



European  
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# Erasmus+

## Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus

Conclusions of the conference on Erasmus Mundus  
Joint Master Degrees

Brussels, 29-30<sup>th</sup> June 2016



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ISBN 978-92-9492-327-1 (paper)

ISBN 978-92-9492-326-4 (digital)

doi: 10.2797/53068 (paper)

doi: 10.2797/066592 (digital)

This report has been produced and prepared by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

Unit A3 - Erasmus+ : Higher Education - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

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## FOREWORD

Dear reader,

By gathering around 130 EMJMD representatives, colleagues of EAC and EACEA the Conference “Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus” which we - the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) – organised in June 2016 was an opportunity to get together and celebrate the achievements of one of EU’s most successful programmes in the field of international higher education.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the highlights of the Conference that resulted from the active involvement of all participants in a spirit of exchange of knowledge and experience.

We have been in charge of the **Erasmus Mundus** programme since 2006 when the European Commission established EACEA to implement EU programmes in the fields of education, training, youth, sport, audiovisual, culture and volunteering. Over the last 10 years, we have supported more than 300 Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree courses and we have provided nearly 19.000 scholarships to students from nearly 200 different nationalities.

Looking more globally at the European Higher Education Area, we are proud of the achievements Erasmus Mundus has made in boosting the Bologna Process. Joint programmes require a high level of integration and in this sense the Erasmus Mundus projects have acted as ‘catalyst’ for bringing forward the internationalisation of the European dimension.

With the Conference, we were looking to identify ideas and collect insights for feedback on policy and programme design from those with hands-on experience in joint programme management and coordination through a user-centred approach. This booklet gives an interesting picture of the current reflections of our project coordinators on topics such as jointness, graduate employability, quality assurance and excellence in teaching and learning. The challenge of ensuring long-term sustainability for these highly prestigious courses was also in the spotlight of the discussions.

I am convinced that the recommendations and conclusions presented in this report deserve deeper reflection and will stimulate further analysis for the future of the Erasmus+ programme. It is our pleasure to share the wealth of experience we have gathered over the years and to give our contribution to the broader debates on the perspectives ahead of the European and international higher education.

Feel free to visit our website [www.eacea.ec.europa.eu](http://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu) where you can learn more about **Erasmus+** and the other programmes EACEA is managing.

I look forward to continuing working with you or welcoming you as a new partner in the future.



**Brian HOLMES**  
Director  
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), in cooperation with the European Commission's DG for Education and Culture, organised a conference on "Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus" on 29-30 June 2016 in Brussels<sup>1</sup>.

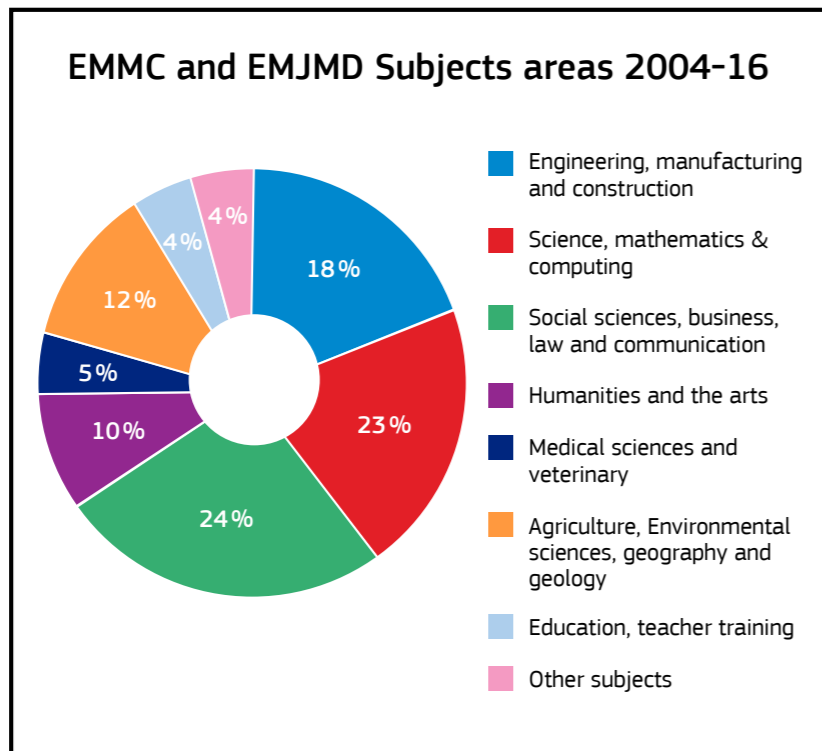
The conference was brought together representatives of all Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) programmes selected since 2009, as well as practitioners and representatives from the European Commission, the Executive Agency, the Erasmus+ National Agencies and the Erasmus Mundus students and alumni association (EMA).

The event was designed to launch a networking process and to give further support to the implementation of the selected EMJMDs. It gave high priority to the exchange of experience among the programme coordinators themselves, so that the lessons learned and the good practices identified under the previous Erasmus Mundus programme could be used to nurture the new generation of EMJMDs.

The conference adopted a participatory approach and was composed of a complementary mix of plenary sessions, workshops and ample space for networking.

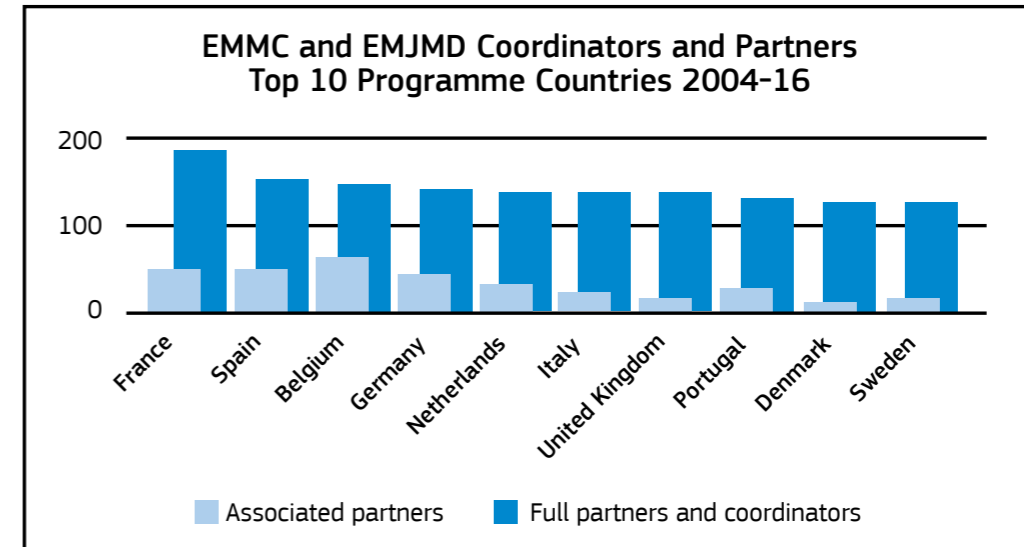
The plenary sessions celebrated the achievements of Erasmus Mundus and, in the policy context of international higher education cooperation under Erasmus+, looked forward to its continuing expansion. The principal challenges that the speakers identified – employability, sustainability, quality assurance, and the 'jointness' or internal cohesion of the degrees – were the themes taken up in the conference workshops. Four workshops were in action throughout the two days, establishing a collaborative dialogue and the sharing of knowledge and ideas, and actively engaging all participants. During the final plenary session the main outcomes of the workshops were set out, together with proposals for future follow-up.

## EMJMDs TODAY



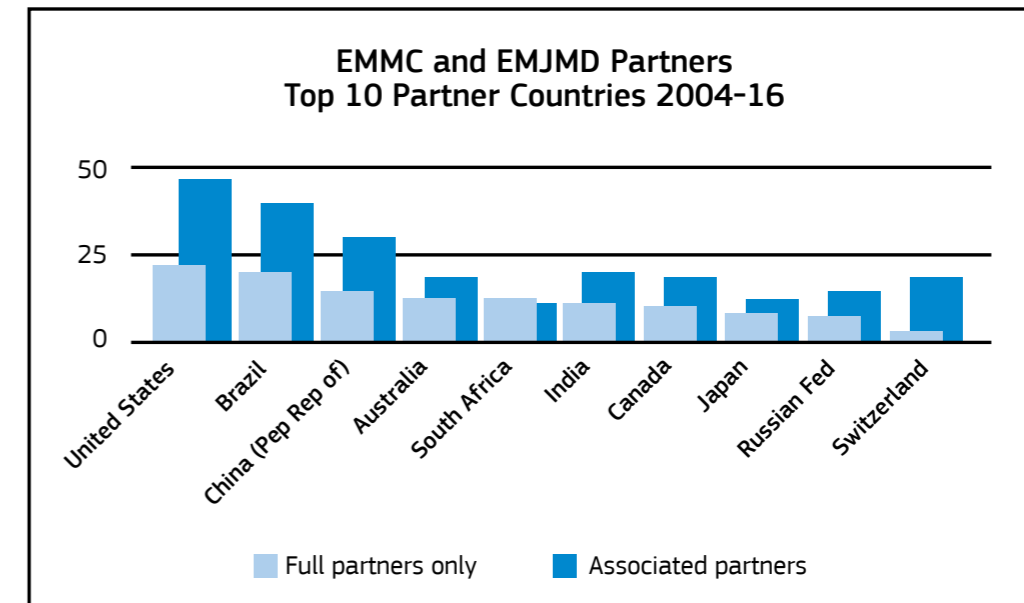
<sup>1</sup> For the conference programme, see Annex II

The Erasmus Mundus programme was launched in 2004. It has become, as one plenary speaker put it at the conference, an effective 'instrument of public diplomacy', strengthening the links between the countries of the EHEA and their partners.



In 2014, Erasmus Mundus was integrated into the Erasmus+ umbrella framework. For the European Union, which has designed, steered and funded it over the years, the programme represents a successful policy initiative. So much so that Member State governments, which lent it strong support through the legislative process, have largely stood back and allowed it to go from strength to strength, gathering momentum and prestige.

EHEA ministers, for their part, regard joint programmes as major contributors to the implementation of the Bologna Process. This much became evident when they met in Yerevan in 2015<sup>2</sup>. In the areas of employability, student-centred learning and social inclusion, the expectations placed on Erasmus Mundus are high.



<sup>2</sup> See the Ministerial Communiqué at [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/SubmittedFiles/5\\_2015/112705.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/SubmittedFiles/5_2015/112705.pdf)

To some extent, this has always been the way. From the outset, the EMJMDs acted as the testing ground for many of the key features of Bologna: collaborative cross-border curriculum design; credit transfer; grade conversion; quality assurance; recognition of qualifications; use of the Diploma Supplement.

Throughout its history, Erasmus Mundus has been a powerful motor driving the push for transparency and trust between national higher education systems. It has helped to open up the European space, making Bologna countries more mutually intelligible as well as less protectionist. And, of course, it has brought into the EHEA large numbers of partner country students. It has also encouraged the growth of joint degrees outside its own funding framework.

The key challenges ahead – beyond those cited by the Bologna ministers, notably employability and social inclusion – include the need to raise the level of ‘jointness’ and to implement more effectively a pan-European quality assurance regime.

‘Joint programmes are a hallmark of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). They are set up to enhance the mobility of students and staff, to facilitate mutual learning and cooperation opportunities and to create programmes of excellence. They offer a genuine European learning experience to students. Joint degrees express the “jointness” also in the awarding of the degree.’

European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, approved by EHEA ministers in May 2015

## 2. THE CONFERENCE

The purpose of ‘Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus’ was to bring together coordinators of the EMJMDs funded by the European Union and to facilitate their networking. Excellence, employability, ‘jointness’, quality assurance, the attractiveness of EHEA, and sustainability were high on the conference agenda.

For more than a decade a considerable number of EMJMDs have been funded. The conference was an opportunity to look at their functioning and outcomes, but also to identify areas for improvement.

Given the strong emphasis that the Erasmus+ programme puts on the dissemination and exploitation of results, the aim was also to identify success stories and good practices, as well as challenges in the management of the EMJMDs, and to gather ideas about how the challenges have been met.

Primarily, the conference set out to stimulate and intensify networking between the wide range of EMJMD representatives and other key actors. For two days, course coordinators mingled, conferred and compared experiences. They were drawn from two generations of programmes: those still launched between 2010 and 2013 under Erasmus Mundus; and the EMJMDs which began in the framework of Erasmus+ in 2014 and 2015. At the time of the conference, all of the 165 courses were up and running, of which 106 were represented in the workshops.

Joining the coordinators were chairs and rapporteurs from higher education institutions and sectoral bodies operating at European level, representatives from the national agencies in programme countries, as well as staff from the European Commission and the EACEA. In total, the participants numbered over two hundred.

*“It has been a very good experience to get to know other projects and ways of managing them. Is good to put a face to the person you establish a relationship with, via email”*



The conference adopted a participatory approach and was made up of a complementary mix of plenary sessions, workshops and ample opportunity for networking. Time and physical space were set aside for networking. It was important for participants to have the scope to discuss policy issues, problems and questions of detail, outside the formal sessions. The formal sessions themselves then benefitted from relationships already struck up and from the exchanges of experience.



The introductory plenary session focused on the policy context of international higher education cooperation under Erasmus+. It also touched upon the latest developments in the Bologna Process, the meeting of Bologna Process ministers in Yerevan in 2015, and the role to be played by EMJMDs in such areas as employability and quality assurance.

The plenary was followed by a series of workshops. These were designed to facilitate collaborative dialogue and the sharing of knowledge and ideas by all participants. The workshops reflected on thematic themes which formed the content of several articles published by the European Commission just before the conference and collected under the title: Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees – The story so far<sup>3</sup>. In these articles experts discussed the achievements and challenges of joint programmes looking at four different aspects. The conference gave a forum to the EMJMD consortia to complement the reflections with their own practises, namely on:

1. Management and added value of Joint Programmes (including employability and links to the world of work)
2. Quality assurance of Joint Programmes – excellence in teaching and learning
3. Promotion, visibility and sustainability
4. Student issues and perspectives

During the final plenary session the main outcomes of the workshops were summarised, together with proposals for future follow-up.

## 2.1. PLENARY SESSIONS

The plenary speakers represented the Cabinet of Commissioner Tibor Navracsics for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, the Commission's Directorate General for Education, Audiovisual and Culture, and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, including the Eurydice network. They extended a warm welcome to all participants, while outlining the achievements of Erasmus Mundus, its prestige and its prospects for future growth.

The conference heard in some detail of the contribution that Erasmus Mundus had made to the Bologna Process, notably in terms of mobility instruments, as well as the role that it could play in the development of quality assurance at European level and in the promotion of employability. The speakers indicated that national governments, too, had a role to play – in assisting the promotion and funding of Erasmus Mundus, but above all in adapting their legal frameworks in such a way as to facilitate the recognition of its awards.

All the speakers welcomed feedback from the conference on policy development and programme design, particularly in respect of the 'jointness' and the sustainability of the joint degree courses.



<sup>3</sup> Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees – the story so far, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg 2016. <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/erasmus-mundus-joint-master-degrees-pbNC0116443>

## 2.2. WORKSHOPS

### WORKSHOP I: MANAGEMENT AND ADDED VALUE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES

Joint programmes were once seen as a means of integrating and internationalising curricula, developing strategic international academic collaboration and providing a unique study experience for those students who were keen to learn from different education systems. Through the Bologna Process it has become clear that joint programmes, and in particular joint degrees, can be a way to extend study recognition, quality and mobility across borders while enhancing graduate employability.

Graduate employability sits at the core of EU policies for growth and jobs – namely, ‘Europe2020’<sup>4</sup> – and is accordingly a principal objective of the education and training programmes supported by the EU. Employability has similarly become a key driver of the modernisation of higher education systems and institutions.

#### Workshop discussions

The history of Joint Programmes stretches back over more than ten years. Successive generations of coordinators and partners have built up and shared substantial management experience. Their accumulated wisdom has been widely disseminated in publications such as the Joint Programmes from A to Z reference guide<sup>5</sup>.

As a result, much of the added value of Joint Master Programmes now goes unchallenged. Students confirm that they benefit in terms of cultural and linguistic competence. They acknowledge that the mix of different styles of learning and teaching gives them an experience far broader than if they had remained in one study location.

Institutions, too, recognise the benefits of collaborative curriculum design and course delivery. They see the advantages in the stimulus to collaborative research and in raised profile. Increasingly, they view joint programmes in the context of strategic partnerships capable of generating revenue. The coming together of excellent students and innovative institutions is regarded by both parties as hugely positive.

For the European Higher Education Area, meanwhile, Erasmus Mundus has long been a flagship programme – as one plenary speaker put it, the ‘jewel in the crown’.

The workshop was not content simply to rehearse the acquis. It wanted to carry the debate forward by looking at areas in which further progress can be made. The workshop set out to explore<sup>6</sup> how inter-institutional collaboration could be intensified and how programmes could be more closely related to labour market needs.

#### ‘Jointness’

Many institutions have long experience of joint curriculum design and course delivery. Historically, this has been within one country, locally or regionally, where specific training needs exist, or – increasingly – where HEIs need to pool costly infrastructure such as specialist laboratories. With the launch of the EMJMDs and their predecessors, ‘jointness’ became international. New challenges arose. They were cultural, linguistic, legal, logistic, pedagogic, and they had to be met by institutions, students, policy makers, within the EHEA and with partner countries outside it. These were tough challenges in constant evolution, such that yesterday’s solutions always needed to be revisited today in preparation for tomorrow.

The majority of workshop participants were course coordinators and partners working on the frontline. It is important to realise that the consortium of an EMJMD has, more often than not, steered the course development process from concept to delivery. The consortium has to be an innovator, navigating design problems for which only approximate precedents exist. This remains the posture throughout the life of the project. No one, therefore, is more conscious of the opportunities and constraints of ‘jointness’.

The participants were in full agreement that the academic success of EMJMDs depends on their degree of integration – disciplinary, managerial, administrative, and logistic. In theory, ‘jointness’ can be achieved by maximising the integration of project management and course design, while encouraging diversity of styles of learning, teaching and assessment, so long as these styles work in synergy. The measure of success is then the extent to which the students derive an experience which they can regard both as complete, in the sense of having achieved all its stated objectives, and as overflowing, in the sense of opening doors to opportunities that were not there before.



The challenge posed by this holistic aspiration is two-fold: first, it depends on a complex labour of cooperation and planning; secondly, its ultimate fulfilment is measurable only on a case-by-case basis. ‘Jointness’, in other words, has to be constructed and then fine-tuned in action. This is crucial, if an EMJMD is to be more than the sum of its parts.

Clearly, there has to be a division of labour at project level: between coordinator and partners, but also between groups of academics working to complement each other’s contribution to the curriculum. Better, then, in the opinion of participants, to involve as many actors as possible at the preparation and application stages, in order to minimise the danger of partners not pulling their weight and of staff failing to commit fully to the project. The work of preparation, led by the coordinating institution, involves:

- Ensuring that the commitment of partners (and their institutional leaderships) is active, informed, embedded in coherent strategy, rather than merely formal
- Gaining acknowledgement from all parties that the managerial burden of EMJMDs substantially exceeds that of traditional in-house courses
- Ensuring in advance that support staff are adequately trained culturally and linguistically
- Fully grasping the potential tensions between the EMJMD action requirements and national legislations
- Maximising the intensity of communication within and between participating institutions

Existing joint degrees are under pressure to maintain or raise their level of integration, while new degrees have to bootstrap themselves into a high level of operational coherence. Workshop participants were convinced that this requires prior teambuilding, to be sustained by:

- Adequate financial resources
- Constant dialogue between academics at all phases of delivery: materials development, learning support, formative and summative assessment
- Effective quality assurance
- Scope for student input which is more than merely reactive
- Consistent institutional and national support

Participants considered consortial teambuilding to be the key to the enhancement of ‘jointness’. Trust is what energises and binds collaborative effort. On two counts, they were optimistic. Firstly, the Bologna Process and its mobility instruments have rendered higher education systems more transparent to one other. Secondly,

<sup>4</sup> ‘Europe 2020, a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’, Commission Communication

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.epnuffic.nl/en/internationalisation/jdaz-guide>

<sup>6</sup> The full set of questions put to all the workshops can be found in the conference programme in Annex II



technology has advanced: digital tools and social media, all with near global reach, have become available and, for some, indispensable.

The scope for dialogue within common frames of reference has thus expanded enormously during the lifetime of Erasmus Mundus. Future conferences could usefully focus on strategies of consortial teambuilding: the extent of common ground (discipline, pedagogic culture and style, research, language); the degree of complementarity; the human resource implications.

### Employability

The conference workshop acknowledged that the interface of higher education with commerce and industry continues to pose problems, but here too it stressed that the situation had moved on significantly since the launch of Erasmus Mundus.

When the first cohorts of students enrolled, they could not know that they would graduate in the aftermath of a global financial crisis, in which rates of graduate unemployment would be high. By and large, they did not study in institutions which set great store by student-centred learning and competence-based curricula. They did not envisage building a career in a world in which the emerging economies had triggered the creation of complex global value chains. When they graduated, the EHEA policy frame of learning outcomes, skills agendas and enterprise education was at its earliest stage of development. The changes that have come about since then have created a new environment for joint degree designers.

#### 10 “key recommendations” on how to provide students with prerequisites and resources to increase their “employability”:

1. Learn from different approaches – build up joint solutions
2. Communicate the Erasmus Mundus Brand Name
3. Link Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses and labour markets
4. Deploy professional alliances for academia
5. Give practical learning a place
6. Provide and integrate internships
7. Confidence increases commitment
8. Unfold the impact of internationality
9. Student networks are effective resources
10. Activate complementary abilities

From Erasmus Mundus Thematic Cluster on Employability: Practical guidelines, September 2010 - October 2011, section 5

These developments led the participants to reflect on the following challenges:

- Many joint degrees are located in research-intensive institutions, which place a strong emphasis on innovation. Self-employability is as important as employability. With it comes a need for certain skills to be acquired as adjuncts to the headline discipline: these may include intellectual property rights, marketing, and specialist IT skills.
- Some element of entrepreneurship or enterprise education is thus desirable across the higher education curriculum, in proportion and character to each particular discipline. While this is easier to achieve in higher education cultures already attuned to the employability imperative and in HEIs which have an entrepreneurial outlook, it is a challenge which faces all EMJMD consortia.
- Advisory boards help ease the tensions which develop between academia and the world of business. They need to be multi-stakeholder in character and to involve alumni, careers counsellors, chambers of

commerce with SME membership, local and national policy makers, professional bodies, trade unions, as well as employers. Advisory boards can also be a rich source of mentors.

- Internships and other forms of work placement, such as volunteering, can be difficult to organise, particularly for mobile international students. Their timing, level and intensity all pose challenges, as do questions of supervision, quality and credit-allocation, but when well defined and delivered they bring substantial added value.
- In an age when professionals can move relatively easily from country to country, career guidance needs to strengthen its cross-border dimension.
- ‘Jointness’ can be expressed in inter-disciplinarity. This can give graduates greater potential access to, for example, emerging ‘green’ professions, particularly if the learning and teaching methodology is problem-based and in a real-world setting.
- Joint degrees have always promised ‘soft skills’ alongside specialist academic competences. These can be enhanced and given direct application by the stronger participation of students in the management and quality assurance of the degree.

While there is no counter-factual to reveal the trajectory of what an EMJMD graduate would have achieved had he or she not enrolled in the programme, the new generation of EMJMDs has sharpened the focus on competences and employability. Public, private and social enterprises are encouraged to participate. Proposals are expected to set out the detail of employer involvement and to demonstrate how the EMJMD will foster entrepreneurship.

Nearly 70% of the EMMC graduates had found a full-time job after their studies, with almost 60% of those having found one in less than two months after graduating.

Graduate Impact Survey, 2015, EMA

Participants welcomed this policy platform. In order to build on it, they called for longitudinal research, based on systematic graduate tracking of selected representative cohorts and using official data, EMA surveys, social media, etc. They also reiterated the oft-repeated cry for employers to be better informed about the EMJMD action and its excellence. This insistence links with the theme of sustainability and is taken up in a later section.

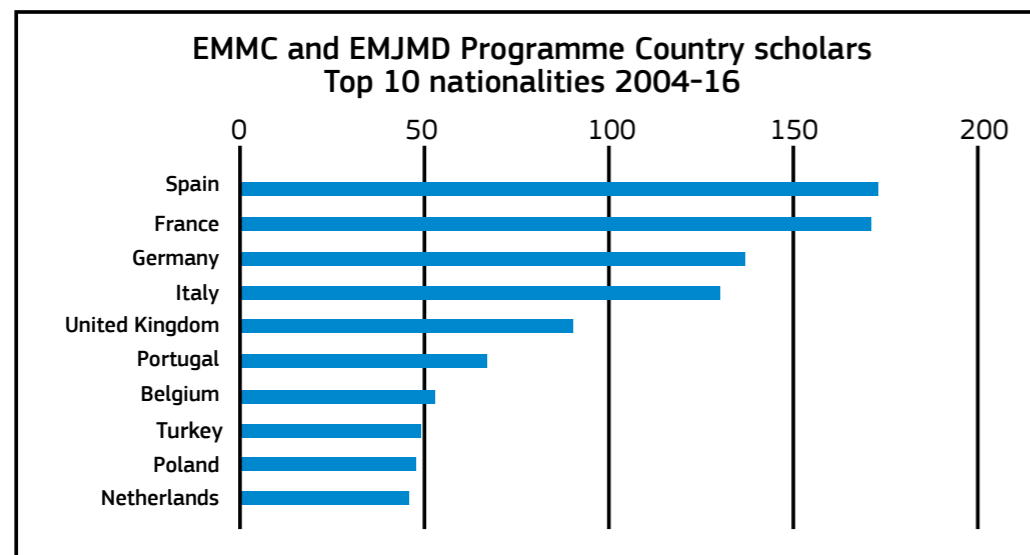


## WORKSHOP 2: QUALITY ASSURANCE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES – EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

Over the past years, QA agencies and stakeholders have been working together to develop and test various approaches that facilitate the external QA of joint programmes and, in particular, reflect their joint character. These have demonstrated that the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) together form a sound basis for the QA of joint programmes. Yet the full recognition of formal outcomes resulting from a single external quality assurance procedure often remains a cumbersome and bureaucratic process.

The European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes has been developed to address these difficulties. It defines standards that are based on the agreed tools of the EHEA, without applying additional national criteria. This is expected to facilitate the adoption of integrated approaches to the quality assurance of joint programmes, genuinely reflecting their joint character.

However, fostering quality teaching presents HEIs with a range of challenges at a time when the higher education sector is coming under pressure from many different directions. Institutions need to ensure that the education they offer meets the expectations of students and the requirements of employers, both today and in the future.



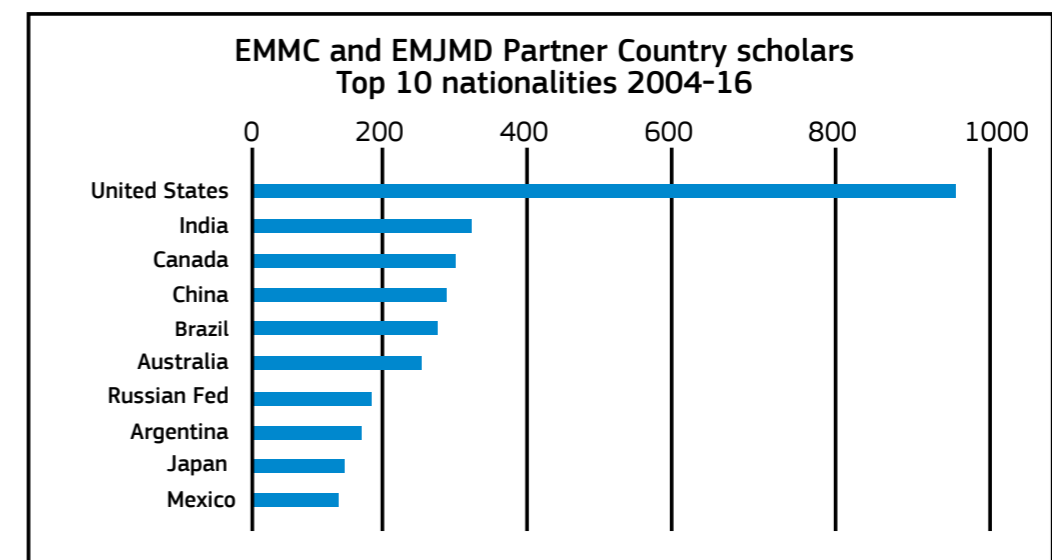
Yet HEIs are complex organisations where the institution-wide vision and strategy needs to be well-aligned with bottom-up practices and innovations in learning and teaching. Developing institutions as effective learning communities in which excellent pedagogical practices are designed and shared also requires leadership and collaboration.

### Workshop discussions

The quality assurance workshop focused on the current QA landscape and the challenges of implementing the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. The most significant elements of the discussion were based on the recognition that:

- The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) – an instrument central to the Bologna Process – have been revised, placing strong emphasis on student-centred learning

- Bologna ministers approved (in 2015) the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes<sup>7</sup>
- At the same time, the ministers committed to reviewing their national legislations with a view to achieving full compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC), including, therefore, the Convention's 'Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees'<sup>8</sup>
- The legitimacy of student participation in quality assurance procedures is now widely accepted
- The efforts of students and alumni in the Erasmus Mundus Association (EMA) to monitor the quality of joint degrees continues to gather momentum



The revised ESG, by refreshing the consensus, bring particular questions into the foreground. At the level of course design, how can 'jointness' be enhanced? Here there was a clear view. It would be by aligning the academic strategies of all the partners and by expressing 'jointness' in the learning outcomes, a process requiring active staff exchange between partner HEIs and the involvement of teaching staff at all levels in continuous course development. It would also be by involving stakeholders in the overall architecture of the course, rather than merely in its constituent parts.

And in terms of course delivery, how can student-centred learning be embedded and evaluated? Participants stressed the crucial role played by academic counselling in negotiating the transitions between different learning cultures and environments. Mobile students require support when moving between placements. For them, the academic and the personal are not easily separable; institutions must therefore work to ensure the best possible collaboration and understanding between their specialist internal agencies.

How can 'jointness' be assessed, when the course is distributed between different national quality assurance regimes? The workshop considered this question, coming up with a litany of the impediments that national legislations still inflict on joint programmes. To cite just a few: the fact that external stakeholder involvement in course design is not legal in every jurisdiction; the fact that in some countries courses can be modified only at the point of application for re-accreditation; the insistence on award templates which cannot accommodate multi-partner cross-border course delivery.

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[https://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/bologna/02\\_European\\_Approach\\_QA\\_of\\_Joint\\_Programmes\\_v1\\_0.pdf](https://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/bologna/02_European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Programmes_v1_0.pdf)

8

<https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=320284&SecMode=1&DocId=822138&Usage=2>

*"It is very important to be able to exchange good practices and see how one can improve the own programme on a regular basis. It is surprising how many similar problems other coordinators face and which solutions worked for them. It is also helpful to meet the EACEA staff in person. As we don't have a national chapter of EMJMD coordinators for our country, it is a good way to meet there."*

These and other factors expose the limitations imposed on academic autonomy which make mature institutional collaboration difficult and risk introducing into course design dysfunctional compromise solutions.

### The 'European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes'

In this light, the workshop turned to the European Approach. Would it solve all the problems? It is worth recalling its content:

- The Approach depends on the use of EHEA instruments, notably the ESG, the EHEA qualifications framework (QF-EHEA), the European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ECTS), and the LRC
- It is applicable to the quality assurance of cross-border joint degrees, thus circumventing national requirements
- It sets a premium on the evaluation of 'jointness'
- Where national legislation requires programme accreditation, this can be secured via an agency on the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) – and will be recognised throughout the EHEA
- Otherwise, it prescribes a methodology consistent with ESG: self-evaluation, site visit by a panel of experts, report, and follow-up

The reality is that the Approach, although endorsed by all Bologna ministers, has still to be enshrined in the legal frameworks of all Bologna countries. It will have to be enacted by what will effectively be pilot or pioneer consortia<sup>9</sup>, publicised across and beyond the HE community, embraced by all parties, and implemented in a manner consistent with ESG.

While it is true that EMMC/EMJMDs are located in institutions which abide by elaborated and agreed QA procedures, both external and internal, very few of the course websites link to the relevant institutional pages. Indeed, it is rare that they make reference to quality assurance beyond an indication of how and when their applications for EU funding succeeded in meeting the selection criteria.

There remains much work to do to bring EMJMDs into the ambit of the revised ESG and the European Approach. Given the rising profile of quality assurance – and, in high fee-paying regimes, of consumer protection – applicants are likely to require convincing evidence that their chosen course is well anchored in compatible institutional and national quality cultures.

In the face of this challenge, workshop participants issued a triple call to action: to national agencies, to engage in dialogue with national quality assurance agencies; to institutions, to lobby national policy-making bodies, rectors' conferences, social partners;



<sup>9</sup> For example, NVAO, the Dutch-Flemish accreditation agency, <https://nvaio.com/quality-assurance-systems/international>

and to themselves – the actors most intimately involved – the students, the academics, the institutional administrators.

It is the EMJMD activists on the ground who, in the first instance, will trigger the European Approach, assessing its potential in a variety of contexts and testing its capacity to overcome local constraints.

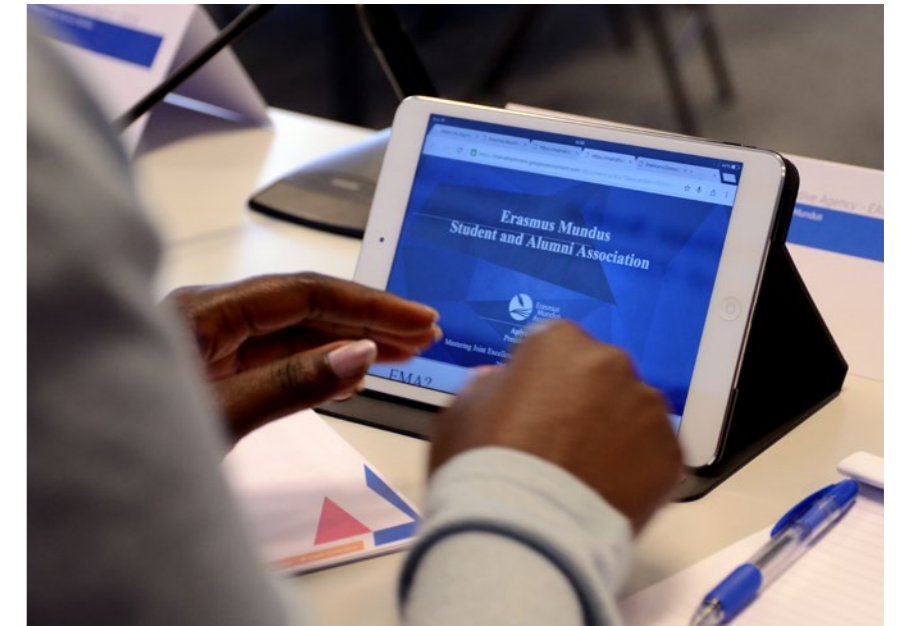
*"Meeting, discussing and sharing with colleagues in Europe is one of the few things you can really miss as a coordinating administrator. I strongly believe we need to support each other across countries and programmes. The face to face meeting can only enhance the collaboration."*

For this to happen, and in order to help them raise awareness among the full range of stakeholders, they need access to a forum which incentivises active participation by offering them a rich resource in trouble-shooting. Three-quarters of the respondents to the conference evaluation exercise indicated that they would appreciate the opportunity to exchange experiences online.

### The role of students

The ESG regard students as key internal stakeholders. They share responsibility in promoting a quality culture. In joint programmes, they have a unique role: they and they only, among all the parties to the development and delivery of the course, travel the entire internationally integrated learning path.

Of course this means that student satisfaction surveys should feature in course monitoring. Participants felt that students' evaluations of their experience should be periodic and systematic as well as summative. They also felt that there should be a stronger focus on e-learning for complementary studies.



The Quality Course Advisory Board (QCAB) attached to EMA collects data on student satisfaction, which it disseminates to course coordinators as well as to the public at large<sup>10</sup>. It gathers views from both alumni and current students in a Course Quality Student Services survey (CQSS)<sup>11</sup>, giving an additional retrospective dimension to course perceptions.

The role of students, however, is much more than reactive. The ESG Standard 2.4 states that the groups of external experts who carry out the site visits and produce the final reports should include one or more students. The strong expectation, therefore, is that students should also be represented on self-evaluation teams, as well as on course management teams and advisory boards. There is opportunity now, in the rapidly evolving quality assurance environment, for good practice in student participation to be collected and shared.

<sup>10</sup> Its course browser can be accessed at [https://erasmusmundusassociation.shinyapps.io/Course\\_browser](https://erasmusmundusassociation.shinyapps.io/Course_browser)

<sup>11</sup> The Course Quality Student Services survey is an annual survey conducted by QCAB. The survey evaluates the perception of students about their overall Erasmus Mundus experience, as well as the experience students have at each university attended as part of their course. The results of the CQSS survey can be found on the EMA website at <http://www.em-a.eu>

### WORKSHOP 3: PROMOTION, VISIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Under the Erasmus+ programme projects are requested to put greater emphasis on raising awareness of their activities among a wide spectrum of potential target groups. It is important that there is a joint effort to capitalise on the results and lessons learnt. In order to maximise the potential of the funded activities, it is necessary to share and integrate this wealth of experience into new initiatives and to create the space for possible synergies.

Sustainability is a complex concept. It requires time and commitment involving financial and non-financial aspects. Achieving sustainability implies learning from experience, making decisions about which elements of the programme to sustain, selecting the right strategies, and using the right tools to build support for the programme. Non-financial sustainability can encompass, for example, the notions of integration, continued cooperation, added value, innovation, quality, visibility, employability and transparency.

Sustainable partnerships are often based on shared financial planning and promotion strategies. But it is not solely the partners' responsibility; academics, students, Erasmus+ National Agencies, as well as international organisations, can work to promote the global benefits of Erasmus Mundus.

Nowadays there are numerous opportunities for the high quality promotion of EMMC/EMJMDs, but there are also many programmes which directly compete with the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree courses. Competition may be so intense that it is of crucial importance to make sure that the added value of the international experience is well presented and convincing.

#### Workshop discussions

The European Approach to quality assurance represents a potential step change in the development of EMJMDs. When in place, it will give them enhanced international visibility via EQAR, assist in their promotion and contribute to their sustainability. The third workshop was therefore timely.

#### Promotion and visibility

Procedurally, the workshop's three designated themes proved difficult to disentangle. Visibility is heavily dependent on promotion, while continuing promotion is a very likely precondition of sustainability. It is helpful to distinguish between internal and external visibility. Without the first – and the institutional back-up that it implies – the second is much more difficult to achieve. Course representatives confirmed that both the promotion and the sustainability of their courses depend crucially on the extent to which they can be durably 'anchored' in the institution's portfolio.

Those who determine resource allocation in the institutions respond positively to a range of factors: to name only the most pressing – evidence of student demand; alignment with institutional strategy; prestige of association with peer and/or highly ranked HEIs in other countries; synergies with the research agenda; economies of scale.

In the view of participants, these are crucial in securing effective promotion of their courses. Institutional support is critical to external visibility. This requires an international development strategy that gives due prominence to jointly designed, jointly delivered EMJMD programmes. It is important that the strategy is explicit in its listing of the benefits. Important, too that it stresses the synergies with its research strategy, demonstrating how far the academics are research-active and how far their research outcomes feed into the EMJMD curriculum. Yet more important is the commitment in both strategies to undertake collaborative work with foreign partners.

Only by reference to the official institutional strategy can an EMJMD consortium argue successfully for the necessary human, financial and material resources to complement those provided by the European Union. Only when enshrined in formal statements by the institutional policy-making bodies can action be sought from marketing and recruitment departments, to ensure visibility via the production of flyers and prospectuses, direct advertising in the press and on social media, online portals, recruitment fairs, and agents abroad.

EMJMD consortia need to have access to the full panoply of recruitment techniques deployed in transnational higher education. This is much easier in national HE cultures which encourage institutions to be entrepreneurial. Not all consortia operate in such environments; hence the need for opportunities to learn of good practice elsewhere and to assess the possibilities of adopting it.

The promotion and visibility imperative has to be addressed by would-be EMJMD consortia at the application stage. They have to anticipate how they will secure continuity after the conclusion of EU financing period. Once the EU funding comes to an end, the question of sustainability becomes urgent. The need to promote the course throws up a new range of challenges. Institutional leaderships will expect business plans, alternative sources of income, replacement scholarship schemes, recourse to low-cost advertising (one participant recommended Google Ads), and a demonstrable capacity to generate revenue from public and private sectors.

The measures taken will vary considerably, depending on location and on discipline. Participants agreed that the first recourse was the recruitment of self-funded students. For this, they recommended alumni ambassadors, graduate employment data, employer testimonies, work placement possibilities, together with full backing of institutional public relations and marketing services.

#### Sustainability

Discussion led to two linked considerations: first, that the problem of sustainability cannot be left until the impending expiry of European funding; secondly, that it has to be tackled by the consortium, not by the coordinating institution alone. From the outset, in other words, collaboration must be close and continuous enough to stimulate distance foresight. It is no good to think only in terms of the current academic year and the daily round of fine-tuning course delivery, however essential this may be.



Participants received advanced notice of a report into sustainability being undertaken by the EACEA. Full details have yet to be published, but the workshop was able to take note of the broad findings. When EMJMDs were discontinued, it was generally the result of funding difficulties and insufficient institutional support. Those that had continued beyond the EU financing period had done so by attracting self-funded students. Sometimes, this transition had occasioned significant course re-design. Encouragingly, there were reports of positive impact on institutions, in terms, for example, of the setting up of an International Office, a boost to research collaboration, and a growth in the number of courses delivered in English.

The triple theme of the workshop produced wide-ranging debate and a proliferation of different perspectives. But in the contributions of all participants, one issue stood out: the Erasmus Mundus brand.

Coordinators see themselves in a predicament. They can use the EMJMD name and logo for as long as their programme is funded by the European Union. Once the flow of funding stops, and once the contractual monitoring by the Commission comes to an end, the use of the brand name is curtailed. The brand, as everyone knows, is a strong one, but the stronger the brand, the greater the risk of damage when it can no longer be used.

At best, the joint degree course slips back into the in-house Master portfolio. At a stroke, its visibility is reduced. Having lost a key component of its competitive advantage, it has to compete with in-country courses of equal quality and lower running costs, as well as with distance learning courses. At worst, having lost its prestigious EMJMD label, it may be perceived as failing, and therefore as presenting a higher risk to potential students than the in-house offerings.

The workshop also considered economies of scale as a way to achieve sustainability. Here, the most frequent recourse is the opening up of EMJMD modules to other second cycle pathways present in the institutional portfolio. On balance, this is regarded as positive. Beyond the increased scope for cost-sharing, the academic advantages are significant. Students have access to a wider body of teachers and fellow students. A larger group of academics have access to the EMJMD students and therefore greater familiarity with the programme's mission. The profile of the course within the institution rises accordingly. Constant monitoring is required, but the very task of averting the dilution of academic focus demands more concerted steering by the consortium, which is itself of great benefit to students and staff alike.

*"This is an opportunity for the main stakeholders in the Erasmus Mundus community to meet and brainstorm in a bid to ensure the sustainability of the program and share experiences and ideas."*

## WORKSHOP 4: STUDENT ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

Nearly 19.000 students from around the globe have pursued an Erasmus Mundus Master degree. They originate from close to 200 countries around the world. Over the last ten years the student selection has become more and more competitive: while in 2007, 14 out of 100 excellent students were awarded a scholarship, in 2016 it is only the top 6 students (out of 100) to receive an EMJMD scholarship. The central aspect to the student experience is mobility; EMJMD students travel to and live in at least two, mostly European, countries during their programme.

With the experience of mobility come opportunities, such as belonging to an international network and enjoying enhanced employability perspectives, as well as encountering different cultural realities. A unique feature of the EMJMD student experience is the intense learning which takes place both within and outside an international classroom and which blends academic knowledge with valuable intercultural competences.

At the same time, a highly mobile degree programme presents a number of challenges, such as visa processes, cultural adjustment, and the time and energy needed to move from one location to another.

### Workshop discussions

The discussions in the fourth workshop confirmed the aspects raised in the other three, but with a stronger student-centred focus.

### The pull factors

Unsurprisingly, the EMA Graduate Impact Survey revealed that 65% of respondents cited scholarships as their major motivating factor, followed by 51% who were attracted by possibility of living and studying in Europe, and 45% attracted by the academic level of the EMJMD. This underlines the difficulties experienced by EMJMD courses: once their EU funding is terminated; they may be just as inherently attractive, but they may fail to attract.

Over half of the graduates, when asked which of the widely rehearsed benefits they rated most highly, pointed to intercultural competence. This, too, is perhaps unsurprising, since it is a versatile competence which can satisfy personal, social and labour market needs.

The workshop participants looked carefully at the pull factors, of which by far the most powerful was the hope that graduation would lead to satisfying employment. Despite the fact that – according to the Survey – two thirds of EMJMD graduates had found jobs (the majority within two months), 73% considered 'the links to employment to be too weak' during their study period.

Participants were of course aware of the background. Despite the efforts of institutions and enterprises, as well as ten years of dialogue sponsored by the European Commission's University-Business Forum, productive working relationships have never been easy to construct. While some disciplines lend themselves more readily than others to collaborative input, the respective cultures, priorities, timeframes of the two sectors do not automatically fall into alignment.



In the workshop sessions, much was made of the opportunities missed: internships should be easier to access, better integrated into the programme, and embedded in closer relations between the worlds of academia, business and industry. There was nevertheless recognition that internships are difficult to arrange, particularly in the contexts of multiple mobilities and employers' lack of awareness of EMJMDs.

### Disadvantaged students

Participants then turned to equally challenging issues. Given the emphasis placed by Erasmus+ on inclusion, they considered how to facilitate access to disadvantaged students. In respect of refugee applicants who might lack documentary evidence of their prior qualifications, it was noted that all institutions in the EHEA should observe the relevant articles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention<sup>12</sup>.

The workshop was aware of the wide range of special needs: physical, psychological, socio-economic. It focused on generic issues, ranging from the inadequacy of commercial insurance policies to difficulties of definition and identification.

*"I found it much more useful than I expected. It was good to get the understanding from conversations that we are on track with our new programme and to hear how other groups overcame difficulties"*

One problem preoccupied the participants. How to deal with applicants who chose not to divulge their special circumstances until just before arrival? Not uncommon were students with children, who failed to disclose the fact, perhaps fearful that the logistic difficulties would prejudice their application. Clearly, ways have to be found of reassuring applicants that their legitimate special needs will not put their application in jeopardy.

The discussion revealed that many institutions are reactive rather than proactive. Beyond national policies promoting access, of which many are long-standing, there was little evidence of cross-border recruitment campaigns which target particular groups among the disadvantaged. Some participants observed that an enhanced scholarship rate for disadvantaged students, such as exists in Erasmus student mobility<sup>13</sup>, would encourage applicants.

### Recognition of the degree

Some problems reported by graduates go beyond the ability of institutions to resolve. No institution can guarantee, for example, that the EMJMD award – however well supported by a detailed Diploma Supplement – will be recognised in the student's home country, particularly if this country lies outside the EHEA.

The Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees<sup>14</sup>, which was adopted by the Committee of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 2016, is addressed to the countries which are parties to the LRC; on third countries it has only a rhetorical force. It may be that UNESCO will ease the problem of recognition by achieving tighter articulation and implementation of the various regional conventions.

Meanwhile, the success of the EMJMD action suggests that it will become harder for a partner country to refuse recognition of its prestigious awards – particularly if the beneficiaries are some of the brightest students that the country in question has produced. In this regard, the 'Study in Europe' recruitment fairs<sup>15</sup>, financed by the European Commission, are an important promotional instrument, not just for attracting students, but also for informing governments.

12 See the EAR-HEI Manual, chapter 21, at <http://eurorecognition.eu/Manual/EAR%20HEI.pdf> It contains useful guidance, based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee's 2010 Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (para.20 + explanatory note).

13 See the section on Special Needs Support, ERASMUS+ Programme Guide 2016, p.44

14 Revised Recommendation of the Recognition of Joint Degrees, Council of Europe / UNESCO, 2016

15 For example, the event held in Seoul just prior to the conference and organised by a consortium including the British Council, Campus France, the DAAD, EP-Nuffic, the Archimedes Foundation and the Academic Cooperation Association  
<http://www.campusfrance.org/en/event/study-europe-fair-south-korea>

### Multiple mobilities

Discussion of multiple mobilities once again stressed the importance of 'jointness'. Whatever the degree of contrast between different academic and social environments, there had to be a sense of continuity and integration when moving between them, otherwise morale would drop and studies would suffer.

Participants emphasised that the smoothest transitions were those conceived as hand-overs, not just between institutions or even between course modules, but by named tutor to named tutor. Nothing replaces the personal touch.

*"Face-to-face is the best!"*

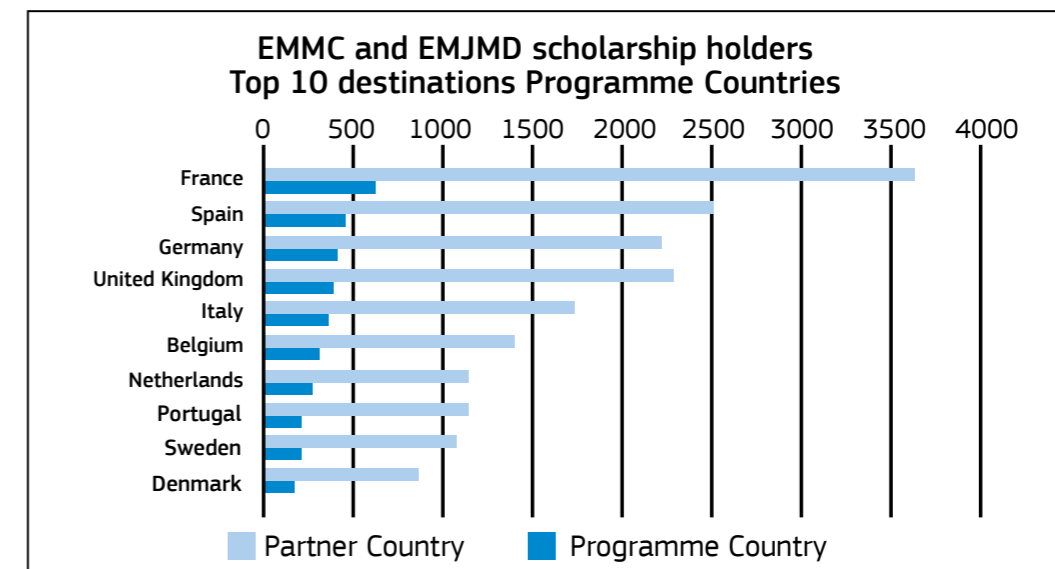
Even with the easiest of transitions, there could be problems. The workshop dwelt for some time, for example, on the challenges facing itinerant students as they accumulate more and more baggage. Not all acquisitions can be stored in the cloud.

Other problems are persistent and complex, precisely because they require close liaison between institutions, national and foreign authorities, particularly ministries, embassies and consulates. These are the problems which most beset students as they embark on the Erasmus Mundus itinerary: problems of visa, transfer from one host country to another, and the related issue of access to banking.

All are compounded by factors such as language, translation and notarisation of documents, fees, not to mention the complex interface, within the EU, of Schengen and non-Schengen countries.

Students call for better liaison between institution and authorities, and they are right to do so. But the financial crisis, the politicisation of migration, the surge in refugees, and the instability consequent on all these developments, makes the issues much less tractable.

Even more crucial, therefore, is the wealth of hands-on experience accumulated by course coordinators. Communicated with ease between members of the same consortium, it could also be profitably and rapidly disseminated between consortia, given the existence of an efficient interactive online platform.

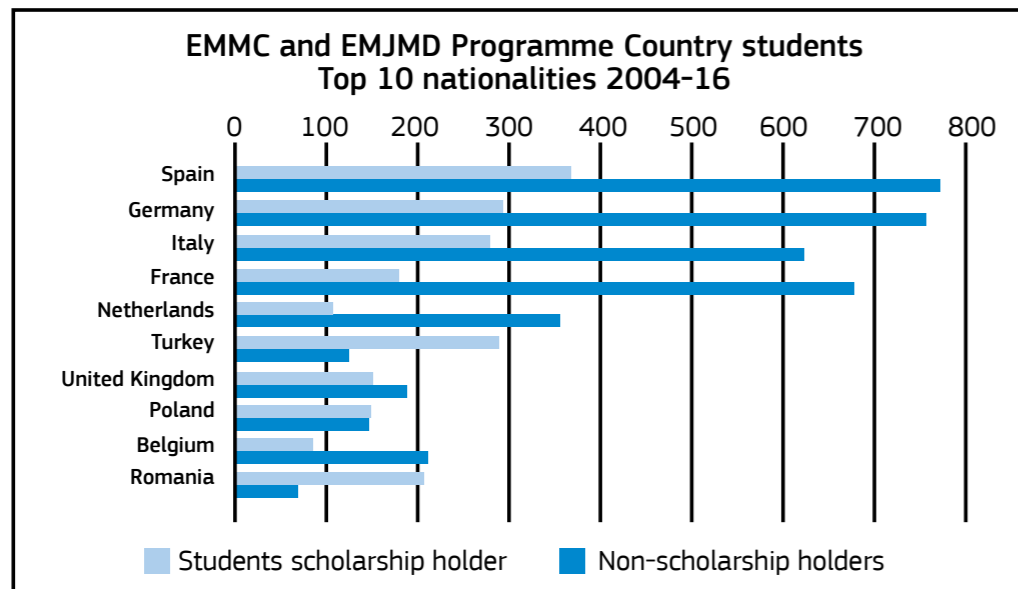


### The Directive on conditions of entry and residence of third country students

Into this context comes the EU's new Directive 2016/801 on 'the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing'<sup>16</sup>.

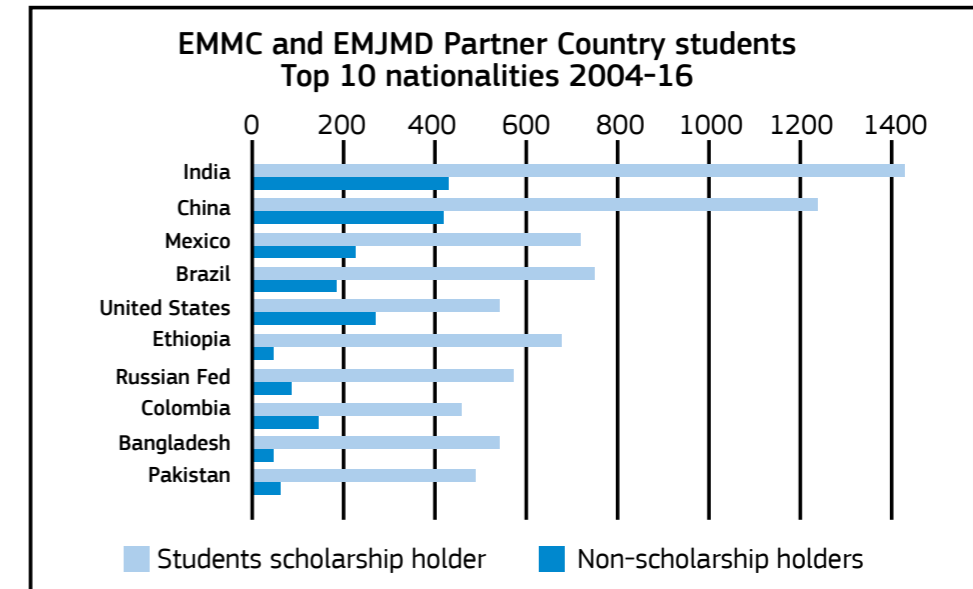
**Directive (EU) 2016/801 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing**

This Directive aims to facilitate intra-EU mobility for researchers and students, inter alia by reducing the administrative burden related to mobility in several Member States. For this purpose, this Directive sets up a specific intra-EU mobility scheme whereby a third-country national who holds an authorisation for the purpose of research or studies issued by the first Member State is entitled to enter, stay and carry out part of the research activity or studies in one or several second Member States in accordance with the provisions governing mobility under this Directive. (Recital 44)



In other words, students registered on joint programmes which have built-in first and onward destinations 'shall be entitled' to enter for a period of up to 360 days. During this period their transfers from the first to subsequent host countries are covered by the initial authorisation. EMJMD programmes are not named, but were clearly in the mind of the legislators. They belong, in the words of the Directive, to a 'Union programme that comprises mobility measures'.

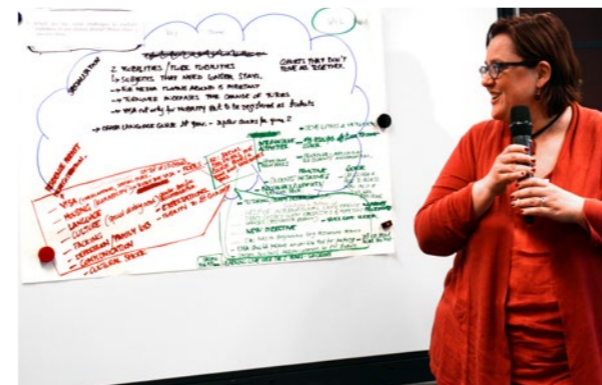
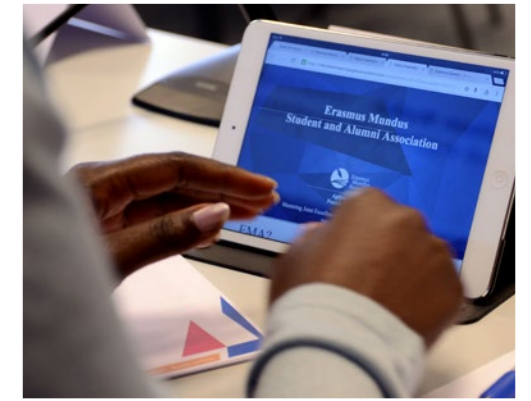
*"There is valuable information that is so specific to joint masters degrees, we can never get this quality of information alone at our institutions and countries."*



Much of the detail of intra-EU mobility by third country students nevertheless remains at the discretion of Member State governments. The Directive has now entered a transposition period which ends in May 2018. By that date, Member States are required to have decided and declared how exactly they intend to implement it. It is important, during this period, for institutions and national sectoral bodies to monitor, join and influence the discussions.

Thereafter, it will still be important to keep a watchful eye on developments; identifying and eliminating impediments to multiple mobilities is likely to be a long-term task. Participants saw here further indication of the need for a structured forum, supported at EU level, in which they could address technicalities and pool their experiences.

<sup>16</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016L0801&from=EN>





### 3. OVERARCHING CONCLUSION

The conference was an undoubted success. Of the 165 Joint Master projects launched since 2010, 106 were able to send either one or two representatives. In conversation, they commented favourably on the content, the structure and the organisation of the event. In their formal evaluations, they reported that they had benefitted principally in two ways: by ‘gathering ideas on improving the implementation of EMJMDs’ and by ‘networking’. These reactions were gratifying, since it was precisely for these purposes that the EACEA had convened the conference.

The networking had three dimensions. Participants had time to compare experiences and to discuss, both in the working groups and in the generous networking slots. It allowed the exchange of good practice and problem-solving. Success stories emerged and so did an awareness that ways must be found for the life of the platform to continue.

These tangible outcomes were made possible by the format of the conference. It had relatively few – and consequently more effective – plenary sessions. Over half the conference time was devoted to a world-café system of four workshops within which participants rotated from table to table, following a structured agenda and designating ad hoc rapporteurs entrusted to keep the record. These in turn reported to formal rapporteurs for the benefit of the final plenary.

The conference format brought into full view the framework in which EMJMD courses operate. They are embedded in general principles – educational, social and political. These are backed by a consensus of many different actors, but are realised in practice by small groups of academics working on a complex case-by-case basis. It quickly became apparent that the distance between overarching rationale and the intricate detail of course management is dramatic. The inherent risk is that contact will be weakened or lost between those who deliver the courses and those who are the guardians of the EMJMD mission.

This is why the conference was important. It wanted to safeguard coherence and cohesion, as well as to move forward on the basis of strengthened consensus. It sought to make sure that beneficiaries continue to range across a wide spectrum, from the individual mobile student to the higher education institution, and onward to the assembly of nations in the EHEA and their partner country partners.

The EACEA stated explicitly that it was looking for feedback on policy and programme design from those with the hands-on experience of joint programme management and coordination. By way of preparation, participants had access to relevant prior reading, notably to a recently published set of articles dealing with employability, the student perspective, quality assurance, and the management of joint programme.

The first workshop focused on the **management and added value of Joint Programmes (including employability and links to the world of work)**. EMJMDs have a long and proven record in attracting students to courses and institutions to the programme. Their added value – to the internationalisation agenda, in inter-institutional collaboration, and in the competences acquired by students on foreign study placement – is widely appreciated. The workshop reasserted it, but did not insist.

Instead, it looked closely at ways of enhancing the ‘jointness’ of courses and of raising the level of employability. Participants agreed that optimal ‘jointness’ is multi-dimensional; it characterises all the strands of activity which together make up a Joint Master – academic, pedagogic, strategic, administrative, logistic. ‘Jointness’ requires sensitive foresight at the concept and planning stages, as well as constant vigilance when the course is up and running. Beyond the evident need for adequate resource, participants stressed the need for deeper reflection on techniques and good practice in consortial teambuilding.

Regarding employability, the workshop recognised that the problems involved in university-employer relationships have historically been well rehearsed and less well resolved. Financial crisis, however, had created a new situation and an added urgency. The EMJMD programme has sharpened the focus on employer involvement in course design and provision of work placements, as well as on the role of alumni. Good

practices duly came through in the workshop discussions, but were qualified by the awareness that they may often be local and difficult to scale up. Participants called for more focused alumni tracking through Europe’s segmented labour markets, to give new consortia a better delineated panorama of the cross-border viability of good practices.

The working group on **Quality Assurance (QA) of Joint Programmes – Excellence in Teaching and Learning** also considered ‘jointness’, this time in relation to student-centred learning and teaching and to student assessment. It discussed the quality indicators which could be used by courses as a basis for self-evaluation. Participants agreed that there was a need to develop more reliable methods of assuring the quality of digital learning. Looking towards the future, they welcomed the recently agreed European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

**Promotion, visibility and sustainability** were interlocking themes which proved difficult to disentangle. The workshop discussed a number of promotional activities, all of which routinely feature in the work of an institution’s recruitment, marketing and international offices. The problem was a deeper one: how to convince the institution to take on board the full range of its responsibilities to the consortium, for example the need to provide replacement scholarships once the EMJMD funding had expired. Fall-back positions, such as recourse to blended learning, were considered, but these might diminish the added value of the course. Participants expressed a strong preference for one particular way forward: to be able to use the Erasmus Mundus label following the termination of EU financing.

The workshop devoted to **student issues and perspectives** revisited the issue of employability, once again urging business and academia to higher levels of cooperation. EMJMD offers full degree scholarship to the best Master students worldwide; participants therefore looked in detail at the question of widening access for disadvantaged students. Here it recommended uprated scholarships, which would be of direct benefit to students, as well as raising the institutional profile of their needs. The paramount importance of ‘jointness’ came back into focus as participants discussed the benefits and difficulties of multiple mobilities. There was cautious reassurance that some of the visa problems would be resolved by the new EU Directive on ‘the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training [...]’.

**What, then, were the outcomes of the conference?** Academic participants, the coordinators of EMJMD courses, were by and large confident in their ability to steer consortia to the benefit of students. At the same time, they were clear about the ways in which they might be better supported:

- **By institutions**

EMJMD consortium members ask of their institutions that they commit wholeheartedly to embed, to anchor, EMJMDs in their course portfolios. This means giving them a significant place in institutional strategy (international, research, human resource) and regarding them as potential long-term assets. It means, correspondingly, assigning them adequate material resource and effective access to those internal specialist agencies whose support is critical to the quality and the sustainability of the course. EMJMD consortia steer cross-border provision of high quality graduate education; in twenty-first-century universities, they believe that they should be not marginal, but central to institutional development.

- **By national authorities**

Using their legal competence for higher education in conjunction with their commitments to the EHEA, governments are asked to give full support to EMJMDs located on their territories. In the view of conference participants, this means aligning national legislation with the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Recognition Convention, publicising cross-border initiatives in quality assurance, and incentivising institutions to sustain their EMJMDs beyond the EU funding period.

- **By the European Commission and the EACEA**

Top of participants' agenda is their wish to be able to continue using the Erasmus Mundus label or, at the very least, to be able to refer applicants to an archive of 'former EMJMD courses' prominent on the Europa website. They express the need, too, for a structured and centrally managed network support to EMJMD consortia. This would allow them to probe in greater detail issues such as consortial teambuilding, employer involvement, alumni tracking, and the role and quality assurance of digital learning. It would give them the space to confer on the implementation of measures such as the European Approach and the Directive on the entry and residence of third-country nationals.

*"Thank you very much for arranging this event!"*

Cross-border Joint Master programmes are complex ventures. They require high quality cooperation between higher education institutions in different countries. It is crucial for good practice to be recognised and to circulate freely, to the benefit of students, academics, administrators and policy makers. And it is the EMJMD representatives who best understand the day-to-day realities of programme delivery; they must be able to talk to each other.

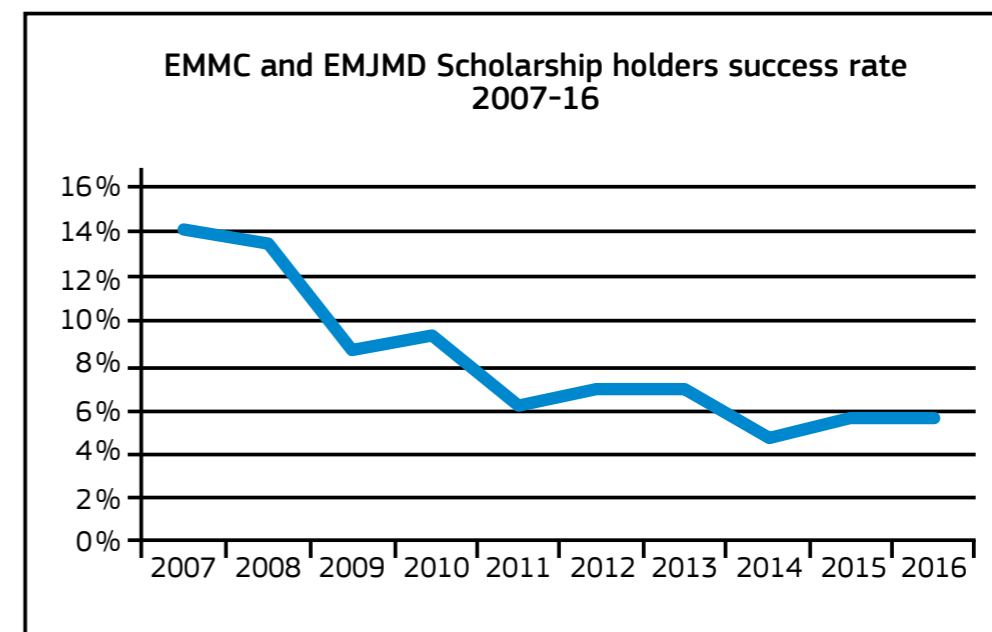
This is why – in each of the themed workshops – conference participants stressed the desirability of a platform in which they could exchange good practice and trouble-shoot problems. They particularly welcomed the EACEA's proposal to enable the creation of cluster forums to encourage follow up of the principal challenges. The key issues of employability and sustainability are no doubt heavily constrained nationally and institutionally, but this is all the more reason why EMJMD consortia, who may sometimes feel isolated, need to know that they can have access to the wisdom of a community of their peers. By laying the foundation of a networking platform, the conference took a decisive step in this direction.



## ANNEX I. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ERASMUS MUNDUS AND ERASMUS+: EMJMD PROGRAMMES

An EMMC/ EMJMD is a second-cycle integrated international study programme of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits. It is delivered by an international consortium of higher education institutions (HEIs) from several programme countries and from partner countries in all parts of the world<sup>17</sup>. Often the HEIs are joined by other educational and non-educational partners from Europe and beyond and count on the expertise of highly qualified scholars/ guest lecturers. They award Master degrees which must be duly accredited. This can be either as a joint degree (i.e. a single diploma issued on behalf of at least two HEIs from different programme countries and duly accredited in those countries) or as multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two duly accredited HEIs from different programme countries).

An EMMC/EMJMD can exist in any academic discipline. It is characterised by its high degree of integration, as well by the excellence of its academic content and its learning and teaching methodology. The degrees are selected according to strict criteria, receive generous funding for three intakes of students and offer full degree scholarships to the best Master students worldwide.



The courses selected display a high degree of 'jointness'. This means a jointly designed and fully integrated academic curriculum, backed by collective implementation: e.g. joint student application, selection and admission procedures; joint assessment regulations; and shared quality assurance (QA) mechanisms. The concept of 'jointness' was one of the principal themes of the conference on 'Mastering Joint Excellence'.

The Erasmus Mundus programmes now span twelve years of continuing evolution and rising popularity. With sufficient numbers of institutions now engaged in the EMJMD programme, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is also a major beneficiary.

EMJMD are distinguished by their academic excellence, the high level of integration of the courses between multiple higher education institutions across countries, and their internationalisation. 75% of the EMJMD scholarships budget fund partner country student scholarships, aiming to attract the best world students.

<sup>17</sup> Programme countries are the 28 Member States of the European Union, plus the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey. Participant third countries are known as partner countries. They are listed, by global region, on pages 23 and 24 of the 2016 ERASMUS+ Programme Guide.

## ANNEX II. CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Wednesday, 29 June 2016

- 08.45 Registration and welcome coffee**  
Plenary session chairman: Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit, Erasmus+: Higher Education – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- 09.30 Welcome and introduction to the conference**  
- Welcome speech by Ms Adrienn Kiraly, Head of Cabinet of Mr Tibor Navracsics – Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport  
- Welcome speech by Mr Brian Holmes, Director, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- 10.00 Presentation of the conference**, the structure of the workshop sessions and the topics to be discussed by Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit, Erasmus+: Higher Education – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- Film**
- 10.15 Presentation of the 'Policy paper on Joint Degrees'** by Ms Claire Morel, Head of Unit, International cooperation in Education and Youth, Jean Monnet actions – Directorate-General Education and Culture, European Commission
- 10.45 Presentation: 'Joint Degrees in the Bologna Process'** – Mr David Crosier – Eurydice coordinator – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- 11.15 Case study from 'ProDeJIP'** (International Association for the Promotion and Development of Joint International Programmes) by Mr Boas Erez – President of ProDeJIP
- 11.30 Networking Coffee break** followed by Networking activities (groups divided first by disciplines, then by project selection year and finally by group of countries).
- 12.45 Lunch**
- 14:00 Parallel workshops (Session 1)**
- Workshop 1: Management and Added Value of Joint Programmes** (including Employability and links to the world of work)  
Chair: Ms Melita Kovacevic, University of Zagreb  
Rapporteur: Ms Madalena Pereira, International Erasmus + Contact Point National Agency Erasmus+ Education and Training (NUFFIC), NL
- Workshop 2: Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes – Excellence in Teaching and Learning**  
Chair: Ms Maria Kelo, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education  
Rapporteur: Ms Annika Sundbäck-Lindroos, International Erasmus + Contact Point National Agency Erasmus+ (CIMO – Centre for International Mobility), FI
- Workshop 3: Promotion, Visibility and Sustainability**  
Chair: Ms Kate Sevón, Swedish Council for Higher Education  
Rapporteur: Ms Martina Friedrich, International Erasmus + Contact Point National Agency Erasmus+ (Österreichischer Austauschdienst – OeAD), AT
- Workshop 4: Student issues and perspectives**  
Chair: Ms Beate Körner, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
Rapporteur: Mr Márton Beke, International Erasmus + Contact Point National Agency Erasmus+ (Tempus Public Foundation – TPF), HU

- 15.30 Coffee break**
- 16.00 Parallel workshops (Session 1 continuation)**
- Workshop 1: Management and Added Value of Joint Programmes** (including Employability and links to the world of work)
- Workshop 2: Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes – Excellence in Teaching and Learning**
- Workshop 3: Promotion, Visibility and Sustainability**
- Workshop 4: Student issues and perspectives**
- 18.00 Networking Cocktail**

### Thursday, 30 June 2016

- 9.30 Parallel workshops (Session 2)**
- Workshop 1: Management and Added Value of Joint Programmes** (including Employability and links to the world of work)
- Workshop 2: Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes – Excellence in Teaching and Learning**
- Workshop 3: Promotion, Visibility and Sustainability**
- Workshop 4: Student issues and perspectives**
- 11.00 Coffee break**
- 11.30 Parallel workshops (Session 2 continuation)**
- Workshop 1: Management and Added Value of Joint Programmes** (including Employability and links to the world of work)
- Workshop 2: Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes – Excellence in Teaching and Learning**
- Workshop 3: Promotion, Visibility and Sustainability**
- Workshop 4: Student issues and perspectives**
- 13.00 Lunch**  
Plenary session chairman: Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit, Erasmus+: Higher Education – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- 14.30 Feedback from the parallel workshops** (by rapporteurs), recommendations and follow-up
- 16.00 Closing remarks and pre-information on 2017 EMJMD call** – Mr Klaus Haupt, Head of Unit, Erasmus+: Higher Education – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- 16.30 Farewell coffee**

## ANNEX III. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### PARTICIPATING COURSES

4CITIES - Vrije Universiteit Brussel - BE	EMMIR - University of Oldenburg - DE	M.E.S.C - Université de Picardie Jules Verne - FR	VIBOT - Université de Bourgogne - FR
ACES - Scottish Association for Marine Science - GB	EMM-Nano - KUL Leuven - BE	MAIA - University of Girona - ES	Vinifera - Montpellier SUPAGRO - FR
ADVANCE - University of Lincoln - GB	EMMPHID - University of Oviedo - ES	MAMASELF - Université de Rennes 1 - FR	VINTAGE - Association Groupe Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture d'Angers - FR
ALGANT - Université de Bordeaux - FR	EMPLE - Erasmus University Rotterdam - NL	MAPNET - Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna - IT	WACOMA - University of Cádiz - ES
AMASE - Saarland University - DE	EMQAL - University of Barcelona - ES	MARIHE - Danube University Krems - AT	WINTOUR - Rovira i Virgili University - ES
ASC - Université Lille 1 - FR	EM-SANF - Wageningen Universiteit - NL	MathMods - University of L'Aquila - IT	WOP-P - University of Valencia - ES
BIFTEC - Katholieke Universiteit Leuven - BE	EMSD - Radboud University - NL	MCM - Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya - ES	
BIFTEC - KU Leuven Technology Campus Gent - BE	EMSE - Free University of Bolzano - IT	MEDFOR - University of Lisbon - School of Agronomy - PT	
CARTO - Technical University of Munich - DE	EMSHIP - Université de Liege - BE	Media AC - Danube University Krems - AT	
ChIR - University of Algarve - PT	EMTM - Universitat de Girona - ES	MEREMMC - University of the Basque Country - ES	
Choreomundus - Norwegian University of Science and Technology - NO	EU4M - Universidad de Oviedo - ES	MESPOM - Central European University - HU	
CLE - Università di Bologna - IT	EUCOMOR - University of Antwerp - BE	MFAMILY - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa - PT	
CoMeM - Norwegian University of Science and Technology - NO	EUPADRA - Luiss Guido Carli School of Government - IT	MIM - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona - ES	
COSI - Université Jean Monnet - FR	EUROAQUAE - Nice Sophia Antipolis University - FR	MIND - University of Graz - AT	
COSI - University of Granada - ES	EUROCULTURE - University of Groningen - NL	MISOCO - University of Amsterdam - NL	
COSSE - KTH Royal Institute of Technology - SE	EuroPhilosophie - Université de Toulouse 2 - FR	MITRA - Université Lille 3 - FR	
CWCN - University of Perpignan Via Domitia - FR	EUROPUBHEALTH - Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sante Publique (EHESP) - FR	MScEF - University of Eastern Finland - FI	
DCLead - University of Salzburg - AT	FIPDes - AgroParisTech - FR	MSPME - Mip Politecnico di Milano - IT	
DESEM - Maynooth University - IE	Food ID - Ecole Supérieure d'Agricultures -d'Angers - FR	MUNDUS URBANO - Darmstadt University of Technology - DE	
EACH - University of Tartu - EE	FUSION_EP - Università di Bologna - BE	NEURASMUS - University of Bordeaux - FR	
ECOHYD - University of Algarve - PT	GEM - University of Twente - NL	NOHA - Network on Humanitarian Action - BE	
EDAMUS - Université de Montpellier / Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen de Montpellier - FR	GEMMA - Universidad de Granada - ES	NOHA - University of Deusto - ES	
EM3E - Université de Montpellier - FR	GLITEMA - Universidade do Porto - PT	NOMADS - University of Theatre and Film Arts - HU	
EMARO+ - Ecole Centrale de Nantes - FR	GLOBED Universitat - Autònoma de Barcelona - ES	PERCCOM - Université de Lorraine - FR	
EMCL - Technische Universität Dresden - DE	G-WatCH - UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education - NL	PlantHealth - Universitat Politècnica de València - ES	
EMCL - University of Groningen - NL	IMAESC - University of Glasgow - GB	SAHC - University of Minho - PT	
EMECS - TU Kaiserslautern - DE	IMEC - Oslo and Akershus University College - NO	SEED - Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya - ES	
EMERALD - Université de Liège-International Office - BE	IMFSE - Ghent University - BE	SERP-Chem - Université Paris Sud - FR	
Emerald - University of Liège - BE	IMIM - Universidad Politecnica de Madrid - ES	SpaceMaster - Luleå University of Technology - SE	
EMGS - Leipzig University - DE	IMIM - University of Groningen - NL	SSI - Heriot-Watt University - GB	
EMIN - Universidad Pontificia Comillas - ES	IMQP - Muséum national d'histoire naturelle - FR	STeDe - Università degli Studi di Padova - IT	
EMLE - Erasmus University Rotterdam - NL	IMQP - Università di Ferrara - IT	STEPS - University of Oviedo - ES	
EMLex - Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg - DE	IMRCEES - University of Glasgow - GB	SUSCOSCzech - Technical University in Prague - CZ	
EMLex - Universidade do Minho - PT	IMRD - Ghent University - BE	SUTROFOR - University of Copenhagen - DK	
EMMCMSP - Università Luav di Venezia - IT	JEMES - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona - ES	TCCM - Autonomous University of Madrid - ES	
	LCT - Saarland University - DE	TCCM - Katholieke Universiteit Leuven - BE	
	LIVE - Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1 - FR	TEOS - Philipps-Universität Marburg - DE	
		TROPIMUNDO - Université libre de Bruxelles - BE	

## PARTICIPATING INTERNATIONAL ERASMUS+ CONTACT POINT (ICPs) IN PROGRAMME COUNTRIES:

Erasmus+ International Contact Point, AEF Europe - BE

Erasmus+ International Contact Point, National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) - DE

International Erasmus+ Contact Point, the Danish Agency for Higher Education - DK

International Erasmus+ Contact Point: Servicio Español Para la Internacionalización de la Educación/Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Education (SEPIE) - ES

Erasmus+ International Contact Point, Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) - FI

Agence Europe-Education-Formation France, International Erasmus+ Contact Point - FR

Erasmus+ International Contact Point, Hungarian National Agency - HU

Capo Unità Istruzione superiore/Ufficio Erasmus+ Istruzione superiore, International Erasmus+ Contact Point - IT

Erasmus+ International Contact Point, Erasmus+ LV ICP - State Education Development Agency - LV

EP - Nuffic, International Erasmus+ Contact Point - NL

Senter for internasjonisering av utdanning (SIU), International Erasmus+ Contact Point - NO

International Erasmus+ Contact Point, Foundation for the Development of the Education System - PL

OeAD Erasmus+ International Contact Point, Austrian National Agency - AT

Portuguese National Agency Erasmus+ Education and Training, International Erasmus+ Contact Point - PT

Swedish Council for Higher Education, International Erasmus+ Contact Point - SE

International Erasmus+ Contact Point, Turkish National Agency - TK

Irish National Agency: Erasmus+ International Erasmus+ Contact Point - IE

## EXPERTS / OTHERS:

EACEA - Education Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency

DG EAC - Directorate-General of Education, Audiovisual and Culture

EUA - European University Association

ENQA - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

ProDeJIP - The Association for the Promotion and the Development of Joint International Programmes in higher education

EMA - Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association

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## **Erasmus+ : Conclusions of the conference on Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus - Brussels, 29-30<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

This brochure summarises the main outcomes of the conference "Mastering Joint Excellence under Erasmus Mundus" organised by EACEA in June 2016. Around 200 participants representing EMJMD, EMA, the International Contact Points in Programme countries, experts in international higher education and colleagues from DG EAC and EACEA attended. The event aimed to create a platform for sharing experiences and fostering networking. The set of activities ensured that the lessons learned and good practices identified in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus programme could be used as a feeding ground for the new generation of EMJMD projects.

### **Contact us**

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