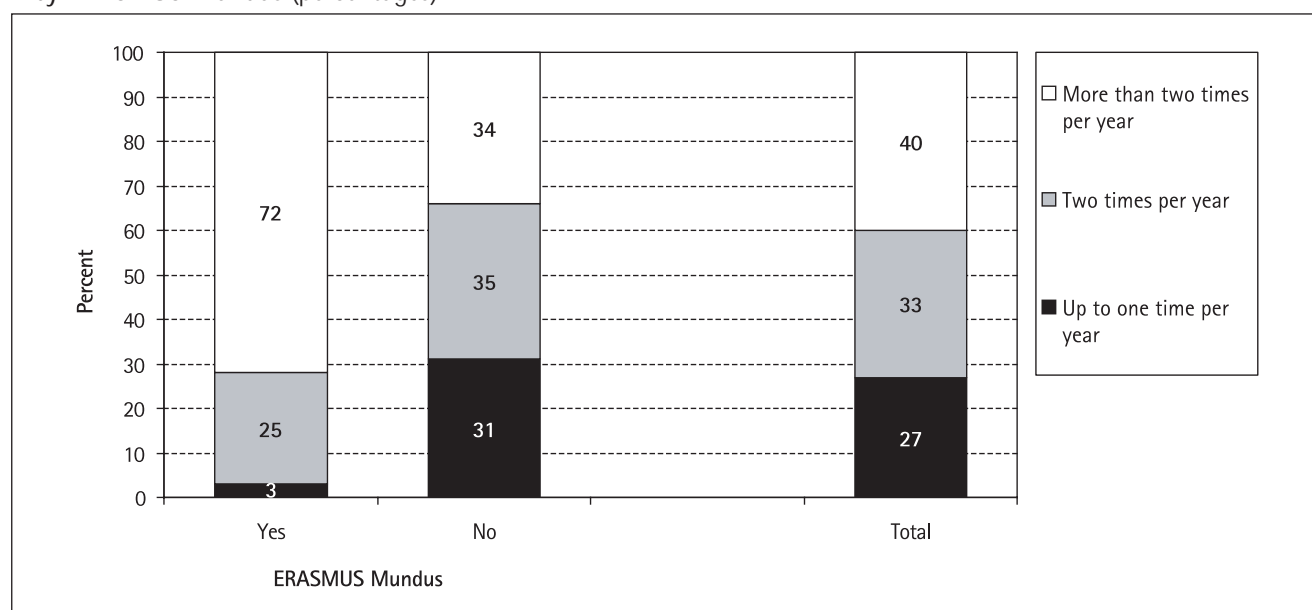
Special agreements for quality assurance with partner universities – by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages, multiple replies possible)

	ERASMUS Mundus	Other	Total
No agreement for quality assurance	18	37	34
Common admission standards for students	80	49	53
Use of the same credit system in all participating universities	83	48	53
Accreditation of the study programme in all countries involved	43	27	29
Common study regulation	53	32	35
Common examination regulation/evaluation	43	28	30
Total	318	221	233
(n)	(40)	(263)	(303)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 4.2: Do you have an agreement for quality assurance with your partner university?

Chart 5

Frequency of annual meetings with representatives from partner universities to administrate the study programme – by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 4.3: How often do you meet with representatives from your partner universities to administrate your study programme?

Special quality agreements with partner universities were reported by two thirds of the respondents. Most often common admission standards (53 %) and use of the same credit system in all participating universities (53 %) are mentioned. Common study or examination regulations are less frequent and reported by only about one third of the participants.

ERASMUS Mundus programmes more often have introduced special agreements between the partner universities than other programmes (see Table 19). The vast majority has defined common admission standards

(80 %) and makes use of the same credit system (83 %). Additionally, common study and examination regulations are more frequently agreed upon between participating universities than in other programmes.

On average, representatives from each partner university come together to discuss academic and administrative issues of the programme two times per year. About one quarter meet only one time per year, one third two times and 40 percent more than two times. As Chart 5 shows, frequent annual meetings are much more common in ERASMUS Mundus than in other programmes.

### 3.5 Scholarships and Tuition Fees

The majority of universities introduced special scholarship schemes to support students taking part in integrated study programmes (59 %). Differences concerning the availability of scholarships could be observed by country groups. While 61 percent of the universities from EU/EFTA countries have special scholarship schemes, the respective proportion is 51 percent in new EU member states and only 44 percent in non-EU/EFTA countries.

Generally, scholarships are slightly more often available for foreign students than for domestic students (43 % as compared to 38 %). This general figure is true for universities from EU-15/EFTA and non-EU/EFTA countries (see Table 20) alike. On the other hand, universities from new EU members states more frequently provide financial support for their own than for foreign students (40 % as compared to 22 %).

While ERASMUS Mundus programmes offer scholarships to foreign students, the availability of such kind of support for domestic students is only one quarter.

Less than half of the programmes request tuition fees from their students. Domestic students slightly more often are obliged to pay fees (38 % as compared to 34 % of foreign students). The request of tuition or programme fees varies strongly by country (see Table 21). It is highest in Belgium (76 %), the United Kingdom (75 %) and France (71%) and lowest in Germany (19 %) and Poland (32 %).

The median amount of tuition fees for foreign students is 4.000 € and thus twice as high as respective fees for domestic students. Although nearly half of the programme directors mentioned differences in the amount of tuition fees by individual partner universities in the consortium, only one fifth of them experienced major problems resulting from this circumstance.

**Table 20**  
Availability of special scholarship-schemes for students of the study programme? - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Not at all	39	49	56	41
Only for foreign students	23	11	17	21
Only for domestic students	14	29	6	16
For both, foreign and domestic students	23	11	22	22
Total	100	100	100	100
(n)	(243)	(35)	(18)	(296)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 5.2: Is there a special scholarship-scheme only for students of your study programme?

**Table 21**  
Obligation for students to pay tuition/programme fees - by country of university (percentages)

	Country of university							Total
	BE	DE	FR	PL	UK	Other EU-15/ EFTA	Other	
No fees requested	24	81	29	68	25	40	42	56
Only foreign students	0	5	4	0	6	11	12	6
Only domestic students	29	3	25	23	6	6	12	10
Both, foreign and domestic students	48	11	42	9	63	42	35	28
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(n)	(21)	(119)	(24)	(22)	(16)	(62)	(26)	(290)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.  
Question 5.3: Are students obliged to pay tuition/programme fees



### 3.6 General Observations

In order to explore possible strengths and weaknesses of integrated study programmes, programme directors were asked to state the degree to which they have encountered significant difficulties with respect to five thematic areas:

- Interest and competences of domestic students
- Interest and competences of foreign students
- Quality of students and courses offered from partner universities
- Lack of financial means
- Organisational matters and acceptance of degrees by employers

#### *Interest and competences of domestic students*

Considerable proportions of directors stated difficulties caused by a lack of interest of national students to enrol in the study programme (30 %), a lack of highly qualified domestic students (24 %) or insufficient foreign language proficiency of national students (18 %).

Respondents from EU/EFTA countries most frequently reported difficulties with respect to domestic students. As Table 22 shows, respective proportions were highest in the United Kingdom, Belgium and in small EU-15/EFTA

countries. On the other hand, only a few programme directors from Poland, from other new member states or from non-EU/EFTA countries encountered problems with national students.

It might be a surprise that more than half of the high quality ERASMUS Mundus programmes obviously are not very attractive to national students (see Chart 6). If this lack of interest is to be correlated with the high academic quality expected from students and respective difficulties of the programmes to find such students (38%) could not clearly be decided on the basis of available data.

#### *Interest and competences of foreign students*

Difficulties with regard to foreign students are less often reported than problems concerning domestic students. However, about one fifth of the programme directors stated a lack of interest of international students to enrol in the programme or insufficient language competences of foreign students. Respondents from new EU member states most often complained about the lack of interest of foreign students (see Table 23).

It might be noteworthy that none of the ERASMUS Mundus representatives encountered difficulties to attract foreign students to enrol in the programme.

Table 22  
Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to interest and competences of domestic students  
– by country of university (percentages\*)

	Country of university						Total	
	BE	DE	FR	PL	UK	Other EU-15/EFTA	Other	
Lack of interest of national students to enrol in the study programme	35	27	32	9	67	41	9	30
Difficulties to find highly qualified domestic students to attend the study programme	27	23	14	9	60	27	19	24
Insufficient foreign language proficiency of national students	13	17	30	13	47	11	9	18
(n)	(18)	(118)	(21)	(23)	(15)	(54)	(24)	(273)

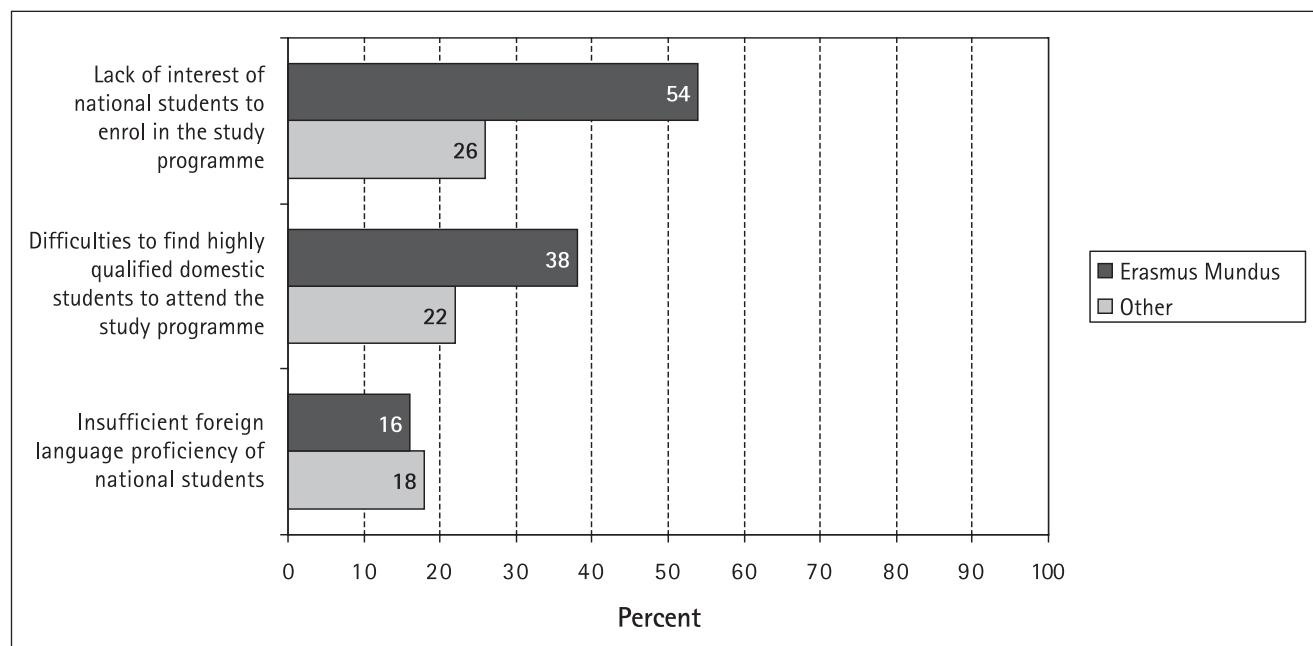
Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

Chart 6

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to interest and competences of domestic students  
– by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages\*)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

Table 23

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to interest and competences of foreign students  
– by country of university (percentages\*)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Lack of interest of international students to enrol in the study programme	15	40	18	18
Insufficient foreign language proficiency of international students	18	21	11	18
(n)	(226)	(32)	(15)	(273)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

### Quality of students and courses from partner universities

In almost all programmes, academic level of students from partner universities and academic quality of courses offered at partner universities does not give rise to

complaints. As Table 24 shows, the proportion of programme directors who encountered significant difficulties in this respect is below five percent.

Table 24

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to quality of students and course offers from partner universities – by country of university (percentages\*)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Low academic level of students from partner universities	4	4	10	4
Low academic quality of courses offered at partner universities	3	0	8	3
(n)	(226)	(32)	(15)	(273)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

#### *Lack of financial means*

Besides difficulties with domestic students, the lack of financial means was most often mentioned as reason for substantial problems. About one third of the programme directors claimed that they were not sufficiently able to support mobility of incoming or outgoing students and one fourth stated a lack of financial resources for staff mobility and meetings with partner universities. It might not be a surprise that the highest proportion of respondents who encountered financial difficulties are from non-EU/EFTA countries and from new EU member states (see Table 25).

Although ERASMUS Mundus programmes are supported by the European Commission, a substantial proportion of programme representatives stated significant problems. Most frequently, complaints about a lack of financial means to support outgoing students (39 %) could be

noticed, but also the resources for incoming students or staff mobility were criticised (see Table 26).

#### *Organisational matters and acceptance of degrees by employers*

While significant problems with public authorities (8 %) or missing acceptance of the degree awarded by national employers (5 %) were only experienced by a small minority of directors, a substantial proportion stated difficulties of students from non-EU countries to get a visa (19 %). Particularly ERASMUS Mundus programmes which were implemented with the intention to link European higher education to the rest of the world were confronted by this kind of problem (see Chart 7). More than half of the representatives from ERASMUS Mundus programmes reported visa difficulties of students from non-EU countries.

Table 25

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to financial means – by country of university (percentages\*)

	Country of university			Total
	EU-15/ EFTA	New EU member states	Non EU/EFTA countries	
Lack of financial means to support mobility of incoming students	31	32	55	33
Lack of financial means to support mobility of outgoing students	27	41	75	31
Lack of financial means for staff mobility and meetings with partner universities	22	43	58	26
(n)	(226)	(32)	(15)	(273)

Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

Table 26

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to financial means - by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages\*)

	ERASMUS Mundus	Other	Total
Lack of financial means to support mobility of incoming students	21	34	33
Lack of financial means to support mobility of outgoing students	39	30	31
Lack of financial means for staff mobility and meetings with partner universities	22	27	26
(n)	(37)	(236)	(273)

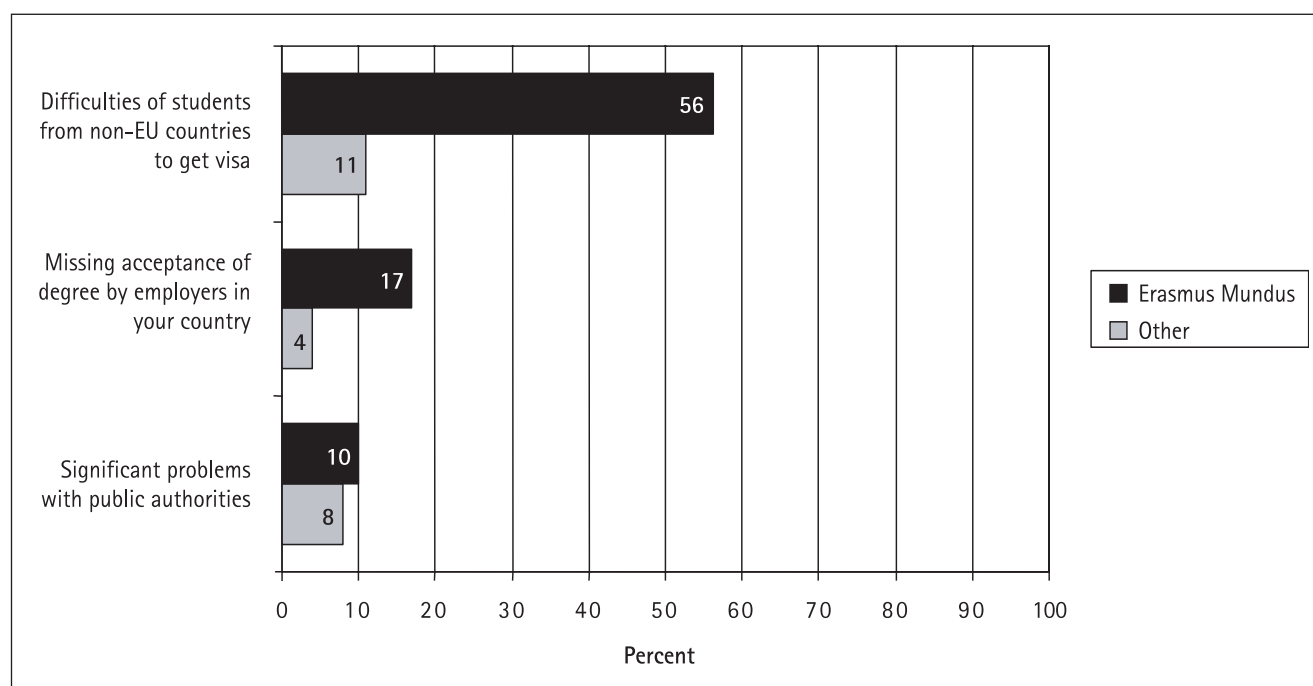
Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.

Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

Chart 7

Encounter of significant difficulties with respect to organisational matters and acceptance of degrees by employers - by ERASMUS Mundus (percentages\*)



Source: DAAD Survey on study programmes awarding Double, Multiple or Joint Degrees.


Question 6: Did you encounter significant difficulties in any of the following areas with regard to the programme?

\* Points 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 = "no problems at all" to 5 = "very serious problems".

While frequent visa difficulties of ERASMUS Mundus programmes could be explained by their specific international profile, it comes as a surprise that missing acceptance of degrees by national employers is much more often seen as a problem than in other integrated study pro-

grammes. In this context it might be interesting to notice that ERASMUS Mundus programmes awarding a joint degree more often expect or encounter acceptance problems than ERASMUS Mundus programmes awarding a double or multiple degree (27% as compared to 9 %).





# Guidelines for Quality Enhancement in European Joint Master Programmes

European University Association (EUA)

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### REFERENCES

## FOREWORD

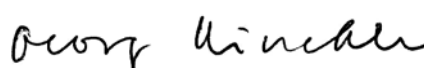
These Guidelines for Quality Enhancement in European Joint Master Programmes are addressed to all higher education institutions either considering or actually running joint programmes. It is the outcome of the follow-up to EUA's 2003-2004 Joint Masters Project, which highlighted a number of challenges to be tackled in Europe in the years ahead. Foremost among these is the challenge for institutions to assume responsibility for enhancing the quality of their programmes through a more robust and systematic approach.

As well as drawing on the outcomes of the Joint Masters Project, these Guidelines also benefit from EUA's considerable experience in supporting the development of quality culture in institutions – work which has been a key pillar of EUA's activities in recent years.

This Bologna decade has already been marked by an increasing interest in the European dimension of higher education, and joint programmes – particularly at master level – have become a main focus for inter-institutional cooperation. While few would doubt the attraction of joint programmes either to institutions or to students wishing to benefit from the experience of studying outside their national environment, the difficult reality for joint programmes in Europe shows that many factors have to be in place if positive outcomes are to be achieved.

These Guidelines have been produced to help institutions in their reflection on inter-institutional cooperation and joint programme development. They are inspired by the belief that if institutions ask themselves the right questions at the right time, they will significantly improve their chances of making the right decisions.

It is particularly appropriate that EUA's work on these Guidelines has been supported by funding from the European Commission's Erasmus Mundus Programme, itself a major catalyst for new joint master programmes across the continent.



Professor Georg Winkler  
EUA President



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These Guidelines were produced after a period of intensive work from a large number of people. Firstly, EUA would like to thank all the members of the Steering Committee of the *European Masters New Evaluation Methodology* (EMNEM) project for their dedicated commitment and thoughtful contributions. Above all, thanks are due to Stefanie Hofmann who courageously assumed the onerous task of translating the ideas of the Steering Committee<sup>1</sup> into the concrete text of this document. We also extend particular thanks to the Chair of the Steering Committee Chair, Professor Jürgen Kohler, for his tireless efforts to ensure that the Project was pursued and completed in the best possible manner. The Guidelines would not be what they are today without the input of a great number of EUA member institutions – academics, administrators and students – who shared their experience of joint programmes with us, and generously offered their comments to various drafts of the document. Finally EUA would like to thank the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission for providing valuable support to this project.

Andrée Sursock  
EUA Deputy Secretary General

David Crosier  
EUA Programme Development Director

## INTRODUCTION

Since the Bologna Declaration was launched in June 1999, the “European dimension” of higher education has become a matter of increasing interest for Europe’s higher education institutions. One major innovation that has given more substance to this notion is the development of joint degree programmes. Not only have European joint degrees been mentioned frequently in ministerial declarations, they have also been promoted by the European Commission, in particular through the launch of the Erasmus Mundus programme, as a means of making European higher education attractive both within Europe and to the wider world.

### 1 Steering Committee

Prof. Jürgen Kohler, chair (former rector, Greifswald University)  
Prof. Keith Chapman (former joint programme coordinator, participant of Joint Masters Project) Filomena Chirico (former student of a joint programme, participant of Joint Masters Project)  
Prof. Julia Gonzalez (Vice-rector University of Deusto, TUNING)  
Prof. Stefanie Hofmann (ACQUIN)  
Predrag Lazetic (ESIB)  
Prof. Ewa Sadowska (Graduate Studies Office, Trinity College)  
Prof. Staffan Wahlén (ENQA, TEEP II)

The European University Association (EUA) has been interested to understand better how higher education institutions are realising a vision of European cooperation and development through joint programmes. With this aim in mind, EUA developed and undertook a project on joint master programmes in Europe from 2002-2004, focusing on cooperation at the master level. This project worked closely with eleven established joint master programmes to identify issues of relevance throughout Europe.

The EUA Joint Masters Project report identifies a number of crucial issues related to quality, arising from the sometimes weak anchoring of joint programmes within institutions. Indeed, as the articulation of responsibilities within and between institutions can be problematic for joint programmes, it becomes difficult for them to find a stable place in an emerging European system whose national components are in a state of flux and transition. The Project therefore recommended that further work should be undertaken by EUA on how quality for joint programmes could be enhanced and developed.

These guidelines for institutions are the result of a follow-up project undertaken with the involvement of European higher education institutions, specialists of joint programmes, students and quality assurance agencies. This project, the European Masters New Evaluation Methodology (EMNEM), was supported by funding from the European Commission’s Erasmus Mundus programme, and has overseen the development of these Guidelines which aim to help institutions involved in developing new joint master programmes or improving existing programmes. The Guidelines were drafted principally by Stefanie Hofmann, policy officer of the German accreditation agency ACQUIN, and Vice President of the European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (ENQA), on behalf of the EMNEM project Steering Committee.

The draft was initially developed from January to December 2005, and involved widespread consultation, including through a seminar where different representatives of institutions involved in running joint programmes were invited to comment on the issues raised in the text and, subsequently, to comment on the revised draft.

## USING THE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines aim to provide different stakeholders involved in joint masters with a clear set of questions and issues, which they could usefully address in their daily work. Information and advice are provided for anyone involved or interested in the quality assurance of joint masters. The main audience for the Guidelines are higher education institutions, and in particular the institutional leadership, academic and administrative staff. While this is not a document aimed at students, it is one which has considered the needs of students as being paramount in all aspects of developing and running joint programmes.

These Guidelines have necessarily been conceived with a range of different users and usages in mind. They are inspired by the conviction that concern for quality should be uppermost in the minds of all involved in joint programmes from the moment of initial conception of a programme, and throughout its entire lifetime. Hence the concern for quality should underpin all aspects of programme development and implementation, and not be thought about only at the moment when some form of evaluation is desired or required. Thus the Guidelines address both how to develop joint programmes and how to assure their quality.

The Guidelines focus both on the specificities of a joint master curricular design while also taking its institutional and inter-institutional implications into account. The focus is deliberately on internal quality enhancement. Internal quality is the important first step, which may be complemented by some form of external quality assurance procedures. Hence these guidelines deliberately leave aside specific forms of external evaluation or accreditation, which is the topic of a parallel ENQA project. The intention is to understand what questions need to be considered by the institutions involved to develop an inter-institutional quality culture in which all partners are responsible for the quality of all aspects of their joint programme.

While joint programmes are not restricted to second-cycle or master degrees, there are several good reasons why many joint programmes are currently being developed at the master level:

- Students in the second cycle will generally have the maturity to gain maximum benefit from such programmes and from the periods of mobility that they entail;
- Second cycle programmes tend to be more specialised, often focusing on particular professionally-oriented outcomes and requiring a high degree of commitment from students;
- As the programmes take place over a shorter time frame, some implementation problems may be better managed.

The Guidelines are intended to be flexible, and to be adaptable for all kinds of joint programmes. While they highlight specific characteristics of joint master programmes, they may equally be applied to other joint programmes, for example in the first cycle.

The first chapter, *Basic Assumptions and Starting Points*, defines the core elements underpinning joint degrees, and provides a brief introduction to the principles on which the Guidelines have been developed. It should be of interest to all who wish to reflect in depth on the specific nature of joint programmes and the implications for quality enhancement.

The second chapter, *From Planning to Action*, considers how quality enhancement measures can be implemented

within joint programmes, outlining issues which need to be considered at different levels of institutions. These measures are inspired by a concept of quality as “fitness of purpose” and “fitness for purpose”, which the Project has considered as the most appropriate conception upon which to build a culture of inter-institutional quality. This concept can be both understood easily and applied effectively, and therefore the chapter should engage those who are interested in a theoretical underpinning for practical measures of quality enhancement for joint programmes.

The third chapter, *Quality Assurance for a Joint Master Programme*, considers the different phases of a quality cycle, and the issues to be thought through during these different phases. It also examines the relationship between quality assurance and recognition.

The fourth chapter, *Quality Situations in Practice*, examines in greater depth the different steps involved in the two main quality situations relevant for the Guidelines – setting up a new joint degree programme and evaluating a running joint degree programme.

The fifth chapter *Quality-related Questions*, offers a list of issues and questions that should be reflected upon in all processes related to the quality of joint programmes. This is not intended as a comprehensive or rigid list, but rather as one that should be easily adaptable to the needs of all joint programmes.

The sixth chapter, *From Points of Reference to Points of Concern*, concludes the guidelines by reflecting upon four key issues that are likely to provide a major challenge to all joint programmes: the organisation of mobility, funding, language policy and the logistical challenge of managing a joint degree programme.

Different usage of this document depends on the needs of the reader. The Guidelines are intended to be neither prescriptive nor normative, and hence they are open for, and indeed require, interpretation. They need to be adjusted to the context of each specific joint degree programme and in no way should be considered as a checklist asking for compliance. On the contrary, the quality-related criteria and questions outlined here are explicitly meant as points of reference to which each individual joint master can relate. Hence, these are points to be considered when developing or running a joint master programme and do not replace the work of defining and prioritising relevant quality indicators against which each programme can assess its own achievements and progress.

## A. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS AND STARTING POINTS

*This chapter outlines key features of the joint masters programmes for which the Guidelines have been developed, as well as the basic assumptions about responsibility for quality improvement within higher education institutions.*

While a wide range of different types of joint programmes exist, these Guidelines are designed for those study programmes which are developed and implemented jointly by several institutions in different countries. For such joint degree programmes, overcoming geographical separation is a crucial issue for students and staff alike. The Guidelines therefore emphasise primarily issues related to physical student and staff mobility, while being fully aware that there are different potential solutions to this issue, including for example the development of virtual mobility through distance or e-learning. Typically, in programmes for which these Guidelines hope to be relevant, students from each participating institution study specified parts of the programme at other institutions, and these periods of study and exams passed at partner institutions are recognised fully and automatically by the partners. Professors of each participating institution may also teach at other institutions. Finally, the joint programme should of course lead to the award of a degree, in this case a qualification at master level.

Ideally, the programme will be embedded in an all-embracing quality culture marked by a distinct "culture of jointness". The "culture of jointness" refers to the fact that the whole is more than the sum of its parts and that the quality of the whole rather than simply the individual parts must be taken into account. The notion of quality culture is thus not restricted to one institution, but functions across institutional and national borders. All those who are working together in order to make the realisation of the joint programme a success therefore follow a shared aim, while not necessarily working under the same conditions or approaching the programme from the same starting point.

The quality-oriented implementation of a joint degree programme requires a great deal of additional work and effort from all parties involved and it is helpful to be aware of the following key requirements which need to be met in order to succeed in this adventure:

1. A joint degree programme is a highly complex, coordinated activity of partners. *Cooperation and coordination* are hence crucial for the realisation of any joint degree programme.
2. Often, a central coordination structure will not be institutionalised – at least not in terms of an infrastructure. In many cases, coordination will take place mostly in informal cooperative structures. Hence, the joint degree programme – in terms of organisation – may be characterised as a collaborative initiative with a central coordination supported and "fed" by two or more universities. These universities, in turn, will have their own coordination and decision-making structures which may influence the coordination of the network as a whole. Given this complexity, *coordination on different levels should be considered and analysed* in a transparent way: Who takes decisions? When? How? With whom? On which basis?
3. In order to ensure that each of the collaborating universities is willing and ready to support the joint initiative, several *key preconditions* need to be identified (cf. section B) and fulfilled before institutions reach the stage of issuing diplomas and certificates together. Trust between partner institutions will be enhanced through greater knowledge and understanding of specific features, profiles and strengths.
4. European cooperation should be *guided by curiosity and trust in what is different*. Common academic values do not imply a strict uniformity or mainstreaming of content or action. On the contrary, the culture of jointness builds on trust in and respect for different historical, cultural, geographical backgrounds and perspectives. The great challenge will be to maintain and enrich this wealth of cultural heritage and diversity in a coherently structured programme.
5. In order to ensure that difference becomes a strength and positive value of the programme, all partners involved should base their *cooperation on the principles of transparency and honesty*. Only if these principles are respected will the joint degree programme as a whole be stable and effective. It is the shared responsibility of all partners in the network to analyse strengths and weaknesses in order to identify necessary fields for change and improvement.
6. *Trustworthy communication between all partners* responsible for the joint degree programme has an impact on the attitude of each individual partner institution in the network. Each partner institution needs to analyse its own situation regularly in order to identify what might be relevant for the programme as a whole. This self-scrutiny on behalf of an inter-institutional activity is combined with a permanent dialogue with partners sharing the same aims. Joint seminars, conferences and regular meetings will also support the sense of jointness, and help each participating institution to contribute effectively to the overall programme.
7. A joint master programme will only be successful if all parties involved in its realisation are committed to shared aims and objectives and are able to develop a *sense of common ownership*. Partners need to define and agree on a number of issues that may in one cultural context seem self-evident, e.g., what they regard as success and failure.
8. Striving for a culture of jointness as a distinct feature of inter-institutional quality culture, all parties involved should be guided by *shared academic values*, which may be *expressed as a set of agreed quality principles*. A necessary precondition is the will to work together in an international context. This guiding principle of internationalisation (or Europeanisation) may, be supported at the university level by an institutional mission statement.
9. The organisation of a networked type of cooperation needs to be maintained at the same time as pro-



gramme activities are sustained in each participating university. All aspects of this specific inter-institutional quality culture will benefit from a *broad involvement and participation of all relevant stakeholder groups*, notably students, academic and administrative staff as well as the senior leadership of the institutions.

10. Last but not least, in successful joint programmes the whole should be more than the sum of its parts. Assuring the quality of “the whole” is therefore necessarily different from assuring the quality of all parts by themselves. *Quality assurance should therefore be regarded as a shared and integrated responsibility of the network as well as a responsibility to be taken by each participating institution.* In order to embrace all crucial elements and features of the joint degree programme which arise “among” the participating institutions, all quality relevant criteria should be linked and considered in relation to the joint degree programme itself. A mere adding-up of the individual quality assurance activities taking place will not suffice. Likewise, activity only at the programme level will also be insufficient, since the joint programme is not an isolated self-sustaining activity, but depends on the individual contributions of each institution in the network.

## B. FROM PLANNING TO ACTION

*These Guidelines aim to provide a consistent reference system for all activities and actions related to the quality of programmes. Different challenges demand different solutions and decisions need to be taken at different levels of institutions and networks. Thus the aims of this chapter are to outline some of the fundamental issues upon which reflection is essential and to encourage strategic reflection on how to develop an inter-institutional quality culture, with effective management of all elements of the joint master.*

### 1. Shared Understanding

Effective communication is a critical factor to the successful development of the joint programme, and a range of *language issues* needs to be consciously addressed. All parties involved in the development or implementation of a joint master will need, as a matter of course, to find a shared language as a basis for communication and to outline and develop the curricular concept itself.

As linguistic and cultural diversity is a major potential added value of joint programmes, the choice of teaching language(s), as well as language(s) of study and teaching materials will need to be considered carefully.

More subtle linguistic issues with regard to the technical terms used when developing or implementing curricular concepts should also be taken into account. For example,

as the Bologna Process has developed, different meanings of technical terms have emerged. There is no single legal definition of any particular term, and attempts to restrict the proliferation of meanings by introducing a binding glossary have failed to make any impact so far. However, a shared understanding of terminology within a joint master is essential. Therefore partners would be well advised to agree their own glossary in order to facilitate unhindered communication. Where differences in understanding and usage arise, a functional approach based on common policy objectives and practical outcomes is likely to be most successful. Thus terminology will simply be the medium between policy and outcomes and, as long as outcomes are common and agreed, terminology should not pose any barriers.

## 2. Decision Making and Levels of Responsibility

### 2.1 Decision Making

Identifying effective governance structures and forms of decision making in a joint degree programme is far from an easy task. Decision-making structures need to take into consideration the different institutional structures and cultures as well as the interests and functionality of all relevant institutional levels. Decision making should aim to be both efficient and effective, and decisions should be clearly communicated to everyone involved. Therefore the decision-making structures chosen for the quality management of a joint master must include clear strategies and communication policies (e.g., through flow charts).

### 2.2 Levels of Responsibility

While the joint degree programme itself is the result of a joint initiative of more than one institution, the levels of responsibility outlined below show where institutions will need to take action in order to accomplish a coherent and valid joint master:

- In terms of coordination and decision making for the programme: the level of the network provides the framework for the joint degree programme as a joint initiative, irrespective of whether it is a formal or a relatively informal networking structure.
- In terms of content and its implementation: responsibility rests at the subject level to be formed by representatives of those disciplines which will implement the joint degree programme. Coordination at this level is especially challenging when master level programmes show a stronger interdisciplinary approach.
- In terms of sustainability and institutional anchoring: the level of the individual university (institutional level) contributes primarily to the development and implementation of the joint degree programme.

Quality assurance measures also need to be coordinated among these three levels and depend on the cooperation and broad participation of all stakeholder groups. What

Level	Challenges and Actions (tasks)
Network	Effective coordination
Subject	Appropriate content
Institution	Sustainable institutional anchoring

are the specific challenges and the relevant tasks and who should fulfil these? The overall programme needs to be developed, validated and agreed upon by all partners involved. If this were not achieved, a joint master would resemble a patchwork of different ideas and approaches and the key quality criterion of coherence would be lost.

Each action at the different levels needs to be taken by an agent – a person in a defined position who is competent, trained and responsible. It might be useful for each partner institution to identify – at the initial stage – its “key agents” at each level. In deciding which person(s) to involve at which level, each institution should consider:

- the challenges to be addressed on each specific level (see table above);
- the duration, continuity and potential evolution of each task; and
- the composition of groups operating at each

level with respect to the institutions involved in the joint master, the disciplines involved in the curricular development, the representative groups within a university (academics, students, administration, senior leadership) and the stakeholders from outside the university (representatives from the labour market, graduates, representatives from society).

It is of utmost importance to involve students in the working groups addressing the quality and quality assurance of joint masters. Programmes are designed for the benefit of students; hence students are the most important source of information on quality-related questions. Within joint programmes, students also play a major role in transporting information on both good and less good practice across Europe (and sometimes beyond). Therefore they should be encouraged to share their experience, knowledge and know-how for the enhancement of the programme's quality.

## C. QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR A JOINT MASTER PROGRAMME

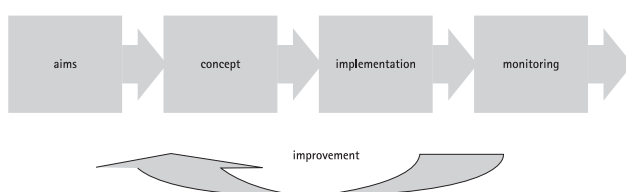
*In this chapter, the Guidelines present a generic approach to the quality of a joint degree programme that may be used for the purpose of quality assessment, assurance and enhancement. The aim is to achieve a joint master programme of good quality, and this implies that the cooperating partners need to share an understanding both of what “good quality” means and of the elements comprising it.*

### 1. The Quality of a Joint Master Programme

As their starting point, the Guidelines follow a conception of quality as fitness for purpose, which includes the element of “fitness of purpose” – identification of valid objectives. Using the degree programme's declared objectives as a starting point, the quality of the programme will depend on the coherence and consistency of the concept. The degree to which the learning elements credibly contribute to achieving the required learning objectives (“fitness for purpose”), the coherence of implementation as well as the competence and capacity of the degree programme provider to assess, assure and enhance quality. A number of key questions should be posed in this context:

- Have valid degree programme objectives (learning outcomes in terms of competences) been defined?
- Is the degree programme as a whole, but also each individual degree course module, a suitable device to reach the objectives of the degree programme, i.e., is the curriculum coherent, target oriented and suitable?
- Is a consistent and suitable implementation of the degree programme ensured and will there be appropriate and sufficient resources?
- Will the fulfilment of the defined objectives be assessed?
- Does improvement take place in order to eliminate errors and assure optimisation at all process stages?

These questions apply to any type of study programme, including joint degree programmes. Compared to study programmes being offered by a single institution, however, joint masters are characterised by their broad ambition and the complexity of their overall programme design<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, three additional elements should be considered:



- The joint degree programme should be the only way of achieving the programme's objectives. Thus valid aims and objectives for a joint degree should always make this unique dimension provided by the joint degree programme explicit.
- There are additional challenges of programme implementation in institutions in different countries. Different organisational cultures and values need to be balanced. In the joint master, all partners need to establish a common understanding of the correct level

<sup>1</sup> EUA Survey of Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe, by Christian Tauch and Andrejs Rauhvargers, September 2002.

for master work. Questions related to the management of mobility and, with this, the social dimension should also be addressed in this context.

- Recognition issues need to be solved.

All partners therefore need to have a common understanding of what a “master” degree is. This implies that for each joint master all partners will need to define:

- the level of competences and the formal qualification to be achieved (where relevant, according to the respective National Qualifications Frameworks)
- the number of ECTS credits to be achieved (according to the Bologna agreements this should be 90-120 ECTS credits and no less than 60 ECTS credits)
- the duration of the course of studies (e.g., two years of full-time studies)
- the specific entrance requirements

Thus “jointness” relates to both the programme and the institution and has legal implications. Compared to a regular study programme, the same set of quality-relevant questions should be posed. The difference lies not in the questions to be asked but in the nature of the responses given. Answers cannot be as linear and straightforward as in the case of single institution degree courses but rather must be characterised by coordination and consensus across the network.

## 2. Quality Assurance and Recognition

“If you want to develop a joint degree, does this imply that you can only involve institutions in countries legally able to award a joint degree?” While this question may be posed within many institutions considering the development of joint programmes, its importance can be exaggerated. Of course, those striving for a joint degree will need to pay careful attention to all regulatory frameworks of all participating institutions. Institutions striving for a joint cooperative programme as the realisation of a truly European experience will have to face also the legal impediments that currently exist. However, since the higher education ministers in all European countries have committed to removing legal obstacles, true joint degrees will most probably be achieved in the near future. In this phase of transition, double or multiple degree awards will be accepted since they follow the same aim as joint degrees.

The political discussion on the feasibility of joint degree programmes very much concentrates on the topic of recognition. However, the debate can be somewhat illusory as it does not specify the necessary prerequisite for recognition, i.e., trustworthy quality assurance processes and procedures: “Competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the joint degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assessment or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or

more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention.”<sup>2</sup> Careful quality assurance of the joint master programme will provide the ground for broad recognition. Thus implementation of the guidelines can be considered as a common challenge for higher education institutions and national quality assurance systems.

## D. QUALITY SITUATIONS IN PRACTICE

*These Guidelines are addressed to two different quality situations: the planning and development of a new joint master programme is one, and the evaluation of a running joint master programme the other. This chapter examines the relationship between these situations from the point of view of quality enhancement and the nature of questions to be posed.*

The process of thinking through quality assurance at the planning stage is closely related to the implementation of quality processes for an existing programme. Whereas the first stage focuses on planned activities and the necessary preconditions for their success, the second is concerned with an empirical validation of implementation and on factual achievements and success. The first is thus an “ex-ante” procedure requiring a sound “concept” and the second is an “ex-post” procedure validating the applied concept on the basis of empirical information and data.

The difference between both approaches lies in the formulation of arguments for validation:

- For example, relevant questions at the planning stage include: How do we intend to organise the data administration for each student's Diploma Supplement? Why? Is this appropriate?
- Questions of a running programme will be addressed on the basis of empirical evidence: Did it work? What were the specific obstacles? How can we improve the organisation of the Diploma Supplement? In this sense, the items outlined throughout the Guidelines are points of reference for each programme.

Before presenting the quality criteria and the associated questions, two separate processes for particular situations will be presented to indicate how internal quality

2 “Where the joint degree is issued on the basis of a curriculum developed by a group or consortium consisting of a number of recognised higher education institutions, recognition of the degree may be made contingent on all member institutions or programmes of the group or consortium being subject to transparent quality assessment, or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, even if only some of these institutions provide courses for any given degree.” Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, UNESCO/Council of Europe (adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications of Higher Education in the European Region, June 2004).

assurance may be structured and organised. As stated before, these two processes follow the same logical construction, and it is the elements and questions of time, experience and perspective which result in procedural differences.

### 1. *Setting up a New Joint Degree Programme*

The development of a new joint master or a joint degree programme implies a set of creative acts: It is not only the creation of a new and innovative curricular concept, but also the design of a new type of programme for which students are expected to move between different locations. This programme is designed with the purpose of providing a truly European study experience, fully integrated in the degree programme. Hence, organisational and structural links are developed when needed by the programme itself.

Each university collaborating in this network will usually need to cope with different and mostly divergent interests. In some respects the joint master will be competing with a large number of other degree programmes being offered by each university. Therefore it is especially important that each partner in the network will help to strengthen the collaboration and support the achievement of the joint aims and objectives.

In setting up a new joint master, the phase of forming a network of motivated and committed partners is of particular importance. The question of which institutions to include in the network needs to be answered by considering the aims and the purpose of the (planned) joint master programme. The question of which academic teachers and researchers to involve in the planning and realisation of the joint master is also of utmost interest. Therefore the phase of “matchmaking” or building a strong network will always correlate with the design of the joint master programme.

When planning a new joint master programme, early and thorough planning is recommended. The initiative will be completed in several steps.

In any case, the partners involved in the planning of the joint master programme shall express their **commitment to quality**. They are recommended to agree on their quality principles and concepts that they intend to apply. Their commitment to quality shall thus form a central element of any cooperative agreement.



#### Step 1: IDEA

In phase 1, the idea of setting up a new joint master is being explored. The history of a new joint master usually starts with a moment of creative and innovative planning.

There are a set of crucial items which will be discussed in this very initial phase. This phase is in principle a brainstorming one. What do we want to do and why? What shall our joint programme focus upon? Who are “we”, i.e., which researcher or academic teacher do we wish to include in this project? Which universities will fit on our (virtual) campus? Which group(s) of students do we bear in mind when we think of our envisaged programme? What will be the benefits of such a joint initiative? How do students/institutions/employers/society benefit? What is new? Why is this idea unique? etc. By exploring the idea of setting up a new joint master programme, all those involved in this phase have the possibility to collect different opinions and a broad input for the further development of the joint master.

In the initial planning phase the partners should be aware of their reasons for working together. Which institutions attempt to work together in the joint master and why? There might be different reasons such as (1) personal reasons, (2) rational choice or, (3) systematic matchmaking. These reasons will also be affected by the interface with the university's international mission, as well as by support to such activities through the institutional infrastructure, such as an international office.

Before setting up a joint degree programme, the collaborating partners may wish to conduct some form of needs analysis, to see whether there is interest in the specific qualification offered – both from the students' perspective and the labour market. Such a needs analysis can provide information for rational choice regarding the content of the programme and the selection of partner institutions.

Collective brainstorming is an important exercise which prepares the network for a joint degree programme. All those involved in this exercise have the possibility to learn the opinions and approaches of others regarding the creation of an innovative programme. In the initial phase, some systematic data collection could be useful. Therefore sufficient time needs to be foreseen for the first analysis of the programme's outline and context.

By the end of the planning phase, partners should be in a position to demonstrate their commitment to the programme. Such a commitment should also be to the quality principles and concepts that have been agreed and will help to bind the network together.

#### Step 2: CONCEPT – outline

Based on the outcomes of the brainstorming on the aims, a working group may develop the outline of a concept for the joint degree programme.

The outline of the concept shall entail the basic structural and organisational information on the joint degree programme. The concept will be the basis for the following steps in the planning and implementation of the joint master programme. An outline should at least entail the following information:



- name of joint degree programme
- aims and objectives of the joint degree programme
- discipline/s involved
- level (Bachelor/Master/PhD)
- duration (in years/in ECTS credits)
- full time/part time
- institutions offering elements of the joint degree programme (including their motivation)
- entrance requirements
- regulatory framework (on state level; on institutional level)
- benefits and costs
- mandatory student mobility
- envisaged measures of quality assurance: quality principles and quality measures
- funding
- legal implications (e.g., copyright of material that has been developed, which can become an issue if the programme is dismantled later)

### Step 3: PLANNING – in detail

Once the basic outline of the joint degree programme's concept has been agreed upon by all partners, the detailed planning of the joint degree course will begin. In the detailed planning, the individual contributions and organisational arrangements of each partner university will be specified. Therefore, the partners involved may wish to describe the individual contributions in a more bottom-up approach. Section E of these Guidelines may serve as a common orientation for each university.

The organisation of the programme should also be reflected upon during this phase. Will there be a central, professional and institutionalised coordination? How will communication and cooperation on the network level be organised? Who will represent the respective universities in the coordinating body? How do the members of the coordinating body ensure coordination and communication with decision-making bodies of each university? etc.

The outcomes of the planned individual contributions of each participating university should then be analysed at the network level (e.g., a written agreement). In this way, all partners have the opportunity to get more familiar with the specific approaches to teaching and learning across the network as well as understanding the planned practical implementation of the programme in each respective institution.

### Step 4: AGREEMENT

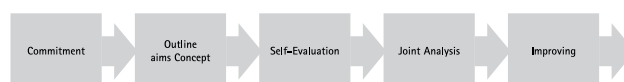
The programme concept shall be agreed by all partners involved – both the programme providers (on the subject level) as well as the institutional leaders. The programme concept is thus part of a formal agreement and can therefore give orientation to all parties. The institutional leaders should sign a memorandum of intent or a formal contract in order to demonstrate their commitment and confirm their support to the joint project.

### Step 5: DOING the programme

Now it is time to get the programme going. This includes the implementation of the planned quality assurance measures.

### 2. *Evaluation of a Running Joint Degree Programme*

The providers of a joint master or a joint degree programme are recommended to evaluate their joint endeavour with regard to its quality on a cyclical basis. The purpose of an evaluation may be to get a shared, analytical understanding of the programme's current strengths and weaknesses as well as to identify necessary areas and measures for improvement. Those involved in the evaluation procedure can make use of section E of these Guidelines.



### Step 1: COMMITMENT to quality

The path to quality culture embracing a culture of jointness shall start with a statement by all partners on all levels that demonstrates their commitment to quality and clarifies the quality principles and concepts which will be binding for the network.

In order to support the necessary coordination of a joint master programme in a quality assured way, it will be helpful to re-visit and question the conceptual assumptions regarding quality and quality assurance in light of practical experience:

- The joint definition of quality – a concept of quality as fitness of purpose/fitness for purpose?
- The agreement to strive jointly for a quality culture, i.e., the agreement:
  - to share responsibility for the quality of the joint master programme;
  - on quality criteria (e.g., based on elements of these Guidelines);
  - on a coordinated procedure for the application of these quality criteria;
  - joint responsibility for the enhancement of quality as demonstrated through self-evaluations;
  - etc.

### Step 2: Revisiting the OUTLINE, AIMS and CONCEPT of the joint master

Each joint master pursues specific aims which are decisive for the programme's concept in terms of both content and implementation.

An agreed outline of the programme's aims and objectives describes its concept and its implementation. The

outline includes information such as the programme's duration in terms of ECTS credits, years, the programme's level, the degree to be awarded, mobility phases, learning outcomes and curricular concept. The relevant questions can be derived from section E of these Guidelines. It will be important to ensure that the documentation of the programme's aims and concept are complete and up-to-date. The documentation should be updated on the basis of the empirical experience and feedback received during the running phase of the programme. Moreover, it will be important to ensure the knowledge and awareness of these curricular concepts among all partners.

### Step 3: Bottom-up SELF EVALUATION

The joint master's quality very much depends on a well-tuned cooperation of different partners. In order to analyse the individual specificities, similarities and differences in perception, concept and implementation, all partners should be involved in a bottom-up self-evaluation process.

Each university collaborating in the joint degree programme conducts a self-evaluation on the basis of the set of questions provided in section E. The university is asked to describe to what extent these aspects of the guidelines are considered in implementing the programme, in accordance with the different institutional circumstances, intentions and possibilities. Alternatively, they are asked to justify why they were not included or implemented. The guidelines should not be seen as rigid and prescriptive, but rather as a flexible handbook of questions. Irrelevant points should be omitted and special features of the course which are not included adequately through the questions should be described.

The self-evaluation shall be based on an in-depth SWOT analysis, which should embrace both a description of the programme and its implementation, as well as an analysis of the specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the programme in each institutional context.

The partners collaborating in the joint master are recommended to agree on a common format for a self-evaluation report. It will also be helpful if the partners substantiate their self-descriptions by providing similar evidence for their statements (i.e., statistical data, policies, etc.).

### Step 5: JOINT ANALYSIS of contributions and SPECIFIC FOCUS of INTEREST

The coordination of the joint master will benefit from a jointly conducted analysis of the specific contributions of each individual partner in the network. By conducting a self-evaluation of the joint degree through a decentralised approach and by analysing the results of this self-evaluation on a central level, all partners have the opportunity to gain more familiarity with all aspects of teaching and learning and the practical implementation of the programme.

The joint analysis of the self-evaluation reports will benefit from a clear set of procedural rules. It will be important to follow the principles underlying the concept of "culture of jointness". Respect, honesty, trust and shared responsibility will enable all partners involved to achieve their common aims and objectives.

### Step 6: Drafting an ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT

On the basis of the compilation of self-evaluation reports and their comparative analysis, the collaborating partners will undertake to identify the need for changes in the programme's concept and its implementation and they will develop a joint action plan which embraces necessary actions, priorities and a clarification of responsibilities.

These issues will need to be scrutinised on a regular basis in order to ensure that all parties involved in the programme will contribute to improving it in a coherent and regular way. Furthermore, the action plan shall specifically include information on the quality assurance processes which the individual partners set in place for their contributions.

Challenge	Activity	Responsibility
1. Student admission	1.1 Setting up an admission committee 1.2 Assuring compliance with a range of national laws	1.1 Network level 1.2 Institution
2. Recognition of the joint degree	2. Negotiations with the Ministry, if applicable	2. Institution/Rector's level
3. Implementation of the curricular plan	3. Creating a learning and teaching environment which fits the agreed set of course objectives	3. Subject level
4. Equal access to university facilities	4. Providing immediate access to facilities for students visiting the university for a short-term period	4. Institution

### 3. An External Evaluation to Validate the Outcomes of the Self-evaluation

What are the results of this decentralised self-evaluation followed by a coordinated analysis of the outcomes of the self-evaluation plus the joint agreement on necessary steps?

Any network which answers all questions listed in section E of these Guidelines will be able to demonstrate the following:

- The network provides a collection of systematic data and information which are relevant for the joint master as a joint initiative and sheds light on the contributions of the different partners cooperating in the network.
- The network has a description of its joint programme's concept, which is based on evidence.
- The network demonstrates that the realisation of its joint master is being monitored in a joint way.
- Founding its self-evaluation exercise on an indepth SWOT-analysis, i.e., an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the joint degree programme, the network demonstrates a joint awareness of the problems and challenges as well as the future perspective of the specific joint degree.
- Hence, the network is in a position to control the further development of the joint degree programme, assure and monitor its quality and improve it.

As a possible next step, the joint master may wish to have all information gained through the self-evaluation validated by means of an external evaluation.<sup>3</sup> Especially the external evaluation of the management and coordination on the network level or the interrelation between the institutional level and the network level may be subject to an assessment. Moreover, there might be the request from national framework regulations or legislation for an external evaluation.

## E. QUALITY-RELATED QUESTIONS

*This chapter introduces a range of questions that should be addressed by all those who are responsible for the quality of joint programmes – at both the institutional and the joint programme level. The list is by no means exhaustive or prescriptive: questions will need to be adapted to suit the particularities of each programme.*

The definitions of quality as “fitness of purpose” and “fitness for purpose” translate into a set of quality criteria

<sup>3</sup> “Use of internal quality assurance procedures: External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.” Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, ENQA (adopted by European Ministers of Education, Bergen, May 2005).

that need to be met by the joint master. In accordance with the principle of institutional autonomy, there is no restrictive definition of how the universities involved in the joint master are to accomplish this. It is their responsibility to find an adequate solution. This explains why the quality criteria are defined in quite an abstract way. They are to be read as guiding principles. The Guidelines provide in addition a set of quality-related questions, i.e., reference points, which demonstrate in more detail how the quality criteria are to be understood.

The criteria and quality-related questions follow an institutional process orientation for the implementation of programme quality. By interrelating the elements of a quality cycle – (valid) objectives, (fitting) concept, (true) implementation, (candid) quality monitoring, (timely) improvement – they support a relational quality concept. This concept avoids external standardisation of the programme's content. Rather, they support the universities' uniqueness and their power for innovation.

The criteria address all levels involved in realising effectively and efficiently a joint master: these are the level of the university (institutional level), the subject (disciplines) within each university, and the network of universities providing the joint master. All levels should participate actively in the realisation of the joint degree programme in order to assure and improve the quality of such a complex initiative. Their cooperation shall be carefully coordinated in order to enhance commitment and a sense of ownership while keeping to a limit the necessary resources (especially in terms of human resources and work). Ideally, the quality approach proposed for the joint master should be complementary to any existing processes in the partner institutions.

All parties involved in the joint master are invited to consider the question “How do we ensure the joint master's quality?” Since quality is a complex issue, all parties involved should go through the full list of questions presented in the following list. In order to come to an agreed and coordinated answer, shared by everybody involved, there is a need for analysing different opinions and expectations. It is important to be aware of the degree of heterogeneity in the network; even more important is the negotiation and agreement on a joint form of activity. As indicated above, both negotiation and agreement will lead to an integration of different approaches. The self-evaluation of each institution involved in the joint master may read differently from those done by the participating partners. It is a necessary step to carefully analyse the individual contributions<sup>4</sup> and to view the differences as a great learning opportunity for everyone involved.

<sup>4</sup> “Information systems: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of studies and other activities.” (Part 1: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, ENQA (adopted by European Ministers of Education, Bergen, May 2005).

## 1. Aims and Objectives

### CRITERIA:

*How do we ensure that the joint master's objectives are explicit, adequate and plausible?*

*How do we ensure that they are valid?*

*How do we ensure that they are shared – both among all participating universities providing elements of the joint degree programme and among all persons involved (quality culture)?*

### 1. Programme Development: Objectives

#### 1.1 Objectives of the joint master

- What objectives does the joint master pursue with respect to academic values, democratic citizenship, societal relevance, in particular employability, and the personal development of the students?
- What specific competences, abilities, skills and knowledge are to be gained by the students (learning outcomes of the joint degree programme)? How do the institutions perceive the level of competences which the joint master degree will pursue? Is this level in compliance with the respective national qualifications framework?
- In what ways do the programme's objectives require a joint degree? How do the participating universities define the "jointness" of the programme and its realisation?
- What are the linguistic aims of the joint master and the specific language policy?

#### 1.2 Institutional aims (regarding the individual university)

- Is the joint master part of the institutional mission? What connection is there between the joint master and other degree programmes offered by the associated departments and/or university?
- What were the primary reasons for introducing the joint master: academic, professional, organisational, financial or others?

#### 1.3 Institutional aims (with a view to the participating universities)

- What were the primary reasons for selecting the participating universities: academic, professional, organisational, regional, linguistic, financial, others? Were these selection criteria appropriate for achieving the programme's aims and objectives?

#### 1.4 Other objectives or, if applicable, constraints

- How do the participating partners ensure that all legal stipulations are fulfilled? How do they ensure that the

joint master degree will be recognised – academically, legally and professionally?

- How do the participating partners cope with specific legal constraints regarding the establishment of a joint degree?

#### 1.5 Validity of the aims and objectives (reasons for the objectives described in 1.1 to 1.4 above)

- How do the participating partners validate the joint master's aims and objectives?
- What level of demand is demonstrated through student applications and the labour market? Was a need analysis or market research performed? Has it been updated?
- Are professionals involved in developing the joint degree programme? What contacts are there with the profession and the labour market and what are the links with society and industry?

## 2. Concept

### CRITERIA:

*How do we ensure that the curriculum will achieve the stated objectives?*

*How do we ensure that the joint master's curriculum is coherent and consistent?*

*How do we ensure that the concept is feasible for students as well as for the institutions?*

#### 2.1 Target group / Addressees / Admission requirements

- Does the admission policy achieve the set objectives? What are the entrance requirements and selection criteria? What specific skills, abilities and knowledge are required, especially linguistic abilities? How does the university ensure diversity, i.e., access for students from different backgrounds? How does the institution ensure a need-blind admission?
- What is the planned number of places for the joint master in total/in each institution/for each year; the expected number of first year students, undergraduates, and postgraduates in each participating institution? What is the admission yield (i.e., the applications/admissions ratio)? Do these achieve the set objectives?
- What are the expected and achieved flows of mobility?
- Do the participating institutions reach their targets?

#### 2.2 Course structure

- Does the content of the study plan satisfy the set objectives? What is the structure of the joint degree course and the teaching practices regarding time and



content? Does the joint master enable all students to have equivalent learning opportunities?

- How are the periods spent abroad specified in the joint master and how are they structured?

### 2.3 Learning outcomes, ECTS, modular structure

- To what extent is the joint master structured/ modularised? What are the expected learning outcomes in the context of the joint master's objectives (core and transferable skills and knowledge, social competence and personal development)?
- Does the joint master meet the requirements of ECTS in respect of the defined learning objectives (learning outcomes) and the workload of students? How is the expected student workload quantified?

### 2.4 Assessment and examination system

- How is the examination system structured? Is it cumulative or is there an all-encompassing final examination? What kinds of controls and proofs of achievement are there?
- How do the examinations enable students to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning objectives?
- Which grading schemes are used? How is consistency of grading ensured across the partner institutions?
- What happens if a student fails an exam and is due to move to another institution? Can students carry a fail and move? Can they take a supplement at another institution?

### 2.5 Learning context (didactics, methodology, learning and teaching materials)

- What forms and methods of teaching are used (lectures, seminars, exercises, projects, directed independent study) to ensure that graduates are equipped with adequate competence for the professions in their speciality areas? Are the selected types of teaching practices suited to achieve the set objectives?
- What is the (major) language of instruction?

### 2.6 Transparency

- **Diploma:** Is there a certification that the degree awarded is "joint"?
- **Diploma Supplement:** Is there a Diploma Supplement? How is it structured? In which language is it provided?
- **Transcript of records:** Is there a transcript of records? How is it structured? Which institution issues an overall transcript of final records?
- **ECTS course catalogue:** Is there an ECTS course catalogue? How is it structured?
- **Examination rules:** How are the assessment criteria rendered transparent? Does the joint master have set examination rules? Are assessments carried out in a consistent manner by all partners?

- **Student information and advisory service:** What possibilities and materials are there for students to obtain the relevant information? Is there an individualised student support and advisory system providing targeted information for both prospective and current students (Information, website, faculty advisory service, regular office hours, support through tutorials, etc.)?

### 3. Programme Implementation: Tools

#### **CRITERIA:**

*How do we ensure that the decision-making processes both on the network level and in each university are appropriate for achieving the joint master's objectives?*

*How do we ensure that the resources are available and appropriate to achieve the objectives in all universities involved in the joint master?*

#### 3.1 Decision-making processes

- Is the organisation of the joint master clearly defined and appropriate at both the university and the network level? What are the responsibilities and decision-making structures within the faculty, the university and the network? Is there a leading university?
- How are network-level decisions integrated into the regular decision-making processes of the university (institutional anchoring)?
- How are the inter-institutional bodies organised? What is their mandate? How often and how regular do they meet? Who are the members of these bodies?
- Do students participate in shaping the joint master (decision making) at university and network level?

#### 3.2 Organisation

- Is there a professional and institutionalised coordinating body in the network and in each institution?
- How is communication organised in the network?
- To what extent are joint projects, conferences and other events with the partner institutions or with other institutions undertaken?
- How does the organisation ensure equal opportunities for students enrolled in the joint master, e.g., equal access to university facilities (library, computers, etc.)?
- How are the mandatory mobility phases organised within the joint master?

#### 3.3 Resources (financial, staff, infrastructure, mobility grants, etc.)

- Is the funding of the joint master assured (at network level and at the level of each individual university)? Are the resources required in order to meet objectives available (at network level and at the level of each individual university)?

- How are funding issues addressed? Is the cost per student known? Does each partner receive equitable treatment in terms of the return on their investment?

### 3.4 Staff

- Does the programme have sufficient administrative, technical and other staff in each university? How many and what positions are there for teachers (including guest professorships, lecturers as well as services between the various faculties) in general/for the joint master? What is the teacher/student ratio? What are the benefits for staff (i.e., why do they do it)?
- Do the qualifications of the academic staff fit the programme's profile and content? What are the qualifications of the academic staff? Are qualification profiles available? Are academic staff members also active in research or in artistic/design development? What international experience do academic staff members have?
- What are the policies and practices for staff mobility in the joint master?
- What regulations are there for administrative and academic staff with regard to supporting the joint degree?
- How is the linguistic ability of academic and administrative staff ensured with respect to the main language of the joint master?

### 3.5 Financial resources, physical resources and infrastructure

- What equipment, teaching and financial resources are available to the joint master? Is the current budget sufficient?
- Are mobility grants available for joint degree students and for staff involved in this programme?
- What costs do the students have to cover (e.g., tuition fees, housing)?
- Does the university provide assistance with student housing? In what way? Are there arrangements for short-term (3 months) accommodation?

### 3.6 Administration

- How does the university administration support the joint master?
- How is the enrolment of students organised?
- How is the examination administration organised for the transcript of records and the Diploma Supplement?
- How is the appeal system organised? In which institution may students appeal final results?

### 3.7 Organisation of admissions and transitions

- How is student admission organised (which panel is responsible for this)? What rules does the procedure follow? Are the entrance criteria to the course defined and documented? Do they follow a transparent procedure?

Is the admission procedure coherent across all participating institutions?

- Are “bridging classes” organised for foreign students, first year students, or students who are new to the subject (in order to level the playing field, especially in terms of language skills)?
- To what extent do the faculty/the university/the network support the graduates in their search for suitable employment? Is there a careers service? Are contacts to former graduates organised, and if so, how (e.g., alumni association)?

## 4. Quality Assessment

### CRITERIA:

*How do we ensure that the achievement of the joint master's objectives will be assessed systematically at all levels involved?*

- Does the joint master have a quality policy? Does it have a quality management system (e.g., record of study data, feedback and follow-up mechanisms for the development of study plans, selection of staff, student admission modalities, evaluation of teaching, feedback from the labour market)?
- Is there an evaluation of the success of the joint degree course? (e.g., graduation rate, studies of where graduates live/work, amount of time spent looking for jobs, income, career analyses). Are these updated regularly? Are surveys carried out among both students and teachers?
- Are there mechanisms for the systematic development of the joint degree programme?
- What measures are taken to remedy high dropout rates, unsatisfactory graduate analyses or unsatisfactory average grades? Has the programme undertaken an external evaluation?
- What is the students' input into the quality assurance processes? How does the university ensure a participatory student feedback and a systematic follow-up?

## 5. Improvement and Enhancement: Programme Sustainability

### CRITERIA:

*How does the university ensure its steering capacity with regard to setting objectives, conceptualisation and implementation of the joint degree programme?*

*How does the university ensure its capacity for change?*

*How does it set priorities and how does it handle various joint degree programmes?*

*etc.*

- To what extent does the programme use the results of its internal evaluations in order to improve?
- Is there a list of priorities concerning necessary changes? What measures are taken to improve
  - the joint master programme per se (content)
  - the coherence inside the network
  - support by the home institution
  - etc.
- Which committee makes decisions about proposed changes – at university and network level?

## F. FROM POINTS OF REFERENCE TO POINTS OF CONCERN

*This final chapter highlights issues which are likely to be of particular concern to all joint masters. It illustrates how a systematic approach to these matters can help address issues which remain major challenges to the successful development of joint master programmes throughout Europe.*

The list of questions in section E demonstrates the complexity of a joint master's evaluation and provides a structured way for addressing a range of issues, four of which – the particularly challenging ones – are addressed below.

### Mobility

The systematic mobility of students and staff is one of the key features of a joint master<sup>5</sup>. There are a set of challenges that need to be addressed in order to facilitate a broad and fair mobility. These challenges – which can be viewed often as constraints, particularly when it comes to funding – will need to be addressed systematically:

#### Aims and objectives

- What are our objectives in terms of mobility? How many students should be mobile, and what are the expected mobility flows?

<sup>5</sup> In the Bergen Communiqué, the European Ministers for higher education stressed the importance of mobility for the accomplishment of the European Higher Education Area: "We recognise that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many remaining challenges to be overcome, we reconfirm our commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans where appropriate through joint action, with a view to making mobility within the EHEA a reality. We shall intensify our efforts to lift obstacles to mobility by facilitating the delivery of visa and work permits and by encouraging participation in mobility programmes. We urge institutions and students to make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of study periods abroad within such programmes." (Bergen Communiqué, 2005)

### Concept

- How are the phases of mobility conceptualised and integrated in the curriculum?
- What is required for automatic recognition of study periods spent at partner institutions?

### Implementation

- How do we organise and facilitate mobility? Which mobility grants are available? How can we best organise services for mobile students (accommodation, access to facilities, computers, libraries, other student services, etc.)?

### Monitoring

- How do we monitor the effectiveness of mobility? Which feedback loops have we implemented in order to receive feedback both from mobile students and partner institutions?

### Improvement

- How do we plan to improve the organisation of mobility?

### Finances and Fees

The management of finances and fees of joint masters is closely linked to the issue of feasibility. Indeed the question of programme costs needs to be examined from the point of view of costs to the institutions and costs to students.

The students' economic situation and the aim of equal opportunities regarding access to higher education is one action-line which receives constant interest in the Bologna Process<sup>6</sup>. In a cooperative network where different kinds of financial traditions, policies and practices meet, coordination needs to be especially thought through.

The first step includes creating transparency about each partner's requirements, such as for example mandatory tuition fees. A comparison and integration of these will make the points of concern transparent. What is our financial policy? Shall the students carry the tuition fees of their home institutions abroad? Or shall they adopt the system of the respective institution? How can we prevent costs (tuition and housing) to be the decisive criteria for the mobility choice? How will the university in the most costly system cope with this situation? Has our financial policy proved successful?

<sup>6</sup> "The social dimension is a constituent part of the EHEA and a necessary condition for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA. We therefore renew our commitment to making quality higher education equally accessible to all, and stress the need for appropriate conditions for students so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background..." (Bergen Communiqué, 2005)



How can we improve it? In addition, the network partners are advised to ask themselves whether they experience some sort of “jurisdictional competition”, i.e., students do not enrol in their home country but in the one with lowest fees or highest grants. Does this problem affect the joint degree? If so, a requirement to enrol in one’s own country could be at least raised in order to avoid discrimination. Can the overall funding system be rationalised to overcome the problem? These important questions should be raised in the initial stages of a new joint master.

### Language Issues and Language Support

The appropriate language policy is of utmost importance for the good implementation of a joint master. The attractive feature of joint masters lies in their international outlook. Students are placed in a situation where they are expected to be mobile and have the great opportunity to study in at least two different national systems of higher education within a short period of time. If joint degree programmes aim at achieving a “true” European dimension, they should embrace the rich cultural heritage of the European Higher Education Area and hence its linguistic diversity. The heterogeneity of Europe implies a rich linguistic heritage which may be uncovered in the course of a joint master. The language issue may easily become a decisive criterion for the flows of mobility and there are good reasons to offer courses in both the teaching language and the local language. The first will improve the quality of the programme and the second the overall European experience.

### Aims and objectives

- What are the linguistic aims of the joint master? What is the specific language policy?

### Concept

- What are the expected linguistic entrance requirements?
- Which is the (major) language of instruction?

### Implementation

- Are “bridging events” organised for foreign students, for first year students, or for students who are new to the subject (to level the playing field, especially in terms of language skills)?

### Monitoring and improvement

- Do we achieve our set linguistic objectives? What do we do in order to improve?

### Managing Life: Logistics

The number of issues which could be outlined here is unlimited, and hence no list is provided. It depends on the specific needs of each joint master programme as to where partners may wish to devote their energy.

The main point, however, which all partners should realise when entering into a joint programme network, is that the complex nature of these programmes guarantees a major workload in terms of logistical management. It is, of course, the joint responsibility of all parties involved to ensure effective management and to further enhance the quality of their joint initiative.

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# Qualitätssicherung in binationalen und trinalen Studiengängen

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Der Beitrag stellt praktische Erfahrungen der Deutsch-Französischen Hochschule – Université franco-allemande (DFH-UFA) mit der Qualitätssicherung in binationalen und trinationalen Studiengängen zur Diskussion. Die Erfahrungen sind auf andere Studiengänge mit gemeinsamen oder doppelten Abschlüssen übertragbar. Die vorhandenen nationalen Strukturen zur Qualitätssicherung sollten für integrierte transnationale Studiengänge verfahrensseitig weiter geöffnet und flexibilisiert sowie inhaltlich erweitert werden.

## 1 Einleitung

Unter dem Dach der Deutsch-Französischen Hochschule sind zurzeit 121 binationale und trinationale Studiengänge (2005/2006) zusammengefasst: mehr als 100 Zusammentreffen unterschiedlicher Hochschul- und Fachkulturen mit unterschiedlichen nationalen Anforderungen an Entwicklung und Durchführung von Studiengängen und einem unterschiedlichen Konzept zur Qualitätssicherung.

Das Spannungsfeld ist in Stichworten rasch umrissen: Evaluation, Habilitation und/oder Akkreditierung (siehe zum Beispiel HRK 2005)? Man denke hierbei an das fast schon entmutigende Ausmaß der Diskussion um Evaluation und Akkreditierung alleine auf der deutschen Seite. Betrachtung der einzelnen Studiengänge – dies ist der derzeitige vorherrschende Ansatz in Deutschland – oder Betrachtung von Institutionen wie zum Beispiel eines kompletten Fachbereichs oder einer Hochschule – ein in Frankreich auch bei den staatlichen Hochschulen erprobtes Verfahren?

Wie lassen sich ein mehr zentrales, durch die nationale Administration getragenes oder geprägtes Konzept auf der einen Seite und eine eher dezentrale Lösung mit eigenständigen Agenturen auf der anderen Seite miteinander verknüpfen? Ganz zu schweigen von den deutschen Besonderheiten durch die föderale Struktur. Beide nationalen Ansätze sind zudem zunächst einmal dafür konzipiert, nationale Studiengänge vor dem Hintergrund der nationalen Regularien zu beurteilen. Wie lassen sich damit aber auch wesentliche Merkmale integrierter transnationaler Studiengänge wie zum Beispiel der Erwerb interkultureller Kompetenzen oder der Integrationsgrad eines Curriculums adäquat bewerten? Und all dies vor dem Hintergrund eines national und fachspezifisch mit unterschiedlicher Dynamik ablaufenden Umstellungsprozesses auf die Bachelor- und Masterabschlüsse?

Alle von der DFH geförderten Projekte werden auf Basis einer Ausschreibung einer Qualitätsprüfung unterzogen. Der vorliegende Beitrag konzentriert sich auf die Erfahrung mit der Qualitätssicherung der Studiengänge. Der Begriff Qualitätssicherung wird dabei gleichberechtigt mit Qualitätsentwicklung verwendet. Die DFH-Erfahrungen aus anderen Bereichen wie Sommeruniversitäten oder thematischen Ateliers für Nachwuchs-

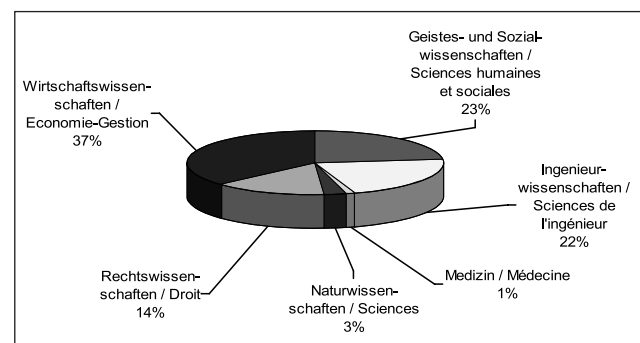
wissenschaftler werden nicht erörtert. Auch der Bereich Forschung ist ausgeklammert. Hier arbeitet die Deutsch-Französische Hochschule mit den großen forschungsfördernden Institutionen wie der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) und dem Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) bzw. der Mission Scientifique, Technique et Pédagogique (MSTP) und künftig der Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR) zusammen.

## 2 Die Deutsch-Französische Hochschule – Université franco-allemande (DFH-UFA) – eine kurze Übersicht

Die Deutsch-Französische Hochschule ist ein binationaler Verbund von derzeit 140 deutschen Mitglieds- und Partnerhochschulen aus Frankreich und Deutschland (2005/2006). Die Finanzierung wird paritätisch von beiden Ländern getragen.

Eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben ist die „Initiierung, Förderung und Durchführung“ von deutsch-französischen Studiengängen (Art. 3 Abs. 2 des Abkommens von Weimar, 1997). Diese Studiengänge führen als Kooperation einer französischen und einer deutschen Hochschule zu einem gemeinsamen (doppelten), äquivalenten Abschluss. Seit Dezember 2004 sind auch Studiengänge mit Drittland-Beteiligung möglich.

Abbildung 1:  
Verteilung der Studierenden nach Fachrichtung  
(Stand WS 2004/2005)

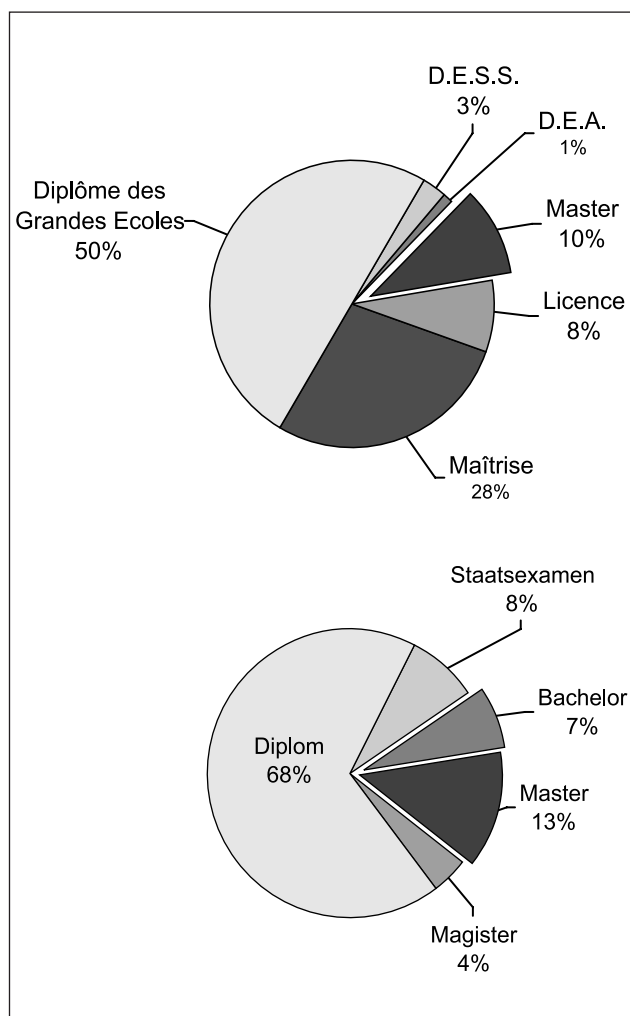


Gegenwärtig sind rund 4500 Studierende in 109 binationalen und 12 trinationalen Studiengängen (2005/2006) der verschiedensten Fachrichtungen eingeschrieben (Abbildung 1). Dies entspricht etwa der Hälfte des binationalen Studienangebots in Deutschland insgesamt und erfasst rund ein Drittel der Studierenden im „franco-allemand“. Praktisch alle Hochschultypen sind an den Kooperationsstudiengängen beteiligt.

Knapp 20 % der Studiengänge bieten bereits Bachelor- und Masterabschlüsse an (Abbildung 2). Die Umstellung ist jetzt in vollem Gange. Schwierigkeiten entstehen für die Mitgliedshochschulen dabei auf verschiedenen Ebenen, wie zum Beispiel:

- durch die unterschiedliche Dynamik bei der Umstellung in beiden Ländern;
- durch die Einengung und teilweise zu starre Handhabung der für gestufte Abschlüsse im europäischen Hochschulraum vorgesehenen Struktur (Bachelor 180-240 credits, Master 60-120 credits) durch die zuständigen Genehmigungsbehörden. Beispiel sind bundeslandspezifische Vorgaben bezüglich der Dauer eines Bachelors oder die M1/M2-Problematik in Frankreich;
- durch die noch nicht abschließend geklärte Eingliederung von dreijährigen Grandes Ecoles nach einer zweijährigen „classe préparatoire“ in das Sorbonne/Bologna-System – 50 % der französischen Abschlüsse in der DFH entfallen nach Abbildung 2 auf Grandes Ecoles;
- durch die Sondersituation mit dem Staatsexamensbereich;
- und nicht zuletzt, vorwiegend auf der deutschen Seite, durch Unsicherheiten bezüglich der Akkreditierung.

**Abbildung 2:**  
Verteilung der Abschlüsse in den Studiengängen der DFH  
(bezogen auf die Anzahl der Studiengänge, Stand WS 2004/2005)



Die Zahlen belegen den Umfang der binationalen Erfahrung in der DFH mit Kooperationen in den unterschiedlichsten Fachdisziplinen, in den verschiedenen Hochschultypen sowie mit fast allen Abschlussarten.

### 3 Qualitätssicherung in der Deutsch-Französischen Hochschule – Notwendige Ergänzung oder Luxus?

Das Spannungsfeld ist durch die Struktur der DFH als Verbund autonomer Mitglieds- und Partnerhochschulen angelegt. Die Verantwortung für die Qualität des Lehrangebots liegt zunächst bei der durchführenden Hochschule, ein Anspruch, den die DFH für ihre Mitglieder und Partner hochschulpolitisch auch nach außen vertritt.

Warum reicht also die interne Qualitätssicherung der Hochschulpartner in Verbindung mit den nationalen Qualitätssicherungsstrukturen nicht auch für die DFH aus? Im Kern aus den gleichen Gründen wie bei jeder der Mitgliedshochschulen: Die DFH definiert eigenständige Qualitätskriterien für ihr eigenes Qualitätskennzeichen, den binationalen, integrierten „DFH-Studiengang“ (Auszug siehe Tabelle 1). So unterscheiden sich DFH-Studiengänge mit ihren Qualitätsanforderungen hinsichtlich Integrationsgrad oder hinsichtlich Verbindlichkeit und Umfang des Aufenthaltes im Partnerland, Sprachanforderungen oder Betreuung deutlich von der SOKRATES-Mobilität oder von MUNDUS-Anforderungen.

**Tabelle 1:** DFH-Anforderungen an einen integrierten binationalen Studiengang (Auszug)

- Integriertes Curriculum auf der Grundlage einer gemeinsam vereinbarten Studien- und Prüfungsordnung/-regelung;
- Ausbildung in zwei nationalen Bildungssystemen mit ihren landesspezifischen Hochschul-, Fach- und Wissenschaftskulturen sowie unterschiedlichen Arbeits-, Lehr- und Lernmethoden und den entsprechenden Techniken;
- die zeitliche Ausgewogenheit der Studienaufenthalte (von zwei bis fünf Semestern) im jeweiligen Partnerland;
- die Vergabe von zwei gleichwertigen, jeweils national anerkannten Hochschulabschlüssen; die Auseinandersetzung mit unterschiedlichen Umgangs- und Kommunikationsformen in der anderen Alltagskultur;
- den Erwerb von mindestens einer weiteren (Fach-) Sprache;
- fachliche, sprachliche und organisatorisch-praktische Vorbereitung auf den Aufenthalt im Partnerland; Betreuung der Studierenden, insbesondere während des Aufenthaltes im Partnerland;
- in der Regel obligatorische Praktika im Partnerland.

Die Einhaltung der Kriterien muss in geeigneter Form geprüft werden. Transparenz gegenüber den Studierenden und den Zuwendungsgebern, die Nachvollziehbarkeit von Förderentscheidungen gegenüber den Hochschulen und das Einspeisen von „best-practice“-Erfahrungen in die Weiterentwicklung der Ausschreibungskriterien sind starke interne Gründe für eine DFH-interne Ergänzung der vorhandenen Instrumente zur Qualitätsentwicklung.

Es existieren aber auch gewichtige extern motivierte Gründe, kurz gefasst im Sinne der Dienstleistung für die Mitgliedshochschulen. Die vorhandenen nationalen Strukturen zur Qualitätssicherung stoßen bei transnationalen Studienprogrammen an eine gewisse Grenze und bedürfen einer verfahrensseitigen Flexibilisierung und inhaltlichen Erweiterung.

Weder zur Evaluation noch für die Akkreditierung binationaler Programme existiert verwaltungsseitig ein Standardverfahren. Bereits aus den Anfragen der Mitgliedshochschulen lassen sich die Unsicherheiten bezüglich der Akkreditierung eines transnationalen Studiengangs ablesen. Wird von der deutschen Agentur nur der deutsche Teil begutachtet? Was wird dann eigentlich vom Ministerium genehmigt? Wieder nur der deutsche Teil? Was ist mit der eventuellen zeitlichen und kostenseitigen Mehrbelastung infolge nicht-synchronisierter Begutachtungsintervalle französischer und deutscher Verfahren?

Die Erweiterung betrifft zum Beispiel die Einschätzung der interkulturellen Aspekte, den Einfluss nationaler Ausbildungsphilosophien und der jeweiligen nationalen rechtlichen Rahmen oder die Bewertung der obligatorischen Studierendenmobilität. Binationale, zweisprachige Gutachterteams sind Voraussetzung. Mit Flexibilisierung ist das Erproben angepasster Verfahrensabläufe für transnationale „joint degree“-Studiengänge gemeint. Dies beginnt mit einer besseren Harmonisierung der verwaltungsseitigen Prozeduren (welche Unterlagen, in welcher Form, wann, in welcher Sprache, Rolle der Studierenden, Publikation).

Die Grundsätze der Qualitätssicherungsverfahren für den europäischen Hochschulraum sind im Bergen-Communiqué vom Mai 2005 und der Glasgow-Deklaration (EUA 2005) nochmals hervorgehoben worden und liegen in den Veröffentlichungen verschiedener Organisationen wie der European University Association (EUA), der European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA 2005) oder der National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB) weiter spezifiziert vor. Die generellen Anforderungen müssen jetzt auch in verwaltungsseitig praktikable Verfahren übersetzt werden.

Sehr wertvoll, weil konkret und fachspezifisch, sind hier Pilotprojekte wie die Kooperation der Commission des Titres des Ingénieurs (CTI) und der Fachakkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge der Ingenieurwissenschaften, der Informatik, der Naturwissenschaften und der Mathematik e.V. (ASIIN) für den Ingenieurbereich oder die län-

derübergreifende Akkreditierung eines Bachelorstudiengangs für die Neisse-University durch das Akkreditierungs-, Zertifizierungs- und Qualitätssicherungsinstitut (ACQUIN).

Diese Pilotprojekte ordnen sich grundsätzlich in die transnationalen Netzwerke der nationalen Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsorganisationen wie dem European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) oder dem 2004 gestarteten Projekt Accreditation of European Engineering Programmes and Graduates (EURACE) ein. Ziel ist die gegenseitige Anerkennung und Zusammenarbeit der national anerkannten Organisationen bis hin zum Lösen des Problems mehrsprachiger Gutachterpools. Bei praktisch allen Netzwerken steht man aber noch am Anfang. Das Europäische Zentralregister der national anerkannten Organisationen ist noch aufzubauen. Und: Netzwerkbildung bedeutet noch nicht, dass auch per se abgestimmte Verfahrenswege existieren.

Ein anderer Weg ist die Schaffung einer eigenen transnationalen Organisation wie im Falle der Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO), einer grenzüberschreitend für die Niederlande und Belgien (Flandern) zuständigen Organisation (siehe z.B. Aelterman (2005)). Allerdings sind diesem Weg mit der Anzahl der Partnerländer Grenzen gesetzt.

#### 4 Qualitätsentwicklung in der Deutsch-Französischen Hochschule – Verfahrensweise

Das DFH-Verfahren richtet sich vorwiegend nach innen, ist also eher mit einer Evaluation als mit einer Akkreditierung zu vergleichen. Das Verfahren wird entsprechend der Struktur der Einrichtung gemeinsam mit den Mitglieds- und Partnerhochschulen durchgeführt. Ziel ist, die für das DFH-Markenzeichen definierten Qualitätskriterien durch die Auswahl hervorragender Studiengänge zu sichern. Dies ist nicht zu verwechseln mit den in einer Akkreditierung in Deutschland nachzuweisenden Mindeststandards – ein akkreditierter Studiengang erfüllt nicht zwingenderweise zugleich alle Qualitätskriterien der DFH.

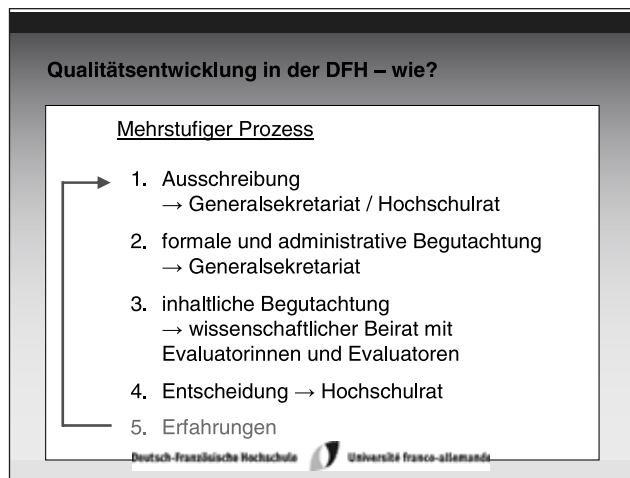
Das mehrstufige Verfahren gliedert sich inhaltlich in drei grundsätzliche Abschnitte mit getrennten Zuständigkeiten:

- die wissenschaftliche Qualität in der Zuständigkeit des wissenschaftlichen Beirates,
- die förderpolitische und haushaltsseitige Dimension in der Verantwortung des Hochschulrates,
- die administrative Beurteilung in der Verantwortung des Generalsekretariats.

Die Einzelschritte sind in Abbildung 3 dargestellt. Bei allen Schritten, ausgenommen Schritt 2, sind Vertreter der Mitgliedshochschulen eingebunden.



Abbildung 3:  
Qualitätsentwicklung in der DFH – ein mehrstufiger Prozess

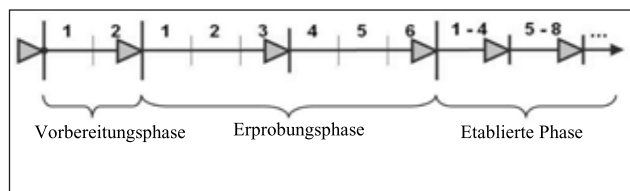


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#### 4.1 Ausschreibung

Die Ausschreibung ist, neben der Bedeutung für die Ausrichtung der Förderpolitik, ein wichtiges, gleichwohl häufig unterschätztes Element der Qualitätsentwicklung. Hier fließen die Erkenntnisse aus der Begutachtung der vorhandenen Studiengänge in Form der Qualitätskriterien (Tabelle 1) in die Neu- und Weiterentwicklung zurück.

Abbildung 4: Zeitraster der Begutachtungen



#### 4.2 Formale und administrative Begutachtung

Dreh- und Angelpunkt des Verfahrens sind die im Antrag durch die Hochschule selbst dargestellten Informationen. Das Intervall der Begutachtung steigt mit dem „Alter“ des Studiengangs von zwei auf vier Jahre (Abbildung 4). Damit wird dem Erfahrungszuwachs Rechnung getragen.

Das Generalsekretariat nimmt mit dem zuständigen Programmbereich vor der wissenschaftlichen Begutachtung zu dem Antrag der Mitglieds- oder Partnerhochschulen Stellung. Neben formalen Aspekten fließen bei laufenden Studiengängen ein:

- die Verwendungsnachweise der Fördermittel,
- die Studierendenberichte,
- die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit mit der DFH.

Die administrative Abwicklung eines Studiengangs ist deshalb von Bedeutung, weil eine schlechte Abwicklung letztlich zu Lasten aller geht. Umgekehrt sollte eine gute Abwicklung als „best-practice“-Erfahrung auch für

andere Studiengänge nutzbar werden. Dies versucht die DFH durch das Beratungsangebot im Zuge der Antragstellung zu gewährleisten.

Seit 2005 führt die DFH – ähnlich wie die Akkreditierungsagenturen – Vor-Ort-Begehungen durch, bei denen neben den finanziellen Aspekten insbesondere der Austausch mit den Programmverantwortlichen und den Studierenden im Vordergrund steht. An den Begehungen ist neben dem DFH-Personal auch ein externer Experte beteiligt.

#### 4.3 Inhaltliche Begutachtung

Kernstück des Verfahrens ist die inhaltliche Begutachtung durch den wissenschaftlichen Beirat der DFH. Der Beirat konzentriert sich auf die wissenschaftliche, didaktische Qualität des Studienangebotes. Der wissenschaftliche Beirat ist fach- und hochschultypübergreifend mit acht französischen und acht deutschen Lehrenden besetzt und unterteilt sich für die Begutachtung in einzelne Fachgruppen (z.B. Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften, Ingenieure).

Der Präsident des Beirates beruft für jeden Antrag ein deutsch-französisches Gutachtertandem. Bei der Auswahl der Gutachter profitiert die DFH von dem weitgespannten Netzwerk mit 140 Hochschulen (2005/2006). Der Gutachterpool ist ein entscheidender Bestandteil des Verfahrens und wird in regelmäßigen Abständen fortgeschrieben.

Auf der Basis einheitlicher Evaluierungsbögen mit einem zuvor vom Beirat festgelegten Kriterienraster beurteilt dieses Tandem unabhängig voneinander den Studiengang. Leitmotiv bei der Beurteilung ist die im Antrag dargelegte „Tauglichkeit für den angestrebten Zweck“, heute „fitness for purpose“ genannt. Das Kriterienraster umfasst rein quantitativ bewertbare Kriterien (zum Beispiel Anzahl der Studierenden) wie auch offene, nach Erfahrung und im Ermessen der Gutachterin oder des Gutachters zu bewertende Kriterien (zum Beispiel interkulturelle Aspekte, Betreuung der Studierenden). Die DFH bietet den Gutachtern vor Abwicklung des Verfahrens eine Informationsveranstaltung an. Kriterienraster und zugehörige Gewichtungsfaktoren werden regelmäßig überprüft.

Die Beurteilung des Gutachtertandems wird zunächst innerhalb der Fachgruppe diskutiert, abgeglichen und ggf. korrigiert. Bei erheblichen und nicht einvernehmlich klärbaren Diskrepanzen wird ein weiteres Gutachten eingeholt. Die Fachgruppen stellen ihre Ergebnisse anschließend dem fachübergreifenden Beirat zur Entscheidung vor. Der Beirat wiederum beschließt eine Rankingliste je Fachgruppe und „Alter“ der Kooperation (Abbildung 4) als Beschlussvorschlag für das zentrale Steuerungsorgan der DFH, den Hochschulrat.

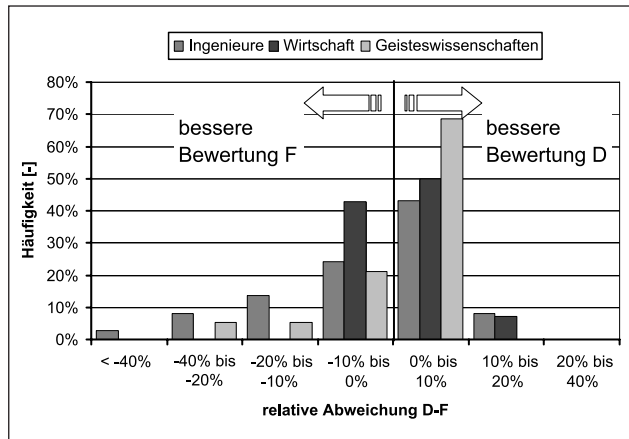
Das Kernstück des Verfahrens ist damit rein qualitätsorientiert. Weder Förderpolitik noch Haushalt spielen bei der



Auswahl im wissenschaftlichen Beirat eine (entscheidende) Rolle.

**Abbildung 5:**

*Eine erste Beobachtung der Übereinstimmung bei der Begutachtung von Studiengängen durch binationale Gutachterteams*



#### 4.4 Entscheidung im Hochschulrat

Der Hochschulrat trifft die endgültige Auswahl auf Basis der Vorschläge des wissenschaftlichen Beirates. Neben der wissenschaftlichen Qualität fließt die Haushaltsseite und die hochschulpolitische Seite in den Prozess ein.

Unterhalb eines Schwellenwertes (= Mindestpunktzahl) wird der Studiengang in keinem Fall gefördert. Oberhalb des Schwellenwertes ist das interne Ranking bei Mittelknappheit für die Förderung entscheidend. Die Auswahlentscheidung wird, im Ablehnungsfall versehen mit einer kurzen Erläuterung der Gutachterposition, mitgeteilt und abschließend veröffentlicht.

#### 4.5 Kontinuierliche Verbesserung

Die Erfahrungen jeder Auswahlrunde werden im wissenschaftlichen Beirat einerseits und – wie zuletzt bei der jährlichen Versammlung der Mitgliedshochschulen 2005 in Mainz – mit den Programmverantwortlichen der Hochschulen andererseits aufbereitet und diskutiert. Wo dies möglich ist, werden bereits in der nächsten Runde Anpassungen vorgenommen. 2006 werden erstmals alle Studiengänge der DFH von mindestens einer Begutachtung erfasst worden sein. Dies ist der geeignete Zeitpunkt für eine umfassende Bilanz.

### 5 Erfahrungen

Obleich mit etwas anderer Zielsetzung und noch im Aufbau begriffen, entspricht die aktuelle Vorgehensweise der DFH in vielen Punkten den im ENQA-Bericht formulierten Standards für Qualitätssicherungsverfahren (ENQA, 2005). Eine Stärke des Verfahrens ist die bina-

tionale, externe „peer-review“ durch unabhängige Experten mit einer klaren Ja/Nein-Entscheidung am Ende.

Auch der offene Wettbewerb der Studiengänge untereinander über alle Hochschultypen hinweg ist eine Stärke. Der Wettbewerb induziert eine kontinuierliche Weiterentwicklung der Studiengänge, kann aber im Falle eines Negativbescheides auch zu Härten führen. Wie bei jedem Wettbewerb ist das Endergebnis immer relativ in Bezug auf die Qualität der Mit-Wettbewerber und im vorliegenden Falle auch der zugeordneten Haushaltsmittel zu sehen. Selbst wenn der Schwellenwert für die prinzipielle Förderbarkeit erreicht wurde, kann sich infolge einer ungünstigen Positionierung im Ranking ein negativer Bescheid ergeben. Die Erfahrungen zeigen, dass diese Art der Auswahl von den französischen Partnern besser akzeptiert wird als auf der deutschen Seite. Ein interkulturell erklärbares Phänomen?

Die DFH erwägt zur Zeit die Einführung eines weiteren Qualitätskennzeichens (DFH-Standard ohne finanzielle Förderung), um den genannten Fällen besser gerecht werden zu können. Verbunden mit dem Kennzeichen sind auch praktische Aspekte wie Öffentlichkeitsarbeit durch die DFH.

Natürlich wird intern immer wieder die fundamentale Frage, ob man Qualität in der Lehre überhaupt quantifizierbar erfassen kann, aufgeworfen. Ist dies nicht der – für die Wissenschaft typische – Versuch, eine Art Scheinobjektivität herzustellen? Nach Überzeugung der DFH ist der gegenwärtige Modus, gestützt auf unabhängige Expertinnen und Experten aus den Hochschulen, der geeignete wissenschaftsadäquate und praktikable Weg. Schwierigkeiten, wie der zufallsabhängige Einfluss aus der Zusammenstellung des Gutachterteams oder stark divergierende Gutachtereinschätzungen, müssen als verfahrensimmanente Konsequenz akzeptiert und behandelt werden.

Im Unterschied zu den vielen anderen gutachtergestützten Verfahren stellt sich bei der DFH zusätzlich die Frage nach einem systematischen binationalen, interkulturell bedingten Einfluss (die Studierenden würden fragen: „Wer beurteilt strenger?“). Noch sind die Fallzahlen für eine valide statistische Auswertung zu gering, da sich diese Frage ja mit dem disziplinspezifischen Aspekt überlagert. Aber erste Beobachtungen weisen darauf hin, dass die Abweichungen der Gutachtereinschätzungen (vor Diskussion in der Fachgruppe) überwiegend in der Größenordnung von bis zu 10 % der maximal erreichbaren Bewertung liegen, die Einschätzungen also recht kongruent sind (Abbildung 5). Eine gewisse statistische Verteilung muss existieren, weil sich ansonsten die Frage nach der Unabhängigkeit der Beurteilungen stellen würde. Die Effekte scheinen insgesamt eher fachspezifisch als nationalitätsgeprägt. Am dichtesten liegen bisher die Beurteilungen in den Wirtschaftswissenschaften zusammen, die größte Streuung zeigt sich bei den

Ingenieuren. Bei den Geisteswissenschaften sind bessere Bewertungen durch die deutsche Seite insgesamt etwas häufiger zu beobachten.

Die Studierenden sind derzeit nicht direkt in das Verfahren eingebunden. Dies entspricht nicht den üblichen Standards (siehe z.B. ENQA 2005 oder das Bergen-Communiqué von 2005). Der Grund ist, dass die DFH zunächst eine eigene binationale, legitimierte Studierendenvertretung aufbauen musste. Auch hier ist Pionierarbeit zu leisten, denn für eine transnationale Hochschuleinrichtung existiert diesbezüglich weder ein vorgegebener rechtlicher noch ein verfahrensmäßiger Rahmen. Das Abkommen von Weimar, die Geburtsurkunde der DFH, sieht keine Studierendenvertretung in den Organen der DFH vor.

Im Jahr 2004 wurde der Aufbau der Studierendenvertretung mit Unterstützung der Mitglieds- und Partnerhochschulen begonnen. Ab 2006 werden gewählte Studierendenvertreter zur Verfügung stehen. Die Sicht der Wirtschaft bei der Studiengangs Auswahl fließt auf der Ebene des Hochschulrates ein.

Positive Entscheidungen werden derzeit gegenüber den Mitgliedshochschulen nicht weiter detailliert. Die Kooperationen verlieren dadurch Hinweise zur Weiterentwicklung des Studienangebots. Eine Nachverfolgung der Qualitätsentwicklung erfolgt aufgrund der Ja/Nein-Entscheidung indirekt über den Antragszyklus.


Eine Schwäche ist die unzureichende Synchronisation und Harmonisierung mit den Qualitätssicherungsverfahren außerhalb der DFH. Für die Programmverantwortlichen an den Mitgliedshochschulen entsteht ein Mehraufwand, weil zu unterschiedlichen Zeitpunkten ähnliche Informationen in unterschiedlicher Form zusammenzustellen sind.

Auf europäischer Ebene ist ein Grundsatz für die (externe) Qualitätssicherung wie folgt im Bergen-Communiqué formuliert: „[...] We underline the importance of cooperation between nationally recognised agencies with a view to enhancing the mutual recognition of accreditation or quality assurance decisions.“ Für die binationalen und trinationalen Projekte bietet es sich an, die vorhandenen Erfahrungen der DFH aus der Qualitätssicherung ihrer 121 Studiengänge (2005/2006), bis hin zum Gutachterpool, für die nationalen Strukturen nutzbar zu machen. Für die Hochschulen wäre die Mehrbelastung geringer. Die DFH wiederum könnte als transnationale Einrichtung, entsprechend ihrem europäischen Auftrag und ganz im Sinne des Berlin-Communiqués von 2003, sicher ähnlich wie bei der Entwicklung der Doppeldiplome einen wichtigen Beitrag in Richtung einer Konvergenz von Verfahren leisten. Aus dem gleichen Grund wird sich die DFH auch zunehmend in den europäischen Netzwerken einbinden.

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# Assurance-qualité dans les cursus binationaux et trinationaux

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Cet article soumet à discussion les expériences pratiques que l'Université franco-allemande – Deutsch-Französische Hochschule (UFA-DFH) a réalisées en matière d'assurance-qualité dans le domaine des cursus binationaux et trinationaux. Ces expériences sont transposables à d'autres cursus sanctionnés par un double diplôme ou un diplôme conjoint. Les structures nationales existantes relatives à l'assurance-qualité devraient s'ouvrir davantage aux cursus intégrés transnationaux sur le plan des procédures. Elles devraient gagner en outre en flexibilité et voir leur objet étendu.

## 1 Introduction

A l'heure actuelle, 121 cursus binationaux et trinationaux (2005/2006) sont regroupés sous le toit institutionnel de l'Université franco-allemande : cela signifie plus de 100 rencontres de cultures universitaires et disciplinaires distinctes, avec des exigences nationales distinctes en termes de mise en place et de mise en œuvre de cursus, et un concept distinct pour l'assurance-qualité.

Le champ de tension peut se résumer en quelques mots-clés : évaluation, habilitation et/ou accréditation (voir par exemple HRK 2005)? A ce titre, on songe à l'ampleur presque décourageante du débat autour de l'évaluation et de l'accréditation, rien que du côté allemand. Faut-il considérer chacun des cursus individuellement – telle est l'approche qui prédomine actuellement en Allemagne – ou faut-il considérer des institutions, comme par exemple une unité de formation complète ou un établissement universitaire – une procédure expérimentée en France dans les établissements universitaires publics ?

Comment rapprocher un concept davantage centralisé, porté ou marqué par l'administration nationale, d'un côté, et une solution plutôt décentralisée avec des agences autonomes, de l'autre côté ? Et cela sans parler des spécificités allemandes dues à la structure fédérale. En outre, les deux approches nationales sont d'abord conçues pour évaluer les cursus nationaux selon les règles nationales. Mais alors, comment certains critères essentiels des cursus intégrés transnationaux tels que l'acquisition de compétences interculturelles ou le degré d'intégration d'un curriculum peuvent-ils ainsi être évalués de manière adéquate ? Et tout cela sur fond de mise en œuvre au plan national et des disciplines de la réforme des diplômes LMD, suivant une dynamique variable.

Tous les projets soutenus par l'UFA sont soumis à un contrôle qualité sur la base d'un appel d'offres. Cet article se concentre sur l'expérience en matière d'assurance-qualité des cursus. Dans ce contexte, le terme d'assurance-qualité est utilisé au même titre que développement qualité. Les expériences acquises par l'UFA dans d'autres domaines tels que les universités d'été ou les ateliers thématiques pour jeunes chercheurs ne sont pas traitées. Le secteur recherche est également mis entre parenthèses. A ce titre, l'Université franco-allemande coopère avec les grandes

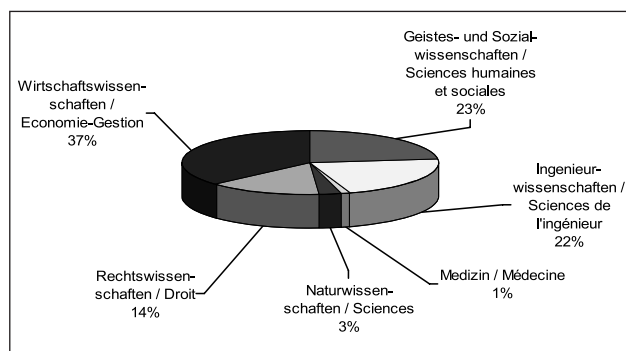
institutions de soutien à la recherche telles que la «Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)» et le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) ou la Mission Scientifique, Technique et Pédagogique (MSTP) et dorénavant avec l'Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR).

## 2 L'Université franco-allemande – die Deutsch-Französische Hochschule (UFADFH) – un bref aperçu

L'Université franco-allemande est un réseau binational de 140 établissements membres et partenaires français et allemands (2005/2006). Le financement est assuré à parts égales par la France et l'Allemagne.

Parmi ses missions essentielles, elle «suscite, soutient et met en œuvre» des cursus d'études franco-allemands (art. 3 al. 2 de l'accord de Weimar, 1997). Ces cursus d'études qui sont des coopérations entre un établissement d'enseignement supérieur français et un établissement d'enseignement supérieur allemand mènent à un diplôme conjoint (double diplôme) de niveau équivalent. Depuis décembre 2004, il existe également des cursus associant un pays tiers.

*Schéma 1:  
Répartition des étudiants par secteur disciplinaire  
(1<sup>er</sup> semestre 2004/2005)*



A l'heure actuelle, près de 4500 étudiants sont inscrits dans 109 cursus binationaux et 12 cursus trinationaux (2005/2006) dans les secteurs disciplinaires les plus variés (schéma 1). Au total, ceci représente environ la moitié de l'offre de formation binationale en Allemagne et concerne près d'un tiers des étudiants du «franco-allemand». Pratiquement tous les types d'établissements universitaires sont impliqués dans les programmes de coopérations.

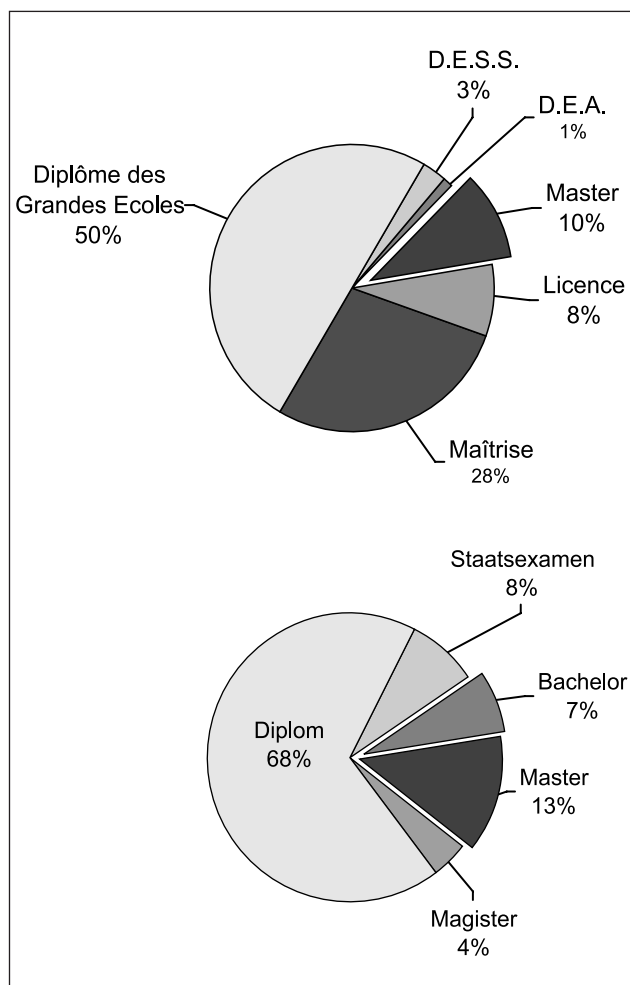
Presque 20 % des cursus proposent déjà des diplômes de Licence/Bachelor et de Master (schéma 2). La mise en place du LMD est en cours. A ce titre, les établissements membres se heurtent à des difficultés de plusieurs ordres, induites notamment :

- par les écarts de dynamique lors de la mise en place du LMD dans les deux pays ;

- par le cadre restrictif et, en partie, la transposition trop rigide de la structure prévue pour les diplômes hiérarchisés dans l'espace européen de l'enseignement supérieur (Bachelor 180-240 crédits, Master 60-120 crédits), imposés par les instances d'habilitation. A titre d'exemple, on peut citer les règles propres à chaque Bundesland concernant la durée d'un Bachelor, ou la problématique M1/M2 en France;
- du fait que l'intégration des Grandes Ecoles, dont la durée des études est de trois ans après une classe préparatoire de deux ans, dans le système Sorbonne/Bologne n'est pas encore définitivement réglée, 50 % des diplômes français à l'UFA reviennent aux Grandes Ecoles (schéma 2) ;
- par la situation particulière des diplômes d'état;
- et notamment par les incertitudes au sujet de l'accréditation, surtout du côté allemand.

Schéma 2:

Répartition des diplômes dans les cursus de l'UFA  
(par rapport au nombre des cursus, état au 1<sup>er</sup> semestre 2004/2005)



Ces chiffres témoignent de l'étendue de l'expérience binationale au sein de l'UFA portant sur des coopérations dans les disciplines les plus diverses, dans les différents

types d'établissements universitaires et concernant presque toutes les natures de diplômes.

### 3 Assurance-qualité à l'Université franco-allemande – un complément nécessaire ou un luxe ?

Le champ de tension est déterminé par la structure de l'UFA, en tant que réseau d'établissements membres et partenaires autonomes. La responsabilité de la qualité de l'offre de formation incombe en premier lieu à l'établissement qui la met en œuvre. Il s'agit là d'une prérogative que l'UFA défend au nom de ses établissements membres, au plan de la politique de l'enseignement supérieur et vis-à-vis du public.

Pourquoi l'assurance-qualité interne des établissements partenaires combinée avec les structures d'assurance-qualité nationales ne suffit-elle pas pour l'UFA ? C'est au fond, pour les mêmes raisons que pour chacun des établissements membres : l'UFA définit des critères de qualité autonomes pour son propre label de qualité, le «cursus UFA» intégré binational (cf. tableau 1). Ainsi, les cursus UFA, avec leurs exigences qualité à l'égard du degré d'intégration ou à l'égard de la durée du séjour obligatoire dans le pays partenaire, des connaissances linguistiques ou de l'encadrement, se distinguent-ils nettement de la mobilité SOCRATES ou des exigences MUNDUS.

Tableau 1: exigences UFA vis-à-vis d'un cursus intégré binational (extrait)

- Un curriculum intégré mis en œuvre entre des établissements partenaires sur la base d'un règlement commun des études et du contrôle des connaissances;
- Une formation fondée sur deux systèmes éducatifs nationaux, se distinguant dans chaque pays par une culture universitaire, disciplinaire et scientifique propre, ainsi que par des méthodes (et les techniques correspondantes) de travail, d'enseignement et d'apprentissage propres;
- La répartition équitable de la durée des séjours d'études (de deux à cinq semestres) dans chacun des pays partenaires;
- La délivrance de deux diplômes universitaires nationaux de niveau équivalent, reconnus dans chacun des deux pays; la confrontation à d'autres formes de communication et modes de vie;
- L'apprentissage d'au moins une langue de spécialité;
- La préparation aux études, les cours de langue et l'assistance pour toutes les questions relatives à l'organisation pratique en vue du séjour dans le pays partenaire ; l'encadrement des étudiants, en particulier lors du séjour dans le pays partenaire;
- En règle générale, des stages obligatoires dans le pays partenaire.



Le respect des critères doit faire l'objet d'un contrôle approprié. La transparence vis-à-vis des étudiants et des bailleurs de fonds, la justification des décisions de soutien vis-à-vis des établissements et l'injection de meilleures pratiques («bestpractice») dans le développement continu des critères d'appels d'offres sont autant de motifs internes puissants pour une mise à jour interne à l'UFA des instruments existants pour le développement qualité.

Mais il existe aussi d'importantes raisons dictées par des motifs externes, qui vont dans le sens du service à offrir aux établissements membres. Les structures nationales existantes concernant l'assurance-qualité se heurtent à une certaine limite lorsqu'il s'agit de programmes d'études transnationaux. Elles doivent être flexibilisées sur le plan des procédures et élargies sur le plan de leur objet.

Il n'existe pas de procédure standard, administrativement parlant, ni pour l'évaluation, ni pour l'accréditation de programmes binationaux. Les incertitudes à propos de l'accréditation d'un cursus transnational transparaissent déjà dans les questionnements des établissements membres. L'agence allemande évalue-t-elle uniquement le côté allemand? Et l'habilitation du ministère, que concerne-t-elle au juste? De nouveau, seulement le côté allemand? Qu'en est-il du temps et des coûts supplémentaires pouvant résulter du fait que les intervalles d'évaluation des procédures française et allemande ne sont pas synchronisés?

L'élargissement concerne par exemple l'appréciation des aspects interculturels, l'influence des philosophies de formation nationales et des cadres réglementaires nationaux respectifs ou encore l'évaluation de la mobilité obligatoire des étudiants. Des tandems d'évaluateurs binationaux et bilingues sont une condition obligatoire. Par flexibilisation, on entend l'expérimentation de processus adaptés pour des cursus «joint degree» transnationaux. Ceci commence par une meilleure harmonisation des procédures administratives (quels documents, sous quelle forme, quand, en quelle langue, rôle des étudiants, publication).

Les principes de la procédure d'assurance-qualité relative à l'espace européen de l'enseignement supérieur ont encore une fois été mis en évidence dans le communiqué de Bergen du mois de mai 2005 ainsi que dans la déclaration de Glasgow (EUA 2005). Ils figurent de manière plus détaillée dans les publications de différentes organisations telles que European University Association (EUA), l'European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA 2005) ou la National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB). A présent, il s'agit de transposer les exigences fondamentales dans des procédures qui puissent être mises en oeuvre, administrativement parlant.

Très précieux, parce que concrets et se rapportant à des disciplines, sont les projets pilote tels que la coopération de la Commission des Titres des Ingénieurs (CTI) et l'a-

gence d'accréditation spécialisée pour les cursus en sciences de l'ingénieur, en informatique, sciences naturelles et mathématiques (ASIIN), dans le domaine de l'ingénieur, ou l'accréditation internationale d'un cursus Bachelor pour le compte de la Neisse-University menée par l'institut d'accréditation, de certification et d'assurance-qualité (ACQUIN).

Ces projets pilote s'insèrent généralement dans les réseaux transnationaux des organismes d'accréditation et d'évaluation nationaux tels que l'European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) ou le Project Accreditation of European Engineering Programmes and Graduates (EUR-ACE) démarré en 2004. Ils visent la reconnaissance mutuelle ainsi que la coopération des organismes nationalement reconnus, et tendent même à résoudre le problème que signifie un pool d'évaluateurs multilingues. Pratiquement tous les réseaux en sont encore à leurs débuts. Le registre central européen des organismes nationalement reconnus reste à créer. Et puis : formation de réseaux ne suppose pas encore qu'il existe des dispositifs harmonisés en soi.

Une autre solution consiste à créer un organisme transnational propre, comme c'est le cas pour Netherlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO), un organisme transfrontalier compétent pour les Pays-Bas et la Belgique (Flandre) (voir p.e. Aelterman (2005)). Toutefois, cette solution est limitée en soi au regard du nombre de pays partenaires.

#### 4 Développement qualité au sein de l'Université franco-allemande – Dispositif

La procédure de l'UFA est principalement dirigée vers l'intérieur. Par conséquent, on peut davantage la comparer à une évaluation qu'à une accréditation. Elle est menée conjointement avec les établissements membres et partenaires, conformément à la structure de l'Université. L'objectif est de garantir les critères de qualité définis pour le label de marque UFA, en sélectionnant des cursus de haut niveau. A ne pas confondre avec les standards minimum dont il faut justifier lors d'une accréditation en Allemagne – un cursus accrédité ne remplit pas pour autant tous les critères de qualité de l'UFA.

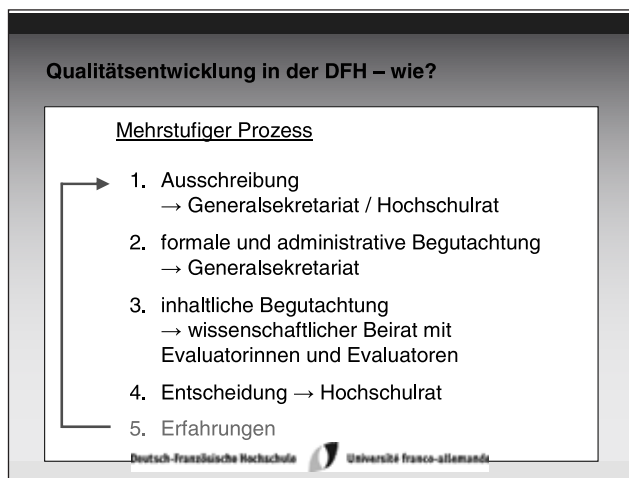
La procédure en plusieurs étapes se décompose en trois phases principales qui relèvent de compétences séparées:

- la qualité scientifique qui est du domaine de compétence de la commission scientifique,
- la dimension politique de soutien et la dimension budgétaire qui sont du domaine de responsabilité du conseil d'université,
- l'évaluation administrative qui est du domaine de responsabilité du secrétariat général.

Les étapes individuelles sont représentées sur le schéma 3. Des représentants des établissements membres sont impliqués à toutes les étapes, exceptée à l'étape 2.

Schéma 3:

*Développement qualité au sein de l'UFA – un processus en plusieurs étapes*

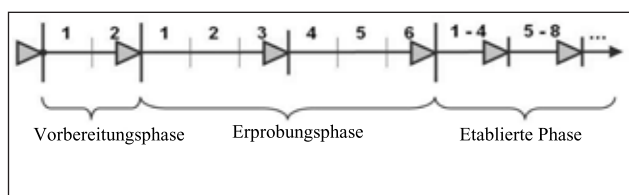


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#### 4.1 Appel d'offres

L'appel d'offres constitue, en plus de son importance pour l'orientation de la politique de soutien, un élément essentiel – quoique fréquemment sous-estimé – du développement qualité. Ici, les enseignements issus de l'évaluation des cursus existants sont pris en compte, par le biais des critères qualité, au niveau du développement qualité, que ce soit au stade de l'élaboration ou de l'approfondissement (tableau 1).

Schéma 4: Echéances d'évaluation



#### 4.2 Evaluation formelle et administrative

Au cœur de la procédure se situent les informations que les établissements eux-mêmes ont fournies dans la demande. L'intervalle d'évaluation passe de deux à quatre ans avec «l'ancienneté» du cursus (schéma 4). Ainsi, on tient compte de l'accroissement d'expérience.

Le secrétariat général prend position avec le secteur programmes – compétent en la matière – par rapport à la demande des établissements membres ou partenaires, préalablement à l'évaluation scientifique. Outre les aspects formels, les éléments suivants sont pris en compte, s'agissant des cursus mis en oeuvre :

- les justificatifs d'utilisation des allocations,
- les rapports des étudiants,
- les opérations de relations publiques impliquant l'UFA.

La gestion administrative d'un cursus est d'autant plus importante qu'une mauvaise gestion se ressent à tous les niveaux. A l'inverse, une bonne gestion devrait également être mise à profit en tant que «meilleure pratique» pour d'autres cursus. C'est ce que l'UFA s'efforce de garantir à travers l'offre de conseil lors du dépôt des demandes.

Depuis 2005, l'UFA effectue des visites sur site – à l'instar des agences d'accréditation – durant lesquelles le dialogue avec les responsables de programmes et les étudiants occupe une place essentielle, parallèlement aux aspects financiers. A ces visites, participe également un expert externe, en plus du personnel de l'UFA.

#### 4.3 Evaluation scientifique

La pièce maîtresse de la procédure est l'évaluation scientifique par la commission scientifique de l'UFA. La commission se concentre sur la qualité scientifique et didactique de l'offre de formation. La commission scientifique est composée de huit enseignants-chercheurs français et huit enseignants-chercheurs allemands répartis sur toutes les disciplines et tous les types d'établissements d'enseignement supérieur. Elle se partage en différents groupes disciplinaires pour l'évaluation (par exemple, sciences économiques, sciences humaines et sociales, sciences de l'ingénieur).

Le président de la commission désigne un tandem d'évaluateurs franco-allemand pour chaque demande. Lors de la sélection des évaluateurs, l'UFA profite du vaste réseau de 140 établissements (2005/2006). Le pool d'évaluateurs est un élément constitutif déterminant de la procédure. Il est régulièrement mis à jour.

Ce tandem d'évaluateurs évalue le cursus, l'un indépendamment de l'autre, sur la base de fiches d'évaluation uniformes comportant une grille de critères préalablement définie par la commission. Le leitmotiv lors de l'évaluation est «l'adéquation aux finalités» décrite dans la demande, aujourd'hui nommée «fitness for purpose». La grille de critères comprend des éléments que l'on peut chiffrer quantitativement (nombre d'étudiants, par exemple) ainsi que des critères ouverts, dont l'évaluation est laissée à l'appréciation de l'évaluateur et est fonction de son expérience (par exemple les aspects interculturels, l'encadrement des étudiants). L'UFA propose une réunion d'information à l'attention des évaluateurs avant le déroulement de la procédure. La grille de critères et les facteurs de pondération correspondants sont régulièrement réexaminés.

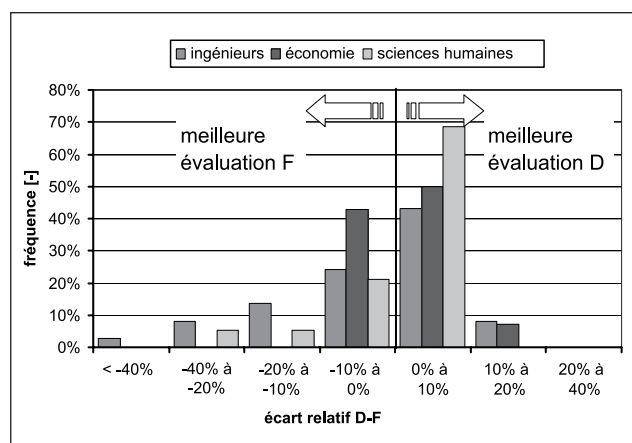
Dans un premier temps, l'évaluation du tandem d'évaluateurs est discutée, comparée et corrigée si nécessaire au sein du groupe disciplinaire. En cas de divergences importantes ne pouvant être réglées d'un commun accord, on procède à une autre évaluation. Les groupes disciplinaires soumettent ensuite leurs résultats à la commission pluridisciplinaire, aux fins de décision. La commission, quant à elle, adopte une liste de classement par groupe

disciplinaire et «ancienneté» de la coopération (schéma 4) qui tiendra lieu de proposition de décision pour l'organe de direction central de l'UFA, le conseil d'université.

Ainsi, la pièce maîtresse de la procédure est purement orientée sur la qualité. Ni la politique de soutien, ni le budget jouent un rôle (déterminant) lors de la sélection au sein de la commission scientifique.

Schéma 5:

Premier aperçu de la concordance des évaluations de cursus des tandems d'évaluateurs binationaux



#### 4.4 Décision au sein du conseil d'université

Le conseil d'université de l'UFA opère la sélection définitive, sur la base des propositions de la commission scientifique. Outre la qualité scientifique, il est tenu compte de la dimension budgétaire et de la dimension de la politique de l'enseignement supérieur.

En aucun cas, un cursus n'est soutenu en-dessous d'un certain seuil (= nombre de points minimum). Au-dessus de ce seuil, la liste de classement interne est déterminante pour le soutien, en cas de restrictions budgétaires. En cas de décision de non-soutien, celle-ci est communiquée avec une brève note d'explication de la position de l'évaluateur puis publiée.

#### 4.5 Amélioration continue

Les expériences de chaque campagne de sélection sont discutées et analysées d'une part au sein de la commission scientifique, et d'autre part, avec les responsables de programmes des établissements – comme ce fut le cas dernièrement, lors de l'assemblée générale des établissements membres à Mayence, en 2005. Là où cela est possible, des ajustements seront effectués dès la prochaine campagne. Pour la première fois, en 2006, tous les cursus de l'UFA auront été évalués au moins une fois. C'est le moment opportun pour dresser un bilan complet.

## 5. Expériences

Bien que l'objectif soit légèrement différent et en cours de définition, le dispositif actuel de l'UFA correspond à beaucoup d'égards aux standards de la procédure d'assurance-qualité formulés dans le rapport ENQA (ENQA, 2005).

L'un des points forts de la procédure est la «peer-review» binationale externe menée par des experts indépendants, avec un Oui/Non décisif à la fin.

La compétition ouverte des cursus entre eux, tous types d'établissements confondus, est également un point fort. La compétition induit un développement continu des cursus, mais peut également engendrer des situations critiques, en cas d'avis négatif. Comme dans chaque compétition, le résultat final doit toujours être considéré relativement à la qualité des co-concurrents et, dans le cas présent, relativement aux crédits budgétaires alloués. Même si le seuil requis pour la recevabilité de principe a été atteint, il peut tout de même y avoir un avis négatif en cas de positionnement défavorable au sein du classement. L'expérience montre que ce mode de sélection est mieux accepté par les partenaires français que par le côté allemand. S'agit-il d'un phénomène que l'on peut expliquer au plan interculturel?

L'UFA envisage actuellement l'instauration d'un autre label qualité (label UFA sans soutien financier), afin de mieux pouvoir tenir compte des cas précités. Certains aspects pratiques, tels que le travail de relations publiques mené par l'UFA, sont également associés à ce label.

Bien entendu la question fondamentale de savoir si la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur est quantifiable se pose régulièrement en interne. Ne s'agit-il pas là d'une tentative – typique pour les sciences – de créer un semblant d'objectivité? Selon la conviction de l'UFA, le dispositif actuel, qui s'appuie sur des experts indépendants issus des établissements, est la solution adaptée et praticable, en adéquation avec les sciences. Certaines difficultés, telles que l'influence fortuite que peut avoir la composition du tandem d'évaluateurs ou bien des résultats d'évaluation fortement divergents, doivent être acceptées et appréhendées en tant que conséquence inhérente à la procédure.

A la différence de nombreuses autres procédures faisant appel à des évaluateurs, se pose en plus la question, dans le cas de l'UFA, de savoir s'il existe une influence binationale systématique liée au facteur interculturel (les étudiants demanderaient: «Qui évalue le plus sévèrement?»). Cependant, on ne dispose pas encore de données chiffrées suffisantes pour une exploitation statistique valable, sachant que cette question se recoupe également avec l'aspect purement disciplinaire. Toutefois, les premières constatations indiquent que les écarts dans les résultats d'évaluation (avant discussion au sein du groupe disciplinaire) se situent généralement dans une fourchette

allant jusqu'à 10 % de la notation maximale pouvant être obtenue, et que les évaluations sont relativement concordantes (schéma 5). Il faut qu'il y ait une certaine répartition statistique, car sinon on pourrait s'interroger sur l'impartialité des évaluations. De telles incidences semblent plutôt avoir un rapport avec la discipline qu'avec la nationalité. Les évaluations les plus concordantes sont celles des sciences économiques. La plus grande disparité se manifeste dans les sciences de l'ingénieur. Dans les sciences humaines, on observe un peu plus fréquemment de meilleures évaluations du côté allemand.

A l'heure actuelle, les étudiants ne sont pas directement impliqués dans la procédure. Ceci ne correspond pas aux standards habituels (cf. par exemple ENQA 2005 ou le communiqué de Bergen de 2005). La raison est que l'UFA a dû d'abord constituer une représentation des étudiants binationale propre, légitimement élue. A ce niveau également, il y a lieu d'effectuer un travail de pionnier, car il n'existe pas de cadre juridique ni de cadre de procédure préétablis pour une institution universitaire transnationale. L'accord de Weimar, l'acte de naissance de l'UFA, ne prévoit pas de représentation des étudiants dans les organes de l'UFA.

En 2004, on a commencé par constituer la représentation des étudiants avec le concours des établissements membres et partenaires. A compter de 2006, on disposera de représentants des étudiants élus. La vision du monde économique concernant la sélection des cursus est prise en compte au niveau du conseil d'université.

Actuellement, les décisions positives de soutien ne sont pas détaillées davantage vis-à-vis des établissements membres. Les coopérations perdent ainsi des indications relatives au développement continu de l'offre de formation. Le suivi du développement qualité s'opère indirectement sur la base de la décision de soutien / non-soutien, en fonction du rythme de dépôt des demandes.

Un des points faibles est le manque de synchronisation et d'harmonisation avec les procédures d'assurance-qualité en dehors de l'UFA. Il en résulte un surcroît de travail pour les responsables de programmes auprès des établissements membres, étant donné qu'il faut rassembler des informations similaires sous une forme différente à des moments différents.

L'un des principes de l'assurance-qualité (externe) à l'échelle européenne est formulé comme suit dans le communiqué de Bergen: «[...] We underline the importance of cooperation between nationally recognised agencies with a view to enhancing the mutual recognition of accreditation or quality assurance decisions.» Les projets binationaux et trinationaux ont tout intérêt à mettre à profit les expériences rassemblées par l'UFA en matière d'assurance-qualité avec ses 121 cursus (2005/2006), y compris celles concernant le pool d'évaluateurs, pour les structures nationales. La charge de travail supplémentaire serait moins importante pour les établisse-

ments. L'UFA, en tant qu'institution transnationale, pourrait, quant à elle, contribuer de manière essentielle à une convergence des procédures, tout comme elle a contribué à l'élaboration des doubles diplômes, conformément à sa mission européenne et tout à fait dans le sens du communiqué de Berlin de 2003. C'est pour cette même raison que l'UFA s'intégrera de plus en plus dans les réseaux européens.

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# “The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals”

Bergen Communiqué, 19-20 May 2005



We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have met for a mid-term review and for setting goals and priorities towards 2010. At this conference, we have welcomed Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine as new participating countries in the Bologna Process. We all share the common understanding of the principles, objectives and commitments of the Process as expressed in the Bologna Declaration and in the subsequent communiqués from the Ministerial Conferences in Prague and Berlin. We confirm our commitment to coordinating our policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010, and we commit ourselves to assisting the new participating countries to implement the goals of the Process.

## I. Partnership

We underline the central role of higher education institutions, their staff and students as partners in the Bologna Process. Their role in the implementation of the Process becomes all the more important now that the necessary legislative reforms are largely in place, and we encourage them to continue and intensify their efforts to establish the EHEA. We welcome the clear commitment of higher education institutions across Europe to the Process, and we recognise that time is needed to optimise the impact of structural change on curricula and thus to ensure the introduction of the innovative teaching and learning processes that Europe needs.

We welcome the support of organisations representing business and the social partners and look forward to intensified cooperation in reaching the goals of the Bologna Process. We further welcome the contributions of the international institutions and organisations that are partners to the Process.

## II. Taking stock

We take note of the significant progress made towards our goals, as set out in the General Report 2003-2005 from the Follow-up Group, in EUA's Trends IV report, and in ESIB's report *Bologna with Student Eyes*.

At our meeting in Berlin, we asked the Follow-up Group for a mid-term stocktaking, focusing on three priorities – the degree system, quality assurance and the recognition of degrees and periods of study. From the stocktaking report we note that substantial progress has been made in these three priority areas. It will be important to ensure that progress is consistent across all participating countries. We therefore see a need for greater sharing of expertise to build capacity at both institutional and governmental level.

### *The degree system*

We note with satisfaction that the two-cycle degree system is being implemented on a large scale, with more

than half of the students being enrolled in it in most countries. However, there are still some obstacles to access between cycles. Furthermore, there is a need for greater dialogue, involving Governments, institutions and social partners, to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service.

We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007. We ask the Follow-up Group to report on the implementation and further development of the overarching framework.

We underline the importance of ensuring complementarity between the overarching framework for the EHEA and the proposed broader framework for qualifications for lifelong learning encompassing general education as well as vocational education and training as now being developed within the European Union as well as among participating countries. We ask the European Commission fully to consult all parties to the Bologna Process as work progresses.

### *Quality assurance*

Almost all countries have made provision for a quality assurance system based on the criteria set out in the Berlin Communiqué and with a high degree of cooperation and networking. However, there is still progress to be made, in particular as regards student involvement and international cooperation. Furthermore, we urge higher education institutions to continue their efforts to enhance the quality of their activities through the systematic introduction of internal mechanisms and their direct correlation to external quality assurance.

We adopt the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area as proposed by ENQA. We commit ourselves to introducing the proposed model for peer review of quality assurance agencies on a national basis, while respecting the commonly accepted guidelines and criteria. We welcome the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review. We ask that the practicalities of implementation be further developed by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB with a report back to us through the Follow-up Group. We underline the importance of cooperation between nationally recognised agencies with a view to enhancing the mutual recognition of accreditation or quality assurance decisions.

### *Recognition of degrees and study periods*

We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge those that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We commit ourselves to ensuring the full implementation of its principles, and to incorporating them in national legislation as appropriate. We call on all participating countries to address recognition problems identified by the ENIC/NARIC networks. We will draw up national action plans to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications. These plans will form part of each country's national report for the next Ministerial Conference. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA.

We see the development of national and European frameworks for qualifications as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning in higher education. We will work with higher education institutions and others to improve recognition of prior learning including, where possible, non-formal and informal learning for access to, and as elements in, higher education programmes.

## **III. Further challenges and priorities**

### *Higher education and research*

We underline the importance of higher education in further enhancing research and the importance of research in underpinning higher education for the economic and cultural development of our societies and for social cohesion. We note that the efforts to introduce structural change and improve the quality of teaching should not detract from the effort to strengthen research and innovation. We therefore emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality of and enhancing the competitiveness and attractiveness of the EHEA. With a view to achieving better results we recognise the need to improve the synergy between the higher education sector and other research sectors throughout our respective countries and between the EHEA and the European Research Area.

To achieve these objectives, doctoral level qualifications need to be fully aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications using the outcomes-based approach. The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. Considering the need for structured doctoral programmes and the need for transparent supervision and assessment, we note that the normal workload of the third cycle in most countries would correspond to 3-4 years full time. We urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs

of the wider employment market. We need to achieve an overall increase in the numbers of doctoral candidates taking up research careers within the EHEA. We consider participants in third cycle programmes both as students and as early stage researchers. We charge the Bologna Follow-up Group with inviting the European University Association, together with other interested partners, to prepare a report under the responsibility of the Follow-up Group on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes, to be presented to Ministers in 2007. Overregulation of doctoral programmes must be avoided.

### *The social dimension*

The social dimension of the Bologna Process is a constituent part of the EHEA and a necessary condition for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA. We therefore renew our commitment to making quality higher education equally accessible to all, and stress the need for appropriate conditions for students so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. The social dimension includes measures taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to widening access.

### *Mobility*

We recognise that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many remaining challenges to be overcome, we reconfirm our commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans where appropriate through joint action, with a view to making mobility within the EHEA a reality. We shall intensify our efforts to lift obstacles to mobility by facilitating the delivery of visa and work permits and by encouraging participation in mobility programmes. We urge institutions and students to make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of study periods abroad within such programmes.

### *The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world*

The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.

#### IV. Taking stock on progress for 2007

We charge the Follow-up Group with continuing and widening the stocktaking process and reporting in time for the next Ministerial Conference. We expect stocktaking to be based on the appropriate methodology and to continue in the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods, and by 2007 we will have largely completed the implementation of these three intermediate priorities.

In particular, we shall look for progress in:

- implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed in the ENQA report;
- implementation of the national frameworks for qualifications;
- the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level;
- creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

We also charge the Follow-up Group with presenting comparable data on the mobility of staff and students as well as on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries as a basis for future stocktaking and reporting in time for the next Ministerial Conference. The future stocktaking will have to take into account the social dimension as defined above.

#### V. Preparing for 2010

Building on the achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we wish to establish a European Higher Education Area based on the principles of quality and transparency. We must cherish our rich heritage and cultural diversity in contributing to a knowledge-based society. We commit ourselves to upholding the principle of public responsibility for higher education in the context of complex modern societies. As higher education is situated at the crossroads of research, education and innovation, it is also the key to Europe's competitiveness. As we move closer to 2010, we undertake to ensure that higher education insti-

tutions enjoy the necessary autonomy to implement the agreed reforms, and we recognise the need for sustainable funding of institutions.

The European Higher Education Area is structured around three cycles, where each level has the function of preparing the student for the labour market, for further competence building and for active citizenship. The overarching framework for qualifications, the agreed set of European standards and guidelines for quality assurance and the recognition of degrees and periods of study are also key characteristics of the structure of the EHEA.

We endorse the follow-up structure set up in Berlin, with the inclusion of the Education International (EI) Pan-European Structure, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE) as new consultative members of the Follow-up Group.

As the Bologna Process leads to the establishment of the EHEA, we have to consider the appropriate arrangements needed to support the continuing development beyond 2010, and we ask the Follow-up Group to explore these issues.

We will hold the next Ministerial Conference in London in 2007.

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45 countries participate in the Bologna Process and are members of the Follow-up Group: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium (Flemish Community and French Community), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, the Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, „the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia“, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. In addition, the European Commission is a voting member of the Follow-up Group.

The Council of Europe, the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), the Education International (EI) Pan-European Structure, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) and the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE) are consultative members of the Follow-up Group.



# Recommendations for the Development of Double Diplomas and Joint Degrees

German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

Translation: Jared Sonnicksen, M.A.



NB: This translation is not official. The only authentic text is the German original as published in [http://www.hrk.de/de/beschluesse/109\\_2459.php?datum=100.+HRK-Senat+am+15.2.2005](http://www.hrk.de/de/beschluesse/109_2459.php?datum=100.+HRK-Senat+am+15.2.2005)

## Why double diplomas and joint degrees?

In Germany, there is already a tradition of integrated courses of study that are offered jointly by universities from various countries, particularly those courses of study that lead to double diplomas. This tradition has been particularly established through the special promotion of Franco-German academic exchange.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, cross-border study partnerships will continue to develop into an essential element of the European space for higher education. Accordingly, at the follow-up conferences to Bologna in Prague (2001) and Berlin (2003), the European ministers of education explicitly called for the creation of such programmes.

The European Commission has spurred this idea further through its newly created ERASMUS Mundus programme, which seeks to promote excellent European master's programmes offered by at least three universities in different countries.

Given the increasing significance of double diplomas and joint degrees (JD), the European Council added in June 2004 the recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees to the Lisbon Convention on the recognition of qualifications between higher education systems in Europe of 1997.

Additionally, a study commissioned by the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst* – DAAD) with the German Business Institute (*Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft*) confirms that graduates with double diplomas have particularly good perspectives in the German labour market.<sup>2</sup>

It is against this background that numerous HRK member universities are greatly interested in the development of double diplomas and joint degrees, but also in their risks as well as the approach to implementing such projects.

## Why has the HRK made recommendations on this topic?

In October 2000, the Senate of the HRK rejected the suggestion to define a list of features of "international courses of study" on the grounds that such standardisation would restrict the universities' latitude. However, the following recommendations will not infringe upon this freedom. Indeed, much higher and precise demands must be

<sup>1</sup> See the scholarship programmes of the Franco-German University (DFH) as well as the DAAD for double degree programmes with selected countries.

<sup>2</sup> See [http://www.daad.de/de/download/doppeldiplom/2994\\_tagung/1\\_„Internationale Doppelabschlüsse“](http://www.daad.de/de/download/doppeldiplom/2994_tagung/1_„Internationale Doppelabschlüsse“).

placed on programmes that lead to a double diploma or joint degree than on "international" courses of study. These requirements can be found almost identically in various scholarship programme descriptions. The recommendations here represent a synthesis of the requirements of DFH, DAAD and ERASMUS Mundus, while taking into account the recommendations from a European University Association (EUA) study on this topic. This study by the EUA also includes conclusions drawn from their Joint Masters Project as well as the aforementioned amendment to the Lisbon Agreement on the recognition of joint degrees.

For the Universities that are working to develop double diplomas and joint degrees, the HRK would like to assist by providing its recommendations.

## What are double diplomas and joint degrees?

The terms *Double diploma* and *Joint Degree* refer to a higher education degree which is awarded jointly by at least two universities on the basis of study programmes exhibiting all or at least most of the following characteristics:

- The courses of study are developed and/or acknowledged jointly by the participating universities;
- Students from one university study for a part of the programme at the other university;
- The duration of the study visits are of comparable length;
- Phases of study and exams that were taken at one university will be recognised automatically by the other university;
- University instructors of one university also teach at the other university, work together on curriculum and form joint commissions for admission and exams.

## The difference between a double diploma and a joint degree: the form of documentation

In general, only one academic degree can be awarded for a single scholarly work. The specific quality of the completed course of study must be clearly documented:

- **Double Diploma:** Each university issues a certificate, whereas both certificates are linked in such a way that they constitute essentially one certificate in content.
- **Joint Degree:** Both universities issue one certificate jointly.

## Structuring curricula, type of degrees

Double diplomas and joint degrees can be developed in cooperation with universities all over the world. However, for degrees offered in the European space for higher education, it is advisable to incorporate the principles developed as part of the Bologna process:

- Double diplomas/joint degrees should be awarded as Bachelor or Master degrees

- The curricula should be modular and use the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
- Bachelor degrees should require 180-240 ECTS-Credits, with Master degrees requiring 60-120 ECTS-Credits.

### Application, admission and exams

Prospective students should have the possibility to apply for entry into a clearly defined programme with common standards of admission, a common admissions procedure and a common applicant selection process.

Exams that are taken at one university shall be recognised automatically by the other university.

### Linking of the study programme's content

The study programme should be developed jointly by university instructors from both institutions in order to ensure the quality of the certified qualification acquired with the double diploma/joint degree.

### Mobility

The study programme should plan for study visits of comparable length at both universities. When applying to such programmes, prospective students must be clearly informed of the possible sequence and combinations.

### Language of instruction

One of the benefits of study programmes of this kind is often the opportunity for students to become familiar with two languages of instruction. In order to fully utilise this advantage, it is worth incorporating both languages in the study programme and to organise the final exams and thesis papers accordingly (e.g. writing the Bachelor-/Master thesis in one language with an abstract or summary written in the other language). The respective national languages should only be replaced by English in exceptional cases in order to protect and promote the linguistic and cultural diversity of the European space for higher education.

### Recognition, quality assurance

For the purpose of facilitating recognition, the study programmes should use ECTS. Moreover, the graduates of these programmes should receive a diploma supplement. This supplement, which is awarded with a double diploma or joint degree, should describe the components of the degree in detail. The supplement should also indicate at which universities and/or in which study programmes the various parts of the degree were acquired.

From the government's perspective (Conference of Education Ministers, *Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK), the recognition of double diplomas has already been possible for a number of years. Moreover, the KMK ascertained in March 2004 that section 18 (1) pg 5 of the University

Framework Law (*Hochschulrahmengesetz* – HRG) allows other academic degrees in addition to those mentioned in the HRG to be awarded if this is based on an agreement with a foreign university and if a German Federal State (*Bundesland*) adopts its state law accordingly. Thus, there should be no reason to raise objection to the awarding of joint degrees, for example within the ERASMUS Mundus programmes. However, the participating institutions would have to be universities or equivalent higher education institutions according to the respective national law. Furthermore, sufficient quality management and guarantees would need to be provided in accordance with the particular national legal rules concerning higher education institutions in the participating countries.

The issue of quality assurance on a cross-border scale is perhaps, at the moment, the most difficult aspect of developing double diploma programmes and especially joint degrees that are not yet permissible by current laws in many European countries. At the Berlin Conference in September 2003, the European ministers of education charged various European organisations with the task of developing suggestions for common standards and guidelines for cross-border quality assurance in European academic cooperation. In turn, the ministers of education agreed to adapt their legislation on universities to the requirements for double diplomas and joint degrees.

It would be prudent, even in anticipation of accepted and well-functioning European procedures, to prepare practical approaches for individual cases. This means that the German institution of higher education must take care that the planned programme is accredited in Germany. At the same, the partner university must make sure that it fulfils the demands for ensuring quality which are applicable in its country. Nonetheless, the German university should find out about accreditation and quality standards in the partner country. In particular, the university should clarify the issue of whether it is permitted at all in the partner country to award double diplomas and joint degrees.

## 10 Golden Rules for developing programmes that will lead to joint degrees<sup>3</sup>

### 1. Be sure of your motivation

Before establishing a joint degree programme, you should reflect on the following questions: Does the programme fill a gap on national or European/international level? Is a joint degree programme the appropriate form? What are the expected academic benefits?

<sup>3</sup> According to recommendations from the final report of the EUA on their Joint Masters Project. [www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Joint\\_Masters\\_report.1087219975578.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Joint_Masters_report.1087219975578.pdf).



## 2. Select your partner carefully

Partner institutions of higher education can be chosen in a variety of ways. The decision can bear significant consequences that extend well beyond the original reasons for establishing the programme. Good communication and mutual trust are essential pre-requisites for the development of common learning goals and standards as well as for the recognition of the study phases at the partner university. How similar or how different should the partner universities be in order to achieve the optimal effects in the programme?

## 3. Develop clear goals with your partner for the JD Programme as well as learning goals to be achieved by the students

The objectives should be framed together with the partner institution in order to develop a balanced programme. This will also facilitate a stronger identification with the programme by ensuring the participation in one of the partner university's programmes. It will be necessary to work out a tailor-made curriculum for this special purpose.

## 4. Make sure that the necessary institutional support for the programme is provided

Full institutional support by both universities is essential from the outset if the programme is to have a long-term future. The absolute minimum should entail an exchange of letters between the university directors, outlining the particular obligations of each university, especially regarding the necessary teaching staff and financial support, for ensuring the programme's success. This communication should be renewed regularly.

## 5. Make sure that sufficient academic and administrative personnel capacity is provided for the programme

The work load should not be placed exclusively on the shoulders of a small, dedicated group. Including a larger circle of individuals from the university will bolster the institution's commitment. Since the mobility of the university instructors involved constitutes an essential element of a double diploma programme, it will be necessary to plan for the subsequent absences and effects on the regular study programmes. Bear in mind what effects might result if a key individual of the double diploma programme changed jobs. Would the institution's commitment remain intact? If not, this may suggest that the programme's personnel basis is too narrow for sustainable programme development.

## 6. Make sure that sustainable financial planning exists for the programme

Such planning should not be limited to the resource management of the individual universities, but must also consider how to finance the programme as a whole. Since the issue of funding can make or break the entire programme, the importance of this aspect cannot be overestimated.

## 7. Make sure that information about the programme is easily accessible

Prospective students to both universities should receive comparable information. An electronic version, for example over the Internet, guarantees that the information about the programme is easy to access and update. Websites and brochures should not only include information about the content of the programme, about application and admission procedures, but also depict the anticipated mobility (room and board possibilities at the partner university) as well as thoroughly describe the double diploma awarded through the programme. In addition, the needs of students who would seek financial aid or are physically disabled should likewise be considered.

## 8. Schedule an adequate number of meetings with the partners

The development of a double diploma programme will take a considerable amount of time. This makes it an absolute necessity to plan for an adequate number of meetings with the partners in order to jointly develop concepts and assess the coherence of the curriculum. Make sure that an agreement has been reached on the aspired learning goals, the use of ECTS (including the value of a credit) and the awarding of the diploma supplement. If there are any doubts about how to properly use these instruments, make sure that relevant learning processes occur and that the necessary information has been made available.

## 9. Develop a common language strategy for the JD Programme and encourage learning the local language(s)

The programme's organisers need to set rules on the language(s) of instruction and provide students with the opportunity to improve their foreign language skills during their course of study. The linguistic aspects should not be treated as a minor issue while developing the curriculum, but rather should also be a main focus from the beginning. Foreign language preparation for visits at the partner university represents a great opportunity to involve other university colleagues and departments in the programme.

## 10. Clearly define the responsibilities between the partners

If the programme is to run well, a clear-cut division of tasks and responsibilities is indispensable. It is not necessary to involve both partner universities in all parts of the programme equally. A division of responsibilities allows the partners to utilise their specialities. Moreover, a well-defined division of labour helps to avoid redundant efforts as well as reduce time and costs. For this purpose, appointing a joint programme commission for assigning and coordinating tasks can be very useful.



# Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

Council of Europe/UNESCO, 2004

## Preamble

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region,

*Considering* that the aim of the Council of Europe and UNESCO is to achieve greater unity between their members, and that this aim can be pursued notably by common action in cultural matters;

*Having regard* to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (ETS no. 165);

*Having regard* to the European Cultural Convention (ETS no. 18);

*Having regard* to the process towards the establishment of a European higher Education Area, and in particular to the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education adopted in Bologna on 19 June 1999 as well as to their Communiqués adopted in Prague on 19 May 2001 and Berlin on 19 September 2003;

*Having regard* to the Diploma Supplement elaborated jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, to the UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Good Practice in the provision of transnational education, to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications;

*Having regard* to the practical action in favour of improving the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education carried out by the Council of Europe/UNESCO European Network of national information centres on academic recognition and mobility („the ENIC Network“);

*Considering* that the Council of Europe and UNESCO have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding of the various cultures and languages, and without any form of racial, religious, political or sexual discrimination;

*Considering* that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's cultural and academic enrichment, as well as to improve the individual's career prospects;

*Considering* that the recognition of qualifications is an essential precondition for both academic and professional mobility;

*Convinced* that the joint development of curricula between higher education institutions in different countries and the award of joint degrees contribute to academic and professional mobility and to the creation of a European Higher Education Area;

*Convinced* that the development and improved recognition of joint degrees will contribute to developing the European dimension of higher education and entail im-

portant benefits for individuals as well as for European society as a whole;

*Aware that* the recognition of qualifications originating in such joint arrangements is currently encountering difficulties of a legal as well as of a practical nature;

*Conscious* of the need to facilitate the recognition of joint degrees;

Recommends the governments of States party to the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (hereinafter referred to as “the Lisbon Recognition Convention”):

- i. to take into account, in the establishment of their recognition policies, the principles set out in the appendix hereto which forms part of this Recommendation;
- ii. to draw these principles to the attention of the competent bodies concerned, so that they can be considered and taken into account;
- iii. to promote implementation of these principles by government agencies and local and regional authorities, and by higher education institutions within the limits imposed by the autonomy of higher education institutions;
- iv. to ensure that this Recommendation is distributed as widely as possible among all persons and bodies concerned with the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education;

Invites the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO, as appropriate, to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those States which were invited to the Diplomatic Conference entrusted with the adoption of the Lisbon Recognition Convention but which have not become parties to that Convention.

## APPENDIX TO THE [DRAFT] RECOMMENDATION ON THE RECOGNITION OF JOINT DEGREES

### General considerations

1. The present Recommendation is adopted within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and applies to the Parties to this Convention. The principles and practices described in this Recommendation can, however, equally well be applied to the recognition of qualifications in countries other than those party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention or to qualifications issued between or among national education systems.
2. The purpose of the present Recommendation is to improve the recognition of joint degrees. While degrees that are considered as belonging to the education system of a Party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention even where parts of the degree have been earned in other education systems fall under the provisions of the Convention, the present Recommendation concerns joint degrees.

3. While the scope of the Lisbon Recognition Convention as well as of subsidiary texts adopted under the provisions of Article X.2.5 of the Convention concern the recognition of qualifications in countries other than that in which they have been earned, the provisions of the present recommendation may equally well be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to joint degrees issued by two or more institutions belonging to the same national higher education system.

### *Definitions*

4. Terms defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention are used in the same sense in the present Recommendation, and reference is made to the definition of these terms in Section I of the Convention.
5. A joint degree should, for the purposes of this Recommendation, be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as
  - a. a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
  - b. a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma
  - c. one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.

### *General principles*

6. Holders of joint degrees should have adequate access, upon request, to a fair assessment of their qualifications
7. Competent recognition authorities should recognize foreign joint degrees unless they can demonstrate that there is a substantial difference between the joint degree for which recognition is sought and the comparable qualification within their own national higher education system. Competent recognition authorities of Parties whose higher education institutions confer joint degrees should recognize these degrees with the greatest flexibility possible.

### *Legislation*

8. Governments of States party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention should, where appropriate, therefore review their legislation with a view to removing any legal obstacles to the recognition of joint degrees and introduce legal provisions that would facilitate such recognition.

### *Quality assurance and institutional recognition*

9. Competent recognition authorities may make the recognition of joint degrees conditional on all parts of the study programme leading to the degree and/or the institutions providing the programme being subject to transparent quality assessment or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
10. Where the joint degree is issued on the basis of a curriculum developed by a group or consortium consisting of a number of recognized higher education institutions, recognition of the degree may be made contingent on all member institutions or programmes of the group or consortium being subject to transparent quality assessment, or being considered as belonging to the education system of one or more Parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, even if only some of these institutions provide courses for any given degree.

### *Information*

11. Institutions providing joint degrees should be encouraged to inform the competent recognition authorities of programmes giving rise to such degrees.
12. As appropriate, in order to facilitate recognition, candidates earning joint degrees should be provided with a Diploma Supplement, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).
13. The Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate the institutions and/or study programmes at which the different parts of the degree have been earned.





# “Realising the European Higher Education Area”

Berlin Communiqué, 18-19 September 2003



## Preamble

On 19 June 1999, one year after the Sorbonne Declaration, Ministers responsible for higher education from 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration. They agreed on important joint objectives for the development of a coherent and cohesive European Higher Education Area by 2010. In the first follow-up conference held in Prague on 19 May 2001, they increased the number of the objectives and reaffirmed their commitment to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010. On 19 September 2003, Ministers responsible for higher education from 33 European countries met in Berlin in order to review the progress achieved and to set priorities and new objectives for the coming years, with a view to speeding up the realisation of the European Higher Education Area. They agreed on the following considerations, principles and priorities:

Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level. In that context, Ministers reaffirm their position that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility. They emphasise that in international academic cooperation and exchanges, academic values should prevail.

Ministers take into due consideration the conclusions of the European Councils in Lisbon (2000) and Barcelona (2002) aimed at making Europe “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” and calling for further action and closer co-operation in the context of the Bologna Process.

Ministers take note of the Progress Report commissioned by the Follow-up Group on the development of the Bologna Process between Prague and Berlin. They also take note of the Trends-III Report prepared by the European University Association (EUA), as well as of the results of the seminars, which were organised as part of the work programme between Prague and Berlin by several member States and Higher Education Institutions, organisations and students. Ministers further note the National Reports, which are evidence of the considerable progress being made in the application of the principles of the Bologna Process. Finally, they take note of the messages from the European Commission and the Council of Europe and acknowledge their support for the implementation of the Process.

Ministers agree that efforts shall be undertaken in order to secure closer links overall between the higher education and research systems in their respective countries. The emerging European Higher Education Area will bene-

fit from synergies with the European Research Area, thus strengthening the basis of the Europe of Knowledge. The aim is to preserve Europe's cultural richness and linguistic diversity, based on its heritage of diversified traditions, and to foster its potential of innovation and social and economic development through enhanced co-operation among European Higher Education Institutions.

Ministers recognise the fundamental role in the development of the European Higher Education Area played by Higher Education Institutions and student organisations. They take note of the message from the European University Association (EUA) arising from the Graz Convention of Higher Education Institutions, the contributions from the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the communications from ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe.

Ministers welcome the interest shown by other regions of the world in the development of the European Higher Education Area, and welcome in particular the presence of representatives from European countries not yet party to the Bologna Process as well as from the Follow-up Committee of the European Union, Latin America and Caribbean (EULAC) Common Space for Higher Education as guests at this conference.

## Progress

Ministers welcome the various initiatives undertaken since the Prague Higher Education Summit to move towards more comparability and compatibility, to make higher education systems more transparent and to enhance the quality of European higher education at institutional and national levels. They appreciate the co-operation and commitment of all partners – Higher Education Institutions, students and other stakeholders – to this effect.

Ministers emphasise the importance of all elements of the Bologna Process for establishing the European Higher Education Area and stress the need to intensify the efforts at institutional, national and European level. However, to give the Process further momentum, they commit themselves to intermediate priorities for the next two years. They will strengthen their efforts to promote effective quality assurance systems, to step up effective use of the system based on two cycles and to improve the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies.

## Quality Assurance

The quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area. Ministers commit themselves to supporting further development of quality assurance at institutional, national and European level. They stress the need to develop mutually shared criteria and methodologies on quality assurance.

They also stress that consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework.

Therefore, they agree that by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include:

- A definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.
- Evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results.
- A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.
- International participation, co-operation and networking.

At the European level, Ministers call upon ENQA through its members, in co-operation with the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB, to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance, to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Follow-up Group to Ministers in 2005. Due account will be taken of the expertise of other quality assurance associations and networks.

### *Degree structure: Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles*

Ministers are pleased to note that, following their commitment in the Bologna Declaration to the two-cycle system, a comprehensive restructuring of the European landscape of higher education is now under way. All Ministers commit themselves to having started the implementation of the two cycle system by 2005.

Ministers underline the importance of consolidating the progress made, and of improving understanding and acceptance of the new qualifications through reinforcing dialogue within institutions and between institutions and employers.

Ministers encourage the member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area.

Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs. First cycle degrees should give access, in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Con-

vention, to second cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies.

Ministers invite the Follow-up Group to explore whether and how shorter higher education may be linked to the first cycle of a qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area.

Ministers stress their commitment to making higher education equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means.

### *Promotion of mobility*

Mobility of students and academic and administrative staff is the basis for establishing a European Higher Education Area. Ministers emphasise its importance for academic and cultural as well as political, social and economic spheres. They note with satisfaction that since their last meeting, mobility figures have increased, thanks also to the substantial support of the European Union programmes, and agree to undertake the necessary steps to improve the quality and coverage of statistical data on student mobility.

They reaffirm their intention to make every effort to remove all obstacles to mobility within the European Higher Education Area. With a view to promoting student mobility, Ministers will take the necessary steps to enable the portability of national loans and grants.

### *Establishment of a system of credits*

Ministers stress the important role played by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in facilitating student mobility and international curriculum development. They note that ECTS is increasingly becoming a generalised basis for the national credit systems. They encourage further progress with the goal that the ECTS becomes not only a transfer but also an accumulation system, to be applied consistently as it develops within the emerging European Higher Education Area.

### *Recognition of degrees: Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees*

Ministers underline the importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which should be ratified by all countries participating in the Bologna Process, and call on the ENICand NARIC networks along with the competent National Authorities to further the implementation of the Convention.

They set the objective that every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge. It should be issued in a widely spoken European language.

They appeal to institutions and employers to make full use of the Diploma Supplement, so as to take advantage

of the improved transparency and flexibility of the higher education degree systems, for fostering employability and facilitating academic recognition for further studies.

### *Higher education institutions and students*

Ministers welcome the commitment of Higher Education Institutions and students to the Bologna Process and recognise that it is ultimately the active participation of all partners in the Process that will ensure its long-term success.

Aware of the contribution strong institutions can make to economic and societal development, Ministers accept that institutions need to be empowered to take decisions on their internal organisation and administration. Ministers further call upon institutions to ensure that the reforms become fully integrated into core institutional functions and processes.

Ministers note the constructive participation of student organisations in the Bologna Process and underline the necessity to include the students continuously and at an early stage in further activities.

Students are full partners in higher education governance. Ministers note that national legal measures for ensuring student participation are largely in place throughout the European Higher Education Area. They also call on institutions and student organisations to identify ways of increasing actual student involvement in higher education governance.

Ministers stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can successfully complete their studies within an appropriate period of time without obstacles related to their social and economic background. They also stress the need for more comparable data on the social and economic situation of students.

### *Promotion of the European dimension in higher education*

Ministers note that, following their call in Prague, additional modules, courses and curricula with European content, orientation or organisation are being developed.

They note that initiatives have been taken by Higher Education Institutions in various European countries to pool their academic resources and cultural traditions in order to promote the development of integrated study programmes and joint degrees at first, second and third level.

Moreover, they stress the necessity of ensuring a substantial period of study abroad in joint degree programmes as well as proper provision for linguistic diversity and language learning, so that students may achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability.

Ministers agree to engage at the national level to remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of such degrees and to actively support the development and adequate quality assurance of integrated curricula leading to joint degrees.

### *Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area*

Ministers agree that the attractiveness and openness of the European higher education should be reinforced. They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries.

Ministers declare that transnational exchanges in higher education should be governed on the basis of academic quality and academic values, and agree to work in all appropriate fora to that end. In all appropriate circumstances such fora should include the social and economic partners.

They encourage the co-operation with regions in other parts of the world by opening Bologna seminars and conferences to representatives of these regions.

### *Lifelong learning*

Ministers underline the important contribution of higher education in making lifelong learning a reality. They are taking steps to align their national policies to realise this goal and urge Higher Education Institutions and all concerned to enhance the possibilities for lifelong learning at higher education level including the recognition of prior learning. They emphasise that such action must be an integral part of higher education activity.

Ministers furthermore call those working on qualifications frameworks for the European Higher Education Area to encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques and to make appropriate use of the ECTS credits.

They stress the need to improve opportunities for all citizens, in accordance with their aspirations and abilities, to follow the lifelong learning paths into and within higher education.

### **Additional Actions**

#### *European Higher Education Area and European Research Area – two pillars of the knowledge based society*

Conscious of the need to promote closer links between the EHEA and the ERA in a Europe of Knowledge, and of the importance of research as an integral part of higher education across Europe, Ministers consider it necessary to go beyond the present focus on two main cycles of higher education to include the doctoral level as the third

cycle in the Bologna Process. They emphasise the importance of research and research training and the promotion of interdisciplinarity in maintaining and improving the quality of higher education and in enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education more generally. Ministers call for increased mobility at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels and encourage the institutions concerned to increase their cooperation in doctoral studies and the training of young researchers.

Ministers will make the necessary effort to make European Higher Education Institutions an even more attractive and efficient partner. Therefore Ministers ask Higher Education Institutions to increase the role and relevance of research to technological, social and cultural evolution and to the needs of society.

Ministers understand that there are obstacles inhibiting the achievement of these goals and these cannot be resolved by Higher Education Institutions alone. It requires strong support, including financial, and appropriate decisions from national Governments and European Bodies.

Finally, Ministers state that networks at doctoral level should be given support to stimulate the development of excellence and to become one of the hallmarks of the European Higher Education Area.

### *Stocktaking*

With a view to the goals set for 2010, it is expected that measures will be introduced to take stock of progress achieved in the Bologna Process. A mid-term stocktaking exercise would provide reliable information on how the Process is actually advancing and would offer the possibility to take corrective measures, if appropriate.

Ministers charge the Follow-up Group with organising a stocktaking process in time for their summit in 2005 and undertaking to prepare detailed reports on the progress and implementation of the intermediate priorities set for the next two years:

- quality assurance
- two-cycle system
- recognition of degrees and periods of studies

Participating countries will, furthermore, be prepared to allow access to the necessary information for research on higher education relating to the objectives of the Bologna Process. Access to data banks on ongoing research and research results shall be facilitated.

### *Further Follow-up*

#### *New members*

Ministers consider it necessary to adapt the clause in the Prague Communiqué on applications for membership as follows:

Countries party to the European Cultural Convention shall be eligible for membership of the European Higher Education Area provided that they at the same time declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. Their applications should contain information on how they will implement the principles and objectives of the declaration.

Ministers decide to accept the requests for membership of Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Holy See, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and to welcome these states as new members thus expanding the process to 40 European Countries.

Ministers recognise that membership of the Bologna Process implies substantial change and reform for all signatory countries. They agree to support the new signatory countries in those changes and reforms, incorporating them within the mutual discussions and assistance, which the Bologna Process involves.

### *Follow-up structure*

Ministers entrust the implementation of all the issues covered in the Communiqué, the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next ministerial meeting to a Follow-up Group, which shall be composed of the representatives of all members of the Bologna Process and the European Commission, with the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE, ESIB and UNESCO/CEPES as consultative members. This group, which should be convened at least twice a year, shall be chaired by the EU Presidency, with the host country of the next Ministerial Conference as vice-chair.

A Board also chaired by the EU Presidency shall oversee the work between the meetings of the Follow-up Group. The Board will be composed of the chair, the next host country as vice-chair, the preceding and the following EU Presidencies, three participating countries elected by the Follow-up Group for one year, the European Commission and, as consultative members, the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB. The Follow-up Group as well as the Board may convene ad hoc working groups as they deem necessary.

The overall follow-up work will be supported by a Secretariat which the country hosting the next Ministerial Conference will provide.

In its first meeting after the Berlin Conference, the Follow-up Group is asked to further define the responsibilities of the Board and the tasks of the Secretariat.

### *Work programme 2003-2005*

Ministers ask the Follow-up Group to co-ordinate activities for progress of the Bologna Process as indicated in

the themes and actions covered by this Communiqué and report on them in time for the next ministerial meeting in 2005.

### *Next Conference*

Ministers decide to hold the next conference in the city of Bergen (Norway) in May 2005.





# “Integrated curricula – Implications and Prospects”

Mantova Report, 11-12 April 2003



## 1. Preamble

The European summit of education ministers held in Prague on 19 May 2001 drew attention to joint programmes and degrees. The final communiqué expressly calls upon the higher education sector “to increase the development of modules, courses and curricula at all levels with ‘European’ content, orientation or organisation. This concerns particularly modules, courses and curricula offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to a recognised joint degree”.

This commitment had already been highlighted in the Bologna Declaration which explicitly set as an objective the “promotion of the necessary European dimension in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research”.

Nevertheless, still today restrictive national legislations make joint degrees impossible to award and recognise in most European countries.

## 2. Main features of joint study programmes

Co-operation between HE institutions of different countries in specific disciplines has generated common education and training activities, generally under the heading of joint study programmes, which are characterised by a common assumption of responsibility by the participating institutions as regards:

- the definition of the objectives of the programme
- the design of the curriculum;
- the organisation of the studies;
- the type of qualifications awarded.

### 2.1. Objectives of the programme

The objectives of a programme are jointly defined by partner institutions with a view to giving graduates an added value when they enter the European/international job market. This requires the identification of professional profiles that will be needed, as well as a search for coherence between the objectives pursued and the curriculum developed.

### 2.2. Design of the Curriculum

Cooperation in curriculum design means drawing up of a common study path aimed at reaching the educational goals that have been jointly defined.

In these schemes the partners offer specific segments which complement the overall curriculum designed, thus making it necessary for students to spend time at each or several of the participating institutions. In some instances, joint programmes based on the combination of segments identify some existing components of each

participating institutions’ study programmes – be they basic parts of the curriculum or specialist areas – and then proceed to put together a programme which utilises those components to the maximum. In other cases, new segments are developed by the institutions involved. Overall, it is the organic combination of diverse approaches, in terms of contents, conceptualisation and teaching methods, that should form the key feature of an integrated curriculum. Accordingly, in this context student mobility is seen not only as a cross-cultural experience – that has a value in itself – but also as a means of acquiring knowledge and skills not available at the home institution and which complement and integrate the activities carried out at the home institution.

### 2.3. Organisation of Studies

The organisation or management of studies mainly concerns decisions on logistical and financial aspects of the programme, the selection of students and the choosing of the teaching staff. In joint programmes there are different approaches to these organisational issues. Students from various institutions may, for example, rotate systematically among different institutions or be able to choose the partner institution where certain modules can be taken. They may be subject to the same selection procedures or be selected by each institution in accordance with different criteria. The contributions of teachers from partner institutions may be organised in different ways.

### 2.4. Type of Qualifications Awarded

The type of qualifications awarded by partners depends on the characteristics of the programme in terms of curriculum design and programme organisation. A programme that is jointly designed and implemented, on the basis of bilateral or multilateral agreements also including a common definition of the required learning outcomes, should naturally lead to a single qualification awarded jointly by all participating institutions. At present, however, in many cases national legal constraints make it impossible, to award fully recognised joint degrees. Very often, therefore, two national degrees have been awarded instead, even when they do not reflect/represent accurately the joint design and implementation of the programme.

## 3. Contributions already made on joint study programmes and joint degrees

### 3.1. The Stockholm conclusions

The seminar on the development of joint degrees, that took place in Stockholm in May 2002 within the framework of the Bologna process, explored the theme mainly from a legal point of view. In the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar the *following criteria have*

been identified as common denominators for European joint degrees:

- two or more participating institutions in two or more countries;
- the duration of study outside the home institution should be substantial and continuous (e.g., one year at bachelor level);
- joint degrees should require a joint study programme established by cooperation, confirmed in a written agreement, between institutions;
- joint degrees should be based on bilateral or multilateral agreements on jointly arranged and approved programmes, with no restrictions concerning study fields or subjects;
- full use should be made of the Diploma Supplement and ECTS in order to ensure comparability of qualifications;
- a joint degree should preferably be documented in a single document issued by the participating institutions in accordance with national regulations;
- joint degrees and study programmes should require student and staff/teacher mobility;
- linguistic diversity in a European perspective should be ensured;
- joint study programmes should have a European dimension, whether physical mobility or intercultural competence in the curriculum.

### 3. 2. *The EUA Survey on Master and Joint Degrees in Europe*

The survey, presented in September 2002, was commissioned by the European University Association (EUA) with the support of the European Commission. It is an attempt to describe and analyse the state of the art with reference to master level programmes and joint degrees offered across Europe. The analysis of joint degrees in the European Higher Education Area was undertaken by Andrejs Rauhvargers.

The study offers a definition for joint degrees proposing that they should be awarded on completion of joint study programmes *that share at least some of the following characteristics*:

- curricula are developed or approved jointly by two or more institutions;
- students from each participating institution study parts of the programme at other partner institutions;
- the students' stays at the partner institutions are of comparable length;
- periods of study and exams passed at the partner institutions are recognised fully and automatically;
- professors of each participating institution also teach at the other partner institutions, work out the curricula jointly and form joint commissions to decide about admission and the awarding of the degrees;

- after completion of each individual programme, students are conferred the national degrees of each participating institution or just one degree jointly agreed upon by them all.

The survey confirmed the Stockholm conclusions.

## 4. The Mantova conclusions and recommendations

This seminar focused on the curricular component of joint degree programmes, on the assumption that curricular integration – intended as joint curriculum design and implementation – is a necessary condition for awarding joint degrees.

A report on "Joint Degrees: the Italian Experience in the European Context" – distributed to all participants – provided some background information on the Italian case. During the seminar the theme was approached at three levels, the country, the institutions and the learners/users. Special emphasis was placed on the institutional perspective, exploring why institutions might get engaged in developing integrated curricula, what methods they could use and what models they could adopt. The reflections presented by three panels of experienced speakers were discussed in the working groups. Both presentations and group discussions contributed first to the development of a shared vision and then to the formulation of a set of recommendations.

### 4. 1. *Shared vision*

- Joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula are one of the major priorities for the building of a European "identity" within the common European Higher Education Area, as they provide the learners in all cycles – including doctoral studies – with a coherent, recognisable and challenging experience of European diversity. This is also an obvious added value to national HE systems.
- Joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula are valuable instruments for developing European "citizenship" and "employability". These terms are used in a broad sense and from the point of view of students and citizens. That is, "citizenship" means having the cultural, linguistic and social experience necessary to live knowledgeably and responsibly in the multinational/multilingual framework of the broader Europe; "employability" means not only being able to find employment or have the attributes that industry or other employers desire, but also having the knowledge and competences necessary to have a satisfactory and fulfilling professional life in a global society.
- Joint doctoral programmes educating for research professions in Europe are a cornerstone for greater co-operation between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. Synergy bet-

ween the two areas is viewed as an essential prerequisite for the creation of a Europe of Knowledge.

#### 4. 2. *Recommendations to the education ministers meeting in Berlin*

- Legal obstacles to the awarding and recognition of joint degrees should be removed in all countries.
- Additional funds should be provided to cover the higher costs of joint degree programmes, keeping in mind particularly the need to create equal opportunities for student participation. Besides national and regional governments, which will normally bear the costs, HE institutions – in the framework of their autonomy –, international bodies and other actors should be invited to provide special support for these programmes.
- Involvement of institutions in joint degree programmes should be encouraged and supported in all Bologna signatory countries, particularly in those which are not yet participating actively.
- Public awareness of the high value of joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula, in terms of European identity, citizenship and employability, should be increased, also by guaranteeing adequate visibility to existing examples of good practice.

#### 4. 3. *Recommendations to HE institutions*

- The development of European joint degree programmes should be based on the criteria identified in the Stockholm conclusions. Moreover, a clear distinction should be made between joint and double degree programmes, in terms of their curricular objectives and organizational models, also with a view to protecting the learners/users. A complete glossary of terms should be drawn.
- Joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula should be developed to address identified needs of European and global society that cannot be adequately addressed through national programmes, both in educating new professional figures and identifying new research areas.
- Students, graduates, employers and other relevant actors should be consulted about the areas in which the implementation of joint degree programmes would be most appropriate. However, it is recommended that HE institutions use to full potential their role as proactive planners for long range societal needs. Students should also be involved in planning and evaluation activities.
- Institutions that develop joint programmes should fully integrate and support them as a core function of their mission.
- Partners for a joint degree programme should be chosen on the basis of shared mission and commitment, as well as their capacity to develop and sustain such

a programme in academic, organisational and financial terms. Thematic networks could provide experience for identifying suitable partners in any European country.

- Full consensus should be reached with partners regarding the model and the methodology to be used, as well as the elements of innovation and academic interest.
- Learning outcomes and competencies, as well as student workload described in ECTS credits, should be viewed as crucial elements in constructing any joint programme.
- Adequate quality assurance procedures should be jointly developed and activated by partners in a joint programme, and made explicit to learners/users.
- Proper provision for linguistic diversity and language learning should be ensured all through joint degree programmes. These programmes should also promote European identity, citizenship and employability.

May 12, 2003



# “The Development of Joint Degrees”

Stockholm Conclusions, 30-31 May 2002

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### Foreword

The seminar on the development of joint degrees took place on 30-31 May in Stockholm, Sweden. The seminar was announced in the Prague communiqué and in the work programme of the Bologna follow-up process. The purpose of the seminar was to explore the possibilities of the development of joint degrees as a means of achieving the objectives set in the Bologna Declaration, in particular from a national and legal point of view.

The seminar resulted in a common understanding on the nature of joint degrees and a common ground for further action. The conclusions and recommendations from the seminar – The Stockholm Conclusions – are presented in this booklet. The conclusions are meant to serve both as an introduction and as a basis for the discussion on the development of joint degrees.

In preparation for the meeting, a survey on the development of joint degrees was carried out. The contact persons of the Bologna group were asked to answer a questionnaire and the answers have been compiled in this booklet. The questionnaire included the following questions:

- How can the development of joint degrees be a helpful instrument to support the principles of the Bologna Process and the Prague Communiqué?
- What elements would a joint degree have to comprise in order to be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna Process?
- How would you envisage the legal framework of a joint degree in your national context?
- Are there any fields/study areas in which a joint degree is particularly useful or easy or particularly difficult to realize?
- What issues related to the award of joint degrees are the most important to address?

A draft version of the booklet was produced for the meeting in Stockholm. Since then, the text has been revised to include comments, corrections or additional information received after the meeting. For each question the answers from the countries are presented in the order they have signed the Bologna Declaration. The Ministry is solely responsible for any misinterpretations or inaccuracies in the presentations.

The Swedish Ministry of Education and Science would like to take this opportunity to express its thanks to all the valuable contributions to this booklet.

Stockholm, June 2002

Karin Röding, Director-General,  
Division for Higher Education,  
Ministry of Education and Science Sweden

The Stockholm Conclusions – Conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar on Joint Degrees within the framework of the Bologna Process

### The Bologna objectives

Joint degrees are important instruments for implementing the objectives set out in the Bologna Declaration and the Prague Communiqué: promoting student and teacher mobility, employability, quality, the European dimension and the attractiveness and competitiveness of 'the European Higher Education Area (EHEA): Joint study programmes could provide an instrument for giving students the chance to gain academic and cultural experience abroad and institutions of higher education an opportunity to co-operate. Such co-operation could exploit wider competences and resources than those available at any single institution.

These conclusions concern joint degrees in a system of higher education essentially based on two main cycles.

### Framework

The basis for joint degrees in the EHEA is established in the Bologna Declaration and the Prague Communiqué, which stress the importance of transparency and compatibility.

A common framework for joint degrees must be flexible in order to allow for and reflect national differences, but it must also include a definition of a joint degree, which will serve as a basis for a legal framework at the national level. The national, legal base must be clear on the conditions for awarding a joint degree and must not limit co-operation between institutions.

The national authorities should also be reminded of the contents of the Lisbon Convention.

In most countries a jointly awarded degree would require amendments to the national higher education legislation. In various countries higher education institutions are increasingly developing bilateral or multilateral degrees (Dutch-Flemish Hogeschool, French-German University, Italian-French University, Danish-Swedish Öresund University, for example). There is, however, reluctance towards and no legal foundation for establishing joint degrees at the supranational level.

### General and professional degrees

Most countries consider joint degrees possible in both general and professional degree fields but expect difficulties in establishing joint degrees in regulated professions. Attempts should, however, be made and the density of regulations should be reduced.

### Quality assurance

Documented quality assurance is necessary to guarantee the international acceptance and competitiveness of joint



degrees on the world education and employment markets. On the basis of mutual trust and general acceptance of national assurance systems, principles and general standards for quality assurance and accreditation should be developed. Joint study programmes which adhere to these principles and standards could use an EHEA label, which could be established within the framework of the Bologna Process and supervised by the national authorities.

It is essential that the national quality assurance agencies co-operate within the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA), in accordance with the Prague Communiqué.

### *Structure*

It should be possible to award joint degrees in each cycle, including doctoral studies.

### *Criteria*

The following criteria could be useful common denominators for European joint degrees:

- Two or more participating institutions in two or more countries.
- The duration of study outside the home institution should be substantial and continuous, e.g. 1 year at bachelor level.
- Joint degrees should require a joint study programme settled on by co-operation, confirmed in a written agreement, between institutions.
- Joint degrees should be based on bilateral or multilateral agreements on jointly arranged and approved programmes, with no restrictions concerning study fields or subjects.
- Full use should be made of the Diploma Supplement and the ECTS in order to ensure comparability of qualifications.
- A joint degree should preferably be documented in a single document issued by the participating institutions in accordance with national regulations.
- Joint degrees and study programmes should require student and staff/teacher mobility.
- Linguistic diversity in a European perspective should be ensured.
- Joint study programmes should have a European dimension, whether physical mobility or intercultural competence in the curriculum.

### *Students*

Students have a role as one of the main actors in higher education institutions and will use their power to choose courses of their own preference.

The social dimension should be taken into account by the member states and the students' social conditions should be guaranteed. Foreign students should have the same benefits as regular, national students.

### *Funding*

Additional funding is needed to develop joint study programmes. Member states are encouraged to ensure that students following a joint study programme in a foreign country can transfer their national study allowances abroad.

The ERASMUS programme should be drawn upon.

### *Labour market*

Education is an important factor for mobility on the labour market. Consultation with the social partners could be considered when establishing joint degrees.

Monitoring of the system of joint degrees should be included in the course of the Bologna-Prague-Berlin process up to 2003.

In order to facilitate an exchange of information and experience on the development of joint degrees the member states are kindly invited to report to the Bologna Follow-up Group at regular intervals on the joint degrees their higher education institutions are taking part in.

### *Compilation of answers to the questionnaire*

How can the development of joint degrees be a helpful instrument to support the principles of the Bologna Process and the Prague Communiqué?

### *Austria*

The co-operation in the construction of common study programmes will step by step lead to an assimilation of contents and structures of study, in order to be comparable to other partner institutions. In medium terms, it will not make sense to keep outside the Bologna system of studies.

The other thing is that the partner institutions, before preparing a common study programme, have to get to know the system and quality of studies in the respective other partner institution. By this, the principle of mutual trust and confidence will be brought alive.

### *Belgium – French Community*

The Bologna process will, at medium and long term, have the effect that most of the degrees offered by the countries signatories of the B.D. will have more or less the same structure. It does not mean that the level will necessarily be the same. A lot of fears are already shown by the institutions: in that sense the development of joint degrees will increase the institutional co-operation and will give to the institutions the opportunity to choose their partners according to same criteria among which the level and the quality. I hope that the extension of joint degrees will have a positive effect on the convergence of the level and the quality what the sole „har-



monisation" of structures might not have. Side effects can also be the improving of mobility and of the attractiveness of European education for foreign students: with one „joint degree" they will be able to have a broader experience with a European dimension.

### *Belgium – Flemish Community*

- Positive impact on the development of – international – quality systems, benchmarking and accreditation. Institutions will not develop joint degrees if the quality of the programmes is not comparable.
- The mobility of students will increase. The fully and automatically recognition of periods of study and exams at partner institutions, the added value for student, the assurance of quality education, all these elements will have a positive impact on the mobility of students.
- The mobility of teachers and researchers will increase. Professors of the participating institutions should have the possibility to teach at the partner institutions, programmes and curricula must worked out jointly, jointly commissions for examinations are needed.
- It will also have a positive impact on the further development of ECTS.
- Improvement of quality of learning and efficiency of teaching, by putting together the strengths of different institutions.

### *France*

Elaborating joint degrees between two – or even more – European institutions will necessarily embrace the first six objectives of the Bologna declaration. It will obviously insist on the bilingual diploma supplement; it will – and can only – be based on a two structure-system common to all countries concerned; the ECTS will be the simplest way to help elaborating a joint degree; mobility will be facilitated for the students and recognition guaranteed through a bi- or trilateral agreement; the quality assurance problem must be resolved between the partners but also between the ministries or other authorities concerned. France suggests a common examination of the jointly elaborated curricula by the two/three authorities (ministries, if such is the case) which could then agree on a „habilitation" or accreditation of the joint degree to be awarded by the institutions requesting such authorisation; and last but not least the European dimension is being thought of because the „habilitation/control" will make it one of its criteria. It could also work with LLL projects, as well as OLD learning.

### *Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany*

Joint degree programmes would certainly help to advance the most important objectives 'of the Bologna Declaration, i.e. mobility, comparability, employability, the

„European dimension" of higher education etc, because of their „inbuilt" European mobility component. They would be, so to speak, the exemplification of the Bologna idea.

They would play a crucial especially with regard to mobility as it is to be expected that the type of study abroad period we had in Germany (as well as in other countries with – traditionally – a one-tier structure) in the ERASMUS and SOCRATES programme will have to change with the introduction of a two-tier system: Until now German students in one of our 5-year programmes went abroad in their third or fourth year of study, for a semester or two, coming back in time for the last year of their programme with the final examinations.

In a Bachelor/ Master structure this will change: Only a 4-year Bachelor will allow study abroad for a semester or two (sandwich model) in the traditional, loosely structured ERASMUS style. A 3-year Bachelor and a 1- to 2-year Master will largely exclude this possibility, time being too short.

The type of mobility will therefore change: Either the student will be mobile by leaving his or home country altogether after the Bachelor to do the complete Master programme abroad or he or she will go for a joint study programme at Bachelor or Master level, with a clearly defined joint curriculum that allows the student to include a study abroad period even in a programme of 2 or 3 years without prolonging the overall study duration. I expect the number of joint degree programmes to increase vastly with the further development of the Bologna process for this very reason.

Finally, joint degree programmes would facilitate the development of a reference framework of European qualifications because any joint degree programme requires the previous agreement of the participating institutions/countries on the learning outcomes, competences etc. to be achieved.

### *Hungary*

The development of joint degrees will constitute an important contribution towards the objective of establishing the European Higher Education Area. It will definitely enhance student mobility if participation in joint degree programmes offered by two or more institutions requires from students to spend a specified period of time in each participating country. It may also foster graduate mobility as the recognized joint degrees can guarantee the direct access to the labour market in the countries issuing the joint degrees.

It will necessarily enhance inter-institutional co-operation as joint curricula should be developed and consequently a common framework of qualifications can be evolved. Furthermore, joint degree programmes may also enhance the attractiveness of European higher education to students not only from Europe but from other parts of the world.

In Hungary one of the articulated objectives of the new Government Programme is to introduce the bachelor/master degree structure in the case of most of the degree programmes. Concerning the implementation of credit system in Hungary, Government Decree 200/2000 (XI. 29.) prescribes the introduction of the ECTS -compatible credit system in all higher education institutions by 1 September, 2002. These changes will encourage Hungarian higher education institutions to develop joint degree programmes with other higher education institutions.

### *Greece*

Actually, the experiment of common programmes leading to joint degrees at both levels touches almost all the objectives or characteristics of the Bologna/Prague process. It is directly related to the issues of comparability and readability, as well as to the issues of mobility. At the same time, it is also related, although indirectly, with the issue of quality, since it may serve as an incentive for the quality improvement for all the partners involved. Furthermore, common programmes, i.e. common efforts, strengthen the cohesion and the dynamics of the European Higher Education Area, while, at the same time, the joint degrees may offer a significant added value to the Europe's international attractiveness and competitiveness.

### *Italy*

Joint degrees imply the mobility of students and the integration of curricula. Students have to spend a period of time abroad and experience a different dimension of living and learning. The first consequence of this exercise is therefore the implementation of European citizenship among youth. The second consequence is the promotion of the identity and specificity of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), through study programmes based on joint curricular work and soaked in European culture. These characterizing elements are going to improve employability and competitiveness, thanks to qualifications largely recognized. This will enhance the attractiveness of the EHEA for teachers, students and employers: The orientation of students will be modified in the direction of a much broader dimension of the labour market.

### *Malta*

Breaking up barriers between the delineated borders of the national degree systems through the development of joint degrees (and in the same instance of building shared and complementary curricula) would be the major efforts towards enhancing the principles of the Bologna Process.

### *The Netherlands*

The development of joint degrees could contribute in achieving the objectives set in the Bologna declaration. Joint degrees could make a contribution to the trans-

parency of degrees, especially to employers in different countries. Transparency of degrees also stimulates mobility in European higher education and on the European labour market.

In addition joint degrees stimulate collaboration between institutions. The activities which have to be undertaken in the process leading to „joint degrees“, can be extremely helpful to achieve the objectives set in the Bologna declaration. Especially the activities on comparison of study programmes, mutual recognition and mutual accreditation. They help in setting international standards for programmes in that particular field and they can lead to mobility programmes which allow students to move from one institution to another after completion of the bachelor to take a master's degree at another institution. At the moment there are several leagues in which Dutch universities are participating, like Europeum, IDEA-league and EURO-league.

However joint degrees should not become the dominant kind of degree in Europe, as we should also foster diversity in programmes.

### *Norway*

Joint degrees will speed up the process of exchange of students and academics between higher education institutions in different countries because 1) an international element will be built into the degree; 2) the formalities connected with exchange will have been dealt with in advance on a systematic level, making the process easy for the persons involved. Number 2) applies for organized exchange programmes as well, whereas No. 1 does not. For academics the development of joint degrees will mean systematic co-operation with institutions in other countries. Whereas such co-operation is well developed in the area of research, it is less so in teaching, and both types of co-operation will benefit from an increase in jointly developed and delivered study programmes. Joint degrees will in their nature often take an international or comparative approach to the field of study in question. This will in itself enhance the students' interest in the other participating countries and increase the probability of their seeking employment there later. Joint degrees will be recognized by all countries involved, which may have a positive effect on the development of mutual recognition processes in general, in addition to facilitating free flow of labour. They will also increase the knowledge and awareness in participating countries of other countries' degree systems and higher education systems in general.

### *Poland*

General remark – the answer to this issue is a complex matter because it has not been the subject of discussion, research or consultations with higher education institutions. The conduct of analyses, starting of co-operation with higher education institutions and their foreign part-

ners – may bring about very positive results that can be used in the works on – implementation of the objectives specified by the Bologna Declaration. It is also difficult to formulate an unanimous answer to the questions asked because within the system in general there is a possibility of acquiring – maybe not entirely „joint“ professional titles (not degrees) – but „parallel“ titles: Polish and foreign. It is possible on the basis of the agreements – international on the inter-governmental level as well as separate agreements concluded by the institutions of higher education which offer the programs that envisage the possibility of obtaining some part of the training abroad. This means that the graduate may obtain two independent titles – a Polish title and a title in foreign language. The students of the Polish institutions of higher education (but also the other way round – foreign students) realise some part of the training process abroad which may entitle them to two documents certifying the completion of their studies – according to the agreements cited above. Sometimes the students obtain one diploma (Polish) and a „certificate“ of a particular form as the foreign document. Joint actions undertaken by the schools in this area are considered a profitable and desirable solution. However, there is a practical problem – what kind of title would appear on the „joint“ diploma – Polish or foreign? Or maybe a joint diploma and a Polish professional title?

### Romania

First of all joint degrees are an imperative necessity to respond to a Europe where mobility is the key word for development. Developing Bachelor and especially joint Bachelor degrees means short time and less money for a complete short time training in higher education to enter directly the Labor Market (not only the internal Labor Market for each country, but also the Labor Market everywhere in Europe) taking into account the increasing mobility promoted by the Bologna Declaration.

Generalization of compulsory Master degree for post-academic education (Ph.D. especially) is also an imperative necessity given the quality assurance requirements. Mobility, student exchange and labor market hiring have to be based on the same coordinates, not to give place to discrimination of any kind. A common conception in organizing higher education leads to a common possibility of offering the same opportunities for every one. (see some countries, Romania including where Master degree was not compulsory for being accepted to a Ph.D. program of study, graduates access to Ph.D. being allowed either with Licenta degree or the Master degree).

From both points of view, Romania has developed a new conception in higher education:

- a) – *Bachelor* programs of study have been increased;
  - initiatives have been accomplished to move health programs of study from the post – secondary level to higher education level (there are already same

colleges – three years short time higher education to train nurses);

- are debates now to have the nurses training (including dentistry technicians) only at the short time higher education, and to finish with post – secondary sanitary schools for this purpose in Romania;
- b) – *Master* degree becomes almost generally compulsory in all Romanian universities to be accepted to Ph.D. studies.

### Slovenia

The development of Joint Degrees will have a very positive impact in many directions in a creation of the European Higher Education Area:

- promotion of mobility
- promotion of European dimension in HE
- promotion of EHEA outside of Europe – its identity and attractiveness
- improvement of employability and competitiveness
- much stronger international co-operation among HE institutions, what is extremely important especially for Slovenian HE

### Sweden

The introduction and development of Joint Degrees could be a step towards the fulfilment of several of the objectives of the Bologna declaration. Joint Degrees would stimulate the mobility of students and teachers, promote the European dimension in higher education, make the European Higher Education Area more attractive and competitive, improve employability in Europe, and work as an incentive for quality improvement and mutual recognition of quality assurance. Furthermore it would strengthen the collaboration (in higher education and research) between higher institutions in Europe.

### Switzerland

The development of „joint degree“-programs has at this time of the Bologna implementation process for us not a high priority. From our point of view there are more important and more urgent questions which should be clarified on European level first (e.g. Ba/Ma-structural model, ECTS -definitions, admission to Master programs, denomination of diplomas etc.).

How to support joint degree programs? A European project group could e.g. work out a guide/handbook (containing model contracts, checklist/s, examples of good practice, suggestions for quality assurance instruments etc.) for the planning and implementation of such programs. But finally we have to be aware, that such programs will always have to be developed between specific institutions and those have to give consideration to institutional and national regulations.

## Cyprus

The development of joint degrees on Bachelor and/or Master level we believe is going to bring together the higher education systems of the various countries involved in joint degree projects and thus decisively contribute to the convergence of the higher education throughout Europe. Undoubtedly this will have significant impact on the employability and more importantly to the mobility of citizens, as the education systems of more than one country will be reflected in the syllabus of a joint degree. The need to bring together two or more educational systems will require the use of commonly understood levels of qualification and furthermore common credit systems, contributing towards the ECTS compatible credit system. Measures and practices of quality control and accreditation need also to be compatible, thus requesting convergence on the recognition of qualifications of other countries. Cultural elements from the countries collaborating in a joint degree will be enriching such courses and the actual presence of a student in a number of countries will promote cross cultivation and understanding of other cultures and civilisations. Attraction of foreign students from outside Europe is also enhanced through joint degrees due to the specific links each European country has developed historically with various parts of the world. Life long learning is most likely to be a principal approach in joint degrees to give opportunities to every citizen of Europe to achieve education in a multiphase environment.

## European Commission

The development of joint degrees will enhance the quality and attractiveness of European higher education by pooling teaching and learning resources across the continent. More specifically:

- Action line 6: „Promotion of the European dimension in higher education”: the joint degree are a direct answer to the request of the ministers for „integrated programmes of study” (Bologna Declaration) and „modules, courses and curricula at all levels with European content orientation or organisation” (Prague Communiqué)”

also, the joint degrees address the concerns of several other Bologna Action lines:

- Action line 4: „Promotion of mobility”: notably during first and second cycle studies as mobility is likely to be an obligatory part of joint degrees.
- Action line 5: „Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance”: Joint degrees will need to be subject to quality assurance, most likely cross border or „European”. Discussion on this aspect is needed.
- Action 7: „Lifelong Learning”: joint degrees, notably at masters level, will be attractive for non-traditional learners. Universities should consider a user friendly mode of delivery to accommodate these audiences.

- Action line 9 „Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”: joint degrees will indeed make European higher education more visible and attractive for its own citizens and for students from other continents.

What elements would a joint degree have to comprise in order to be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna Process?

## Austria

From the point of view of governmental administration, we can only refer to formal items of the question. The questions referring to contents of study have to be addressed to the higher education institutions.

You will have to find two or more partners with similar fields of study and a similar study architecture, but with different specialities or specialisations.

The most important item is that the partners define very clearly their role and function in the common programme, as far as their contribution (in personal, financial and organisational respects) to certain parts of it, is concerned. Moreover it must be clear which academic degree(s) or qualifications have to be awarded and which effects do they have with regard to the respective national systems, especially as far as professional rights are concerned.

In this context, the various parts of study completed at the single partner institutions should be subject to automatic recognition, regulated generally in advance, and must not be left to a case-by-case decision.

## Belgium – French Community

To be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna process a joint degree should:

- be organized by a minimum of institutions from foreign countries (min 3),
- be effectively organized by the 3 institutions: the students should really spend a study period in each of the 3 institutions. As such, 3 should also be in a way the maximum number of institutions involved as far as the level of bachelor is concerned.
- at the level of master, the joint degree might involve more institutions without to require necessarily the organization of the courses in each of the involved institutions: those joint degrees might be organized in one of the partners with – the input of all the others.

## Belgium – Flemish Community

- number of study countries: 2 or 3
- comparable qualifications descriptors
- organisation of studies: the use of a system of credits (ECTS)



- the student must spend a period of study at both universities (period of study at the partner institution must be at least 1/3 of the total study period)
- jointly organisation/ development approval of programmes – joint degrees must be based on a bilateral agreement

### *France*

European dimension is not only the content of studies, but also a geographic reality. Therefore, although difficult at the beginning, all countries eligible under the Bologna Process should participate. Attention should be given as well curricula developing help to some countries which have a tendency abandoning or denigrating their own diplomas and are only interested in the „western“ diploma. All subject areas should be concerned and the content could be informative and accumulative of other European countries' realities, could be comparative of methods and thus be innovating and creative, particularly when a European label, for instance, is at stake.

### *Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany*

The minimal number of countries is obviously two but it should not be more than three either to give the student time to get to know the host countries' higher education systems, culture etc. If the joint degree is offered at Bachelor's level it should preferably be a 4-year programme (like the British sandwich-model). Joint degree programmes at the Master's level might, however, make more sense because the student already has a good foundation of basic study skills, knowledge of foreign languages etc. and can concentrate properly on the study contents. In any case the programmes should be modularised and use credit systems.

### *Hungary*

Programmes should include 2 but preferably more study countries, and students should spend a specified period of time in each participating country. Before developing joint curricula preferably in a credit system, the partner institutions should take into account the national legal regulations. Special attention should be paid for the correspondence of the academic level of the joint degree. An officially issued joint degree should not be subject to case by case recognition process.

### *Greece*

The key point is the choice of the partner institutions and countries for every subject. The partnership should be constructed in such away that it produces maximum results, taken the objectives described in answer 1 for granted. This means that every separate case of co-operation should have its own characteristics as regards on

the one hand the choice of the partner institutions and on the other hand the content and organisation of the courses. However, the strategy should be common in any case and should aim at the achievement of the objectives described in answer 1.

### *Italy*

- Students and teachers mobility
- Integrated curricula pre-determined

### *Malta*

I strongly believe that a higher education qualification, which has an academic weighing between 180-240 credits, will be a key feature in the lifelong learning strategy that needs to develop over European Higher Education. At the same times programme leading to this qualification should indeed have different orientations and plants to the issues related to later life and professional development.

### *The Netherlands*

A joint degree should mean that the programme is jointly offered by institutions in more than one country, and maybe even jointly developed. All participating institutions should be (equally) involved. That is offering a joint degree should be clearly different from mutual recognition/accreditation of a degree.

### *Norway*

Both bi-national and multi-national degrees will be useful; the more and the greater variety the better. Any study programme developed and offered jointly by institutions in more than one country will contribute positively to the internationalization of European higher education. However, the effect is obviously stronger where students are required to spend a specified period of time in another country as part of the programme. The description of modules in terms of credits will make the programmes more flexible and should be encouraged.

### *Poland*

In order to answer the questions in their substance it would be purposeful and desirable to conduct a discussion (analysis, consultations) on joint professional titles. The ministry should undertake appropriate actions to assist and support autonomous activities undertaken by the institutions of higher education.

### *Romania*

Social and economic specificity imposes the main or the number of subjects in the higher education curricula of a country, as well as special trends in training and higher

education organization in general. The major subjects are commended and recommended by social and economic progress. But it is also clear that a 3-4 major's curriculum can not be comparable with 7-8 majors one, even taking into account of different culture environment.

A closed society, without permanent contacts with other societies and cultures could not survive for long time, diminishing day by day its internal potential of development. That was the case of communist countries, unable to progress as they have persisted themselves in remaining closed cultures. Not accepting external influences or other ways of training, not having technical and special literature support in every field of training meant suffocate the own system of education.

Mobility from a country to another is not possible without, on one side, – transparent academic tools (scholar documents); from this point of view Diploma Supplement opened a proper way in academic and professional recognition. All the coordinates specified in a Diploma Supplement have to be present in a joint degree document (e.g. number and name of study countries, with a very brief but suggestive presentation of the national higher education system, details or explanations on the content of subjects studied, presentation of the organization of studies in programs or modules etc) and – on the other side, comparable and readable curricula or programs of study, based on efficiency and quality. They have to respond to the immediate or future (of short or long perspective) needs of the society, as they have to respond to local special needs, but also to general and international needs. The importance and necessity of using ECTS – compatible, providing both assurance and accumulation functions made our universities to introduce credits for academic assessment. The pilot program applied since 1997 is now generalized in Romania.

For the internal needs some University Consortiums have been created by joining several main universities in Romania (e.g. for medicine and engineering field of training). It is a good example to be extended for extension purposes by including some European universities eager to join the given association of interests.

### *Slovenia*

- at least 2-3 institutions from different countries (4 or even more could be difficult at least in the early age)
- mutual agreement between the institution concerned (admission, defining the possible joint development of programmes, curricula, minimum period of study spent at the partner institution; staff exchange/mobility)
- the use of system of credits (ECTS).
- basically, this is the issue which must be defined by the institutions themselves, since they have to respect their internal legislation regarding the accreditation and degrees

### *Sweden*

The countries in Europe should provide a national legal framework for the higher education institutions. The institutions should within the legal framework of their autonomy decide how to co-operate.

The development of Joint Degrees should be determined from below, not from above. The institutions must be free to choose the partner institution(s), the organisation and the content of the courses. Each co-operation should have its own characteristics, the more variety in this field the better. One can identify a few basic elements of Joint Degrees:

- Joint Degrees should require a minimum of two higher education institutions from at least two European countries. Institutions from countries outside Europe should in the long run have the possibility to participate.
- Joint Degrees should require at least one third of the study time should take place in another European country. The Study period should take place during either the first cycle or the second cycle.
- Joint Degrees should require staff mobility, i.e. professors of each participating institution should teach at the other institutions, work out the curriculum and form joint commissions for admissions and examinations.
- Joint Degrees should require a degree of curricular integration. The study programmes and courses should be jointly developed by the institutions.
- Joint Degrees should not be limited to certain subjects or study programmes. The studies leading to a Joint Degree could range from well-structured programs to course units assembled by the student him-/herself as a free-mover.

After completion of the programme the student should either obtain the national degrees of each participating institution or a degree jointly awarded by them. If the degree is jointly awarded it has to be accepted by all the countries concerned. With the two alternatives outlined above, a joint degree could be more than a mutual recognition or accreditation of a degree.

### *Switzerland*

- include 2-4 institutions in different countries
- be directed to undergraduate or postgraduate level
- offer real joint diplomas
- offer courses in English and local languages
- include training in cultural awareness

### *Cyprus*

In our opinion a joint degree may involve more than two countries depending on the programme of study although we expect this to be limited to two countries due to the difficulties in managing such programmes i.e. difficulties



in setting up and co-ordinating the syllabuses, financial burdens on the participants for relocation, problems of accreditation and recognition of degrees etc.

A joint degree must be organised on the same quality standards of the collaborating institutions and means to ensure this quality levels need to be examined in detail so that recognition and moreover professional legislation is satisfied at least in the countries involved in such an activity. The contents of the subjects to be studied may be slightly modified to suit the specific need, or conditions of the collaborating countries but at the same time maintaining the quality standards.

A joint degree must have a balanced participation of the collaborating countries and must not be used simply as a top up course to give an existing programme in our country ratification from another country. In such case we envisage serious deficiencies in the quality levels and possible financial exploitation of the accreditation methods in certain countries.

### *European Commission*

From the point of view of the Commission, the answer to this question can only be a preliminary one. A list of element will result from this survey and from the survey carried out by the EVA, supported by the Commission (Socrates programme). The results of the EVA survey will be presented at a conference in Brussels on 20 September 2002. Ten different models will be observed during a pilot scheme in the course of 2002 -2003. Nevertheless some possible basic elements could already be identified:

- a minimum of three higher education institutions from three different European countries;
- jointly agreed comparable conditions for admission
- a degree of curricular integration (not just student and staff mobility)
- student and staff mobility
- recognition of periods of study undertaken in partner institutions in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System ECTS;
- the award of a degree (joint, double or multiple) recognised (and if possible accredited) in all the countries concerned
- appropriate students language preparation and assistance.

How would you envisage the legal framework of a joint degree in your national context?

### *Austria*

Same items have to be regulated at general level, e.g. by law. Such items are:

- scope of application, i.e. how should „joint degree programmes“ or „double degree programmes“ be defined;

- category of studies (should it be a regular study programme within the national systems of the partners involved, or should there exist a specific category for the purpose of common programmes?);
- academic, financial and social status of students involved;
- definition of the parts of study at the partner institutions(minimal and maximal duration) and automatic recognition in the course of the whole programme;
- procedure of common supervision of theses and of common examination boards;
- status of teachers involved in the programme at the respective other partner institution in case of virtual or physical mobility;
- award of academic degree(s) (which ones, in which way, with which effect in the national systems);
- system of a common quality assurance.

Many of these items will have to be made concrete by internal autonomous regulations of the partners concerned.

### *Belgium – French Community*

One of the obstacles in the French Community of Belgium is that to be able to deliver a diploma to a student, that student needs to be enrolled, at least for the last year, in the awarding institution. In that sense, the organization of joint degrees might be difficult unless we would adapt the regulation. A possible solution might be the adoption in all the partner institutions of a structure in credits and not in academic years: each of the partner institutions could organize same credits and the final diploma would be accredited (signed) by all the partners.

### *Belgium – Flemish Community*

At this moment, the Transnational Universiteit Limburg (tUL) can already offer recognised joint degrees. The tUL is a co-operation between the Dutch ‘Universiteit Maastricht’ and the Flemish ‘Limburgs Universitair Centrum’. The tUL can deliver joint degrees on bachelor, master and doctoral level. The tUL is established (2001) by an international agreement between the Governments of the Netherlands and the Flemish Community of Belgium.

In the new legislation – planned for the end of 2002 –, introducing the bachelor-master structure in Flanders as well as accreditation, we foresee also a regulation for joint degrees. This legislation describes the conditions under which joint degrees will be possible. These conditions refers to:

- the necessity of a bilateral agreement
- the necessity of similarity/ comparability of objectives and content of programmes
- the minimum stay of the students at the partner institutions
- the enrolment of students
- the diploma

## France

In France, one might say, the quality assurance procedures have always existed and are almost perfect: any new degrees a HE institution would like to create, as well as requests for renewals (every four years) must be submitted to the national authority (an expert commission, frequently renewed, within the Directorate of Higher Education) which delivers the authorisation (habilitation) to award a degree requested. It is the national procedure which guarantees quality, national coherence and transparency and the French are very much attached to the system. Hence, as it was mentioned in question n° 1, this ministry is actually contacting (and is being contacted) by other countries which have similar HE systems to examine the possibility of delivering a „joint habilitation“ or joint accreditation for one single diploma to be jointly awarded by two European countries and institutions. So far, no examples can be given. The French institutions, knowing the legal difficulties for one diploma to be jointly awarded, have opted for joint degrees, i.e. two diplomas, both recognised by the partners. Here, some interesting examples exist.

## Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany

The legal situation in Germany with regard to joint degrees is defined by two decisions of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture (KMK) of 21 November 1991 (on joint degrees) and of 6 September 1996 (on jointly supervised doctoral theses). Minimal requirements for joint degrees are therefore as follows:

- the programme is offered jointly by a German and at least one foreign higher education institution (normally within a formal co-operation agreement)
- the participating institutions agree on a defined programme and a jointly defined examination procedure
- each participating institution offers a substantial part of the joint programme
- the programme has to lead to a level of education that corresponds to the German degree to be awarded

As for the doctoral level, the Cotutelle-de-thèse model is applied:

ONE degree is awarded on ONE common doctoral certificate with the seal of both participating institutions. The certificate entitles the holder to beat the Doktor degree in Germany and the corresponding degree of the country in which the other institution is situated.

## Hungary

In the case of more than two partner institutions the compliance with the national legal regulations of each participating country might be an obstacle.

A recommendation by the signatories of the Bologna Declaration should be worked out containing the clear definition of the term 'joint degree', terminology and principles of developing joint degrees, serving as a code of good practice for the institutions and authorities.

## Greece

In Greece, the legal framework for common study programmes leading to joint degrees at the postgraduate level is already in its way to pass from the Parliament in the coming months. On the other hand, the analogous legal framework concerning the undergraduate level is under construction. The idea is that it will be based on the results of the discussions between the Greek and French Universities and Ministries of Education concerning the establishment of such joint degrees. My immediate and spontaneous reaction to this question should be, therefore, that the legal framework in Greece has to be extremely flexible and open to any alternative approach that may appear.

## Italy

(This answer is a contribution of Dr Carlo Finocchietti and Ms Silvia Capucci, respectively Director and Deputy Director of NARIC/Italy).

The award of joint degrees is foreseen in the recent reform of Italian University education system (Ministerial Decree 509/99). Art. 3 allows Italian Universities, on the legal basis of specific agreements, to award degrees jointly with foreign Universities. In conformity to art.

II, the modalities for the awarding of the joint/double degrees are decided upon by individual Institutions in the framework of their autonomy. The provisions for the awarding of such degrees are contemplated in their individual Teaching Regulations („Regolamento didattico di Ateneo“).

The only possible legal obstacles are that the Universities have to comply with the general conditions for the legal validity of degrees. This is a successful example of the award of joint degrees that we have in our country. It is promoted by the allocation of funds of this Ministry, in the framework of the programme for the internationalisation of the University system.

In the case of joint degrees of 1st and 2nd level (Bachelor and Master) a double degree is usually awarded (that is two separate degrees). Universities may also issue just one document bearing names, logos and signatures of the two awarding Institutions.

Another successful example is represented by a form of „co-tutelle de thèse“. It is due to an agreement between Italy and France which dates back to 1984 and leads to a joint degree (Doctorate).

### *Malta*

The issuing of a joint degree would not be a problem for a small state like Malta. We already have this kind of academic relationships. Perhaps the opening up of new areas to joint degrees could be an affirmative positive asset.

### *The Netherlands*

No special legal framework would be required. A degree is a degree, whether joint or not.

In the Netherlands this means that the programme leading to the joint degree shall be subject to regular quality assurance and in future (legislation in preparation) have to be accredited by the Dutch accreditation body, just like regular degrees.

However, the consequences for funding should be taken into account. The main reason is that joint degrees can interfere with the national funding systems.

### *Norway*

Joint degrees are already offered in Norway on the same legal basis as other degrees.

The participating Norwegian institution must be accredited to offer degrees at the level and in the field of study in question; if not, it must apply specially to the Ministry of Education and Research to be allowed to award the degree. The procedures and regulations will be the same as for ordinary degrees. The study programme, admission requirements etc. for the joint degree must be in accordance with the general regulations for the appropriate degree level in Norway. As long as the joint degree is awarded by a Norwegian institution, it will be recognized in Norway in the same way as other degrees from the institution.

The institutions have full responsibility for the quality of their study programmes. For joint degrees this means that the participating Norwegian institution puts its quality stamp on the whole programme, including modules offered by others. The new national quality assurance agency will have the power to review all programmes leading to a degree awarded by a Norwegian institution. As a result of a proposed amendment to the Act relating to universities and colleges, all higher education institutions will be required by law to have fully developed quality assurance systems, which will be subject to audits by the quality assurance agency. These quality assurance systems at institutional level will have to contain provisions relating to the quality assurance of modules delivered by partner institutions or sub-contractors in Norway or abroad.

The amended act will introduce a credit system based on ECTS, which will apply to all study programmes from the autumn of 2003. A full year of study will correspond to 60 „studiepoeng“ (credits).

### *Poland*

The legal solutions should enable the following possibilities: joint education (which in the present system is already implemented as the students may obtain part of his/her training abroad or the other way round – foreign students may obtain their training in Poland), issuing joint diplomas – this requires the acceptance of such regulations by the legal system. At present the diploma may be issued only by one institution of higher education – even within the framework of co-operation between national institutions of higher education, therefore such solutions may appear as very useful and in demand.

### *Romania*

We have already the example of joint curricula or study programs in foreign languages (see Tempus Program) for polytechnic engineering, civil engineering, and economics in co-operation with universities in France and Germany. We have also the experience of SOCRATES programs, but only for periods of study, and here some obstacles have occurred (when back, our students have to pass all the examinations specified in the national curriculum, and there were not precise regulations to accept the foreign experience but only for individual training and development).

Another help and good practice is also the example of Licentiate degree or Ph.D. in double tutorial „cotutela“ with scientific tutor from the two involved countries. But all these diplomas awarded abroad have to be submitted to the national local rules of equivalence.

Ways of saving time and assure the required quality of the future employees to be immediately hired have to be found. In this respect, a legal framework at the national level for automatic mutual recognition is to be envisaged for the near future.

### *Slovenia*

In Slovenia we do not have yet any Joint Degree programmes. We would not need any new special legislation on this issue, since any programme and degree offered by our HE institutions must be accredited by the National Council for Higher Education in accordance with Higher Education Act.

Universities/faculties can apply to the ministry for co-financing the postgraduate/master programmes. One of the important conditions to apply and receive money from the ministry is also established international co-operation of the faculties (common study programmes; networks, credits, visiting professors, how many foreign students apply for the programme, and minimum requirement for students to spend at least 10 % of their study outside home institution.)

The member countries of the CEEPUS programme (A, BG, CZ, H, HR, PL, RO, SK and SI) are preparing new Agreement, where one of the most important issues is going to

be the development of the Joint Degrees programmes. This has been already approved at the 8th Meeting of the Joint Committee of CEEPUS ministers in Bratislava, March 1, 2002.

### *Sweden*

If the Higher education institution is recognized or approved by the government or the national Agency for Higher Education there is no legal obstacle. There are great opportunities for the Universities to develop and design joint degrees as long as they follow the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. If the institutions co-operate to jointly award a new degree (e.g. European Master, International Master or other), this will require amendments in the Higher Education Ordinance.

### *Switzerland*

The legal framework has to be based on inter-university agreements (see answer 1). The guide should contain as well model contracts for such agreements.

### *Cyprus*

The existing legislation in Cyprus does not allow joint degrees to be offered by tertiary education institutions. This legal restriction is under consideration and is likely to change by the time Cyprus joins the EU.

The usual practice for a number of Cypriots and foreigners studying in public or private tertiary education institutions in Cyprus is to seek enrolment in UK universities as transfer students, a process which is mainly achieved through individual applications rather than established collaboration among the institutions. Furthermore the Cyprus Council for Recognition of Academic Qualifications (KYSATS) requires a significant part (more than 50%) of a degree to be performed at the institution, which awards the degree.

### *European Commission*

Question not applicable to the European Commission.

Are there any fields/study areas in which a joint degree is  
a) particularly useful?  
b) particularly easy or particularly difficult to realize?

### *Austria*

No principal difference as far as certain fields of studies are concerned can be recognized, even not in cases where there exist traditionally national differences like in law programmes. The most important fact is the willingness of two or more institutions to cooperate closely and to trust each other's quality of education.

### *Belgium – French Community*

1. fields of studies where a joint degree would be particularly useful: history, political science human and social science pedagogy
2. fields of studies in which it would be particularly difficult to realize joint degrees: pedagogy, law, due to important differences in the legislation
3. fields of studies in which it would be particularly easy to realize joint degrees: natural sciences, including mathematics, foreign languages, medical and paramedical studies; business education

### *Belgium – Flemish Community*

Useful and easy:

- engineering / architect
- business
- life science

Difficult:

- programmes leading to registered professions
- political and social science
- educational science

### *France*

All subject areas should be tried out. Ministries or other authorities giving out „accreditation“ for the award of diplomas could assure the coherence, incite the institutions for pilot projects and assume the quality assurance. A joint degree in regulated professions might be particularly difficult to realise – but nothing a joint commission of experts could not resolve.

### *Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany*

A joint degree seems particularly useful in those fields that are by definition transnational: most of the humanities (history, art history, political science, comparative literature, philologies, philosophy etc.) but also in the social sciences: international and European law, economics and business administration. Joint degree programmes could also be useful in architecture, civil engineering and other engineering sciences.

In Germany joint degree programmes would be probably most difficult to establish in all the disciplines that normally lead to a „Staatsexamen“, i.e. the regulated degrees: medicine and related fields, law, school teachers' qualifications.

### *Hungary*

A joint degree can be particularly useful and easy to realize in fields with definite international aspects e.g. economics, international law, computer sciences, and in the field of languages.



It might be difficult to realize a joint degree if a profession requires a different academic level in one country than in the other, and also in the case of programmes leading to a qualification which is a regulated profession in the countries concerned.

### *Greece*

I do not believe that it is possible to define specific fields of study which appear to be particularly useful (but for whom?) or for which joint degrees may be particularly easy or particularly difficult to realise. I strongly believe that such kinds of choices depend largely on the relative strengths of each partner and on the resulting dynamics of the partnership. This means that it is not easy to make exclusions in advance as regards the study fields in which the realisation of joint degrees should be favoured.

### *Italy*

From the point of view of what we have experienced so far, the study areas in which joint degrees are particularly widespread are Economics and Engineering. However, according to what expressed in answer I, we think that joint degrees, are useful in all study areas. Of course, legal obstacles can arise due to the differences existing between academic and professional degrees, between regulated and non-regulated professions and between differences in learning structures of the individual countries.

### *Malta*

- a) Educational studies, health care, arts, science, humanities, communications would be particularly useful.
- b) I perceive difficulties might arise in degrees pertaining to regulated professions: laws, banking and finance, architecture, pharmacy, etc..

### *The Netherlands*

- a) A joint degree could be particularly useful in fields of study with a specific international focus (e.g. international law) or with a strong international labour market perspective or in language studies.
- b) Whether or not a joint degree is easy to realise is a question to be answered by the universities themselves. The government in the Netherlands has given them a large autonomy that includes the content of the education and the terms set to the exams. Of course the quality of both research and education is closely monitored. There are however a few exceptions following European guidelines restricting the autonomy. In these cases the university is obliged to take care that their students are offered the opportunity within their curriculum to meet the demands of a specific profession as stated in these guidelines.

### *Norway*

- a) Joint degrees may be particularly useful where the field of study is of an international or comparative nature, cf. question I.
- b) In Norway there is no formal difference in statute or regulations between general and professional degrees. For certain regulated professions, authorization depends on the fulfilment of specific conditions. However, with a participating Norwegian institution this should pose few problems. For joint degrees without Norwegian involvement, recognition of professional qualifications may be more complicated than in the case of other degrees from foreign universities. For certain professions, e.g. nurses, teachers, and engineers, study programmes must comply with national general plans. Knowledge of Norwegian is a requirement in some cases, e.g. for teachers.

### *Poland*

The issue of particular usefulness of joint professional titles should be confirmed first of all by the institutions of higher education – from the point of view of the ministry this means opening for the contacts with other countries, enabling the exchange of academic and didactic experiences of the institution, exchange of achievements and work of the academic personnel and students, enriching the experience both in the area of didactics as well as in academic activities, enabling the recognition of diplomas obtained abroad – without the necessity of nostrification (which requires some changes in Polish legislation), enhancing the quality of education and in effect – the quality of education of the graduates of the Polish institutions of higher education.

### *Romania*

- a) joint degrees in the economic field, for instance, are particularly useful for general development of each country and Europe in its unity
- b) particularly easy for philology (foreign languages and literatures studies)
- c) particularly difficult for lawyers, doctors

### *Slovenia*

- all subjects should have the possibility

### *Sweden*

Joint Degrees are useful in all fields/study areas. It is difficult to point out specific areas where joint degrees are particularly useful, or to exclude certain study fields. The higher education institutions should decide which areas are best for the development of joint degrees.

Possibly, it might be easier to start with Joint Degrees within the general degrees that constitute a large part of



the degrees taken in Sweden. Professional degrees could be more difficult to realize since the higher education institutions have less freedom to decide on the curriculum concerning these in Sweden (in Sweden, the professional degrees are more regulated than the general degrees). On the other hand, the collaboration between higher institutions in Europe is more developed in some professional degrees, e.g. economics and engineering, and the demand from the labour market is bigger.

### *Switzerland*

- a) In all fields of studies, especially in small disciplines in disciplines with high research impact in interdisciplinary fields
- b) It is very difficult to realise such programs for regulated academic professions.

### *Cyprus*

Joint degrees may be proved to be useful in studies like Archaeology, Byzantine and Greek studies. Joint degrees will be particularly useful and most welcomed by the Private Tertiary Education Institutions of Cyprus which will exploit further their relationships already established with a number of UK and USA Universities. This will help them to attract more students from countries such as China, Bangladesh, India and the Middle East countries.

A joint degree as long as is provided by a recognised institution or accredited programme, we envisage that there will be no difficulty in the satisfaction of the requirements for practising any regulated profession.

### *European Commission*

Particularly useful: The European Commission publishes annually a General Call for Proposals in the framework of the Socrates Programme, notably for curriculum development projects. Topics come from the political agenda inspired by societal needs.

They link in with the priorities of the Commission research programmes. Recurrent themes are the intercultural dialogue, integration of ethics in subject areas, environmental issues, interdisciplinarity, ICT and biotechnology. At this macro level, the Socrates -Erasmus Thematic Networks could play an important role identifying future needs in consultation with the world of enterprise. At micro level, universities might want to pool resources in order to offer a more complete and attractive programme to their students. Particularly easy or particularly difficult to realise: Question hard to answer for the Commission. Joint degrees are probably more difficult in areas where the university has less freedom to decide on the organisation of the curriculum and the examination. Differs from country to country and from discipline to discipline

## What issues related to the award of joint degrees are the most important to address?

### *Austria*

- award of academic degree(s) and their effects;
- full automatic academic recognition of all parts of the programme between the partner institutions;
- a good system of supporting students.

### *Belgium – French Community*

Most important issues to address:

- recognition issues,
- quality assurance issues,
- national legal framework
- further fights: academic and professional in each countries

### *Belgium – Flemish Community*

- quality assurance:  
Accreditation based on comparable descriptors and criteria should facilitate the award of joint degrees. From this point of view, the development of an – international – accreditation mechanism will be an important instrument.
- The position of the student: enrolment, grants, social security
- The added value of joint degrees for students and employers.

### *France*

- convincing society of the interest of joint European degrees including students;
- incite the institutions to present common pilot projects;
- recognition issues;
- quality assurance problems
- fear of losing time

### *Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany*

Quality assurance is certainly the crucial issue from which recognition and the rest will follow: In order to promote the creation of European joint degrees on a larger scale, mechanisms of quality assurance and accreditation at the European level have to be set up. This will allow a joint degree programme to obtain accreditation only in one country, with the other participating country (or countries) recognising automatically the accreditation decision.

### *Hungary*

- Definition of the term 'joint degree'
- Quality assurance

### *Greece*

I believe that this question has to be answered in two different points: The first point has to do with the characteristics of the partnerships. Concerning this point, the first priority should be how to draw the strategy of the partnership, i.e. how to set the specific objectives and how to take advantage of the strengths of each partner in order to improve the dynamics of the partnership as a whole. The second point has to do with the European environment. Issues concerning recognition, quality and mobility should be primarily addressed. At the same time, however, and specifically for countries like Greece, the problem of the language of instruction should be put also at the top of the agenda.

### *Italy*

- removing the obstacles to mobility for students and teachers. If academic mobility increases, the need for mutual recognition of periods of study and mutual agreements on joint degrees will increase. This process will be able to prepare the ground for recognition/accreditation.
- the use of ECTS
- the use of the Diploma Supplement
- the harmonisation of good practices

In other words, we think that the awarding of joint degrees, if successfully widespread and practised by Universities all over Europe, can spark off a propulsive „chain reaction“ leading to possible solutions, agreed at general level, about the delicate issues of Quality Assurance and recognition/accreditation.

### *Malta*

I would put them in this order:

- Labour market relevance
- Degree structures within national boundaries
- Transparency and comparability of core skills

### *The Netherlands*

See my answer to question 3. We should address:

- Mutual accreditation/recognition is an important development, which should be supported as much as possible.
- International agreements about funding of joint degrees.

### *Norway*

The first priority should perhaps be to establish a common understanding of what is meant by joint degrees and make generally known their position and legal status in the higher education systems of different countries. The ongoing initiatives for mutual recognition of national quality assurance systems are very important in this context. As long as the foreign partner is a recognized or accredited institution in its own country, recognition should pose few problems, at least in a Norwegian context. It should be understood, however, that an institution offering a joint degree takes responsibility for the quality of the entire study programme, and that national quality assurance authorities in the country where the degree is awarded must have the power to review all parts of the programme.

### *Poland*

We should consider the following issues: recognition of education, of course the issue of quality guarantees of the achieved education or last but not least the work on the indispensable changes in the legislation. The list of necessary actions should be completed – after consultations of the issue within the academic environment.

### *Romania*

If quality requirements are accomplished, recognition process is easier and it could even become automatically done with the time, when confidence and trust in the given external training is reached. Therefore, quality assurance has to have priority in any case. Recognition issues have also to be improved for sparing time and gaining professional confidence.

### *Slovenia*

- recognition issues
- use of the ECTS and Diploma Supplement
- quality assurance
- agreements/contracts between the institutions concerned
- possible definition of the term Joint Degrees

### *Sweden*

Some important issues to address:

- To establish a common view/definition of Joint Degrees.
- The development of mutual agreements based on the recognition of quality assurance systems. This is important if Joint Degrees are one degree jointly awarded by the higher education institutions.
- The development of mutual recognition or accreditation of a degree. This is important if Joint Degrees are

two (separate) national degrees of each participating institution.

- Increasing mobility for students and teachers. If mobility increases the demand for joint degrees will increase.

### *Switzerland*

Important issues:

- develop model contracts (to reduce administrative burden)
- facilitation of recognition
- courses in 2-3 languages
- suggest instruments for quality assurance

### *Cyprus*

In our opinion the issues to address for joint degrees in order of priority are the following:

- Quality assurance issues . The recognition issues
- The legal issues
- The balanced participation of each collaborating institution

### *European Commission*

- typology
- degree of course integration
- modes of delivery
- full programme by each of the partners
- full programme delivered by one partner (other partners contribute with students and teachers)
- mixed delivery (basic programme by each of the partners, teaching and student mobility, joint summer courses)
- recognition issues degree: joint, double or multiple degrees recognised (and if possible accredited) in all the countries concerned for academic and professional purposes
- quality assurance: at task of the national quality assurance systems or a need for cross-border/European quality assurance?









Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research

