JOINT DEGREE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION NETWORK
TACKLING CURRENT ISSUES AND FACING FUTURE CHALLENGES

GOOD PRACTICE REPORT FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMMES

SUMMARY

Foreword

The Good Practice Report for the Management and Administration of Joint Programmes is addressed to all Higher Education Institutions which intend to implement joint programmes' initiatives and which would like to know which practices and solutions have been adopted for the administration and management of existing joint programmes. Therefore, this report is addressed to academics wishing to start new collaborative programmes, but also to academics and administrators in charge of the definition and implementation of the internationalisation policy and strategy at their institution.

The report is the result of the work carried out by 15 European Universities involved in the JOIMAN project, a Network financed by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Erasmus Programme. Out of the 15 universities, 12 are members of the Utrecht Network, all involved in the "Joint Programmes" task force, and all 15 universities have a long experience in the field of development and management of joint programmes.
The 15 universities have been working on this report during the first year of the JOIMAN project, supported by 3 Erasmus Mundus National Structures.

While important papers, reports and surveys have been developed in the issue of Joint Programme development (cf. Bibliography), **this Report is the first attempt to investigate the administration and management of joint programmes**.

 It presents and comments the data collected on the following topics:

1. Institutional strategies and policies adopted for the development and management of joint programmes

2. The management structures of joint programmes and the organisation of services

3. Administration of students in joint programmes, including the application and selection procedures, the admission and enrolment practices and the certification and award of diplomas.

4. The financial management of joint programmes, including the additional costs of the programmes, the tuition policies and the issue of the sustainability of joint programmes

5. Quality assurance in joint programmes

While the focus of this report has been the administration of joint programmes between European institutions, during the second year a further investigation will be devoted to the management of joint programmes among European and non European Universities, or more precisely between institutions involved and not involved in the Bologna Process.
Furthermore, specific research will address the issue of the development of joint programmes at doctoral level, which is one of the challenges of the present of HEIs.

Annexed to this report are the main tools developed within the project which can be transferred to the wider HE community. These tools are the "Joiman Surveys" and the "Cooperation Agreement Template".

Introduction

Since the late eighties, European Universities have been involved in the development of joint programmes leading to the award of double or joint degrees.
The Bologna Process, started in 1999 with the Bologna Declaration, has increased the interest on JPs among European and non European Higher Education Institutions, and in many cases European Countries have adapted their legislation to allow the development of JPs.

The first phase of the Erasmus Mundus Programme, launched in 2003 and implemented in the years 2004 – 2008, has triggered an essential change in the philosophy regarding JP creation and administration. The Erasmus Mundus Programme focuses predominantly on the concept of "**consortia**" as well as on the concept of **"Integration"** to be applied to the curricular aspects as well as to the administration and management issues of a JP.

The Erasmus Mundus Programme has also set an explanation of the most commonly used terminology with a particular reference to the final delivery of the diploma, giving a definition to the terms "double degree", "multiple degree" and "joint degree". However, following the Erasmus Mundus philosophy, whatever the final diploma delivered, the consortia should realise a **jointly planned and developed programme, including a strong integration of the curricula and of the organisation**.

Concerning the curriculum, this has to be jointly developed, taking care of the professional profile to be created, the competences required for that particular professional profile, the definition of learning outcomes of the whole programme, the workload to be attributed to the single teaching units and modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes identified.
Concerning the integration of the organisation and management of JPs, Erasmus Mundus focuses on the integration of the students' administration procedures (application, admission, selection and enrolment procedures), as well as in the definition of a common tuition policy among the consortium participants and in the assurance of providing each student the same level of services. The basic assumption behind this requirement is that students enrolled in a JP will acquire the same learning outcomes regardless the institution where they start the programme and therefore they should benefit from the same level of services and should pay the same tuition fee.

The Erasmus Mundus Programme has obtained an incredible success among European institutions in the five years of implementation, and its philosophy has been considered both a challenge and an opportunity to implement attractive master programmes within the European Higher Education Area.

The Erasmus Mundus Programme has pushed European universities to find solutions to administrative and management problems connected to JPs and have fostered, either directly or indirectly, European institutions to advocate changes at institutional and national level to permit the implementation of JPs.

Problematic issues such as the **accreditation** of joint degrees at national levels (some European Countries seem not to have adapted the national legislation on this issue yet)

or **the administrative consequences of joint selection, enrolment and administration of students** which require the involvement and coordination of many administrative units in all the partner universities, have been faced and overcome by European institutions.

Another challenging issue is the **sustainability** of joint programmes, which requires a special effort since it juxtaposes different national university funding systems, challenges the social cohesion dimension, and demands common procedures and tools for consortium co-operation.

In 2008, a group of 15 European Universities and 3 Erasmus Mundus National Structures coordinated by the University of Bologna, created the **JOIMAN Network**, which has been funded under the umbrella of the Lifelong Learning Erasmus Programme.

JOIMAN Network intends to intervene in the above mentioned issues, trying to identify models of JP management and solutions adopted, either by Erasmus Mundus consortia or by institutions involved in other kinds of collaborative programmes, in order to provide information and tools to overcome administrative problems in the management of JPs. For additional information on the aims and objectives of the JOIMAN project, and on the future activities and research fields, please refer to the JOIMAN web site: www.joiman.eu.

How to read this report

The **"Good Practice Report on the Administration and Management of Joint Programmes"** contains the results of the first year of the JOIMAN project and is addressed to academics in charge of JPs or involved in the international relations strategies of their institutions, as well as to administrators at different levels involved in the management or implementation of the procedures connected to JPs (International relations officers, registrar officers, quality assurance officers etc).

Part I includes the description of the methodology applied by the Project for the realisation of this document (chapter 1) and the quantitative data provided, analysed and presented in order to describe the overall picture of the joint programme contemplation (chapter 2).

Part II contains the presentation of the collected data organised under the following chapters:

1. The role of the institutions (chapter 3), i.e. the policies and the strategies adopted for the development and management of joint programmes at institutional level;
2. The management structures of joint programmes and the organisation of services (chapter 4);
3. Students' administration timeline (chapter 5), including the application and selection procedures, the admission and enrolment practices and the certification and award of diploma matters;
4. The financial management of JPs (chapter 6), including tuition policies and the issue of the sustainability;
5. Quality assurance for JPs (chapter 7).

Each one of the above mentioned headings is presented through the interpretation of the data facilitated by graphs and the comments and reflections deducted from the analysed data, presented in "boxes".

Part III summarises the main findings of the project in the form of a list of recommendations of actions to be implemented or issues to be taken into consideration when developing a new Joint Programme.

The last section (annexes) of the report collects all relevant annexes which can be used not only for a better reading of the report, but also as complementary tools for the development and management of joint programmes. The first annex contains the two questionnaires which were sent out for the JOIMAN Surveys. The questionnaires will help to follow the presentation of the data, but they can also be considered a tool in their own right, as they describe in detail the whole administrative process applied to the management of a joint programme.

The Glossary, which is not meant to give a definitive answer on the terminology connected to joint programmes, is useful for the reading and comprehension of the report but it is also an useful additional tool for understanding the debate on joint programmes.

An additional tool developed by the JOIMAN project is the <u>cooperation agreement template</u>. This could serve as a reference for the institutions wishing to start a new joint programme and in particular could be used as a tool for mapping the issues which need to be addressed and negotiated before the implementation of the programme.

Finally, annexed to the report are the <u>guidelines for the management of joint programmes</u> developed by the University of Lund, which is an example of good practice developed at institutional level.

List of abbreviations

JP:	Joint Programme
HEI:	Higher Education Institution
IRO:	International Relations Office
DD:	Double Degree
JD:	Joint Degree
DS:	Diploma supplement
QA :	Quality Assurance
ENQA:	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EM :	Erasmus Mundus
EMMC:	Erasmus Mundus Master Courses
ENIC:	European Network of Information Centres
NARIC:	National Academic Recognition Information Centres
EHEA:	European Higher Education Area
EACEA:	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EU :	European Union
EFTA :	European Free Trade Area
EC:	European Commission

PART I

1. Methodology and tools

The people involved in the elaboration of this Report are the administrators of the 15 Universities involved in the JOIMAN project, which have been divided in three thematic task forces working separately and coordinated by the Steering Committee of the JOIMAN project. The three groups have been working on the following topics:

1. Institutional strategies and policies adopted for the development and management of joint programmes, the management structures of joint programmes and the organisation of services and Quality assurance for joint programmes;
2. Educational administrative issues in joint programmes, including application and selection procedures, admission and enrolment practices and the certification and award of diplomas.
3. Financial issues related to joint programmes, including the additional costs of the programmes, tuition policies and the issue of the sustainability of joint programmes.

The first step of the working groups was the discussion on the **terminology** to be adopted; for this purpose a specific "JOIMAN Glossary" was developed, including the most relevant terms related to joint programmes (see annex 5).

The second step consisted in the **collection of data** to be analysed and processed to be presented and commented in this report. Most of the data have been collected online, thanks to online surveys.

The means for the collection of the data adopted by the project were:

1. A survey on institutional policies of HEIs involved in the development and management of joint programmes;
2. A survey on the organisation of JPs;
3. Study visits and interviews addressed to respondents to the survey or to institutions from Countries not covered by the survey;
4. The collection of cooperation agreement samples from the JOIMAN partners.

The following step consisted in the **organisation and first analysis of the collected data** with the aim of identifying trends and tendencies as well as the major challenges encountered by JP coordinators and institutions, and to identify some institutions to be visited in order to deepen the analysis.

After the analysis, **study visits** to the selected institutions were carried out and research work on the national legislations on tuition fees for higher education programmes was undertaken in parallel.

A separate working group has been working on the analysis of the cooperation agreement samples collected from the partners and has drawn up the **cooperation**

agreement template, which is meant as a transferable tool which could be adopted by the HE community.

The last step was the consolidation of the data acquired and the presentation of the main findings in this report.

1.1 JOIMAN survey on institutional policies

The Survey on institutional policies (Annex 2) has been designed to gather relevant information on the institutional strategies adopted at central level for the development, management and support for joint programmes. In addition, the survey contains questions on the governance structure of the respondent institutions in order to compare the governance structure, size and typology of the institution with the above mentioned policies adopted for the JPs. The ideal respondent defined by the project is either an academic with administration functions involved in the definition of the policies for JPs (i.e.: Rector's delegate for international relations or Rector's delegate for teaching) or administrators involved in the development and management of JPs (i.e.: International relations officers, quality assurance officers etc).
The survey was promoted within the 15 universities involved in the JOIMAN project and beyond the project using the institutional networks of the people involved.

1.2 JOIMAN survey on the organisation of JPs

This survey was designed to collect relevant information on the administration and management phases of the joint programmes. While the survey addressed to administrators referred to institutional policies adopted for all JPs, this survey asked specific questions to academic coordinators on the specific joint programme which they coordinate.
The survey was divided into 4 sections:

      A. Organisation and Management
      B. Educational administrative issues (timeline of students' administration including application, selection, enrolment and certification and final award of the diploma)
      C. Financial issues (including costs calculation, tuition and fees and sustainability issues)
      D. Quality assurance

The survey was promoted within the JOIMAN institutions and beyond, using the institutional networks of the JP coordinators and thanks to the information campaign realised by the three Erasmus Mundus National Structures participating in the project.
The survey contains 82 questions, including matrix questions, open questions and requests for comments. On one hand this generated a long and detailed questionnaire which may have jeopardised the respondency rate; on the other hand, it allowed the collection of a large amount of data from the respondents and, above all, was an important process for mapping the management procedures of a JP, which can be considered an important tool itself (see annex 3).

1.3 Study Visits

After the closure of the survey, in order to extend the analysis, five study visits and 2 institutional interviews were carried out by the JOIMAN group. Out of the 5 institutions visited, 3 are JOIMAN partners and 2 are external to the network. All 5 institutions were selected on the basis of the answers they provided in the 2 surveys. During the visits, the JOIMAN partners interviewed the administrators in charge of policy implementation and the academic coordinator of JPs. Two additional interviews were carried out to administrators of UK institutions, because the data collected did not represent any UK university.

Institutions visited:

- University of Padova (IT)
- University of Trento (IT)
- University of Antwerp (BE)
- University of Bergen (NO)
- University of Ghent (BE)

Interviews to administrators of UK institutions

- University of Sheffield
- University of Reading

1.4 National regulations on tuition fees

Using the existing networks, the JOIMAN group requested data on the national legislation on tuition fees to one representative of each EU Country with the aim of creating an overview of the ongoing tuition fees policies adopted by each EU Country. The questions asked were:

1. What are the legal regulations in your state system for tuition fees of master programmes?
2. Do they make a distinction on the citizenship of the student?
3. Are there special regulations for joint degrees?
4. Do they distinguish EMMC from others?

The findings of this survey will be added as an annex of this report at the end of the project.

1.5 Cooperation agreement template

The Survey addressed to JP coordinators showed that 95% of the coordinators are currently using a cooperation agreement which can be considered a good practice for the development and management of a new JP if addressed at the very beginning of the development phase. The Survey contained two additional questions on the cooperation agreement:

1. Which issues are regulated by the cooperation agreement?
2. Why a cooperation agreement?

The answers to the first question helped the JOIMAN Network to identify what are the most frequently included issues in the cooperation agreement. Furthermore, the second question reinforced the idea that the cooperation agreement is an indispensable tool for the development and running of a JP. Indeed, the vast majority of users replied that the main reason for having a cooperation agreement is because it is a good practice, which may avoid troubles and misunderstandings during the running of the programme

The cooperation agreement template, including administrative and educational issues as well as financial issues related to JP management, is one of the transferable outputs of the JOIMAN project. This output, which is included in the annexes to this report, is meant as a tool which could be adopted by HEIs interested in the development of new JPs, or interested in adapting existing ones to a different quality model.

2.   Presentation of the sample

This chapter intends to introduce the general results of the JOIMAN surveys and to present the sample analysed in terms of quantitative results, geographical coverage, kind of institutions involved and number of JPs covered. A first graphical representation of the sample is provided by the map below, showing the institutions involved either in the survey on institutional policies, the survey on JP organisation and with study visits.


Legend:
- Answers to survey on Institutional policies
- Answers to survey on JP organisation
- Institutions visited
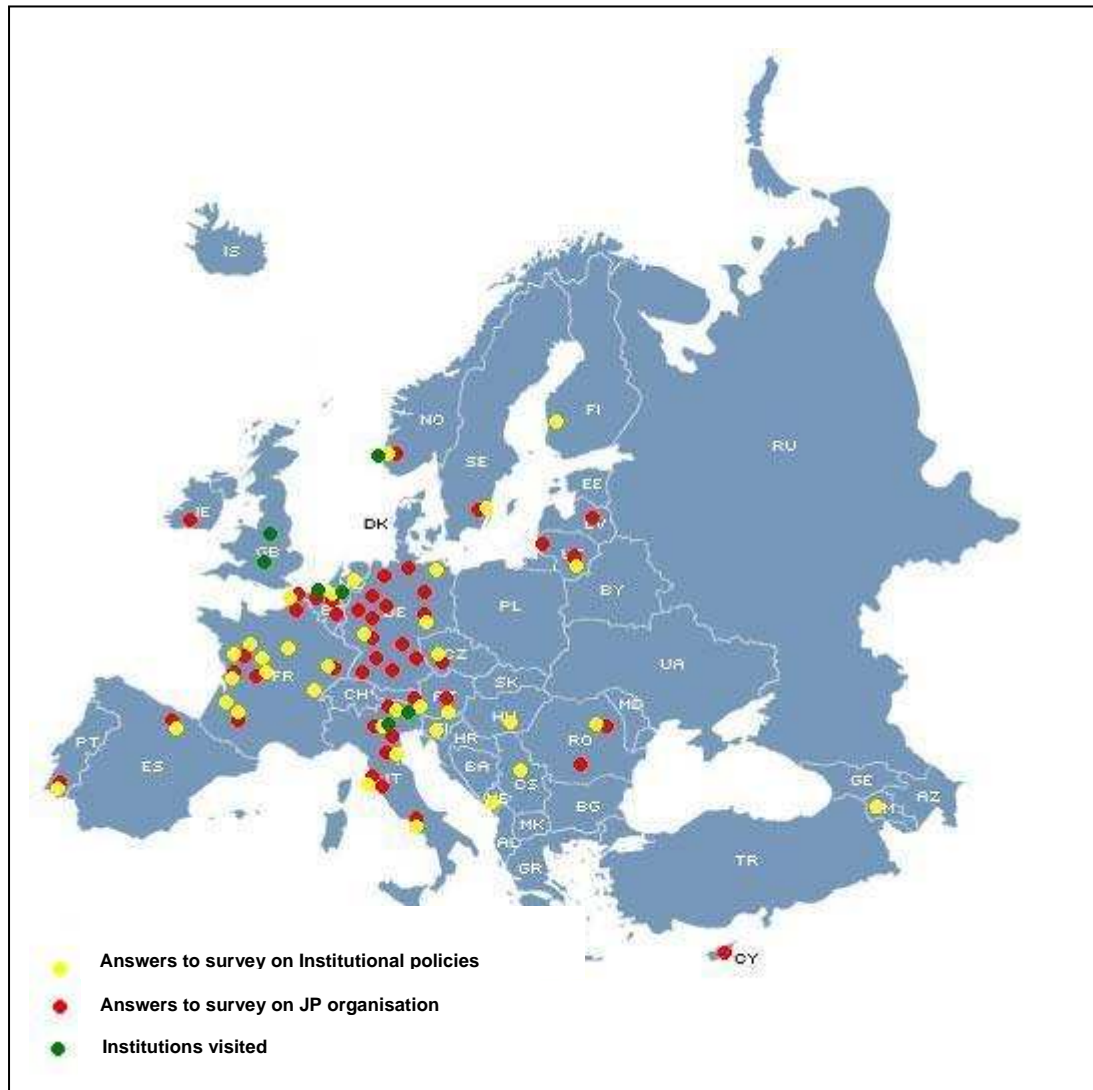
2.1 Survey on institutional policies

The survey on institutional policies contained questions on the governance structure and on the policies and strategies implemented at institutional level for the development and management of JPs. A specific question aimed to identify the size of the institution in terms of number of students enrolled and number of programmes implemented at bachelor and master level, while the last question of the survey asked respondents the total number of joint programmes activated by their institution.

The questionnaire ran from the 1st May to 22nd June. The total number of questionnaires received was **36** from 36 different institutions.

The total number of countries covered is **19**; the graph below shows the distribution of respondents per Country.
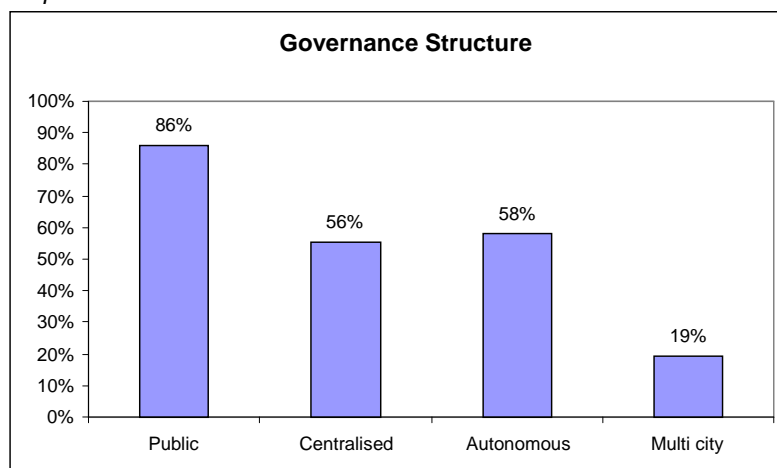
Graph 1

Distribution of respondents per Country
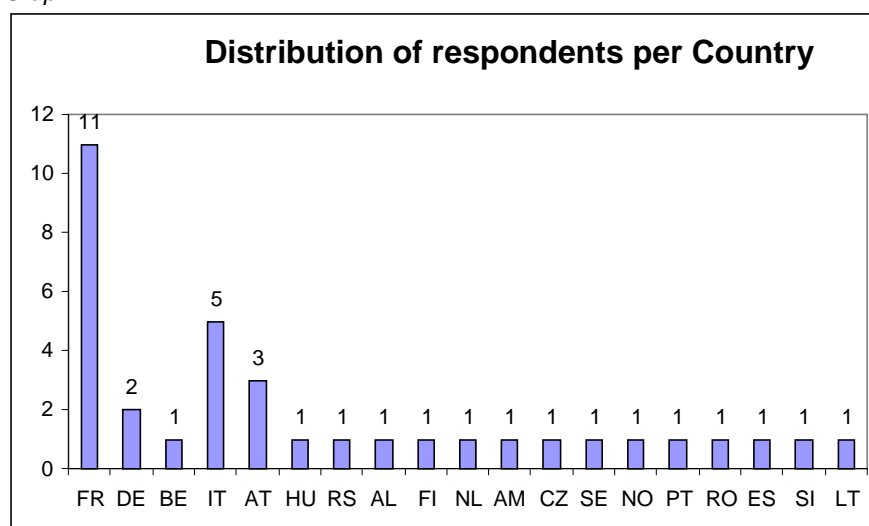
The above graph shows that the 30% of the respondents come from France and the rest of the sample is distributed quite homogenously. Out of the 19 Countries represented, 15 are Members of the EU (France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Finland, Nederland, Czech Republic, Sweden, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Lithuania) 1 is member of EFTA (Norway) and 3 are not members of the EU (Republic of Serbia, Albania and Armenia).

Concerning the Governance structure, as shown in graph 2, the vast majority of institutions are public institutions (31 out of 36 respondents i.e. 86% of the sample). Although 5 institutions are private, only 3 respondents stated that they receive their main financial resources from sources other than the State or Regional Government. More than half of the sample defined themselves as centralised and autonomous, while 7 institutions are based in more than one city.

Graph 2

Governance Structure

Concerning the size of the institutions represented by the sample, Graph 3 represents the distribution of respondents grouped per number of students enrolled.

Graph 3

Respondents grouped per number of students enrolled
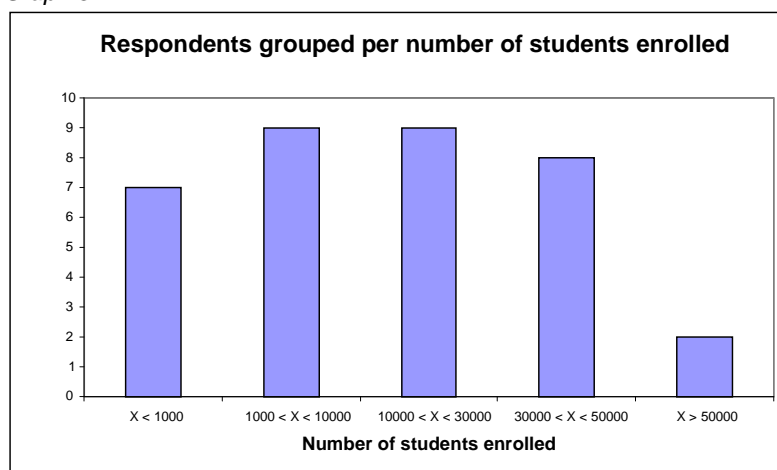
It can be noted that essentially the same percentage of respondents represent respectively <u>very small institutions</u> (less than 1000 students enrolled), <u>small institutions</u> (from 1000 to 10000 students enrolled), <u>medium sized institutions</u> (10000 to 30000 students enrolled) <u>and big institutions</u> (from 30000 to 50000 students enrolled). Two additional institutions are to be considered "very big" (more than 50000 students enrolled).

The above described data on the size of institutions is confirmed by the distribution of respondents per number of bachelor and master programmes offered (Graphs 4 and 5).

Graph 4

Respondents grouped per number of bachelor programmes

respondents

X < 10	10 < X < 30	30< X < 50	50 < X < 70	70 < X < 100	X > 100
8	8	3	8	2	3

number of bachelor programmes

Graph 5

Respondents grouped per number of master programmes

respondents

X < 10	10 < X < 30	30< X < 50	50 < X < 70	70 < X < 100	X > 100
8	6	2	5	3	7

number of master programmes
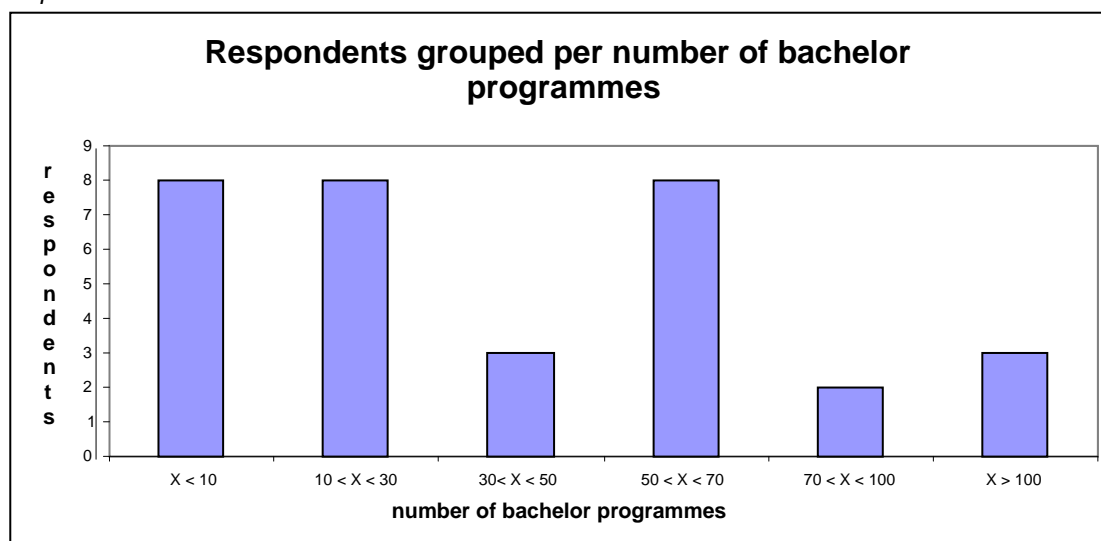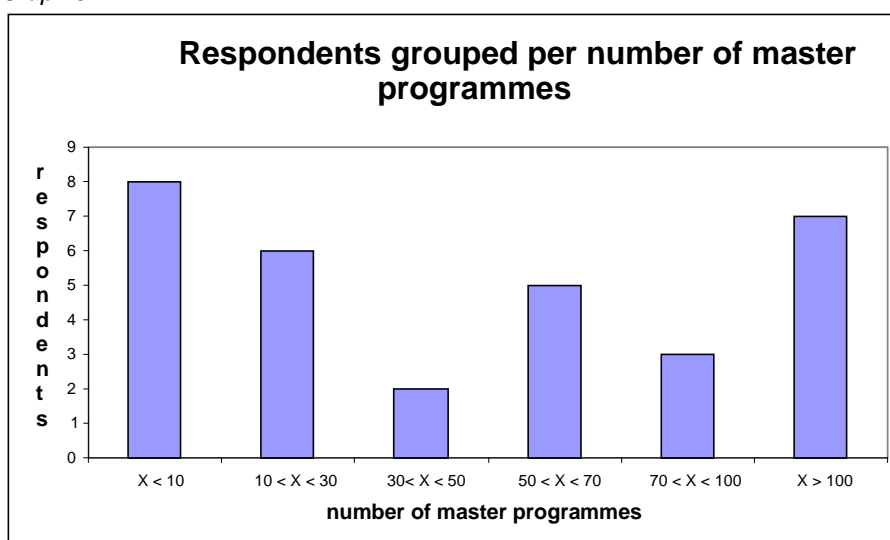
It is also relevant to note that all respondents but 1 are both teaching and research institutions, regardless of their size.

The last question of the survey asked the respondents to indicate the total number of JPs developed at bachelor, master and doctoral level.
The total number of JPs represented by the sample at the first two cycles is **184** (28 at bachelor and 156 at master level). At doctoral level, the sample represents 59 implemented JPs, but this data may not be relevant as the survey did not give the respondent a proper definition of joint programmes at doctoral level. However, it is interesting to note that **two thirds** of the respondents have implemented JP at master level, while only **one third** of the sample have implemented JP at bachelor and doctoral level.

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2.2 Joiman survey on the organisation of joint programmes

The survey on the organisation of JPs, addressed mainly to JP academic coordinators, aimed to gather relevant information on specific joint programmes managed or coordinated by the respondent.

The total number of valid questionnaires received is **89**, covering **45** different institutions in **15** European Countries. The total number of JPs represented by the sample is **75** as some questionnaires have been filled in by more than one partner of the same JP. Graph 6 presents the distribution of the sample by Country:

Graph 6
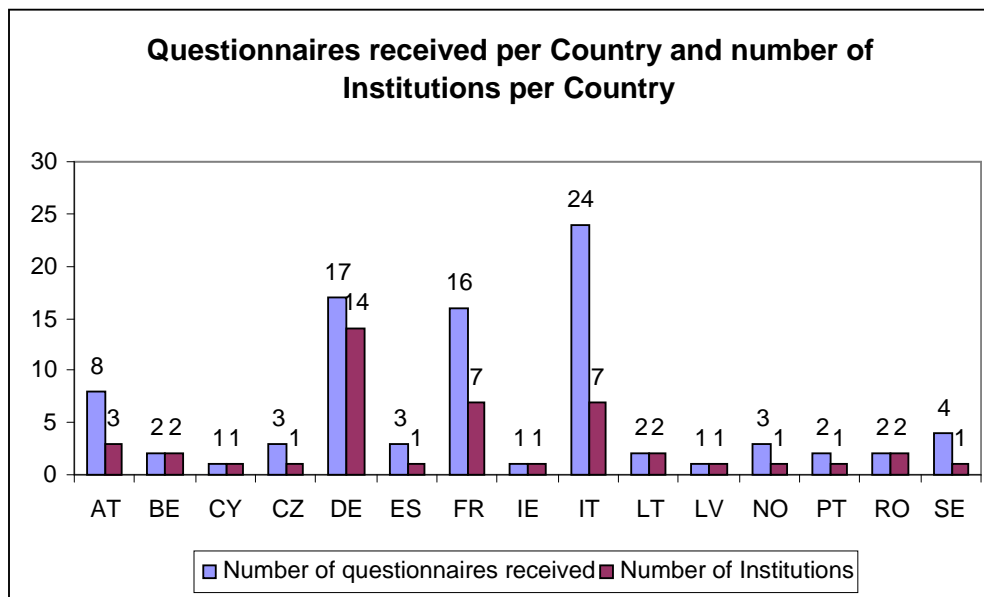
As can be seen in Graph 7, **34** respondents represent an EMMC while **55** are "non Erasmus Mundus" programmes.

Graph 7
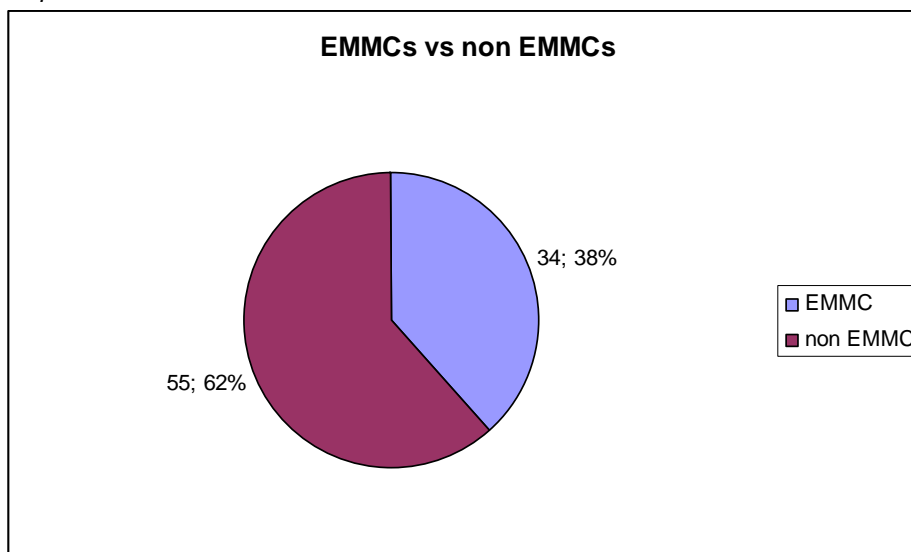
In order to provide a further classification of the "non EM programmes" the type of diploma awarded could be analysed, choosing among double, multiple, joint degrees and "other" (including single degrees or joint degrees "planned" but not yet implemented or "not answered").

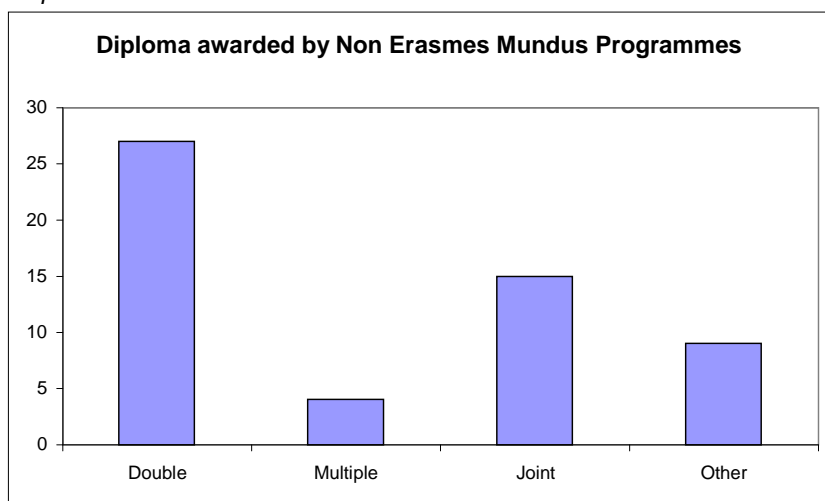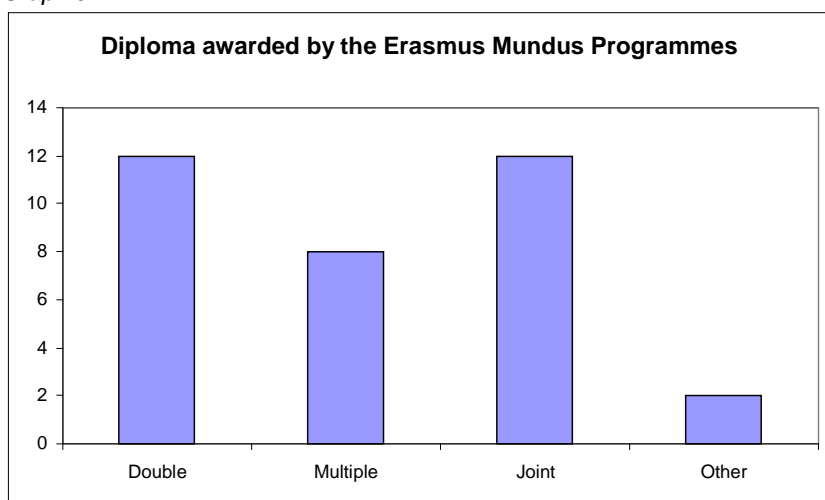Graph 8 presents the classification of non EM programmes per kind of degree awarded. For coherency and in order to give a term for comparison, the same classification is presented for EMMC in graph 9.

Graph 8

Diploma awarded by Non Erasmes Mundus Programmes

Graph 9

Diploma awarded by the Erasmus Mundus Programmes

To conclude the presentation of the sample, it has to be mentioned that the great diversity of respondents combines at the same time positive and negative aspects regarding the entire survey. Creating a thorough picture of the JP landscape, a diverse group as such can be beneficial. It demonstrates the ability of many different types of institutions to organise JPs. However, the group of respondents to both surveys is too inhomogeneous to be considered statistically relevant. Therefore, the data presented in the next chapters together with findings, comments, and recommendations extracted, need not to be considered from the statistical point of view, but as the reading of general trends, analysed with the eye of people involved daily in the processes examined.

PART II

3. The role of the institution

The "Guidelines For Quality Enhancement In European Joint Master Programmes" published by EUA in 2006 as well as the study commissioned by the EC to ECOTEC Group "Erasmus Mundus Support services related to the Quality of ERASMUS MUNDUS Master Courses and the preparation of quality guidelines", published in 2008, underline the need for "institutional commitment" for the realisation of a quality joint programme.
The JOIMAN survey on institutional policies aimed to investigate which bodies are in charge of the establishment, accreditation and signature of agreements for JPs, as well as the presence of strategic policies and specific guidelines developed at institutional level for the promotion and management of JPs.

The basic assumption was that the support a JP receives from an institution can be of many kinds, but it is clearly of the utmost importance that the JP complies with the rules and regulations which are in force. These may be of a varied nature. Here we address, among others, the question of the role of institutions in the development, establishment, accreditation and support of a JP.

3.1   Legal rights related to JPs

Out of the 36 institutions questioned, the majority (52%) responded that the legal right to finally approve the JP is within the Institution, even though different bodies are in charge of this aspect (e.g.: administration council, academic senate, general director), and this is mostly done at the central level of the institution.

The same results apply to the signature of the cooperation agreement for the establishment and management of the JP, which is mostly performed at the central level of the institution, generally by the legal representative, mostly the rector/chairman of the HEI (66.7%).

On the other hand, the final accreditation of JPs mostly depends on a national authority (38%) and to a lesser extent depends on the institution (25%).

BOX 1

> As noted above, there are various institutional models used in Europe or outside. Therefore **a new consortium should be aware of how the programme is legally approved and accredited in the participating institutions**. For example it is important for the establishment and running of the programme to decide when the programme can actually start. It goes without saying that JPs based on already existing, accredited degrees, have no problem with accreditation, as has been confirmed in a number of study visits.

3.2   Strategic policy for JPs

Half of the 36 respondents do have a strategic policy to develop JPs. They have developed such a policy in order to **contribute to and support the internationalisation** of their institution, following in parallel national and European incentives to develop JPs (especially through funding). Here are excerpts of some of the answers collected:

BOX 2

> *Respondent 1: Our university "intends to further strengthen its international profile by increasing the number of excellent joint programmes"*
>
> *Respondent 2: "Internationalisation takes a prominent place in the strategic plan of the university, a new being recently adopted for the period 2009-2012. [The] General target is transparent global internationalisation policy for its education, research and services, meeting the highest standards. Measurable goals are set to recruit more international students and staff. Therefore each faculty will develop at least one international programme. Although not explicitly mentioned, structural cooperation with partner universities abroad is encouraged. Joint degrees programmes/double degrees will be preferred options".*
>
> *Respondent 3: "Internationalisation is one of four strategies for [our] University to achieve the overall goal of highest quality. An international profile on education strengthens students in an increasingly internationalised market. According to [our university's] Strategic Plan 2007-2011, the university will distinguish itself by programmes on an advanced level, especially master programmes with national and international recruitment."*
>
> *Respondent 4: "The strategy on internationalisation underlines development of JD as one of the strategic areas".*
>
> *Respondent 5: One of the Strategic objectives is to "foster the internationalisation of educational programmes", to be achieved through "the increasing number of courses and modules offered in a foreign language" and through the "participation in international projects for the development of international Joint Double or Multiple degree".*
>
> *Respondent 6: Internationalisation is part of the University's statute and JPs are strategic: every year we strengthen existing successful agreements and start new ones, both within Europe and worldwide, in particular with Asia and America".*

If, a fortiori, all universities which answered the questionnaires do manage JPs, we should note that only half of them have developed a strategic policy to develop such programmes. A more detailed analysis of the data shows however that those universities which have developed such a policy have, on average, a higher number of JPs. More precisely:

- Universities with a policy on JPs have 10 JPs on average (between 2 and 40)
- Universities without a policy on JPs have 1.7 JPs on average (between 1 and 12).

BOX 3

A strategic policy on JPs adopted at the highest level of an institution seems to contribute to a systematic development of JPs. Thus a JP policy enhances internationalisation and gives the institution an international profile. Moreover, a strategic policy gives the institution credibility when cooperating with other institutions. **A strategic policy anchors the development and running of JPs within the institution and at the highest level**. It may also enhance the quality of the programme. Furthermore, a strategy can also motivate academic and administrative staff to work towards the development and running of a JP.

Based on the study visits, we can distinguish two basic approaches to set up a strategic policy:

Top-down approach: developed from the highest level of the institution and then spread inside the institution. So for instance one HEI has developed a JP policy, has then integrated it in its general policy documents, and finally has disseminated a "JP culture" to faculties and departments.

Bottom-up approach: a strategic policy is developed *after* the institution becomes involved in JPs in order to streamline and frame the development of new JPs. Such a policy might also be defined in order to help the existing JPs to run more smoothly.

The strategic policies can have different emphasis:

- They might stress the administrative side and hence limit themselves to defining a *framework*
- They might *add an incentive to work inside a framework*
- Or else they might aim at *rationalising* the development of JPs, by creating an appropriate professional culture

It does not seem out of place to cite here an excerpt from one of the study visits, which shows how a JP can have an impact on an institution or a faculty:

"[…] These two programmes brought a very important change in the culture of the Faculty […]. They brought an important impulse to the internationalisation culture (courses in English, international dimension, etc.), but also to the whole organisation of the Faculty (dedicated tutor for international students, coaching for social integration, dedicated fund for the running of the international programmes)."

3.3 Guidelines for the development and management of JPs

The majority of universities do not have a support framework or guidelines to develop JPs or to manage them.

- 75% of the respondents do not have guidelines for the development of JPs;
- 70% of the respondents do not have any guidelines for the management of JPs.

Only very few universities presented their guidelines for the survey.

The guidelines presented are of a varied nature and scope. The most complete guidelines are those from the University of **Lund**, which address all main points that one has to take into account for setting up and running a JP. These guidelines are also reported integrally as an annex of this report. References are given to the main sources of information and ideas are put forward for those seeking financial support. The tone of the document is not emphatic and has no promotional objective.

Other guidelines are of a completely different kind, focusing on legal aspects related to the recognition and accreditation of degrees. They seem to be fairly complete in that respect, and are thus rather technical.

In between these two kinds of guidelines are those which are built around a template for cooperation agreement and therefore include a statement of intent, but also address most of the relevant legal matters, albeit in a generic way.

A fourth model analysed follows very closely the procedure that a department has to follow to obtain accreditation from the Ministry of Education of the Country concerned while the last example of guidelines received is interesting in that they emphasize the need for a JP to comply to the quality assurance principles of the institution, which are to be understood as guaranteeing students that they will not lose out on quality during their mobility periods.

BOX 4

Internal guidelines guarantee that the institution functions or operates in a homogeneous way concerning all its JPs.
Such **guidelines** also **enhance the transparency of procedures** and make the institution more accountable, as a partner.
If guidelines are available, academic staff and administrators work in a more systematic way within JPs.
From the point of view of the institutional leadership, guidelines are a **good tool for monitoring** the implementation and running of JPs.
If the institution has a quality assurance system, these guidelines must be in alignment with this system.
The purpose of the guidelines should help to support the staff in developing and running JPs.
At the same time **guidelines should be flexible** at the point **to allow negotiations with partners.**

We take the following remarks from one of the study visits:

Respondent 1: *[We have developed a] policy rather than a strategy with a very large scope. The policy contains a guideline, which addresses all elements of a JP from the first idea about the programme up to the JD certification and alumni network:*
 [Its] main aspects [are]:

1. Academic aspects,
2. Financial aspects
3. The aspect of sustainability of the programme at all partner universities.

[We favour a] professional/well organised approach to developing JPs, e.g. by developing a business plan for each JP. One basic rule to implement a JP is: solve all problems before the programme starts.

The main conditions that need to be fulfilled are:

Insure full financial coverage of the programme, at all partner institutions;
Organise site visits to the partners prior the start of the programme to check institutional commitment;
Perform a diligence investigation of all partners (including an investigation of the legal framework).

3.4 Framework to sustain JPs

A framework to support JPs can consist of *i.e.* financial support, staff support, strategic policy, guidelines, and support from the leadership (such as a quality label or inclusion in the general promotion of the institution).

Most of the respondents (70%) have not developed a framework to support JPs. Those who have developed such a framework did it either by:

- Providing (direct/indirect) funding;
- Ensuring staff support (with some dedicated staff from the education/students affairs and IRO or dedicated unit to JPs). This seems to be the new trend.

BOX 4

A framework to support JPs (especially funding) motivates the participation in these programmes and contributes to the internationalisation of the institution. **A framework is also of great importance in securing (long term) sustainability of JPs.**

It is interesting to note that the respondents who are running EMMC, did not mention the fact that -- by contract -- they have to guarantee a level of services, which clearly requires support from the partner institutions. This probably means that those JPs received the necessary support, even though a framework does not exist *formally* or has not been made explicit.

There is a trend to create units dedicated to the development and management of JPs (within/attached to IROs or QA units). Their goal is to support and frame initiatives in a professional way.

It is also interesting to note that very few HEIs have mentioned direct support to students as an issue. The study visits have shown that **some HEIs provide** (special) **scholarships** to students enrolled in a selected group of JPs (determined at the institutional level).

Another kind of institutional support shown by the survey is a **financial support transferred to the Faculties running Joint Programmes matching the quality requirements defined** (teaching units taught in a foreign language, a minimum percentage of international students enrolled, the presence of international visiting professors, a dedicated tutor etc.).

In two cases, shown by a study visit and by the survey, a less direct financial support is provided to international programmes in the form of a "**special agreed distribution of the tuition fees**" among the central administration and the study programme. In these cases the study programmes are conceived as "autonomous" and they can count on a percentage of the fees (80 – 85%) for running the programmes. These funds are additional funds to be added to the costs incurred by the institution for the provision of the regular services (teaching rooms, academic personnel, student's services) and are generally used for additional services for international students or for scholarships.

4. Management and organisation of the joint programmes

The JOIMAN Survey on JP organisation aimed to investigate, among the other issues, the management and governance structures of the targeted JPs in order to identify which bodies and administrative units, either external or internal to the Institutions, are involved in the different processes and phases.

While our sample of JPs is not too large, it shows that there are different (viable) ways of managing and organising a JP. The differences might reflect the history of the JP or say something about the kind of partnership that lies at the foundation of the JP. The responsibility for the various aspects of a JP (management, pedagogical, administrative) can be distributed over the consortium or can lie with only one or few partner institutions. In this chapter we present and analyse these issues in some detail.

4.1 Governance processes

Table 1 represents which bodies are in charge of the main "governance processes" including supervision and decision making, administrative coordination, follow up of the programme and academic and administrative quality control.

Table 1: Representation of the answers to the question: "Which body is in charge of the following processes?"

	External body	National authority	Regional authority	Institution	Faculty Dept School	Individual	Consortium
Supervision Decision making	1.10%	1.10%	0%	11.4	18.2	4.6	63.60%
Administrative co-ordination	0%	0%	0%	19.3	30.7	9%	40.90%
Follow-up of the programme	0%	0%	0%	8.1	33.7	5.80%	52.30%
Academic quality control	10.20%	3.40%	0%	15.9	26.1	4.50%	39.80%
Administrative quality control	8.10%	2.30%	0%	27.9	21%	1.20%	39.50%

Table 1 shows that supervision/decision making-process are mostly performed at consortium level (63.6%), while the administrative coordination is either performed at consortium level (40.9%), for instance through a technical secretariat, or also at the level of the departments/faculties of the partner institutions (30.7%).

The responsibility for the follow up of the programme is shared, again, between the consortium and the faculties or departments, while the selection of students is mostly performed at consortium level.

Academic quality control is mostly performed at consortium level (39.8% each), but often at faculty/department level (26.1%), and also at institution level (15.9%) or

external body level (10.2%), while the administrative quality control is mostly done at consortium level (39.5% each) and at institution level (27.9%).

BOX 5

In this regard, it is important to state that EMMC and joint programmes leading to the award of a multiple degree, which together represent 43% of the sample and which involve more than 2 partners, manage the above described processes mainly at consortium level while non EM programmes awarding double degrees usually manage the processes at faculty or departmental level.

It is not too surprising that the supervision and decision making for most of the JPs takes place at consortium level, indeed all of the identified procedures are mostly performed at consortium level. The fact that the quality controls are somewhat decentralised probably reflects the fact that there are procedures in place at the partner institutions, which are not too easy to harmonise. It is clear from this table that our sample does not fully adhere to the EM model and this data is confirmed by the fact that the majority of the non EM programmes awarding double degrees do not follow the EM model of integration.

It is important to note, on the other hand, that most of the non EM programmes awarding either multiple or joint degrees have concentrated some of the management processes at consortium level, adopting in this issue the EM model.

4.2 Organisation and management of the JP: share of responsibility, division of tasks and services provided

The question in table 2 about how tasks and responsibilities on the main organisational processes are divided among the partners offers an inside view into the JPs and, with that, provides ideas how a new programme can be successfully structured or how an existing one could be improved.

Table 2: answers to the question: "The organisation of the JP: who is in charge of the following procedures?"

	Coordinating institution	Delegated to individual partner institutions at central level	Delegated to individual partner institutions at Faculty or Dept. level	Joint structure/ Consortium	Other
Receipt of applications	39.3%	9.0%	29.2%	20.2%	2.3%
Screening of applications	22.5%	10.1%	29.2%	37.1%	1.1%
Admission decision	2.3%	10.1%	25.8%	60.7%	1.1%
Sending letters of acceptance	49.4%	14.6%	22.5%	11.2%	2.3%
Enrolment	35.2%	37.5%	19.3%	5.7%	2.3%
Organisation of mobility	17.2%	21.8%	23.0%	33.3%	4.6%
Visa	11.9%	39.3%	21.4%	3.6%	23.8%
Health Insurance	21.2%	29.4%	15.3%	3.5%	30.6%
Accommodation	5.8%	40.2%	35.6%	6.9%	11.5%
Financial Monitoring of the Programme's	41.9%	9.3%	22.1%	22.1%	4.7%
Fees collection	43.5%	37.7%	5.9%	7.1%	5,9%
Fees distribution	36.3%	28.8%	6.3%	21.3%	7.5%
Organisation of Extra curricular activities	4.9%	17.1%	40.2%	25.6%	12.2%
Examination	6.9%	10.3%	60.9%	20.7%	1.2%
Thesis/dissertation	4.7%	3.5%	57.0%	31.4%	3.5%
Transfer of marks and transcript of records	15.1%	27.9%	37.2%	16.3%	3.5%
Certification	15.9%	28.1%	23.2%	28.1%	4.9%
Delivery of degree certificate	20.9%	31.4%	19.8%	24.4%	3.5%
Delivery of diploma supplement	22.9%	28.9%	18.1%	19.3%	10.8%

The answers given presumably state the obvious.

The **coordinating institution** is usually in charge of receiving the applications, sending letters of acceptance, financially monitoring the programme, collecting and distributing fees.
The **consortium** is then in charge of the following tasks: screening of applications, deciding on admission, organising the mobility and issuing the certificate.

The **partner institutions** are usually in charge of the following tasks: <u>at central level:</u> enrolment, visas, accommodation, certification, delivery of degree certificate and delivery of diploma supplement; <u>at faculty/departmental level:</u> organisation of extra curricular activities; examination, thesis/dissertation and transfer of marks and transcript of records.

Visa and Health Insurance are usually delegated to other instances (mostly the students/individuals concerned).

However, extracting from the sample the EMMC and the non EM programmes, we note that for the vast majority of EMMCs all the mentioned procedures are managed either by the coordinating institution or jointly by the consortium, with the exception of the Visa procedures, accommodation procedures, organisation of extra-curricular activities and examination/thesis dissertation, which are mainly delegated to partner institutions at faculty level. On the other hand, the majority of non EM programmes delegate the management of those procedures in the partner institutions to Faculty level. EMMC usually take care of health insurance and visa procedures, which are mostly delegated to students in the case of non EM programmes.
The only procedures for which it seems there is no relevant difference between EMMC and non EM programmes are the organisation of extracurricular activities, examination and thesis dissertation and accommodation services (usually managed at the partner institution) the definition of mobility (usually defined jointly) and the certification, issues (delivery of diploma and diploma supplement, usually in charge of each institution).

BOX 6

Based on the above reading, one could identify different models for the organisation of JPs. **A *centralised* organisation**, in which the coordinating institution as such is in charge of most of the procedures; **an *integrated* organisation**, in which partners delegate most of the procedures to a well identified entity, such as a consortium/technical secretariat; a ***decentralised* organisation**, in which partners share the burden and responsibility of performing the various tasks. In most cases, the technical secretariat will be located at the coordinating institution, but it will function as a relay between the partners and the other branches of the institution's administration.

A second comment on the above data is that the role of the coordinating institution is played mainly in the EMMCs while in most of the non EM courses the coordinating institution does not cover specific roles, and one may deduce that in many cases the partnership, especially in bilateral programmes, is conceived with equal roles without one institution coordinating the programme.

Table 3 summarises the involvement of different administrative units in the management of joint programmes. The list of units provided by the survey included IRO, students affairs office, financial office and consortium secretariat.

Table 3: representation of the answer to the question: What are the main administrative offices in charge of the following procedures

	International office	Student Affairs office	Financial Office	Consortium secretariat	Other
Application procedures	23.6%	14.6%	0.0%	48.3%	13.5%
Admission procedures	18.4%	18.4%	0.0%	46.0%	17.2%
Enrolment and registration Procedures	14.0%	54.7%	0.0%	20.9%	10.5%
Mobility	38.6%	5.7%	0.0%	39.8%	15.9%
Financial monitoring	10.3%	2.3%	34.5%	35.6%	17.2%
Extra-curricular activities	26.8%	13.4%	0.0%	28.1%	31.7%
Academic monitoring	14.8%	11.4%	0.0%	45.5%	28.4%
Certification	9.6%	42.2%	0.0%	25.3%	22.9%

From the analysis of the answers it is clear that all these units are involved in the processes. In addition, from the analysis of the "Other" answers, it appears that some of the above mentioned tasks are performed at faculty level by administrative or academic personnel, while some of the tasks are performed by external services such as students' associations and former students for the organisation of extra curricular activities.

BOX 7

The management and organisation of JPs is mostly performed at consortium level, with some variations.
Depending on the tasks to be achieved, different patterns have been identified.

- A*cademic tasks*, which are under the responsibility of teachers are usually more distributed over the consortium;
- *Administrative tasks* can be decentralised/delegated to other bodies like IROs or student affairs offices or at the Faculty administrative offices;
- *Services* can be decentralised or may even be completely absent, for instance when staff support is not sufficient.

Results of a study visit shown how one consortium has developed an **online management tool for their JP**. With this system, all the partners have access to the students' information. Data can also be exported and this can facilitate the award of certifications. This management tool, which can be used for the general management of the programmes as well as of the student's career, reduces the workload and permits a more effective monitoring and quality control.

A specific question of the survey to academic coordinators aimed to map the services provided for incoming and outgoing students, which services are offered to all students

and which ones have been specially created for the JP. In table 4 we summarise the results of this question.

Table 4: representation of respondents to the question: Services: please specify which of the following sentences are true or false and which ones are applied specifically to your JP

	False	True	True, specifically for this JP
My institution organises specific language courses for outgoing students	52.8%	39.3%	7.9%
My institution organises specific language courses for incoming students	16.1%	73.6%	10.3%
My institution supports incoming students in finding accommodation	11.2%	75.3%	13.5%
My institution can help incoming students to find accommodation but does not propose accommodation as such	51.8%	41.2%	7.1%
My institution offers short time accommodation for scholars and students	39.1%	56.3%	4.6%
My institution organises special activities on arrival for incoming students	27.6%	60.9%	11.5%
My institution organises some leisure time activities for students	40.9%	48.9%	10.2%
My institution provides information on health insurance	16.1%	75.9%	8.1%

Table 4 shows that services for JP students are usually not provided specifically for these students but are part of a wider range of services. In terms of services, the typical services offered to such students are: specific language courses, support in finding accommodation, information on health insurance and special activities on arrival for incoming students.

BOX 8

The EM model encourages institutions to include a number of services in their offer and organisation of the JP. This is one of the criteria retained to assess the quality of the JP. It should be noted that JPs very rarely develop their own services. On one hand, this might be very difficult, and on the other hand, **the fact that the services on offer are those of the institution(s) facilitates the integration of students into the larger body of the institutions students and avoids the creation of "special lanes", which might have the effect to impede a richer cultural experience.**

4.3   The cooperation agreement

The survey addressed to academic coordinators contained 3 questions specifically referred to the issue of the cooperation agreement:

1. Do you have a cooperation agreement which regulates consortium organisation and programme implementation?
2. Which issues are regulated by the cooperation agreement?
3. Why a cooperation agreement?

The answers of the questions have confirmed the strategic importance of such a tool, which can be considered a quality tool for the implementation of JPs.
Indeed from the first question, which required a yes/no answer, it was found that 95% of the sample has implemented a cooperation agreement within the JP consortium.
The second question, where multiple choices were allowed, shows what are the issues mainly included in the cooperation agreement, and is represented by graph 10.

Graph 10
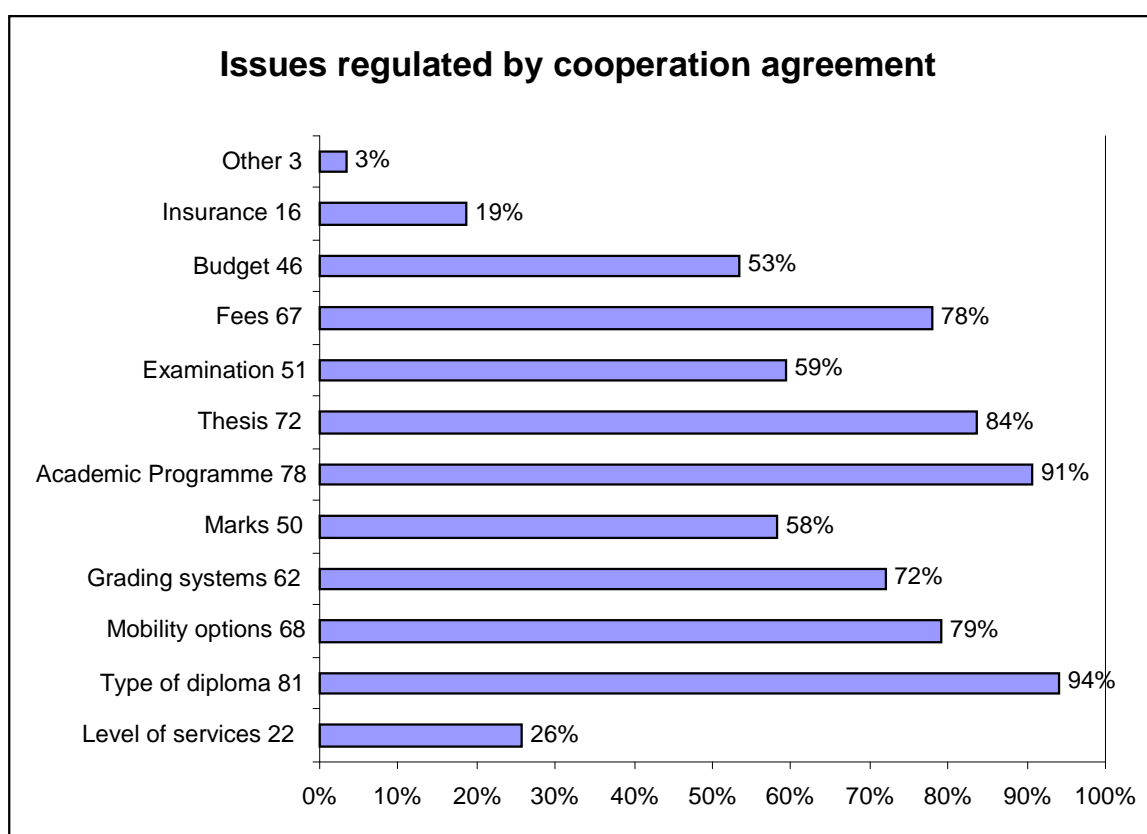
On the other hand, the third question reinforced the idea that the cooperation agreement is an indispensable tool for the development and running of a JP. Indeed, as can be seen in graph 11, the vast majority of users replied that the main reason for having a cooperation agreement is a because it is a good practice, which may avoid troubles and misunderstandings during the running of the programme.

Graph 11

Why a cooperation agreement?

Category	Value
National law	30
Required by funder	25
Required by Institution	33
Good practice	67
Required by a partner	10
Other	6
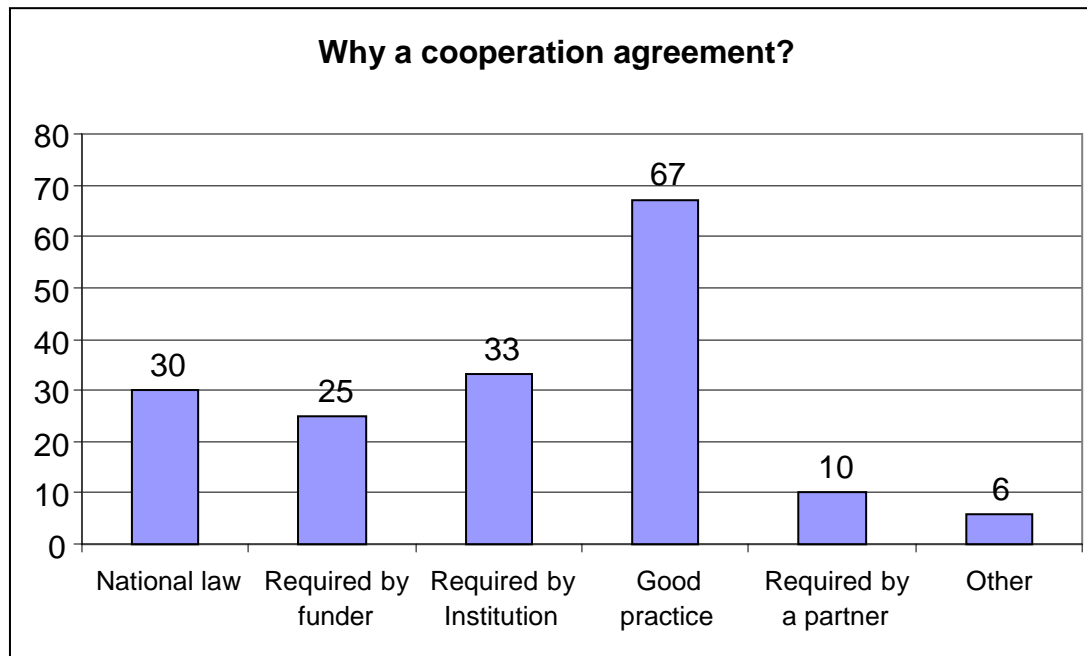
BOX 9

It is hard to imagine a consortium functioning without an agreement. **The results of the survey confirm that essentially all consortia have one**. Still the aspects of the cooperation within the consortium ruled by the agreement are not the same for everyone. **The JOIMAN project has produced an agreement template**, based on existing agreements. **which might be used by future consortia**.

5. Students' administration timeline

A specific section of the survey was dedicated to the <u>administrative processes connected to students</u>, from the application phase to the final awarding of the diploma and diploma supplement. This chapter presents the current procedures and main problems faced in the whole "<u>students administration timeline</u>" including the following phases: application, selection, admission, enrolment, registration, monitoring, academic calendar, grading systems and final certification. Special emphasis is laid on the difference between EMMCs and the non EM joint programmes.
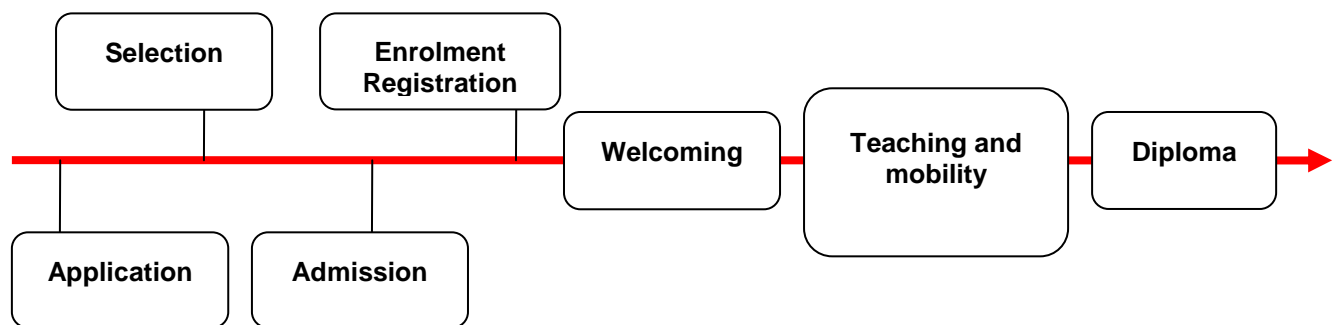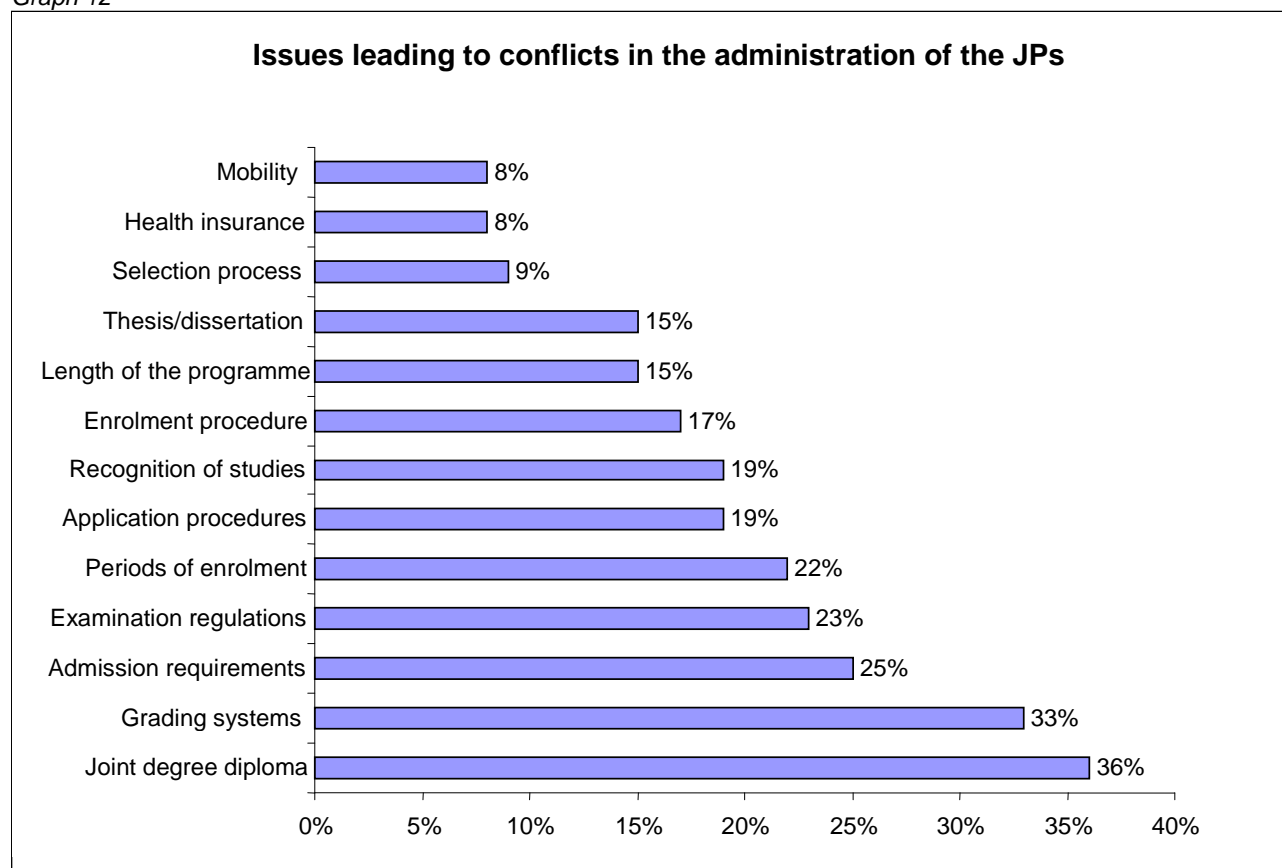

5.1   Target students

Joint programmes are usually developed to foster the internationalisation of the institutions, offering local students an international education and trying to attract international students. Therefore, the kind of students we are taking into consideration are **either EU students** - intended as both those "local" students coming from the institutions involved, and European students experimenting "vertical mobility" within the EHEA – or **non EU students,** defined as those students coming from outside EU borders and therefore requiring additional services.

Asking our sample if they make differences among EU and non EU students for some academic or administrative processes, the only relevant differences observed is for the time of admission decision and for the application process. This can be explained by the length of the Visa procedures for non EU students and by the timetable imposed by the donors for obtaining scholarships (Erasmus Mundus Programme and national governments with other international programmes).

5.2 General issues related to students' administration timeline

Before analysing each phase of the "Timeline", it could be worthwhile to introduce a general overview of the main problems or conflicts encountered by the respondents with regard to student administration. These kinds of problems are represented in general terms (graph 12), with regard to National legislation (graph 13) and with regard to institutional regulations (graph 14).

Graph 12

Issues leading to conflicts in the administration of the JPs

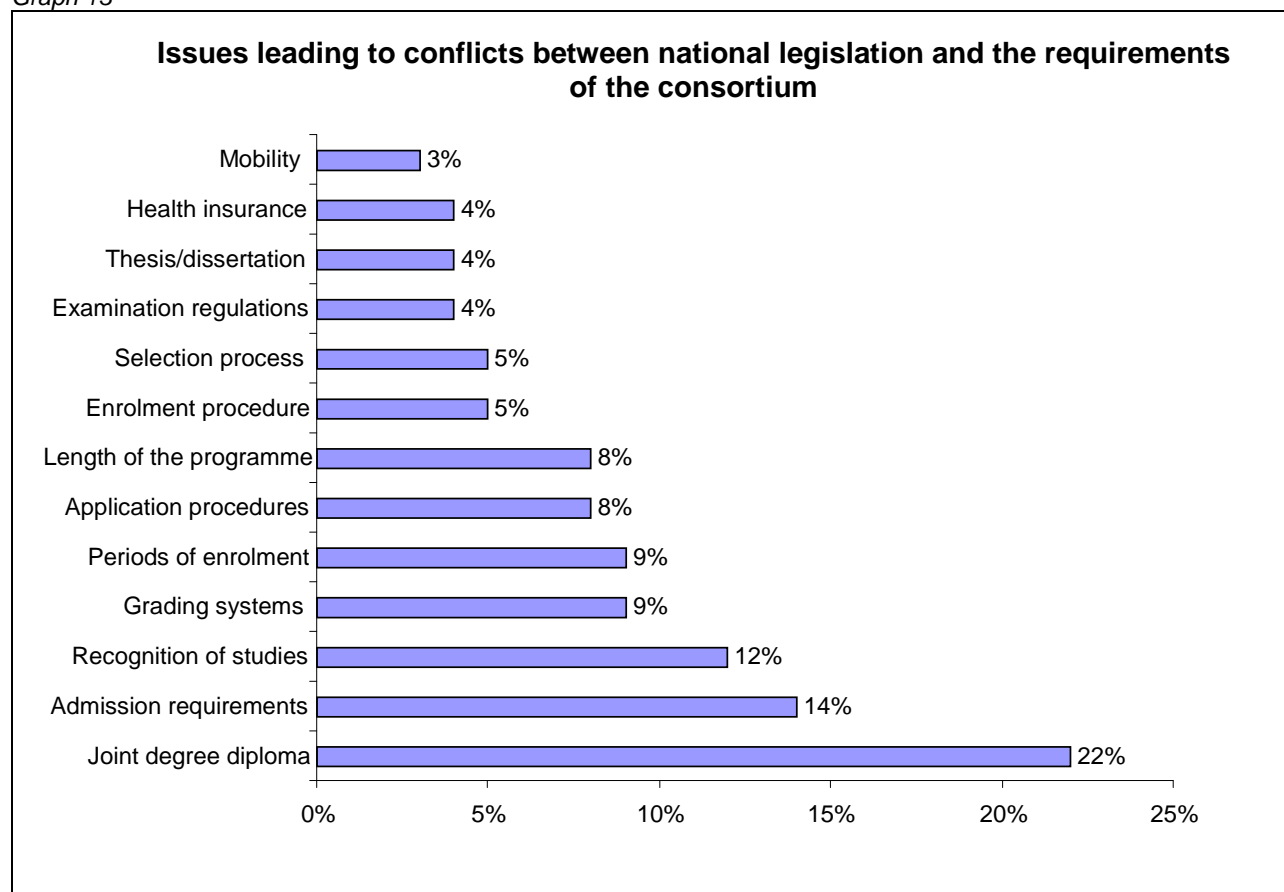| Issue	%
Mobility	8%
Health insurance	8%
Selection process	9%
Thesis/dissertation	15%
Length of the programme	15%
Enrolment procedure	17%
Recognition of studies	19%
Application procedures	19%
Periods of enrolment	22%
Examination regulations	23%
Admission requirements	25%
Grading systems	33%
Joint degree diploma	36%

First of all, it can be seen that the majority of the respondents don't have conflicts regarding all the above listed points, as the highest rate reported is 36%. The main challenge faced by respondents is the delivery of a joint degree diploma (36%) followed very closely by the grading system issues (33%). The former includes the difficulties with the format, the legality of the joint diploma and its accreditation. Concerning the grading systems, they are mostly different between the partners, thus the transfer of marks among partners institutions may engender problems.

Other challenges include: the admission requirement (25%) in terms of institutional regulations; the examinations regulations (22%); the period of enrolment (22%) as the academic calendar may not be the same at all partner institutions; the application procedures (19%); the recognition of the studies (18%); the enrolment process (17%); the length of the programme (15%) and the thesis dissertation (15%).
Selection process (9%), health insurance (8%) and mobility (8%) are considered less problematic.
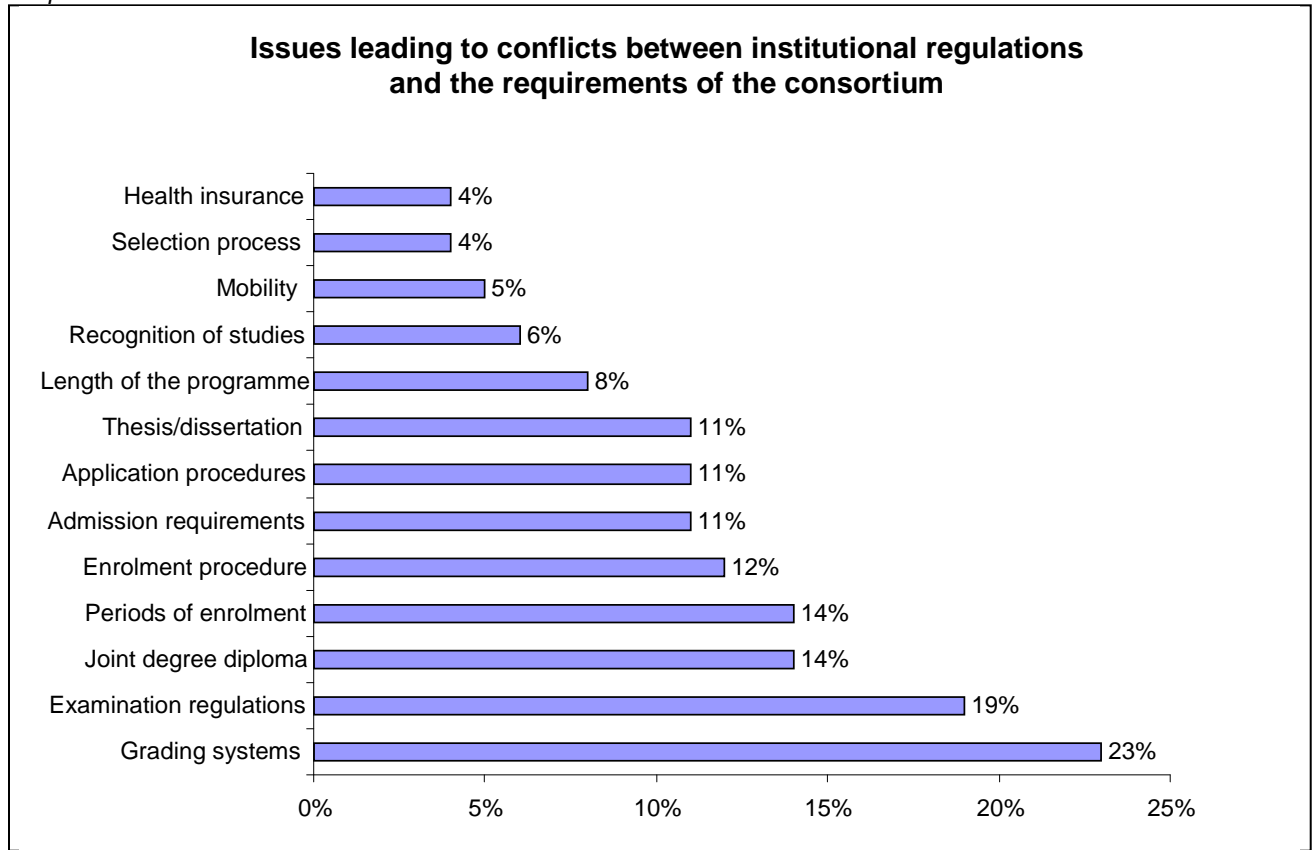
The majority of the problems encountered for the awarding of the joint degree diploma seem to be related to <u>national legislation conflicts</u>, as shown by graph 13. The admission requirements may also lead to conflicts with the national legislation (14%). Nearly all respondents solved this issue (83%). Recognition of studies may be an issue related to national authorities or legislation, 12% of respondents had or still have conflicts regarding that matter. Half of them found a solution to clear up the problem.

Graph 13

Issues leading to conflicts between national legislation and the requirements of the consortium

Issue	Percentage
Mobility	3%
Health insurance	4%
Thesis/dissertation	4%
Examination regulations	4%
Selection process	5%
Enrolment procedure	5%
Length of the programme	8%
Application procedures	8%
Periods of enrolment	9%
Grading systems	9%
Recognition of studies	12%
Admission requirements	14%
Joint degree diploma	22%

The main issue between institutional regulation and the consortium, as shown in graph 14, is the grading system (23%). 80% of the institutions have solved the problems related to this issue. The examination regulations may lead to conflicts as well (19%), but most of the institutions have cleared up the problem (87%). In addition, for the period of enrolment, the enrolment procedures, the thesis dissertation and the application procedures, challenges often come from institutional regulation conflicts; most of the respondents have managed to solve these issues.

Graph 14

**Issues leading to conflicts between institutional regulations
and the requirements of the consortium**

Issue	Percentage
Health insurance	4%
Selection process	4%
Mobility	5%
Recognition of studies	6%
Length of the programme	8%
Thesis/dissertation	11%
Application procedures	11%
Admission requirements	11%
Enrolment procedure	12%
Periods of enrolment	14%
Joint degree diploma	14%
Examination regulations	19%
Grading systems	23%

As shown in the 2 graphs above, difficulties regarding the delivery of the joint diploma may come from institutional conflicts, however as we said above, this issue is more often linked to national legislation.

As confirmed by a specific question asked on the "academic calendar", partially confirmed by some study visits, although 72% of the sample was able to adapt the academic calendar to consortium needs, flexibility in calendars is not easy to obtain.

BOX 10

Most of the respondents have experienced conflicts either with national legislation or institutional regulations and **have more easily overcome the institutional barriers**.
Solutions could be either the **flexibility of the JPs** with regards to general regulation of the institution or a dedicated **institutional strategy on JPs**. In the first case, **exceptions to ordinary regulations** may be awarded to single JPs ("ex – post passive approach"), while in the second case it is the institution which creates **special regulations** valid for all JPs ("ex – ante active approach").
This has also been applied to solve the problem of harmonisation of academic calendars where flexible solutions have been adopted for JP by their institutions derogating from the general institutional regulations.

5.3 Application process

For non EM programmes, most of the partners within a consortium have their own application procedures. Some consortia decided to accept one application procedure based on that of one of the partners.
For the EMMCs, there is one application for EU students, one for non EU; most of the partners use the same application as the one from the coordinating institution.
64% of the institutions use an online application form usually based on a database controlled either by the coordinating institution or accessible to all partners. This facilitates the selection or the pre-selection which can be done by all partners without moving or without printing documents.

For the verification of documents the main tendency is that the verification of the documents is centralised and undertaken by a secretariat or an administrative office (in case of EMMCs or joint programmes with more than 2 partners) or delegated to sending institutions (mainly in bilateral programmes). In this case the vast majority of respondents **trusts** the sending institution because they have been partners for a while and they can **rely** on them.

BOX 11

Online application procedure is crucial for Programmes wishing to attract international students.

Online application **based on databases** where students can upload application files and which can be accessible to all partners can facilitate and speed up the selection procedure. Many of these systems are based on open source platforms and can be implemented rather cheaply. Furthermore, a lot of expertise has been shared recently among Erasmus Mundus and above all **EM External Cooperation Window Consortia**.

Verification of documents **should be done only by the first institution**. Second or third mobility institutions should trust the screening carried out by first institution.

Involvement of registrar offices since the development phase of the programme is important, especially if the institution has no great experience in joint programmes, in order to avoid students rejected for formal requirements after having been selected by the consortium or by the first enrolment institution.

The involvement or the establishment of good relations with ENIC – NARIC centres is a practice which could facilitate and speed up the verification procedures. Indeed, ENIC – NARIC centres could provide relevant information concerning the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study undertaken in other States.

5.4 Selection process

Most of JPs make a screening of the applications before the selection takes place. Sometimes it is done by the secretariat of the coordinating institution and sometimes by the partner universities. The main tendency is that the coordinating institution does a screening of all the applications and then distributes them among each partner, who ranks each applicant according to a predefined and common ranking process.

The most common criteria used for the selection are:

- Formal requirements;
- Academic excellence;
- Motivation;
- Language proficiency (mostly a qualification in the language of the institution the student apply to). Sometimes, a national agency is involved in the language proficiency assessment;
- References/ references letters;
- Research experience.

The majority of respondents (71%) don't validate non-formal learning such as the professional experience when considering applications. For those who validate such experiences they require the CV, a cover letter and occasionally employment documents. On the other hand, the professional experience is taken into account by almost all the respondents as additional information for the selection.

70% of the sample has set up a joint selection process. The majority of the programmes which don't use a joint selection are bilateral programmes.
Where a joint selection is present, partners usually perform the pre-selection while the final decision is referred to a joint selection committee.
The joint selection committee decides on the acceptance of the applicants and on the distribution of the scholarships during meeting organised on a yearly basis. It is constituted of representatives from all the participating institutions. This committee mostly consists of academic staff. In few cases both academic and administrative staff are involved. In most cases, the programme's academic coordinator of each institution is involved.

BOX 12

> For a substantial majority of respondents, the selection criteria are the same within the consortium in order to have the same "grading scale" when pre-selecting in each institution. In most of the JPs there is a predefined ranking procedure in the cooperation agreement.
> In some cases the selection process doesn't refer to a special procedure but to the regular selection process applied for local programmes. In these cases, after the academic approval, each application needs to be formally approved by the central administration. If a student does not fulfil the formal requirements, the application will be returned to the faculty for negotiation.

EMMCs: Most universities refer to the 8-step selection procedures of the EACEA[1].
Mostly, the coordinating institution does a screening of the applications to check if the criteria of the EM are met. The remaining applications are assessed by the Joint committee who ranks each applicant.
Students not applying for the scholarships are usually pre-selected by partners institutions according to common criteria.

Non EM programmes: The majority of non EM programmes select their students locally, each institution ranks the applications and the final selection is done by the joint selection board. Students may apply either to the coordinator or to their home university. Deadlines are usually harmonised.

Non EM bilateral programmes: The selection process is mostly done by the sending institution; the final decision is handled by the host institution. The process of selection for bilateral programmes is similar to an Erasmus exchange selection.

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[1] See European commission, *Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013: programme guide*, p15.

5.5   Enrolment and Registration

The definitions of "registration" and "enrolment" seem to be different from one country to another. In most of the responses, the terms registration and enrolment cover the same step of administration. It permits the institution to enter all the data of the nominees in their database and ensure the follow up of the students and the award of the final certification.

According to the JOIMAN definition[2], enrolment is "registering the student on the roll of the university in order to fully manage the student's academic career (i.e. fees, study programme, mobility, results, diploma, etc.)", whereas registration is "registering (exchange) student data in the institution's student database in order to provide the student with a student ID and access to the facilities such as library, electronic learning platform, etc. and to provide them with a transcript". In other words, an exchange student cannot register in a university without being enrolled in another.

In most of the consortia issuing a joint diploma, students must enrol at the coordinating institution in order to allow the award of the diploma. Then, they have to register in each visiting institution.

For the EMMCs, the enrolment is, in the vast majority, handled by the coordinating institution. For this type of programmes, students pay the fees to the coordinating institution and are then exempted from paying at the other hosting institutions. EU students are usually enrolled by the institutions where they applied to.

For non EM programmes, students are predominantly enrolled at the coordinating institution and then must register at the partner university selected for the first year. Registration at the partner university is mostly free of charge because the students have already paid their tuition fees to the coordinating institution.

In some programmes students are automatically enrolled in the partner university when they obtain the admission decision. Students may be also registered in each university of the consortium even regardless of where they will perform their mobility periods.

BOX 13

The terms "enrolment" and "registration" may have different meanings from one Country to another Country or even from one institution to another one. The Erasmus Mundus Programme has introduced the concept of **"enrolled by the consortium"**. It has to be remembered that EM consortia are not legal entities and the enrolment in the consortia **cannot substitute enrolment in one institution**. For this reason, it is very important that **negotiations among partners during the development phase of the programme take into consideration the issue of enrolment**, discussing and harmonising the formal requirements for enrolment ensuring that students can obtain access to services and to certification at each institution (i.e. transcript of records, diploma and diploma supplement).

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[2] See the JOIMAN Glossary annexed

5.6 Welcoming and mobility

Mobility refers both to international students enrolling in a study programmes and to students enrolled spending an exchange period in another institution to follow the study programme abroad.
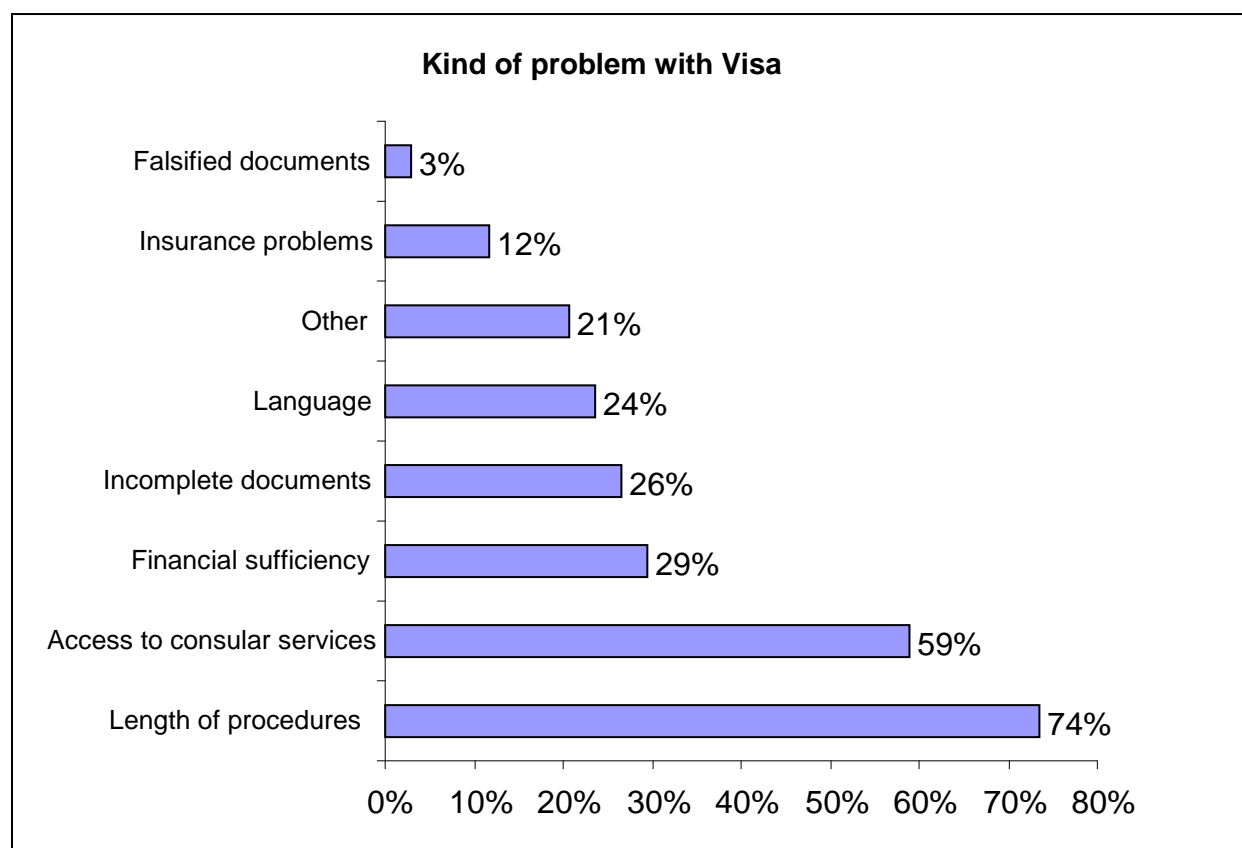
One of the main problems connected to the mobility of international students starting a study programme abroad, is the issue of welcoming services and the administrative requirements for the immigration in another Country.

In this regard, the most problematic issue encountered by international students is the issue of Visas and, in some cases, of the residence permit. These two issues are challenging aspects for international students enrolled in local programmes and therefore it is even more problematic for JPs in which non EU students have to access to more than one EU Country.

Indeed, 38% of the sample answered that their non EU students have already faced some trouble with obtaining their Visa. For EMMCs this amount comes to 44%.

The length of the procedures, in relation to the rigid calendars of master programmes which usually include language courses before the start of the programmes, and the access to consular services are the main problematic issues. Students may also encounter some trouble concerning financial sufficiency if they don't have enough money in their bank account; this applies mainly to non EM students who cannot always benefit from generous scholarships like the EM students. Finally, some students reported problems regarding the documents that must be submitted to the consulate or about the national language proficiency.

Graph 15

Kind of problem with Visa

Problem	%
Falsified documents	3%
Insurance problems	12%
Other	21%
Language	24%
Incomplete documents	26%
Financial sufficiency	29%
Access to consular services	59%
Length of procedures	74%

Another problem encountered by the universities has been the "residence permit" for international students, especially for those students remaining in the coordinating institution for a short term who risk not receiving the residence permit before their departure for the partner University, and consequent refusal at the border.

BOX 14

It is difficult to find a general solution for Visa issues since, as a general rule, Consulates are in charge of the Visa issuing with their own rules and procedures which may differ, in time or procedures, from one to one other.
It is interesting to know that **Erasmus Mundus National Structures** usually collaborate with JP coordinators and institutions being a sort of "trait d'union" with the consulates all around the word. Again the propulsive and innovating role of the Erasmus Mundus Programme can be noted, but at the same time JPs which are "outside" the EM club do not benefit from the same support.

Here we report some suggestions for the Visa issuing taken from the open questions of the survey:

To cooperate with administrative bodies, embassies
To send the certificates, documents directly to the consulate
Intervention of the ministry of foreign affairs
To issue the letter of acceptance as soon as possible
To offer a financial support to excellent applicants i.e. some students don't manage to prove that they will have sufficient funding for their mobility. In that case the university can support them financially to solve this issue
To increase the level of assistance in the joint consortium

Concerning the residence permit issue, some universities have managed to overcome the problem by **developing formal agreements or more simply establishing good cooperation paths with national authorities at local level**, as was remarked during some study visits.

A part from the initial mobility of international students enrolled, the **mobility within a study programme** is a crucial part of the JP, even if in some cases respondents have described their JP without a "physical mobility of the students".
In the next paragraphs we try to show to potential coordinators possible mobility schemes extracted from existing JPs.

Mobility flows usually follow the terms of the academic year, which can be three lasting 4 months or 2 lasting 6 months. Mobility can also be organised in the form of intensive residential modules (such as summer or winter school), usually outside the course periods, or in the form of internships or project work not necessarily within an higher education institution.

The average length of the mobility is one year and this is applied to either EMMC, non EMMC and to bilateral cooperation.
In most of the EMMC, the last 6 months are dedicated to a research project or, in fewer cases, to an internship. In those cases the search for an internship is carried out either at the home institution after the mobility period, or in a partner institution which offer specialised research fields.

Some of the courses analysed seem to be organised so as to offer core courses in each institution, leaving the choice of the starting institution to the students, and presenting specialisation fields which differ from one institution to another. Some other courses foresee that all students start in one institution and have to perform mobility period in all the other partners ("Master trip" model).

The majority of respondents declared that they let their students choose their mobility among several partners (43%). For 24% of the respondents, the student has no choice and is obliged to spend the period abroad at a certain partner university. Other consortia have decided to impose the mobility for the courses but give the student the choice for the master thesis.
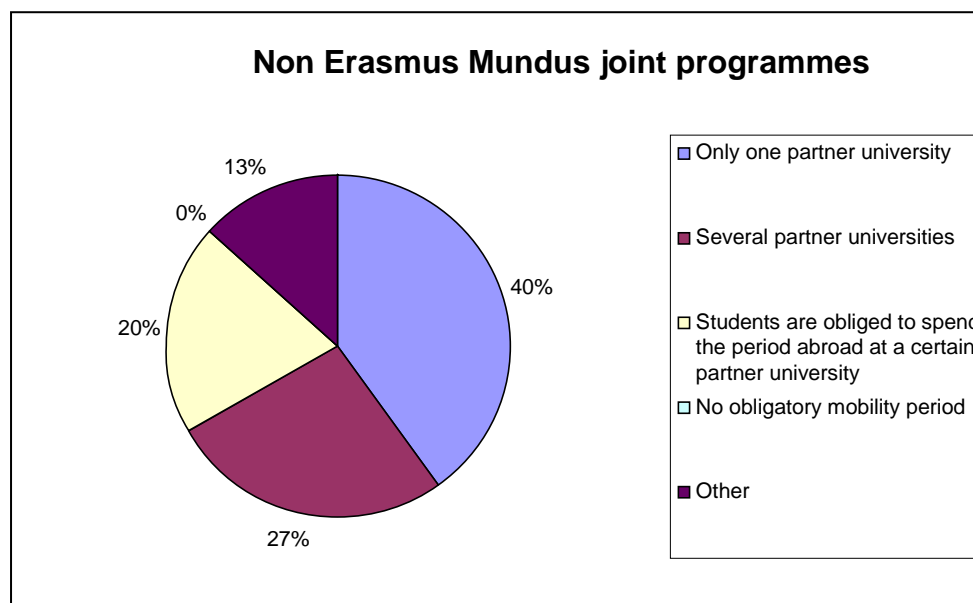
Graph 16
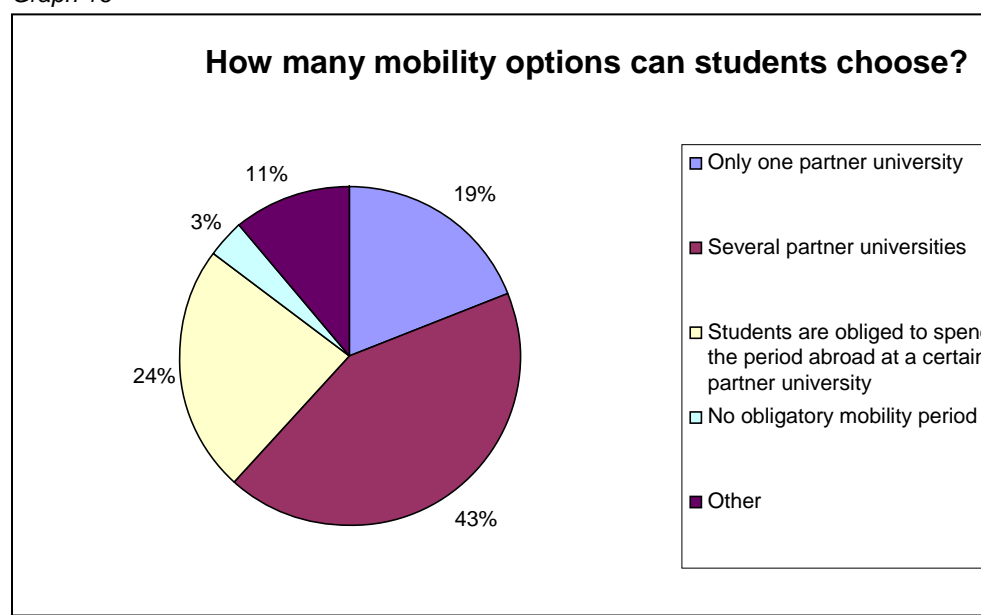
The majority of EMMC declared that they offer mobility options in several partner institutions (which is a formal requirement of the Programme), However for 26% of them the mobility is decided by the consortium (graph 17).

Graph 17
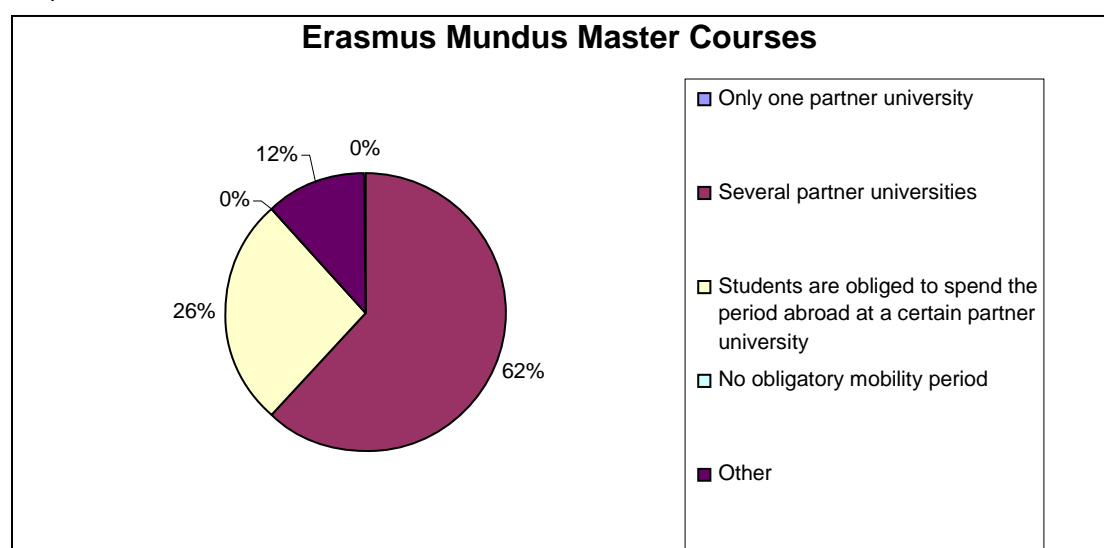
For the non EM programmes awarding multiple or joint diploma all the possibilities are in place.

Graph 18

Non Erasmus Mundus joint programmes

Legend:
- Only one partner university
- Several partner universities
- Students are obliged to spend the period abroad at a certain partner university
- No obligatory mobility period
- Other

Values shown: 40%, 27%, 20%, 0%, 13%

BOX 16

As shown by the above description, many mobility options/model can be applied. The following models can be highlighted as examples:

Programmes with common core courses offered by some or all universities where students can start the programme + one mobility for specialising courses lasting one semester with students going back to home institutions for the research or project work period. Research work can also be performed outside Higher education Institutions

"Trip programmes" with fixed mobility and with all students starting at the same institution. This option is more costly for students who have to carry out more than one mobility period but ensure that all students are together from the beginning to the end of the programme.

"Bilateral mobility programmes": in this case students spend one year at the starting institution and one year in the second institution, including research for the thesis and dissertation. The mobility options in this case can be either fixed depending on the starting institutions or free.

Programmes with Intensive residential modules: in this model students can have either a long mobility period on the basis of the above described models and an intensive residential module, usually organised outside the lectures periods, in which all students are together.

The appointment of a tutor for mobility, who may also be a former student, in charge of counselling before leaving or in charge of integration within the faculty services and social life could be an important service for mobility.

5.7   Monitoring

Monitoring of academic progresses is in the majority of cases performed by the institution delivering the programme (83%) since academic monitoring can be performed more efficiently by institutions in daily contact with the students. The remaining 17% follows these progresses through the JP board.

Only 57% of the respondents declared that they use a learning agreement, but this data can confirm that the programmes concerned are really integrated and students do not need learning agreements <u>as the learning outcomes of the study programme, the modules and the teaching units have been jointly designed and approved</u>.

Most of the time, students are assigned to a local coordinator who is responsible for following the academic progress of JP students. This does not prevent all academic staff teaching in the programme from being responsible for monitoring courses and examinations.

Local coordinators usually report their observations and remarks either to JP Boards or to QA boards.

In non EM programmes awarding double degrees diplomas, the monitoring of the academic progress is mostly handled by both universities.

BOX 15

An example for monitoring the programme extracted from the survey

"The Joint programme board organises a yearly "evaluation and planning meeting" with each local coordinator. They report on the teaching delivered by their staff members. These reports are compared with the student evaluation forms which evaluate each course. Afterwards, the JP board makes recommendations on the teaching in each partner university. These recommendations are sent to the partner university for official approval.

The student evaluation also allows monitoring of other aspects of the JP: "information given to students, the organisation of tests and exams, the perceived workload, tutoring offered, accommodation issues, etc,".

Each local coordinator has a strong relationship with the overall academic coordinator in this HEI. In case of change in the academic staff at the local institution, the local coordinator and overall coordinator have to make sure that the new teacher is well informed of the structure of the JP".


5.8   Grading system

Some consortia took several years to solve the differences between national marking systems. This is partly due to the fact that ECTS grading scale is not applied properly and can generate misunderstandings. Some of the respondents declare that the ECTS grading scale is not sufficient to solve the "translation" problems because of the different interpretation given to the ECTS scale, either quantitative (A = best 10%, B next 25% etc) or qualitative (A= excellent, B = good etc.).

Indeed, even if the vast majority of the sample uses the ECTS grading scale for the conversion of marks, 24% of them use an additional conversion table.
The "Other" answers, which are 12% of respondents as shown in graph 19 have developed their own grading scale. In some cases there is no transfer of marks but only of credits.
In many cases, conversion tables are in place for those JPs either with institutions which do not apply the ECTS grading scale or because the conversion table had been developed for the Erasmus exchange purposes and has been adopted for JPs too.
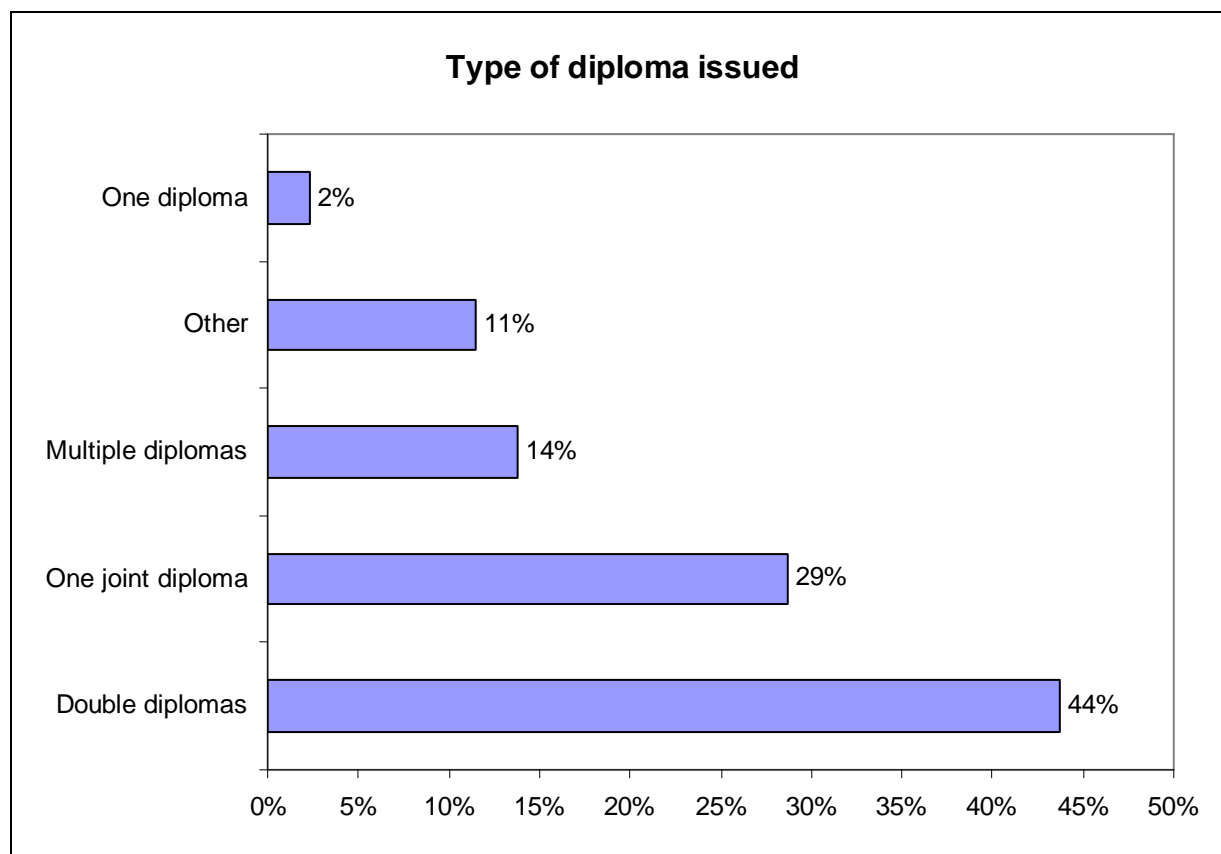
Graph 19
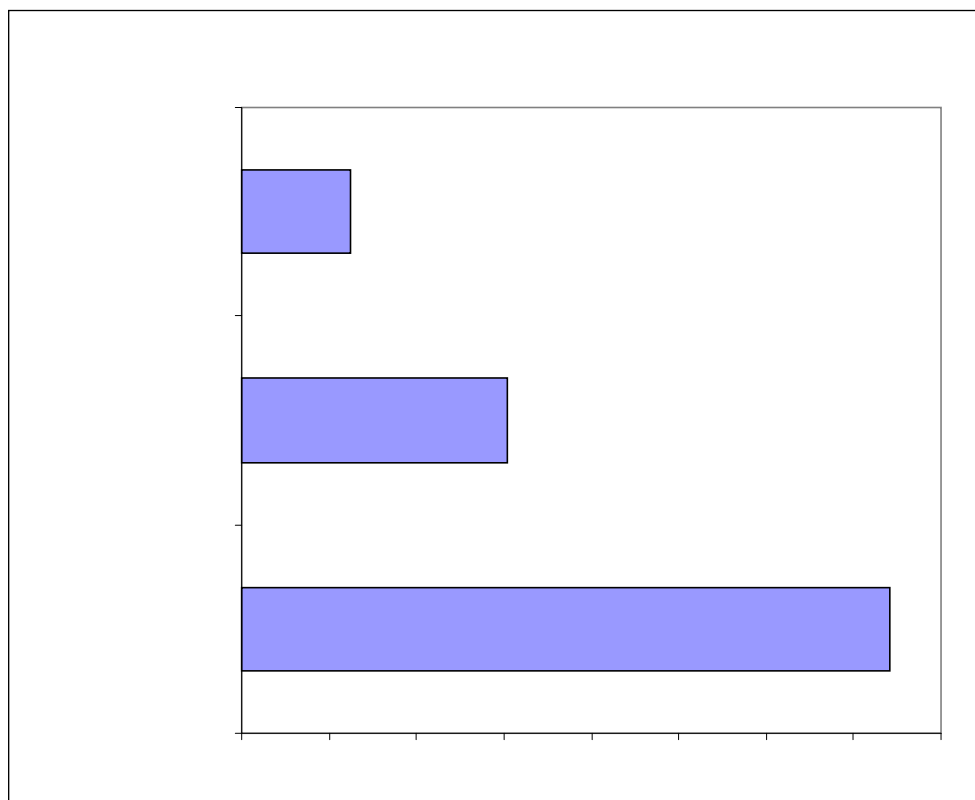
BOX 16

If grading scale **is adopted properly within institutions, with statistics carried out at faculty or programme level regularly, ECTS grading scale seems to be the most suitable and fair tool for the conversion of marks**. Where this is not possible, the use of converting tables developed ad hoc could be a valid alternative.

5.9   Awarding the diploma and the diploma supplement

Our sample involves JP awarding, double, joint and multiple diploma. As shown in graph 20, the majority of respondents issue a double diploma. More than a quarter of the sample delivers a joint diploma. Among "other" answers, many cases are the delivery of diploma by each institution plus a joint certificate issued by the consortium. Some institutions plan to implement a joint diploma, being aware of the long time they will need to achieve this results and of the difficulties they could meet.

Graph 20

Type of diploma issued

Type	Percentage
One diploma	2%
Other	11%
Multiple diplomas	14%
One joint diploma	29%
Double diplomas	44%

Joint Diploma: In most cases the joint diploma is printed and issued by the coordinating institution. In some cases the joint diploma is issued by the university in which the student has submitted and discussed the master thesis. All Rectors of the partners' institutions have to sign the diploma and this procedure usually requires many months. In most cases, once the diplomas are printed and signed by all Rectors, the consortia organise a graduation ceremony to award the diplomas.
The joint diploma is described as a certificate including the logos of all partners, where possible, and the signature of all rectors. In addition, the national name of the degree and the national law enabling the institution to award the joint diploma is quoted on the diploma. Some respondents declared that they issue joint certificates which are not recognised by national laws, which do not replace the degree awarded by the institution according to national law. In this cases diploma is a symbolic award to students and cannot be considered as a real joint diploma because it doesn't fit the common definitions of the Joint diploma[3].

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[3] ESU definition of Joint degree: "a single diploma issued by at least two higher education institutions offering an integrated programme and recognised officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located."

Double and multiple diplomas: the procedures for issuing double or multiple diplomas rarely differ from the regular procedures for local programmes In some cases the first diploma is issued by the coordinating institution and automatically issued by the other institutions, in other cases it is awarded by the institution in which the student has defended the thesis and may be awarded at a later stage at the request of the student.

As anticipated in 5.1, the issuing of the joint diploma remains one of the main challenges for JP coordinators.
The main reasons seem to be connected to either national legislation or institutional regulations. The procedures for the accreditation of joint diplomas are perceived as still too complicated and the regulations of the partners' universities may not be compatible with the delivery of the joint diploma.

An important issue arising from some respondents is that apparently the <u>joint diplomas are not recognised by the labour market</u>; indeed only 16% of the sample believe it is easier for the students to find a job with a joint diploma rather than with a double or multiple one.

<u>It has to be considered that JP constitute a cultural revolution for higher education, which needs time to be digested by the universities themselves and therefore even more by the external world. The issue of "recognition of the joint diploma" by the labour market, seems to hide a two-fold problem: on one hand universities and students are afraid to present "pieces of paper" which are designed differently from the traditional ones; on the other hand it seems to be difficult to communicate what is really the added value of a joint diploma, and more importantly, of a joint programme.</u>

Graph 21
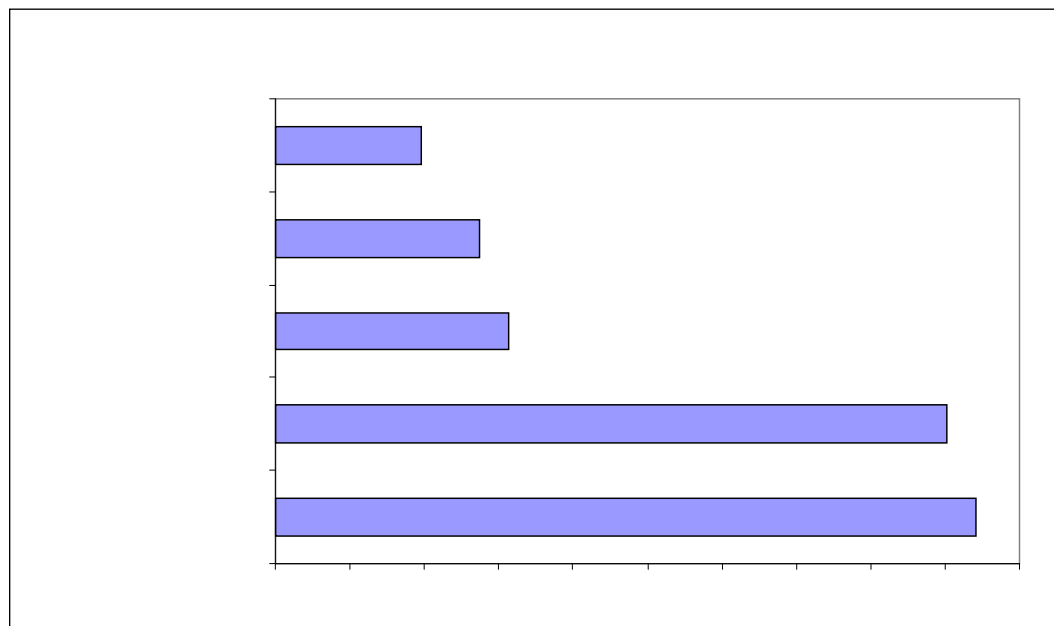
Diploma Supplement and Joint Diploma Supplement: 81% of respondents provide a DS. The DS is issued together with the diploma for 67% of the sample. However the delivery of a joint diploma supplement is less frequent (40%). DS is still a new procedure for many universities and the international dimension of the JPs does not

seem to have affected the DS procedures. What is more rare and still under discussion among consortia is the issuing of a joint DS (in Lithuania is not allowed by law) and the technical problems connected.

BOX 17

The procedure to deliver the joint diploma should be written **in the cooperation agreement.**

There are two main problems connected with the issuing of a joint diploma:
On one hand national and institutional laws and regulations have not always been adapted for this issue; on the other hand students and even JP coordinators are not convinced that the labour market is ready to accept such innovation.

To overcome the above problems, in both cases **the involvement of stakeholders** and in particular of national ministries of education **is crucial**, but also national associations such as rectors' conferences, national agencies and the EC as well. These actors could on one hand play an **advocating role for change** in order to adapt laws to innovation; on the other hand they could **raise awareness among students and in the labour market on the existence and value of a joint diploma**. In other words, the appeal of the joint diploma still needs to be explained and absorbed by students and companies.

6.   Financial management of joint programmes

Joint Programmes require to institutions supplementary investments to cover the additional costs for the organisation and implementation of the programmes. These investments can be either in the form of additional human resources, additional services or scholarships or direct money support. The Erasmus Mundus Programme has introduced the requirement of the <u>common policy on tuition fees</u>, which was almost unexplored by JP in Europe before the EM era, but which requires the harmonisation of an issue – tuition and fees – which is linked to the social systems of the Countries concerned, which are, up to now, not harmonised in Europe. Erasmus Mundus, in this sense, has revealed the many national and institutional differences in EU and demanded that measures be taken to synchronise or even harmonise the various national approaches. This is why these issues have raised the interest of the JOIMAN project which has dedicated a specific part of its research to this field.

This section presents the findings of the project group that tackled financial issues. The focus lies on current procedures and main problems faced in the domains of <u>tuition fee</u> application and distribution, <u>scholarships</u> and <u>sustainability</u> of JPs. Special emphasis is placed on the difference between EMMC and non EM programmes.

The different funding systems of HEIs in Europe as well as the different national legislation on fees and scholarships are also taken into account.

6.1 National Legislation

The whole issue of the financial administration of joint programmes is closely linked with the interrelationship between university autonomy and state legislation. Universities usually are not free to charge tuition as they "like" it. One of the intentions of the legislature in many countries in Europe therefore might be to maintain a social cohesion among the students. The national legislations on tuition fees apparently reflect the various European approaches to education: in some Countries education is as a common good while in other countries education is a benefit of individuals which are therefore asked to pay for their education. However, the changing character of (higher) education in a globalising context raises the political awareness to change legislation in many countries. Globalisation does not stop at a university door - the increasing diversity and competition among European universities on the global education market influence that process as well.

BOX 18

The JOIMAN project carried out a survey in autumn 2009 **to photograph the current situation reported by colleagues from institutions in the individual countries.** The survey concentrates on the legal situation with regard to tuition fees for master programmes, a distinction on citizenship, special regulations for joint degrees and EMMCs. The survey will be published on the web site of the project.

6.2 Tuition fees

According to the present survey, as reported in graph 22, more than two-thirds of the 89 respondents charge tuition fees.

Graph 22

JP charging tuition fees
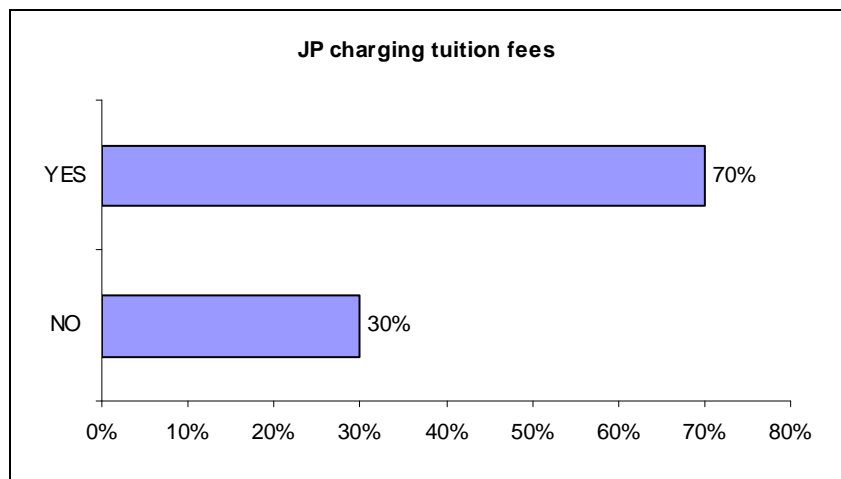
BOX 19

The main explanation for not charging tuition fees seems to consist in **legal constraints**. It is stated explicitly by approx. 20% of the institutions that have tuition fee waiving policies. This statement goes along with the fact that programmes not charging tuition fees are located in countries where these fees are either legally not possible or these countries holding up a long tradition of free university education. Some examples include Norway, Germany (some Federal States), Austria, the Czech Republic, and Sweden.

It is, however, important to note that apart from the legislative diversity, there is another distinction between EMMCs and the non EM joint programmes. The former charge tuition fees in a significantly higher number of cases than the latter. In total, 85% of EMMCs charge tuition fees whereas the remaining 15% do not charge fees mostly due to legislative obstacles. In comparison, only 55 % of the non EMMCs charge tuition fees while the remaining ones are fully supported by the institutions or governments.

Graph 23

Application of tuition fees - EMMC versus non EMMC
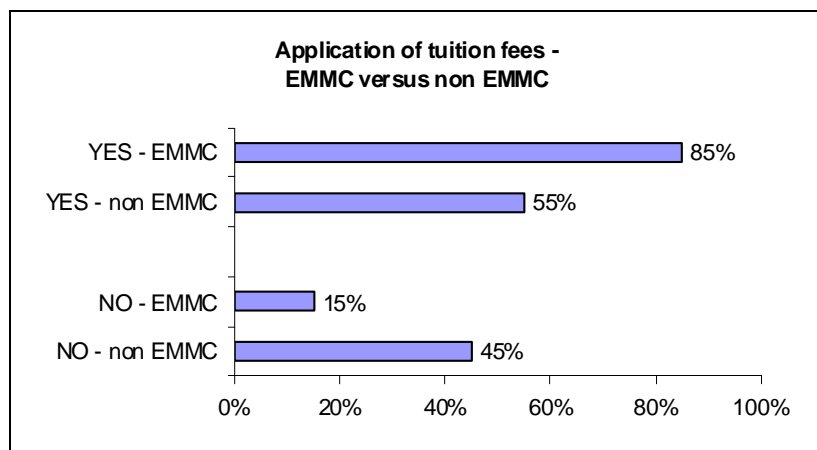
Another strong variation in financial matters concerns the maximum fees. As shown by graph, in EMMCs 70% of all courses charge tuition fees higher than €5,000 in comparison to 11% of non EMMC with that amount. Most of non EMMC (45%) do not charge any fees at all, 27% charge fees between €1,000 and €5,000.

The average maximum tuition fee among EMMC (excluding the ones which are tuition free) is more than twice as high (€ 6,982) as the one of non EMMC (€2,961). The same holds true for the average minimum tuition of €2,367 for EMMC whereas non EMMC charge only €1,013 on average.

Graph 24
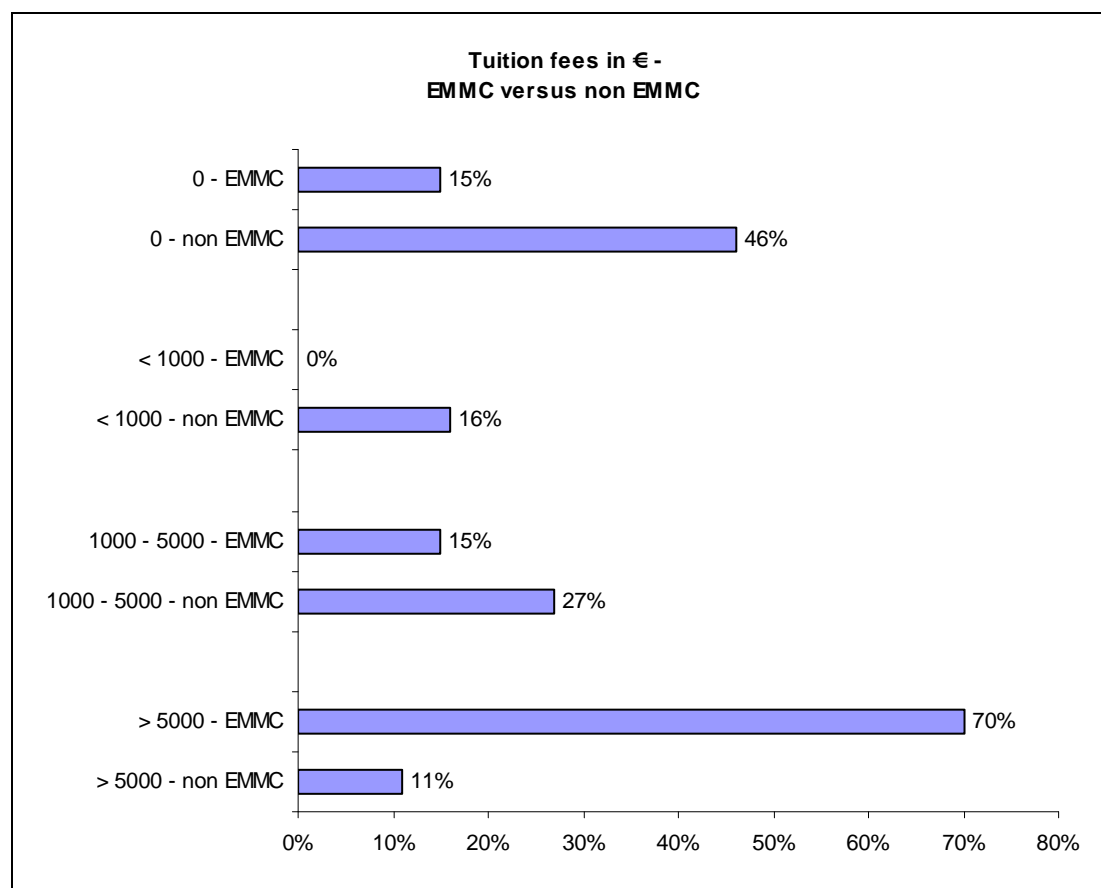
Although the maximum tuition fees in EMMC are relatively high, only 28% of all EMMC charge the same fees for all the students. The majority distinguishes between students according to different criteria. The two main criteria for paying lower prices consist in the student's EU/non-EU origin (70%) and the award/non-award of EM grants (25%).

To compare, 26% of the non-EMMC, if they charge a tuition fee at all, charge all students the same fees. Furthermore, the non-EMMC consortia distinguish by performance (40%), and equally by needs (18%), by nationality (18%) as well as the student being from a partner institution or not (18%).

Graph 25

Criteria of charging tuition - EMMC versus non EMMC

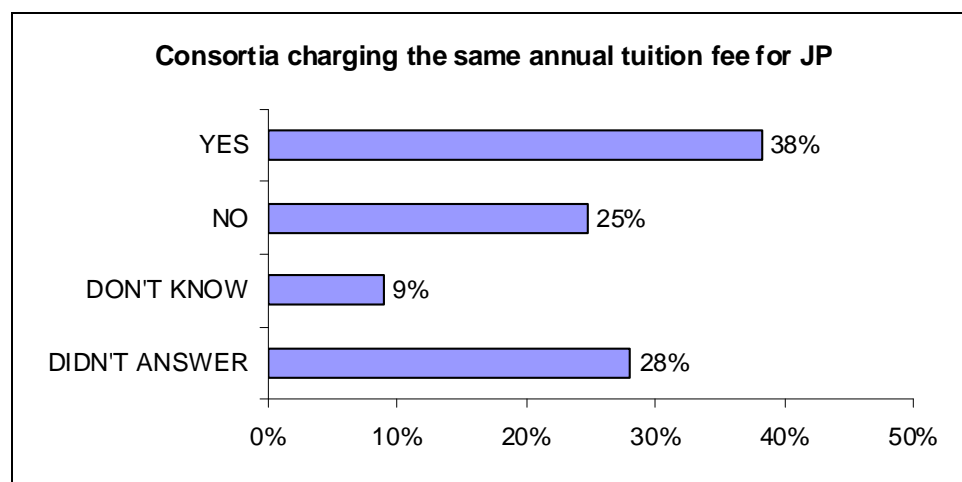| Category	Value
Nationality - EMMC	70%
Nationality - non EMMC	18%
EM grant holders - EMMC	25%
EM grant holders - non EMMC	0%
Needs - EMMC	0%
Needs - non EMMC	18%
Performance - EMMC	0%
Performance - non EMMC	40%
Partner institution - EMMC	5%
Partner institution - non EMMC	18%
Exchange - EMMC	0%
Exchange - non EMMC	6%
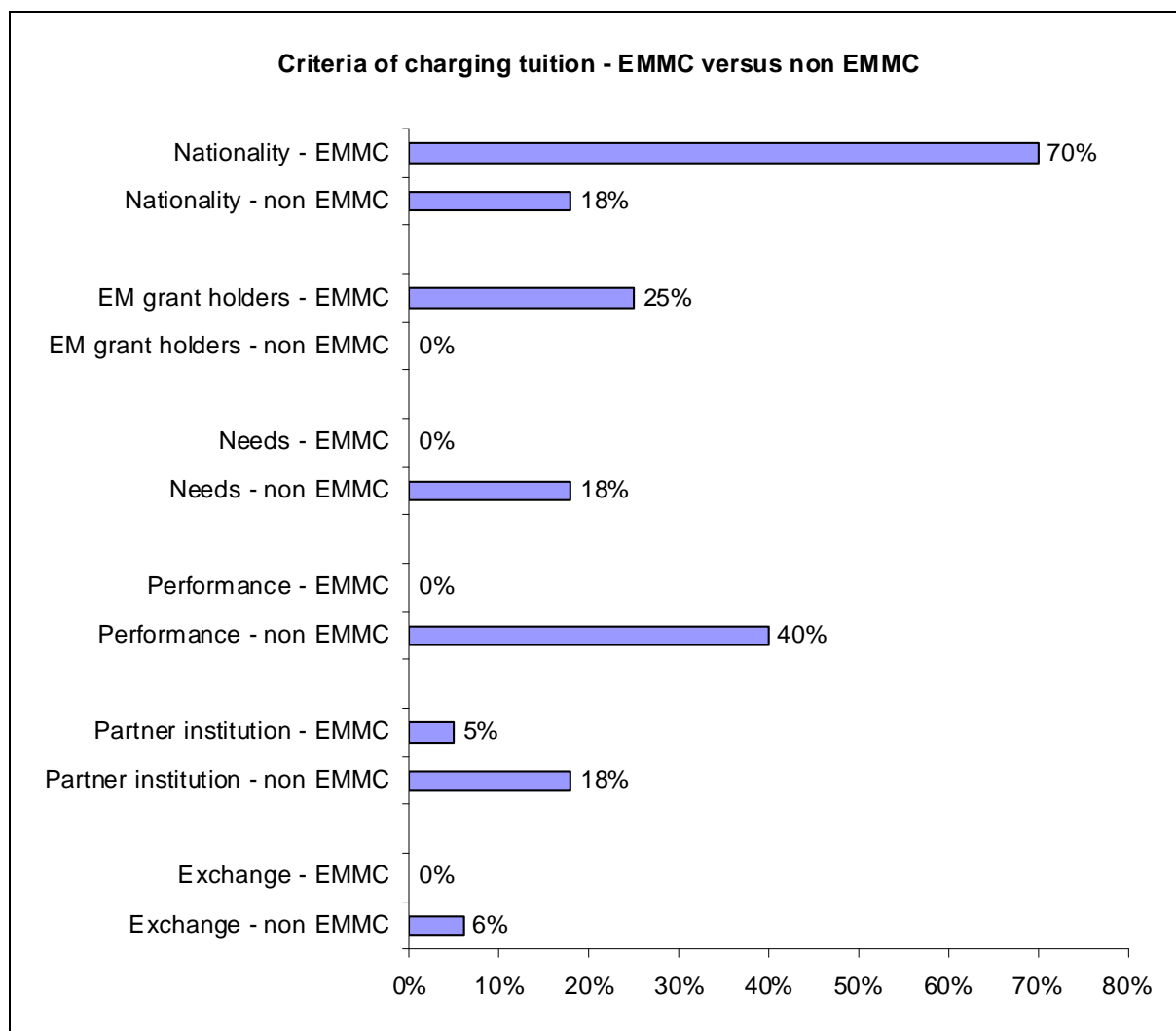
BOX 20

There seems to be inequality within EMMC consortia with regard to the tuition fees charged from EU students compared to non EU students. Higher charges for non EU students are usually waived. This may not support social cohesion among the students enrolled. **Non EMMC joint programmes use students' performance as the dominant criterion to charge less from well performing students**. Although the applicant's performance presumably is the main factor in EMMC as well, it is overruled by their nationality in the respondents' eyes. The performance factor should be strengthened or at least pointed out more visibly within EMMC.

Study visits also underlined that in some cases institutions had to require special regulations to be approved by the university board in order either to increase the regular fees or to apply different fees to students on the basis of nationality. **For institutions wishing to participate in the Erasmus Mundus programme, this is an issue to be taken into consideration before developing the programme**

Taking the consortia and their tuition policies into account, most of them charge the same fees in every partner institution (graph: 38% against 25%).

Many of the study visits revealed that the most severe problems occurred in consortia which comprise institutions from countries with diverging legislation on tuition fees, e.g. when British universities have to harmonise their fees with Scandinavian institutions. It was also reported that the distinction along students' citizenship caused problems, i.e. EU and non EU students are charged different amount. Social cohesion is an issue in this respect.

Graph 26

Consortia charging the same annual tuition fee for JP

YES	38%
NO	25%
DON'T KNOW	9%
DIDN'T ANSWER	28%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%

BOX 21

Therefore **it is essential to check the legal situation of potential partners first**. **The involvement of administrative or law offices** in the planning phase of JP is a "must" and avoids trouble among the partners and even with courts in later phases of the project.
The tuition and other fees have to be agreed on within the consortium before a JP is to be launched. Examples of solving the problems involve the partial re-imbursement of tuition fees to students from "legally difficult" countries, check the real purpose of costs and identify those costs (within a "tuition" fee) which are not directly used for teaching (tuition) clearly, and share fees among the partners considering their legal situation as well. In the latter case, within a set period of time the real participation of the individual partner institutions (in teaching and administering the JP) within a consortium should define their shares amicably.
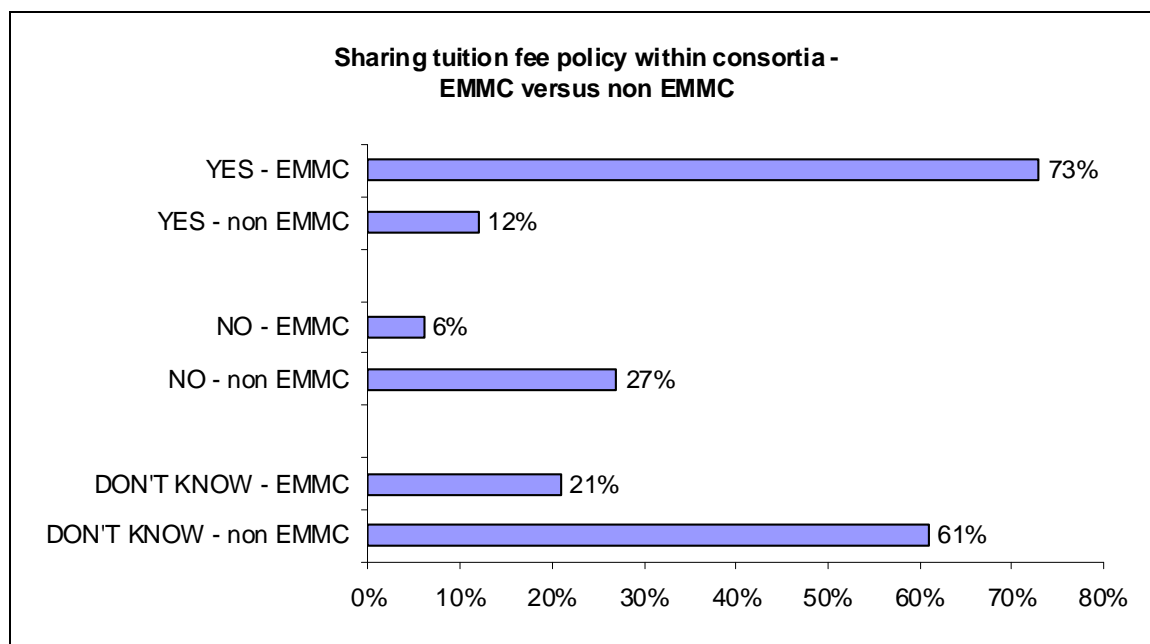The gap between Erasmus Mundus programme parameters and differing or even conflicting national legislation should be bridged for the sake of the programme and the institutions and students involved.

It is interesting to divide the programmes again into EMMC and non EMMC. 73% of the consortia in EMMC share the same tuition fee policy (see graph 27), whereas for non EMMC this applies to only 12 % of the cases.
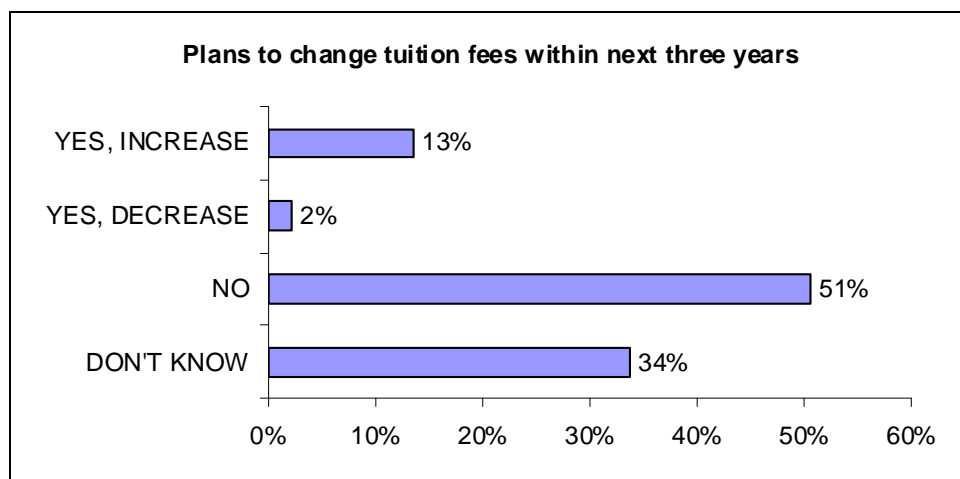
BOX 22

A striking discovery is the number of "Don't know" answers with is tripled in non EMMC, leading to the assumption that transparency between the partner institutions is better in place in EMMC than it is in non EMMC.

Graph 27

**Sharing tuition fee policy within consortia -
EMMC versus non EMMC**

Category	Value
YES - EMMC	73%
YES - non EMMC	12%
NO - EMMC	6%
NO - non EMMC	27%
DON'T KNOW - EMMC	21%
DON'T KNOW - non EMMC	61%

Regarding future plans (graph 28), most of the consortia are not going to change their tuition fees (51%). In many cases the legal situation or national regulations do not allow this, in some cases this is due to the economical situation of the students. The relatively high figure of "Don't know" answers could lead to the consideration that one third of the sample does not consider the issue of tuition fees as an issue for sustainability.

Graph 28

Plans to change tuition fees within next three years

Category	Value
YES, INCREASE	13%
YES, DECREASE	2%
NO	51%
DON'T KNOW	34%

BOX 22

It might be a case of head-in-the-sand-politics when the question of how to develop the fee policy within a JP seems to be an odd one. The predominantly academic or scientific motivation to offer joint programmes seems not to be concerned by their financial dimension in many academic cultures on the continent. This is another reason for raising awareness towards administrative issues among academics.

Furthermore, from a marketing point of view it would be easier to decrease the price of a good product than to increase it. But the academic/scientific quality of the JP in a particular market situation is the key question in this regard as well.

To **sum up the chapter on tuition fees**: Traditionally in Europe, there is a great diversity in national legislations concerning tuition fees. In some countries, such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Portugal etc. all students pay tuition fees, whereas in others, as some Nordic Countries, tuition charged have not (yet) been introduced. This variation is also reflected in the fees being charged in Joint Programmes (JP).

The main explanation for not charging tuition fees seems to consist in legal constraints. This goes along with the fact that programmes not charging tuition fees are located in countries where these fees are either not legally possible or holding up a long tradition of "free" university education. Some examples include Norway, Germany (some Federal States), Austria, Czech Republic, and Sweden.

Presumably, EMMC can afford to charge students the full costs of their tuition because the EM label renders the programmes more attractive on the educational market. Another explanation might be that their students are often provided with very generous scholarships from the European Commission.

Not all partners in the consortia charge the same tuition fees. In some cases differences are explained by the legal restrictions in some countries. One existing model to overcome that obstacle consists in one member (co-ordinator) of the consortia collecting fees and distributing the money to all the partners. However, this policy is forbidden by some national legislation, e.g. Norwegian.

Generally, EMMC seem to be better organised as consortia and share unified policies; non EMMC consortia are more open to meet the needs and consider legal obstacles of every partner. Some of the consortia charge very low fees or none at all. This means that institutions have to invest their own resources or rely on government grants. From the programme's perspective this leads to a growing dependence on the institutions. Yet the investment out of non-financial motives might increase the quality of the programme as well as the support of JP when facing difficulties with external funding.
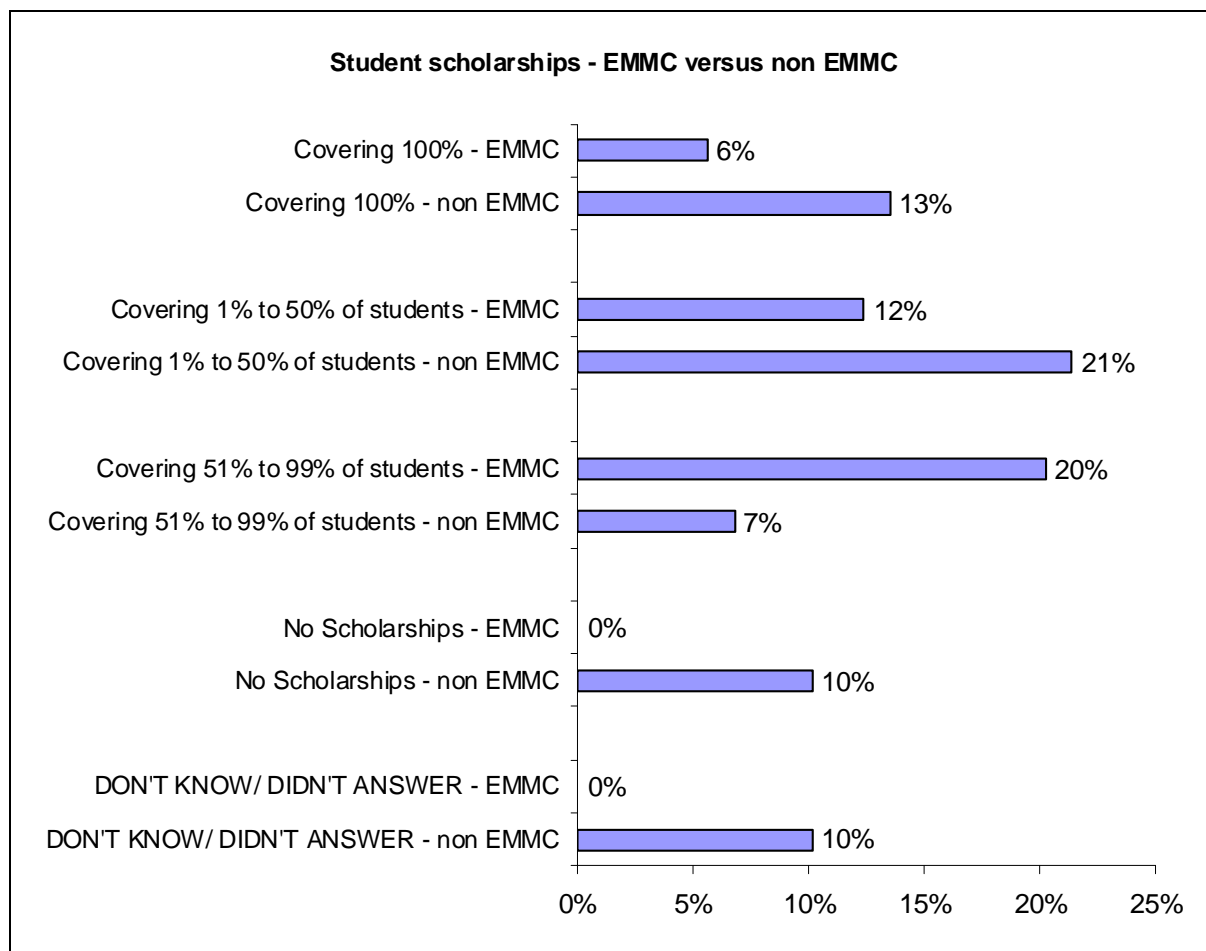
6.3 Scholarships

Crucial financial matters of JP are, of course, closely linked to the question of scholarships and their distribution. Scholarships could be considered a means to support social cohesion among the applicants and students.
With nearly 80%, the majority of the 89 responding JPs grant scholarships to students. More than half of these JPs award a scholarship to more than half of their students, 17 programmes even to all of their students. Only 10% allocate no scholarship whatsoever. Compared to other questions on financial issues such as the coverage of full costs, the percentage of respondents who did not know about scholarships or did not answer at all is relatively small (10%).
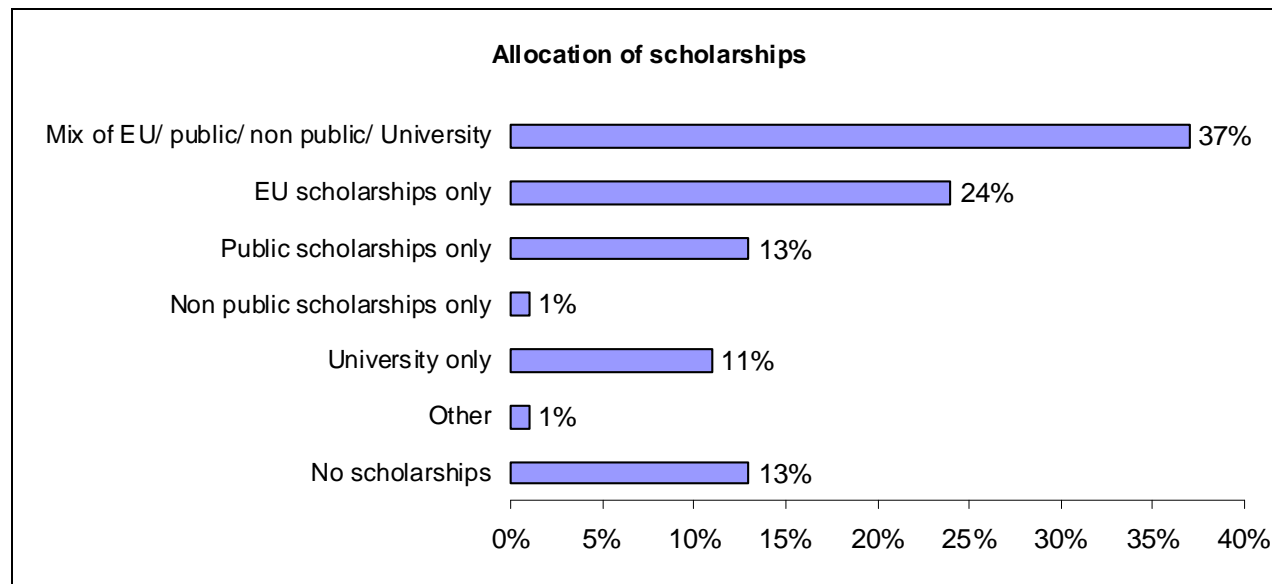
Distinguishing between EMMC and non EMMC, it can be stated that all 34 EMMC which responded grant scholarships. Moreover, a much higher number of EMMC than non EMMC grant scholarships for more than half of their students (68% out of the 34 EMMC compared to 33% out of the 55 non EMMC). Yet, the non EMMC JPs grant scholarships to 100% of their students more often (13% versus 6% in EMMC). Scholarships being distributed to less than half of the students show equal results in both EMMC and non EMMC. All programmes without scholarships as well as respondents not answering the question at all belong to the non EM section.

Graph 29

Student scholarships - EMMC versus non EMMC

- Covering 100% - EMMC: 6%
- Covering 100% - non EMMC: 13%
- Covering 1% to 50% of students - EMMC: 12%
- Covering 1% to 50% of students - non EMMC: 21%
- Covering 51% to 99% of students - EMMC: 20%
- Covering 51% to 99% of students - non EMMC: 7%
- No Scholarships - EMMC: 0%
- No Scholarships - non EMMC: 10%
- DON'T KNOW/ DIDN'T ANSWER - EMMC: 0%
- DON'T KNOW/ DIDN'T ANSWER - non EMMC: 10%

The allocation of the scholarships mostly consists of a combination of EU and public or other sources (37%). Only 6 out of 32 programmes with mixed allocation rely on the private sector. The 13% that do not indicate any source also include 7 programmes without scholarships.
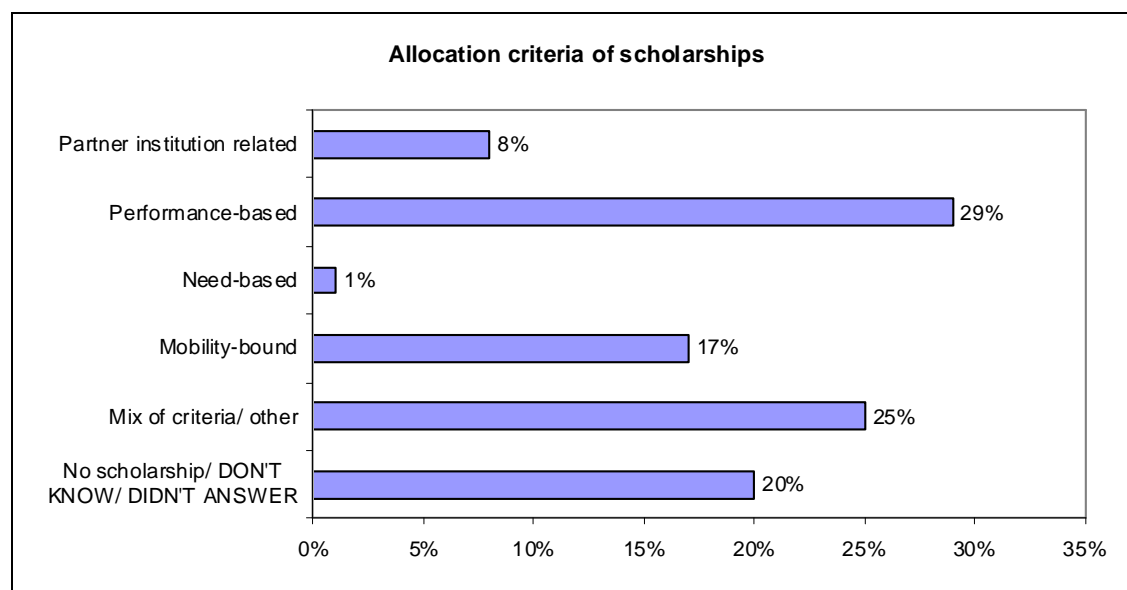
Graph 30

Allocation of scholarships

Category	Percentage
Mix of EU/ public/ non public/ University	37%
EU scholarships only	24%
Public scholarships only	13%
Non public scholarships only	1%
University only	11%
Other	1%
No scholarships	13%

Regarding the purpose of scholarships, 26 programmes did not answer at all. The answers given range from covering tuition and living costs (37 respondents), the need to attract non-EU students (12), general mobility of students (8), social reasons (1), and general merit purposes (3). It follows that EMMC generally cover tuition waivers whereas in non EMMC the dominating purposes are the partial coverage of travel, housing and living costs.
29% distribute the scholarships on a performance-based system, followed by programmes deploying a mix of performance, need, and other considerations (curriculum etc.). Again, 20% do not know or do not respond at all (though it has to be noted that this percentage also includes programmes without scholarships).

Graph 31

Allocation criteria of scholarships

Category	Percentage
Partner institution related	8%
Performance-based	29%
Need-based	1%
Mobility-bound	17%
Mix of criteria/ other	25%
No scholarship/ DON'T KNOW/ DIDN'T ANSWER	20%

BOX 23

The survey also allowed respondents to make remarks. Comments of interest state the following for EMMC:

Respondent 1: "*The scholarship is too high for non EU students. The amount could be more attractive than the programme itself. More scholarships are opportune for EU students*",
Respondent 2: "*The scholarships are so large that they discriminate very strongly between those who receive them and those that do not. Thus, only students getting scholarships take part*".

Besides, the geographical locations of the programmes apparently cause several inequalities:

Respondent 3: "*Geographical balance means that sometimes we must choose a weaker student*", and "*The amount of scholarship for EU students is too high for Italian students and too low for British students. A kind of normalisation according to the country of origin might be advisable in the future.*"

Interviews with JP co-ordinators and administrators during the study visits revealed the problem that local students need an incentive to enrol for a JP. Probably the relatively high tuition fees frighten them off. **One university interviewed therefore successfully introduced a scholarship scheme for their local students which awards €550 a month to support enrolment for JPs.**

Although the sample might be too small for general conclusions, it is obvious that EMMC are better off in terms of their ability to award scholarships. Public sources (EU, state, university) prevail over non-public sources significantly. **The programmes should be encouraged to consider the contact with business sponsors as well**. This could have positive side effects on the employability of their graduates and the curriculum design.
Moreover, the amount of EMMC scholarships could attract students of (non EU origin) for economic rather than academic reasons. Additionally, some EMMC JPs are in a kind of dilemma: either they recruit sufficiently from the region they are supposed to regardless of the applicant's performance, or they miss the EMMC benchmarks in recruiting from a particular region and only enrol the best students regardless of their passport. Student's merit should always be the dominant criterion to register a student and award a scholarship.
The EC has no doubt chosen the right path in the second call for Erasmus Mundus by allocating scholarships to European students for the entire duration of the course. The scholarships should ensure the same living conditions for EU and non EU students, and, there might be reason to harmonise the scholarships for both groups even more significantly.

Additional scholarship schemes on university level may further help to recruit gifted students from populations under-represented in a JP's student body, e. g. EU students.

Again, **institutional support** seems to be crucial on this issues. Financial support can be provided to JP either in the form of scholarships, as shown by one of the study visits, or in the form of support to the programmes (see Box 4)
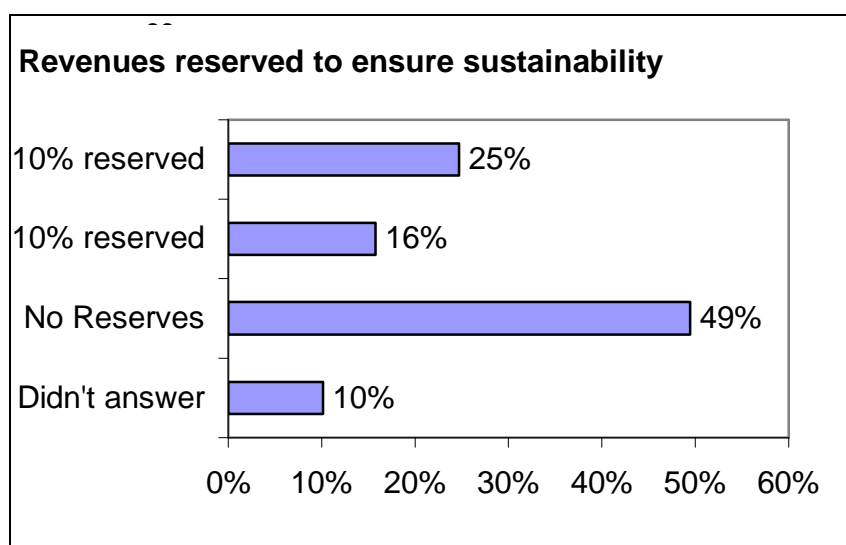
6.4 Sustainability

As introduced above, it is commonly agreed that JP generate additional costs for the institutions involved. Even the programmes supported by the EM Programme, which can count on a certain number of students enrolled, have to support additional costs for the quality measures put in place for the running of the programmes. The issue of sustainability, therefore, is an issue which should interest all institutions wishing to plan and run a cooperative programme and not only because of the special attention paid by the Erasmus Mundus II programme to this issue.

Apart from academic and marketing measures to support a JP, reserves could be considered a major factor in running a programme when spending exceeds income.
Only 41% of the sample declared that it reserves revenues for the future (graph 32). Where a reserve fund is created, a quarter of the respondents reserve more than 10% of the yearly revenues (24.72% on average).
Out of 10 programmes at an Italian university, for example, only 4 state that they have some reserves (2 more than 10% and 2 less than 10%); out of 5 programmes of an exemplary French university only 1 reserves more than 10%, equally, there are 6 Austrian programmes with 5 keeping reserves (4 more than 10% and 1 less) and 1 without.

Graph 32

Revenues reserved to ensure sustainability

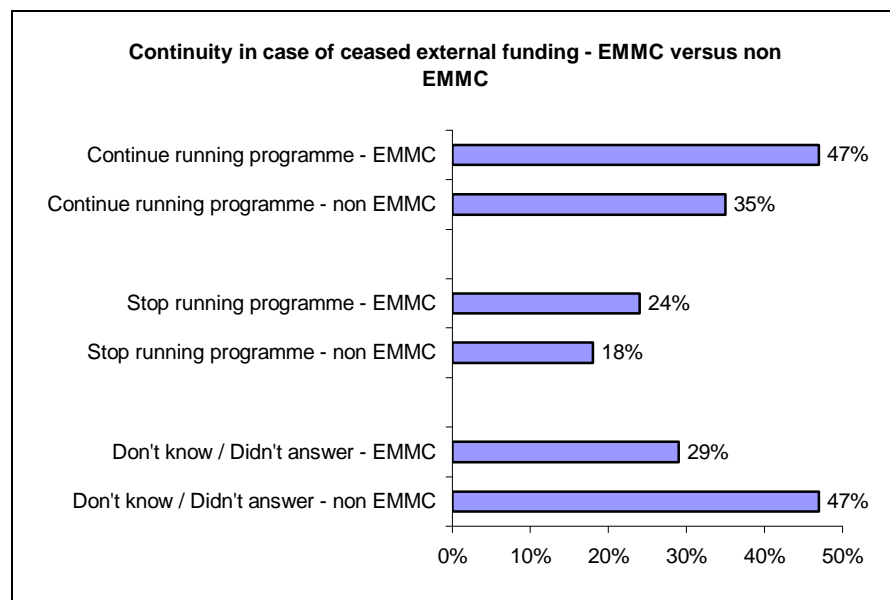|	
10% reserved	25%
10% reserved	16%
No Reserves	49%
Didn't answer	10%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Overall, there seems to be no specific logic or even exchange of information due to geographical location and proximity. Some universities in Germany and Austria underline that occasional reserves derive only from private associations.
It has to be stated that 10% of the 89 respondents did not answer the questions about revenue reserves for the purpose of ensuring sustainability.

The question of sustainability included the issue of potential continuation of the programme in the event of termination of external funding. Without displaying the specific graphs, a striking result needs to be stated: from the entire group of 89 respondents 40% do not know about a plan for such eventuality or did not answer at all. However, 39% would continue running the programme without external funding. This corresponds with the statements on the programme costs. The majority claim that the institution or tuition fees cover the full costs.

Besides this variation, the distinction between EM and non EM programmes does not seem to be decisive for the question. This figures in 34 EMMC, out of which 16 would continue without external funding, 8 would have to end programmes and 10 either do not know (9) or did not answer (1),
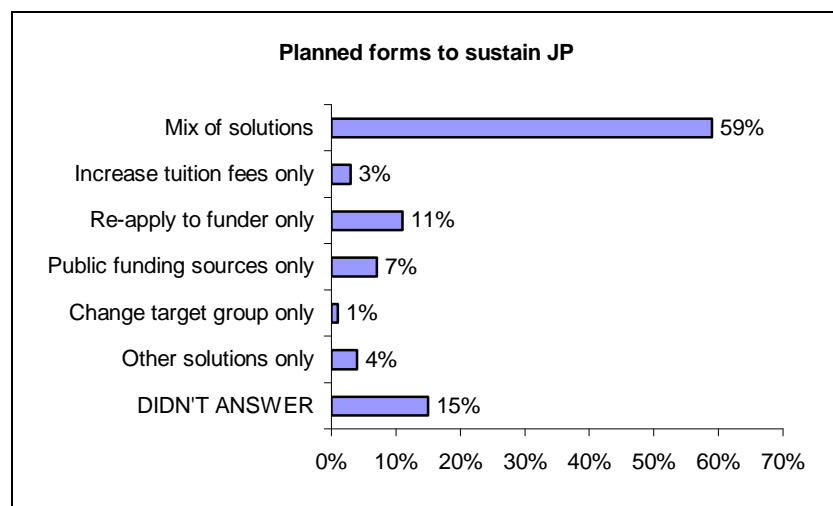
Graph 33

Continuity in case of ceased external funding - EMMC versus non EMMC

Category	Value
Continue running programme - EMMC	47%
Continue running programme - non EMMC	35%
Stop running programme - EMMC	24%
Stop running programme - non EMMC	18%
Don't know / Didn't answer - EMMC	29%
Don't know / Didn't answer - non EMMC	47%

Geographical location and proximity seems to be no criterion neither. Even within the same university, the answers vary. In Italy, for example, 4 out of 9 programmes of one University would continue, 2 would not, 2 do not know and 1 did not answer; out of another Italian university's programmes 3 would continue, 3 would not, 3 do not know, 1 did not answer.
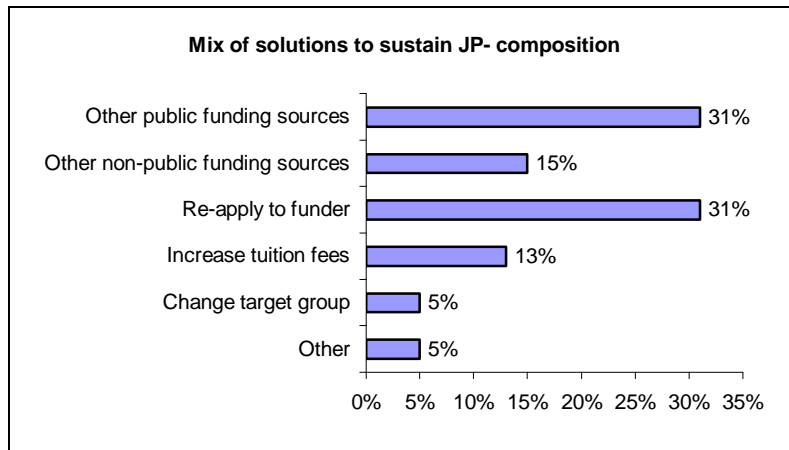
Many programmes plan to reapply to their funding source, especially those depending almost entirely on EU funding; similar numbers chose to try to receive more public funding, find other solutions or expand the programme to other students or partners. Only three programmes out of the 89 consider increased tuition fees as the only option and just one programme plans to exclusively work on the target group to attract more non-EU students. When asked about strategies to sustain JP, 15% did not answer.

Graph 34

Planned forms to sustain JP

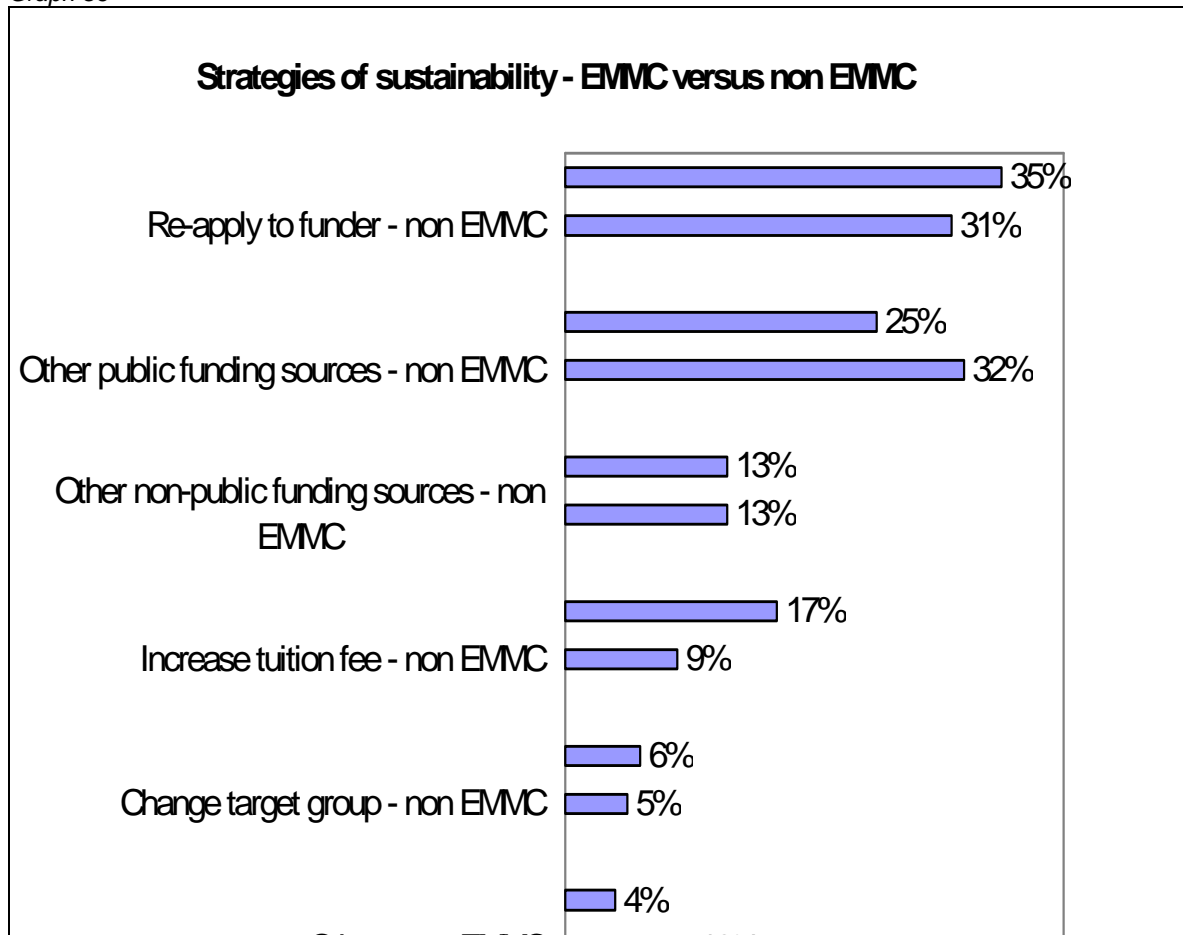| Category	Value
Mix of solutions	59%
Increase tuition fees only	3%
Re-apply to funder only	11%
Public funding sources only	7%
Change target group only	1%
Other solutions only	4%
DIDN'T ANSWER	15%

The majority of programmes (59% of 89) deploys a mix of solutions, favouring re-application to funding sources/ finding other public funding sources. Less popular are the options to search for other non-public funding resources or increase tuition fees. Other solutions include restructuring the curriculum, increasing the number of international students, and employing marketing operations.

Graph 35

Mix of solutions to sustain JP- composition

Category	Value
Other public funding sources	31%
Other non-public funding sources	15%
Re-apply to funder	31%
Increase tuition fees	13%
Change target group	5%
Other	5%

As shown in graph 36, while there appears to be no crucial difference in EMMC versus non EMMC in most answers, the willingness to increase tuition fees to sustain the programme figures slightly higher in EMMC (17%) than in non EMMC (9%).

Graph 36

Strategies of sustainability - EMMC versus non EMMC

Category	Value
Re-apply to funder - non EMMC	35%
	31%
Other public funding sources - non EMMC	25%
	32%
Other non-public funding sources - non EMMC	13%
	13%
Increase tuition fee - non EMMC	17%
	9%
Change target group - non EMMC	6%
	5%
	4%

61

The question of planned modifications to tuition fees within the following three years, displays a certain lack of awareness how to sustain the programme best through financial means. The majority (nearly 51%) does not pursue future changes and, again, a relatively high percentage of 34% does not know (partly because the decision depends on the consortium/ co-operation agreement or national legislation with regard to tuition fees).

The main reason for increasing fees is connected with economic problems (sustainability or economic situation for 10 programmes out of 12 having chosen this option) and only 1 programme argues to offer better services to students.

The open answers given by respondents indicate that JPs are highly attractive for both students, and that the internationalisation profile of institutions benefits significantly. Therefore, the lack of external funds is a crucial issue. Though institutions theoretically seem motivated to invest or look for other solutions, realistically they might not be able to continue successful programmes due to the lack of reserves.

BOX 25

The following comments express some apparently widespread opinions and perspectives:

Respondent 1: *"We hope that the Ministry and local universities will show more sensitivity for the issue of internationalisation"*,
Respondent 2: "*This is the crucial problem: Money. EU funded the initial steps, but afterwards we were let go, hoping that the programme would find its breath (money)*",
Respondent 3: "*Given the successful results of the programme until now, in the event of a lack of funds we will work to find a different solution in order to guarantee our students with at least some minimum economic support*",
Respondent 4 "*We are planning to increase the quality of the programme and to increase the connections with the labour market*".

BOX 25

Nearly half of the JP respondents do not have any reserves to ensure sustainability. Apparently, the institution's motivation for continuing the programmes is high even though serious issues arise in practical terms. The high percentage of non-existing answers and the use of the "do not know" options when questioned about continuity of the JP in the event of external funds ceasing imply a lack of awareness of the matter of sustainability or insecurity when faced with unclear conditions. Yet the findings imply that EMMCs are better informed about financial matters and are more structured in thinking ahead when it comes to sustainability.

Many of the experts interviewed during the study visits could not present a strategy to support their programmes. The potential suspension of funding from public sources is not on the agenda until it is about to happen. It was also said that the consortium was built on the personal friendship of the academics involved; when the co-ordinator retires the network is endangered. In addition, administrative personnel in JPs are usually paid out of the JP income; when the income dries up there could be no continuity.

Generally, sustainability is a priority item in JPs which is obviously disastrously underestimated or even ignored. Programmes heavily rely on the already established

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funding sources and on public funding in general. In particular EMMC get used to a rather comfortable situation of public funding which has a tranquillising effect. While the JP is running successfully and all the staff are rather busy there is almost no room for the effort to look out for new partners in business or elsewhere away from the well-trodden path.

Another conclusion would be that many JPs have not been institutionalised yet, i.e. they are regarded as a temporary positive addition to the "regular" study programmes offered, or as a private matter of a professor extraordinarily committed to international exchange. That is why it is often so hard to install a long-term plan to sustain a programme not only academically, but financially as well. **A solution could be to install a unit within the administration of a university which co-ordinates all JPs which is at least partially independent from the funding of the JPs**. This unit should accompany and support the programmes administratively from the starting line and ensure their sustainability by developing and monitoring their financial planning, in particular by putting aside reserves and establishing contacts with business or different sources of funding. Institutions could even charge JPs for the service of that unit and, thus, force them to make provisions for sustainability.

It might help JP co-ordinators to have a universal terminology at their disposal (e.g. "full costs", "revenue reserve", "ad hoc-funding" and "sustainability") to encourage communication and sharing information which even co-ordinators of the same nation up to the same university do not seem to do yet. **In line with this, seminars and get-togethers should be arranged to profit from mutual experience and to raise awareness about the various matters including the best ignored question of sustainability**. The JPs are not islands, and their inhabitants (academic and administrative co-ordinators) should not operate in splendid isolation, **they need professional development and mutual exchange**. The EMMC are a privileged group in this regard, as they can benefit from EC and National Agencies' seminars and meetings and from the networking opportunities put in place for them by the stakeholders. However, as the survey clearly shows, the EM model is not the only one and not all the JPs could aim to be part of the EM club. Therefore, **information and specialised training initiatives** could be organised by National agencies or institutional units involving potential coordinators of JP, regardless of the willingness to participate in the EM Programme

7. Quality assurance related issues

It is a common feature of JPs that they are based on mutual trust among the partner institutions or more simply among the people most directly involved in the coordination of the Programme. This might be sufficient to launch a JP and to ensure its smooth functioning in some of its aspects, but it seems desirable to support the positive climate brought about by mutual trust, with a regular discussion of the objectives of the JPs and of the ways to attain these. This is what justifies the introduction of QA procedures.

There are widely accepted and enforced standards for QA, such as the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ENQA-standards, see http://www.enqa.eu/pubs_esg.lasso), adopted by the Education and Research Ministers at the Bologna process Bergen conference, in 2005.
The EM Programme has also developed a tool to facilitate the self-evaluation of EMMC (see http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-mundus/doc/handbook_en.pdf).

We should highlight the fact that there are two main dimensions of QA procedures related to JPs. One is administrative and is concerned with making sure that the programme respects the general rules and regulations. The other is academic, and focuses on the content of the JP. This section presents the main findings of the JOIMAN survey on quality assurance issues, in both these dimensions.

Comparison between EMMC and non EM programmes is not presented in this section as, with some exceptions, the differences between the two categories are not relevant.

7.1 ENQA Standards

The JOIMAN survey to JP coordinators asked respondents if they apply ENQA Standards for quality within their JP. The results, represented in graph 37, are that almost half of the respondents apply the ENQA standards, 15% of them do not apply the ENQA standards while 36% do not know about the ENQA standards.

Graph 37

ENQA Standards for Quality

Don't Know 36%
Yes 49%
No 15%
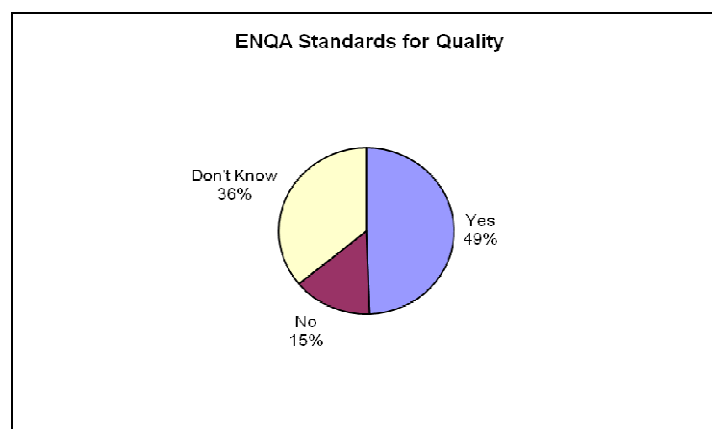
The fact that almost half of the respondents do not apply the ENQA standards, does not mean that they do not follow any QA procedure, which is disproved by the other answers on QA, but rather by the fact that that this part of the questionnaire was answered by the JP coordinators, who are generally teachers, and not QA officers.

7.2 Quality in the development of the programme

With reference to the development phase of the programmes, three questions were asked in the Survey. The first question asked the target how they ensure that their programme is a coherent, holistic programme of study and not just a curriculum consisting of separate, loosely compounded modules; the second question aimed to investigate how learning outcomes at programme, module and teaching units level have been defined among the consortium and the third one aimed to know whether guidelines for the workload of students are implemented within the consortium.

A fourth question referred to the quality of the final certification, which we include in this paragraph as we think the quality in the awarding of certification may vary – positively – considerably if it is part of the development and planning phase.

Not all respondents demonstrated their understanding of the first question, therefore some of the answers are not usable for this report. However, two main approaches have arisen from the open answers which can summarised by these two main quoted answers:

- The initial design of the JP, which has been jointly developed, is sufficient for the programme to be coherent and holistic;
- Having a periodic evaluation and follow-up system (like a QA committee, a joint board, students evaluation and assessment).

BOX 28

Both approaches are to be taken into account even if one refers to the development phase, prior to implementation, and the second refers to the implementation phase and refers more to the monitoring and evaluation aspects rather then to the joint development of the programme.

Table 4 below represents how the respondents answered to questions on the definition of learning outcomes. As shown in the table, it can be noted that learning outcomes of JP study programmes are mostly defined at the level of consortia (86%); learning outcomes at module level are defined at the level of consortia (almost 40%), but also at the level of the institution, while at single unit level the learning outcomes are mostly defined by the providing institution (41.3%) and to a lesser extent by the individual institutions.

Table 5. How are the learning outcomes and competences defined?

	Jointly within the Consortium	By the coordinator	By the single institutions	By the providing institution	There are no learning outcomes defined	Other
On programme level	85.9%	2.4%	5.9%	3.5%	1.2%	1.2%
On module level	39.8%	7.2%	20.5%	28.9%	1.2%	2.4%
On single units level	17.5%	8.8%	28.8%	41.3%	2.5%	1.3%

Concerning the workload of students, around 70% of respondents declared to have implemented guidelines for the workload of students within the consortium.

As one would expect, the coordinating institution mainly plays a role in the administrative running of the JP. The academic content is naturally distributed among the partners.

To ensure quality in the awarding of certifications, two main answers were identified

- It is regulated in the consortium agreement (52.4%)
- During the planning of the joint programme the awarding of degrees will be agreed within the Consortium (35.3%)

BOX 29

Both of the above mentioned statements should be taken into account. The issues regarding certification should be discussed and defined during the planning of the JP and then regulated in the consortium agreement.

7.3 Quality, transparency and clarity of information

7.3.1 Information on mobility scheme

In most of the JPs, students are informed about the mobility scheme by receiving practical guidelines before entering the programme. They also benefit from individual counselling and advice. To a lesser extent (12%), other means are used in JPs such as the JP website, but also brochures, flyers and timetables.

Graph 38

How are students informed about the mobility scheme of the JP

12%

40%

48%

☐ By counselling individual students
☐ By practical guides for students before the programme starts
☐ Other
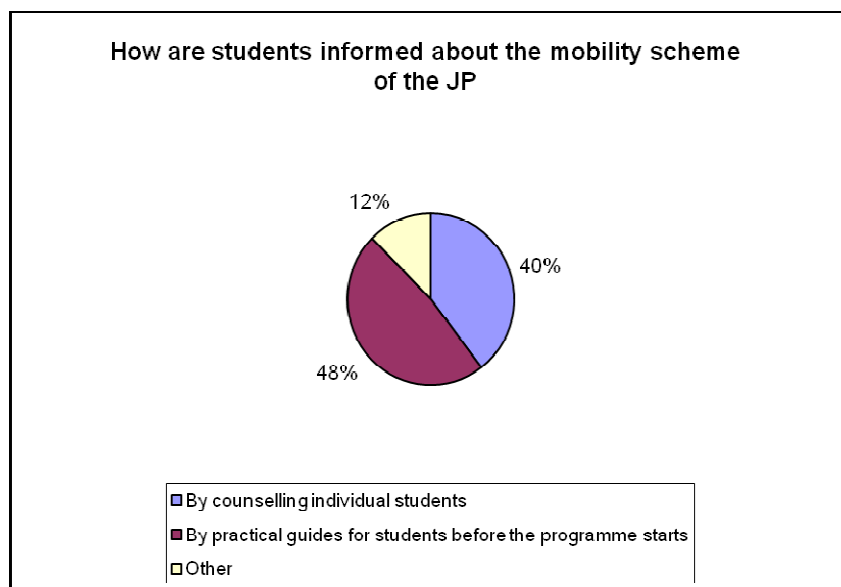
BOX 30

Mobility is an intrinsic aspect of JPs and has to be treated with great care, as it is intimately linked with the success of the programme. The answers show that indeed great attention is given to the mobility scheme by the consortia, since precise guidelines and individual counselling are the two main sources of information for students on this delicate matter. Study visits show that counselling of students can be done as follows:

At central level: by offering general guidance and counselling from a specified unit in charge of (all) JPs.
**At faculty level**: by providing more specific guidelines.

7.3.2 *Quality of admission procedures*

Regarding admission procedures, the target was requested to indicate if they pay attention to the clarity of information about the course - in order to guarantee accessibility – to the clarity of the selection criteria - in order to guarantee transparency – and on the achievement of student's expected level - in order to evaluate if accessibility and transparency are achieved.

The results show that three quarters of the respondents pay attention to accessibility and to transparency and two thirds of them measure the achievement of students' expected level in order to evaluate the quality of the admission procedures.

Graph 39

Regarding admission procedures, do you pay attention to:

Category	Percentage
Clarity of information about the course	76%
Clarity of selection criteria	75%
Achievement of students' expected level	66%
Other	3%
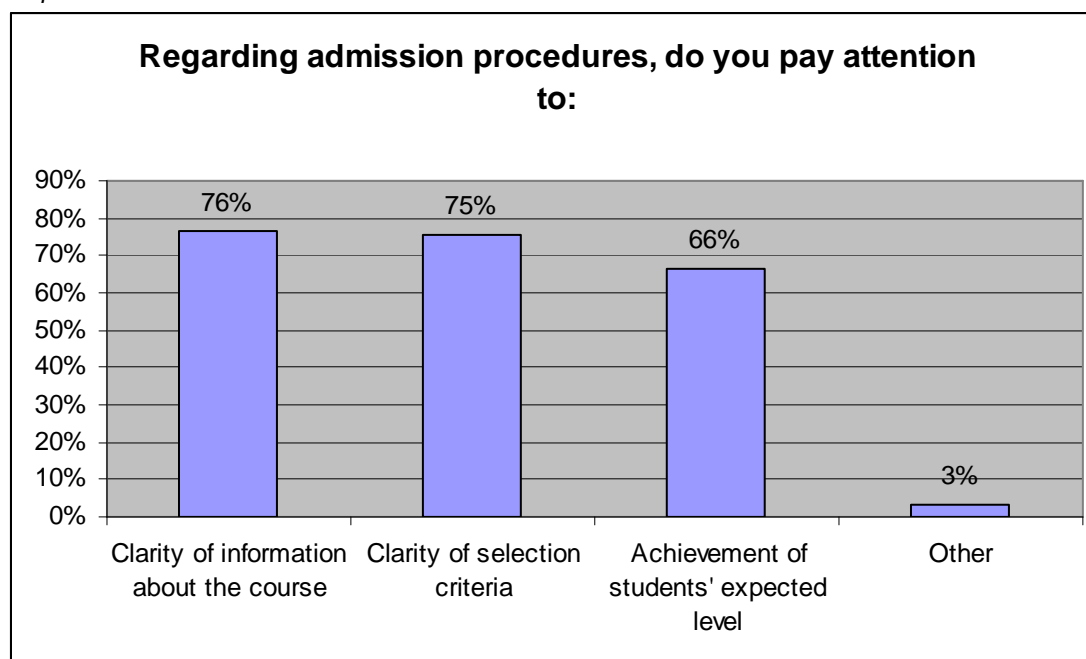
BOX 31

The answers to this questions clearly show that quality measures are in place in the JP reached by the questionnaire, without any substantial difference between EMMC and non EM programmes. This goes partially against the answers to the question on ENQA standards for quality, which does not seem to be widely known among JP coordinators.

7.4   Assessment and evaluation measures

An important part of quality assurance processes are the evaluation and assessment procedures implemented by the programme. Below the evaluation systems put in place by the consortia as extracted by the survey are reported. During the study visits, interviews also aimed to investigate if the evaluation measures applied by single institutions were in contrast with the evaluation procedures developed by the joint programmes, if those institutional measures were used to replace evaluation systems agreed among the partners or if those procedures were substantially ignored and replaced by specific measures agreed by the consortium.

7.4.1 Evaluation of teaching

As presented in graph 40, students are involved in the evaluation of teaching, both evaluating individual modules and, to a lesser extent, evaluating the whole programmes. Only few programmes do not foresee any kind of evaluation of teaching activities (7%) while almost one third of the target have implemented external evaluation or require feedback from the labour market.

Graph 40
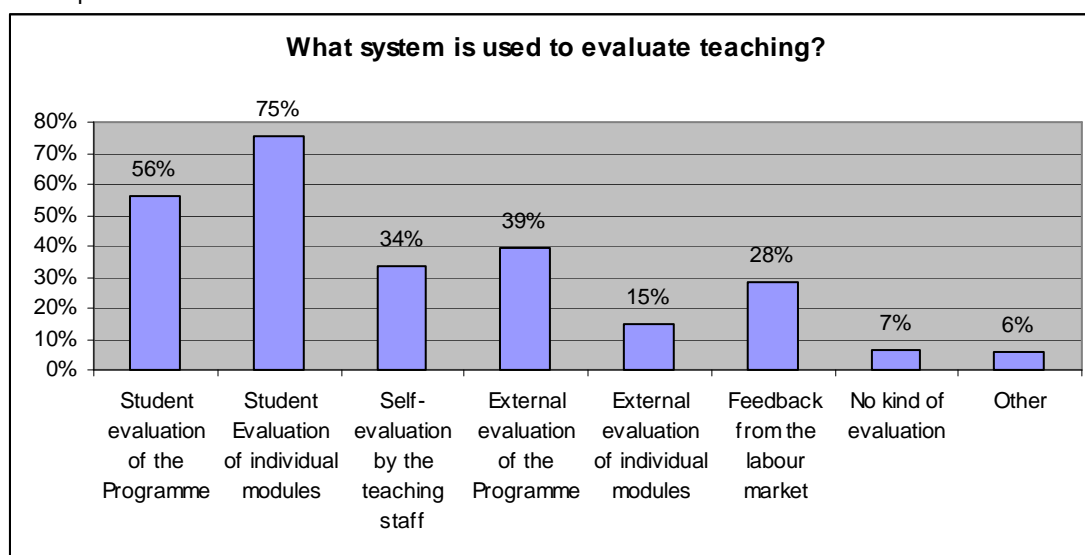
Concerning the evaluation of teaching, we found some differences between EMMC and non EM programmes which we think it is useful to highlight. Although the general data of the involvement of students is confirmed, it can be noted in Table 6 that almost all EMMC foresee the evaluation of teaching modules by the students, while only half of the non EM programme have implemented this kind of evaluation. Some percentage differences are also evident for the external evaluation, both of the whole programme (50 % of EMMC against 33 % of non EM programmes) and of the individual modules (24 % EMMC against 9% of non EM programmes). All EMMC respondents have implemented an evaluation system for teaching, while it is interesting to note that non EM programmes pay more attention to the feedback from the labour market (31 % against 24%).
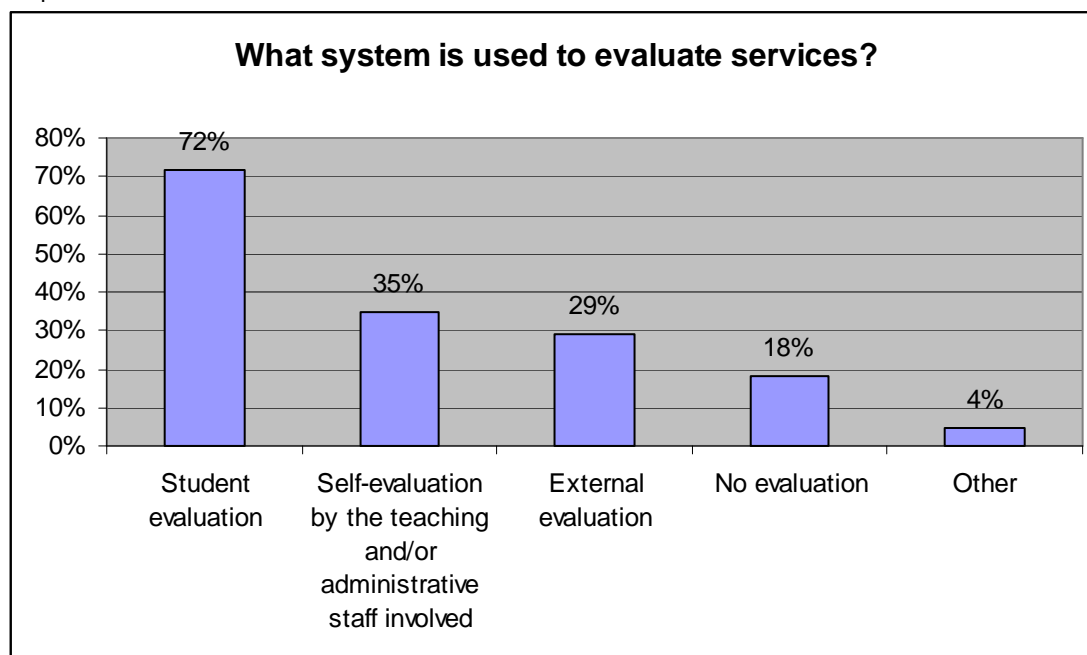
Table 6 What system is used to evaluate teaching?

		yes	**no**
Student Evaluation of the teaching of the Programme	EMMC	68%	32%
	NON EM programmes	49%	51%
Student Evaluation of the teaching of individual modules	EMMC	94%	6%
	NON EM programmes	64%	36%
Self-evaluation by the teaching staff involved	EMMC	26%	74%
	NON EM programmes	38%	62%
External evaluation of the Programme as a whole	EMMC	50%	50%
	NON EM programmes	33%	67%
External evaluation of individual modules	EMMC	24%	76%
	NON EM programmes	9%	91%
Feedback from the labour market	EMMC	24%	76%
	NON EM programmes	31%	69%
No kind of evaluation	EMMC	0%	100%
	NON EM programmes	11%	89%

7.4.2 Evaluation of services

As shown in graph 41, students are also involved in the evaluation of services. Evaluation by students is the main means for the evaluation of services which are evaluated to a lesser extent also by teaching and administrative staff and external evaluators. It is important to note that 18% of respondents do not have any evaluation system for services. No relevant differences are to be highlighted between EMMC and non EM programmes.

Graph 41

What system is used to evaluate services?

- Student evaluation: 72%
- Self-evaluation by the teaching and/or administrative staff involved: 35%
- External evaluation: 29%
- No evaluation: 18%
- Other: 4%

7.4.3 Overall evaluation of the programme

In order to assess the systems developed by the partners for the evaluation of the joint programme as a whole, including the academic as well as the administrative dimension, 4 questions were included in the survey to academic coordinators; one question refers to the ex – post evaluation of the students' career as a means to evaluate the success of the programme (drop out rate, average grades, graduation rate, time employed in looking for a job, income etc) while the other questions refer to the measures to improve the overall quality of the programme.

Concerning the ex – post evaluation of students, graph 43 shows how half of the JPs perform an evaluation of the success of the JP with special emphasis on graduation rate (49%), while only 1 JP out of 5 performs an evaluation of the time spent by students in looking for a job or of the income and career analysis. This may indicate either that JPs do not consider these two parameters as important, or that they are not able to keep records of the students' career after graduation.

Graph 42

Is there an evaluation of the success of the JP with special emphasis on:
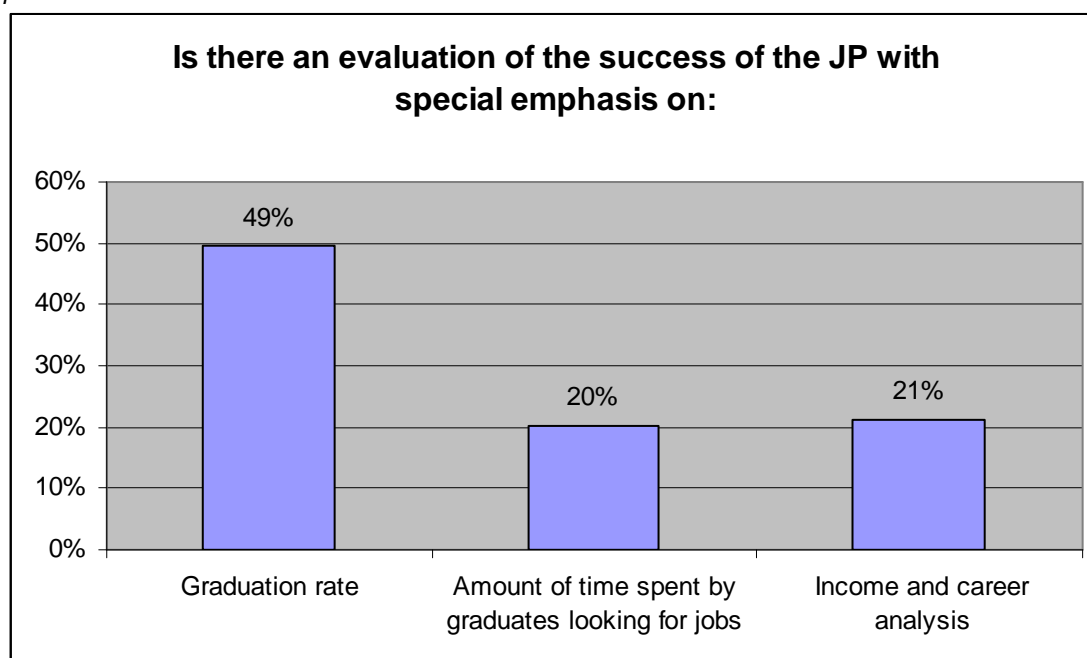
An open question aimed to gather some indications from respondents on the measures taken to avoid high drop-out rates, unsatisfactory graduate analyses or unsatisfactory average grades. The main measures taken by the respondents in order to avoid the above issues can be summarised in the following categories:

1. Quality and flexibility of the curriculum, allowing adjustments on students' and labour market's needs;
2. Quality in the selection process and in services, in particular in the very important issue of tutoring and coaching.

Box 32

In this box we report some of the more interesting answers on how to prevent high drop-out rates, unsatisfactory graduate analyses or unsatisfactory average grades

Respondent 1: *"Curriculum development, enhancement of the quality of the curriculum, joint grading system, ECTS, tutoring system, individual tutoring, special courses on different subjects related to the joint programme".*

Respondent 2: *"It is attempted to avoid these issues by ensuring a high profile programme with excellent teaching and student involvement in both planning, implementation and running of the programme. The programme has high flexibility in adjusting course selection according to the students' individual needs and plans".*

Respondent 3: *"Our programme has performed rather well in terms of drop-out rates, once students are accepted in the programme and generally in terms of graduate grades. More challenging is the task of keeping attractiveness in the European post-graduate market, and this is being discussed in the Governing Bodies and with the Inner Circle Universities with a view to adapt to new market conditions and find ways for enhance competitiveness".*

Respondent 4: *"By increasing the quality of the Master having regular evaluations with the students".*

Respondent 5: *"Improving the selection process and the quality of tutoring and services".*
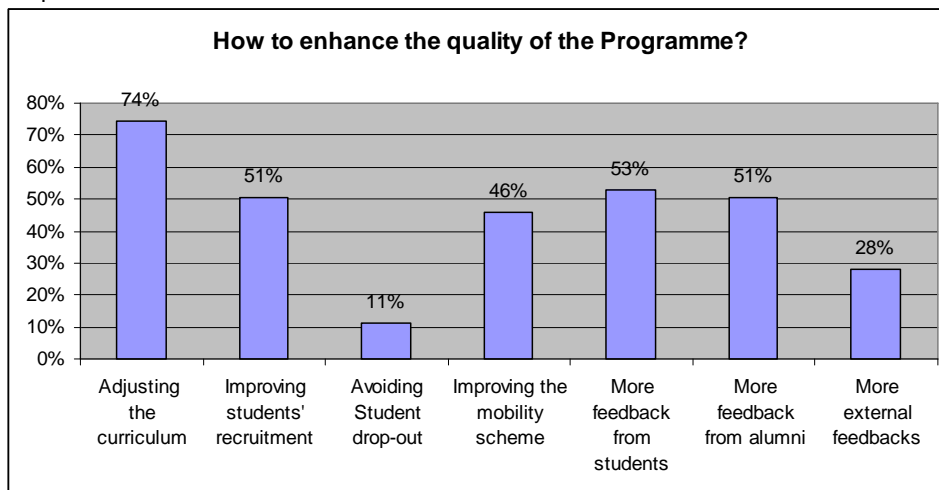
Respondent 6: *"student tutoring by both professors and older students enrolled in related programmes".*

Respondent 7: *"Tight follow-up of students by tutors/supervisors and by administrative staff. Internal discussions within member institutions and at consortium meetings level".*

Respondent 8: *"Very careful admission procedures and student selection. Frequent feedback from the student representative".*

These data are also confirmed by the graph 43 which reports the answers to the question "What are the main focus areas for enhancing the quality of the programme?" from the graph we can note that the adjustment of curriculum (which includes also the feedback from students and labour market to get the input) and the quality of services are the main measures to improve the quality of the programme.

Graph 43

How to enhance the quality of the Programme?

Category	Value
Adjusting the curriculum	74%
Improving students' recruitment	51%
Avoiding Student drop-out	11%
Improving the mobility scheme	46%
More feedback from students	53%
More feedback from alumni	51%
More external feedbacks	28%

BOX 33

From the study visits it appeared that the JP have put their own evaluation systems in place which in some cases have been added to the regular evaluation activities put in place by each institution or faculty, or in other cases have substituted those activities. **Quality assurance** offices in the visited institutions **have in some cases developed guidelines** to be applied before the development of the programmes; those guidelines, however, do not impose any evaluation system which can be defined and agreed among the consortium.

An effective, updated and comprehensive evaluation system is a crucial tool for the success of a joint programme. The system should include regular evaluation of the academic activities (which is mostly the case of our sample) as well as of services (in this case there is a clear need for improvement).
Evaluation should be made by different stakeholders, including the students and the academic staff, as well as the feedback from the labour market which is essential for the adjustment of the curricula.
Evaluation procedures allow programmes to be up to date and respondent to students needs and expectations and permit to avoid high drop–out rates.

PART III

8.   Recommendations and good practices

The "joint programme life cycle" can be divided in two main macro phases which are the **"development phase"** and the **"implementation phase".** A third phase, which is the "marketing of the programme", can be placed in between, where not considered under the implementation phase. These macro–phases refer to each JP singularly, while the **"role of the institution",** in the sense of how each institution is capable and prepared to invest in the internationalisation of education and in particular in JPs, is an important factor which is not necessarily directly related to each singular joint programme but which may considerably influence the macro-phases indicated.

Based on the data presented and commented in the previous chapters, we can assert that **the majority of the actions which could prevent the challenges and problems** arising during the implementation phase, **need to be addressed in the planning** of the programme **or can be prevented thanks to the "role of the institution"** in terms of the policy defined and strategy implemented to support joint programmes.

Therefore, in this conclusive chapter, we will "twist the chronological order" presenting all the processes of the implementation phase and **the most challenging issues** which can be met in this phase. Then we will present those actions or issues which can be put in place or addressed during the planning and developing of the programme, and finally how the "Institutions" could be prepared to prevent some of those challenges.
Some good practice examples are included in between the reccomendations within the "boxes", while useful tools developed by the JOIMAN project are annexed at the end of the report.
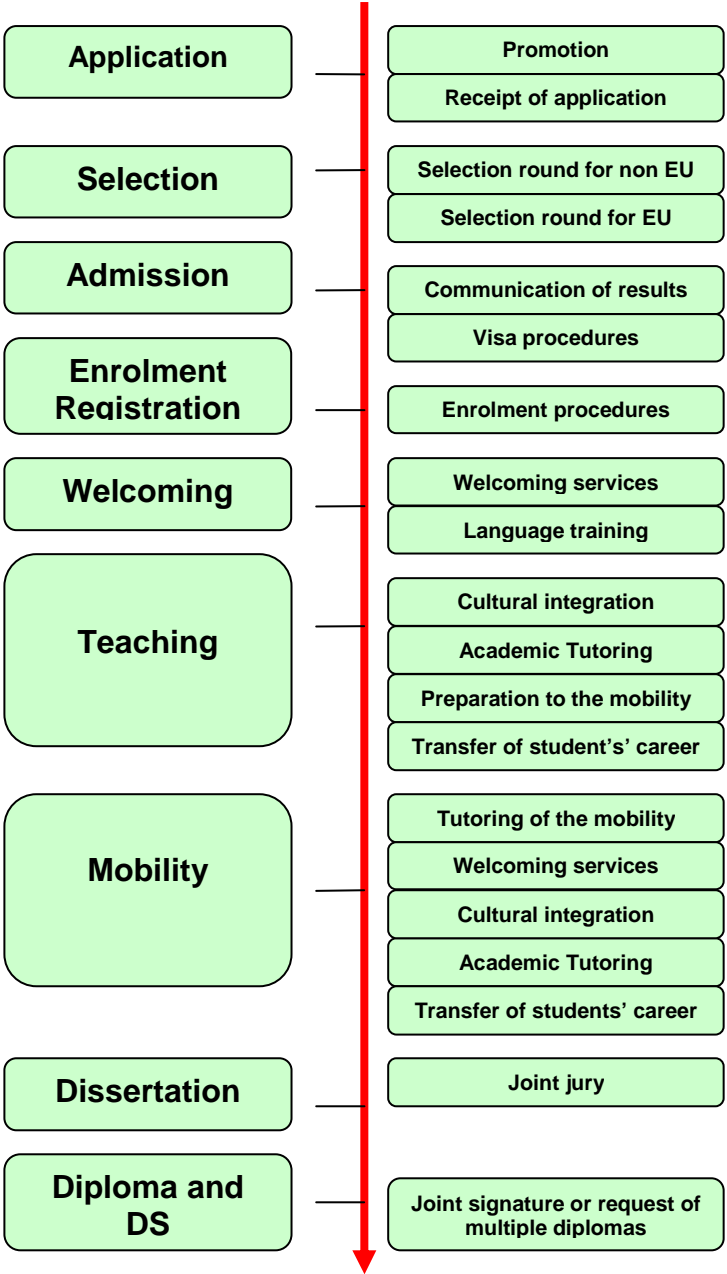
8.1   The Implementation phase

The implementation phase includes what has been defined in chapter 5 as the "students' administration timeline" and, in addition, includes transversal processes which are in place during the entire life of the programme. These transversal processes are the financial management of the programme and the quality assurance measures put in place for the whole management of the programme. The figure on next page represents the implementation phase in graphical terms.
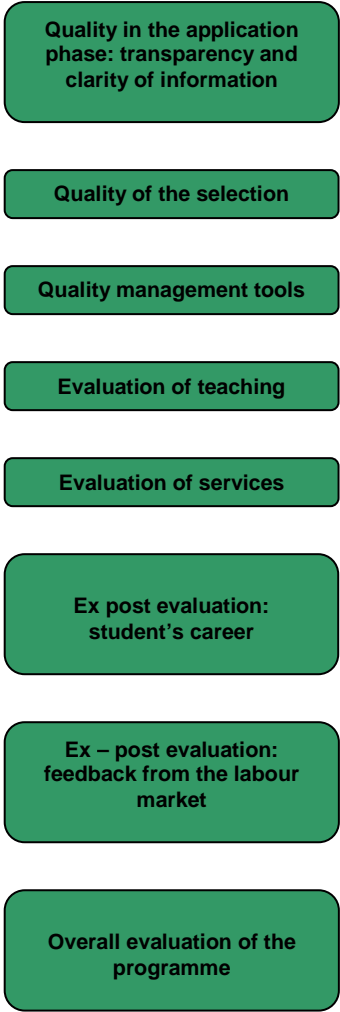
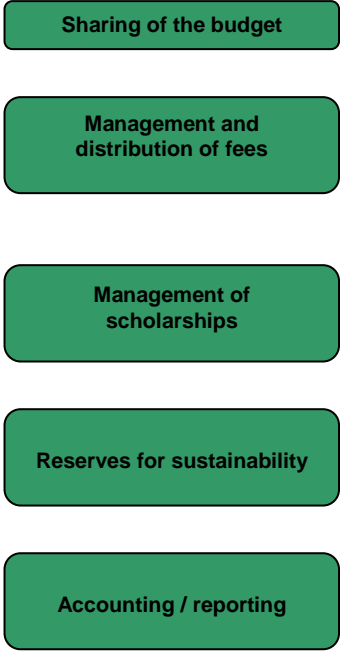## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

STUDENTS' ADMINISTRATION TIMELINE

Phase	Processes
Application	Promotion
	Receipt of application
Selection	Selection round for non EU
	Selection round for EU
Admission	Communication of results
	Visa procedures
Enrolment Registration	Enrolment procedures
Welcoming	Welcoming services
	Language training
Teaching	Cultural integration
	Academic Tutoring
	Preparation to the mobility
	Transfer of student's' career
Mobility	Tutoring of the mobility
	Welcoming services
	Cultural integration
	Academic Tutoring
	Transfer of students' career
Dissertation	Joint jury
Diploma and DS	Joint signature or request of multiple diplomas

TRANSVERSAL PROCESSES

QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

- Quality in the application phase: transparency and clarity of information
- Quality of the selection
- Quality management tools
- Evaluation of teaching
- Evaluation of services
- Ex post evaluation: student's career
- Ex – post evaluation: feedback from the labour market
- Overall evaluation of the programme

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Sharing of the budget
- Management and distribution of fees
- Management of scholarships
- Reserves for sustainability
- Accounting / reporting

8.2 Main challenges during the implementation phase

PROCESSES	CHALLENGES
Application	o Management of applications from different target groups of students o Adapting the regular application procedure to the international dimension
Selection	o Implementation of a joint selection process and implementation of two-step selection o Adapting the regular selection procedure to the consortium needs o Assessment of high numbers of applications
Admission	o Management of communication flows involving many actors (consortium secretariat, the coordinating institutions, the single institutions, the faculties and, in some cases, the donor) o Preparation of the documentation for student enrolment o Length of procedures for the issue of visas
Enrolment/ Registration	o Management of joint enrolment procedures o Different national or institutional regulations for enrolment documents
Welcoming	o Organisation of specific welcoming services such as accommodation, insurance, residence permits etc. o Finding additional funds for specific services o Adapting regular welcoming services to international/exchange JP students (different level of expectations or academic calendar problems) o Cultural integration of international students staying for a short period
Teaching	o Harmonisation of the academic calendars o Monitoring and assessment of students o Harmonisation of marks o Transfer of students records o Tutoring and coaching services
Mobility	o Organisation of specific welcoming services such as accommodation, practical issues, insurance, residence permits. o Finding additional funds for specific services o Adapting regular welcoming services to international/exchange JP students (different level of expectations or academic calendar problems) o Cultural integration of international students staying for a short period o Tutoring and coaching services
Dissertation	o Organisation of joint jury o Harmonising "dissertation" systems
Diploma and Diploma Supplement	o Issuing of joint diploma (difficulties due to national legislation or institutional regulations). o Issuing of the double/multiple diploma o Awarding of a joint DS o Timing for award of joint diploma or in the awarding of DS
Financial	o Definition of (common) tuition fees (national regulations or

management	institutional constraints)
	o Definition of a JP budget
	o Management/distribution of tuition fees or of the JP budget
	o Finding financial support for the programmes in terms of scholarships or human resources
	o Calculation of costs and in the reserves for sustainability
	o Reporting/accounting phase when requested by donor
Quality Assurance	o Ensuring quality in the admission and selection procedures
	o Ensuring transparency
	o Setting up of an evaluation system for the teaching and for the evaluation of services
	o Setting up an overall monitoring and evaluation system
	o Setting up ex – post evaluation
	o Involvement of relevant stakeholders in the overall evaluation

8.3 Recommendations and good practices for the development phase

a) The importance of the selection of partners

1. When planning a joint programme, one should set the criteria for selecting partner(s) beforehand.

2. When setting your criteria for selecting a partner, one should include administrative aspects as well. The academic criteria are essential, but not sufficient.

3. Mutual trust is essential for the development of successful joint programmes, , it is therefore recommended to involve long term collaborative partners assessed both at academic and administrative level.

Good Practice 1: Participation in HE networks

As a starting point for collaboration, in addition to the research links established by single academics, It is also important to underline the usefulness of the participation in HE Networks (i.e.: Utrecht Network, the Coimbra Group, the Compostela Group, the Santander Group etc) in which there is an institutional participation which can facilitate the development of successful JPs. Networks are also important to develop common tools and shared understandings

b) Verification of national legislation and educational systems

4. Having selected the partners, before starting the development phase it is important to be aware of the national situations of the partners involved and in particular:

- It is important to check the educational systems of the partners/Countries involved.
- It is important to check the accreditation system of the (joint) programme in the partners/Countries involved.
- It is important to check the legal situation of the partner involved in relation to the awarding of joint diploma.
- It is important to check the legal situation of the partners/Countries concerned in relation to tuition and other fees and social cohesion.

Good practice 2: How to verify these issues?

- Involvement of the administration of the partner concerned
- Involvement of the ENIC-NARIC centres or the Erasmus Mundus National Structures of the Countries involved
- Checking the EURYDICE database on European Educational Systems (Eurybase http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php#italy)

c) Ensuring Institutional commitment

5. Ensuring the institutional commitment from all partners is crucial. Only with a strong institutional commitment is it possible to bring problems to the decision making tables.

6. Institutional commitment is necessary for obtaining the necessary institutional support in terms of human resources, direct funding, scholarships or services to international students. It is indeed very important that each partner be committed to invest means (either money or infrastructure/ personnel) and that not only "people" are involved, but rather the Institutions as a whole.

7. Institutional commitment is also required if the joint programme requires adaptations of institutional regulations or special derogations to allow the consortium rules to prevail over institutional ones.

Good practice 3: How to obtain institutional commitment?

- Study visits to partners institutions before the development of the programme
- Cooperation agreement negotiated at the very beginning of the development phase
- Involvement of the administration in the development phase
- Involvement of the academic boards

Good practice 4: Visits to institutions?

One of the visited institutions reported that the quality assurance office is in charge of the institutional visits to partners, before the development of the project, in order to ensure that the partner meets the quality standards of the visiting institution and in order to check or obtain the necessary institutional commitment from the central administration, from the faculties and from the administrative units involved.

This approach generates additional costs for the institution but the cost – benefit ratio is positive.

d) Involvement of Stakeholders

8. Stakeholders at national and local level need to be involved in order to advocate the necessary changes in the national procedures and to adapt regulations to innovation (e.g. modification of national regulation on the issuing of joint diploma).

9. Stakeholders are also important as a support to institutions in the process of raising awareness among students and in the labour market on the existence and value of a joint diploma.

e) Establishing cooperation with external services or institutions

10. In order to facilitate the solution to the issuing of visa and the residence permit, it is important to establish cooperation with National Agencies/Structures, with Ministries of Foreign Affairs and with consulates around the world.

11. It is also important, for those countries where residence permits are an issue, to establish cooperation or special agreements with local offices in charge of the issuing of the residence permit.

Some good practices have been put in place by Erasmus Mundus National Structures which usually collaborate with JP coordinators and institutions, being a sort of "trait d'union" with the consulates all around the word.

As for EMMC the list of selected non EU students is ready some months before the start of the programmes, some EM National Structures request those lists every year from JP coordinators and communicate the lists to the consulates in advance.

This practice can also be adopted by single institutions running non EM Programmes, providing that they anticipate the selection process of non EU students.

Again the propulsive and innovating role of the Erasmus Mundus Programme is remarked, but at the same time JPs which are "outside" of the EM club do not benefit from the same support.

f) Financial management: creating a budget of the programme and calculating costs

12. Even if it could be a difficult process, being aware of the full costs of a programme could serve for the negotiations of the budget. Full costs calculation include personnel costs as well as the costs for rooms, communication and travel. Where full costs calculation is not possible, a detail list of additional costs should be provided by all partners.

13. Plan reserves or other means to sustain the programme (e.g. contact with funding organisations, business) from the beginning. This could also influence the curriculum (labour-market relevance).

14. The income within a consortium should be distributed among the partner institutions according to their actual full costs and their contribution rather than institutional or legal regulations. If this is not possible within a shorter period of time, then in the long run there should be means to balance it sufficiently.

15. A scholarship scheme should be implemented in order to attract the best students (performance-based allocation as the dominant criterion) and support social cohesion. The scholarships should be as high as the average scholarship rate for students in that region, they should not be higher than the average living costs for students in that particular region.

16. The budget needs to be constantly monitored and transparently managed.

17. Check in the negotiation phase if your institution will have to grant a derogation or a special approval for the modification of tuition fees (harmonisation with other partners, special conditions on student's nationalities etc.)

g) Setting up a quality assurance system

18. The adoption of ENQA standards is recommended; for JP development and management, refer in particular to their Part 1: "European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions", and Part 1.2 "Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards".

19. Having a periodic evaluation and follow-up systems (like a quality assurance committee, a joint board, students evaluation and assessment).

20. An effective, updated and comprehensive evaluation systems is a crucial tool for the success of a joint programme.

21. The system should include regular evaluation of the academic activities as well as of services.

22. Evaluation should be made by different stakeholders, including the students and the academic staff, as well as labour market which is essential for the adjustment of the curricula.

23. Guarantee the flexibility of the curriculum, allowing adjustments according to students' and labour market' needs.

24. Guarantee quality in the selection process and in services, in particular in the very important issue of tutoring and coaching.

25. Development of an online tool for the whole management of the JP, including students' careers.

Good practice 6: A good example for monitoring the programme

"The Joint programme board organises a yearly "evaluation and planning meeting" with each local coordinator. They report on the teaching delivered by their staff members. These reports are compared with the student evaluation forms which evaluate each course. Afterwards, the JP board makes recommendations on the teaching in each partner university. These recommendations are sent to the partner university for official approval.
The student evaluation also allows monitoring of other aspects of the JP: "information given to students, the organisation of tests and exams, the perceived workload, tutoring offered, accommodation issues, etc,".
Each local coordinator has a strong relationship with the overall academic coordinator in this HEI. In case of change in the academic staff at the local institution, the local coordinator and overall coordinator have to make sure that the new teacher is well informed of the structure of the JP".

h) Setting up specific services in support to mobility

26. To set up a clear information system on the JPs including clear explanations about their organisation and the different mobility options (practical guidelines about the different possible tracks).

27. To provide individual counselling to students to choose their track since the choice of the host university is not (only) linked to the attraction of the city/region/country but has to be linked to the study programme offered there.

28. Organisation of extra–curricular activities to foster social and cultural integration.

29. Creation of synergies between the Joint Programmes at the institution in order to instil a "community spirit" among students and academics.

30. Integration of the JP students in the activities organised for the exchange students.

Good practice 7: Involvement of students or alumni

As shown by study visits, a good practice for the organisation of extra-curricular services is the involvement of students or alumni organisations which could provide additional services with very limited additional costs and which could improve the integration of the international students with the local students.

i) Division of roles within the partnership

31. Roles and the tasks of each actor involved (coordinator, institution, faculty, administrative units involved etc.) should be defined during this phase.

32. Work jointly and create synergies between different offices (IRO, student affairs, financial, faculty) and involve them from the start of the project.

33. Organising meetings at technical and political levels, involving different services (students affairs office, IRO, external service for accommodation) to guarantee political support and implement the correct procedure.

l) Negotiations on procedures

34. Clarifying if the implementation of an application procedure managed at consortium level could substitute the regular application procedures applied to each partner's institution.

35. When addressing international students from all over the world, it is important to use an online application. The consortium should discuss how to implement and financially and technically support this.

36. Involvement of registrar offices since the development phase of the programme is important, especially if the institution has no great experience in joint programmes, in order to avoid students being rejected for formal requirements after having been selected by the consortium or by the first enrolment institution.

37. Discussing and harmonising the formal requirements for enrolment ensuring that students can obtain access to services and to certification at each institution.

38. Discussing in detail the documentation required by each institution for enrolment (certificate of previous studies, declarations from the consulates, official translations).

39. Mutual trust for enrolment: do not require additional documents at the second enrolment or registration.

40. To properly adopt, with statistics carried out at faculty or programme level regularly, the ECTS grading scale for the conversion of marks. While this is not possible, the use of converting tables developed ad hoc could be a valid alternative.

41. Have a common follow-up tool which enables the centralisation of data, made available to all partners.

Good practice 8: Online application procedures

Online application based on databases where students can upload application files and which can be accessible to all partners can facilitate and speed up the selection procedure. Many of these systems are based on open source platforms and can be implemented rather cheaply.

Furthermore, a lot of expertise has been shared recently among Erasmus Mundus and above all EM External Cooperation Window Consortia.

Good practice 9: Development of student's agreement

A good practice implemented by almost all the Erasmus Mundus consortia is the student's agreement. This contract usually covers issues such as fees, scholarship, "code of honour" which includes duties and responsibilities of the parties, learning agreement and mobility scheme. This tool is a transparency tool for the students but it is also a tool to enhance the institutional commitment of the partners.

Good practice 10: Management tool and intranet spaces for students, academics and administrative staff

Many JPs have implemented a website with intranet access for both scholars and students. On the intranet, the students can register for all courses and modules and in some cases they can check their results online. These web portals are managed by the coordinating university which is in charge of the student database.

Results of a study visit shown how one consortium has developed an online management tool for their JP. With this system, all the partners have access to the students' information. Data can also be exported and this can facilitate the award of certifications. This management tool, which can be used for the general management of the programmes as well as of the student's career, reduces the workload and permits more effective monitoring and quality control.

m) Developing a good, comprehensive cooperation agreement

42. A cooperation agreement should be developed and negotiated during the development phase.
43. The cooperation agreement should include all the agreements undertaken and should include regulations on the curriculum but also on administration.
44. The cooperation agreement should include financial managemlent issues.

Good practice 11: the JOIMAN cooperation agreement template

The JOIMAN project has developed a cooperation agreement template which introduces the meaning of this tool and includes and explains possible topics.
This template can be adapted by Higher Education Institutions and can be used as a tool for planning and negotiating administrative issues during the development phase.

8.4 Recommendations and good practices for the "role of the institution"

n) Develop a strategic policy on joint programmes at institutional level

45. A strategic policy on JPs adopted at the highest level of an institution seems to contribute to a systematic development of JPs. A strategic policy anchors the development and running of JPs within the institution at the highest level.

Good practice 12: Models and meaning of strategic policy on JPs

This models have been extracted by the results of surveys and study visits and have been explained in chapter 4.

Top-down approach: developed from the highest level of the institution and then spread inside the institution. So for instance, one HEI has developed a JP policy, has then integrated it in its general policy documents, and finally has disseminated a "JP culture" to faculties and departments.

Bottom-up approach: a strategic policy is developed *after* the institution becomes involved in JPs in order to streamline and frame the development of new JPs. Such a policy might also be defined in order to help the existing JPs to run more smoothly.

The strategic policies can have different emphasis:

- They might stress the administrative side and hence limit themselves to defining a *framework*
- They might *add an incentive to work inside a framework*
- Or else they might aim at *rationalizing* the development of JPs, by creating an appropriate professional culture

It does not seem out of place to cite here an excerpt from one of the study visits, which shows how a JP can have an impact on an institution or a Faculty:

"[…] These two programmes brought a very important change in the culture of the Faculty […]. They brought an important impulse to the internationalisation culture (courses in English, international dimension, etc.), but also to the whole organisation of the Faculty (dedicated tutor for international students, coaching for social integration, dedicated fund for the running of the international programmes)."

O) Develop a framework to sustain joint programmes in the long term

46. Create units dedicated to the development and management of JPs (within/attached to IROs or quality units). Their goal is to support and frame initiatives in a professional way.

47. Provide additional funding in terms of scholarships or other kind of direct or indirect support

48. Provide required professional training to administrative staff to carry out specialised tasks.

49. Spread the QA culture within the institution.

Good practice 13: Financial support from the institution

The study visits have shown that some HEIs provide (special) scholarships to students enrolled in a selected group of JPs (determined at institutional level). One institution, in particular, increases the LLP/Erasmus scholarship up to € 550 for all European students enrolled in a JP (EMMC and non EMMC). This practice increase the balancing between EU and non EU students in JP and fosters the cultural integration of international students.

Another kind of institutional support shown by the survey is a financial support transferred to the Faculties running Joint Programmes matching the quality requirements defined (teaching units taught in a foreign language, a minimum percentage of international students enrolled, the presence of international visiting professors, a dedicated tutor etc.).

Finally In two cases shown by a study visit and by the survey, a less direct financial support is provided to international programmes in the form of a "special agreed distribution of the tuition fees" among the central administration and the study programme. In these cases the study programmes are conceived as "autonomous" and they can count on a percentage of the fees (80 – 85%) for running the programmes. These funds are additional funds to be added to the costs incurred by the institution for the provision of the regular services (teaching rooms, academic personnel, student's services) and are generally used for additional services for international students or for scholarships.

50. Provide internal guidelines on how to develop and manage joint programmes to be used as a development tool, as a monitoring tool and as a flexible tool for negotiations among the partners.

Good practice 14: Example of policy developed

[We have developed a] policy rather than a strategy with a very large scope. The policy contains a guideline, which addresses all elements of a JP from the first idea about the programme up to the JD certification and alumni network:
[Its] main aspects [are]:

1. Academic aspects
2. Financial aspects
3. The aspect of sustainability of the programme at all partner universities.

[We favour a] professional/well organised approach to developing JPs, e.g. by developing a business plan for each JP. One basic rule to implement a JP is: solve all problems before the programme starts.

The main conditions that need to be fulfilled are:

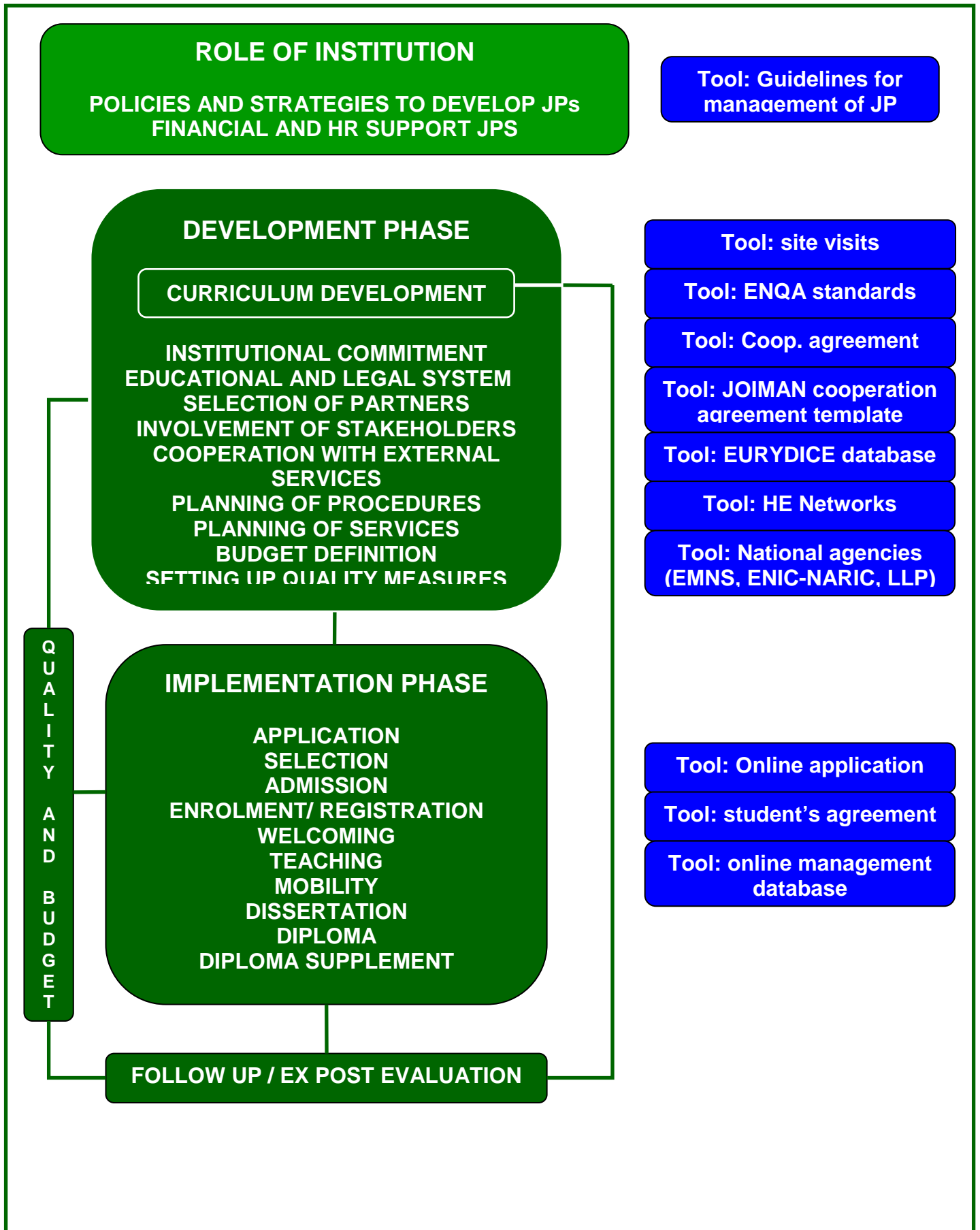*Insure full financial coverage of the programme, at all partner institutions;*
Organise site visits to the partners prior the start of the programme to check institutional commitment;
Perform a diligence investigation of all partners (including an investigation of the legal framework).

Good practice 15: Guidelines developed by the University of Lund

The most complete guidelines are those from the University of Lund, which address all main points that one has to take into account for setting up and running a JP. These guidelines are also reported integrally as an annex of this Report. References are given to the main sources of information and ideas are put forward for those seeking financial support. The tone of the document is not emphatic and has no promotional objective.

8.5 Synthesis of the phases and of the tools

ROLE OF INSTITUTION

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP JPs
FINANCIAL AND HR SUPPORT JPS

Tool: Guidelines for management of JP

DEVELOPMENT PHASE

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT
EDUCATIONAL AND LEGAL SYSTEM
SELECTION OF PARTNERS
INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS
COOPERATION WITH EXTERNAL SERVICES
PLANNING OF PROCEDURES
PLANNING OF SERVICES
BUDGET DEFINITION
SETTING UP QUALITY MEASURES

Tool: site visits

Tool: ENQA standards

Tool: Coop. agreement

Tool: JOIMAN cooperation agreement template

Tool: EURYDICE database

Tool: HE Networks

Tool: National agencies (EMNS, ENIC-NARIC, LLP)

QUALITY AND BUDGET

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

APPLICATION
SELECTION
ADMISSION
ENROLMENT/ REGISTRATION
WELCOMING
TEACHING
MOBILITY
DISSERTATION
DIPLOMA
DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

Tool: Online application

Tool: student's agreement

Tool: online management database

FOLLOW UP / EX POST EVALUATION

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List of annexes

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ANNEX 2:   JOIMAN Questionnaire on institutional policies
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