

Joint programmes: Quality Assurance and Recognition of degrees awarded (JOQAR)

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european consortium for accreditation

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 - Perspectives on joint programmes
 - Inclusion of Erasmus Mundus programmes on Crossroads
- Launch of a Knowledge Base

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JOQAR: background

- JPs are on top of the European HE agenda
- > 150 Erasmus Mundus master programmes
- Estimated total number of JPs: 2,500
- Obstacles for HEIs in organising JPs:
 - Joint programmes are confronted with different national QA regimes
 - Legal obstacles (especially joint degrees)
 - High costs / financing
- Multiple problems with recognition of qualifications awarded by JPs
- Challenges in the Accreditation/QA of JPs

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JOQAR: essentials

- ECA+ project
 - European funding (approx. 310.000 euro)
 - Nov. 2010 – Oct. 2013
- Overall aim:
 - to ensure that joint programmes are facilitated in two specific areas: accreditation and recognition
- Action lines:
 1. Cross-border quality assurance of joint programmes
 - The development of a multilateral recognition agreement regarding QA and accreditation results
 - The establishment of a European coordination point for external QA and accreditation of joint programmes
 - Single accreditation pilots procedures

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JOQAR: essentials

- Action lines:

- 2. Recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes

- Awareness-raising among HEIs and joint programmes about ENIC-NARICs' expectations
 - ENIC-NARIC guidelines regarding the recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes
 - Transparent information provision regarding Erasmus Mundus programmes (inclusion of Erasmus Mundus programmes on Qcrossroads)

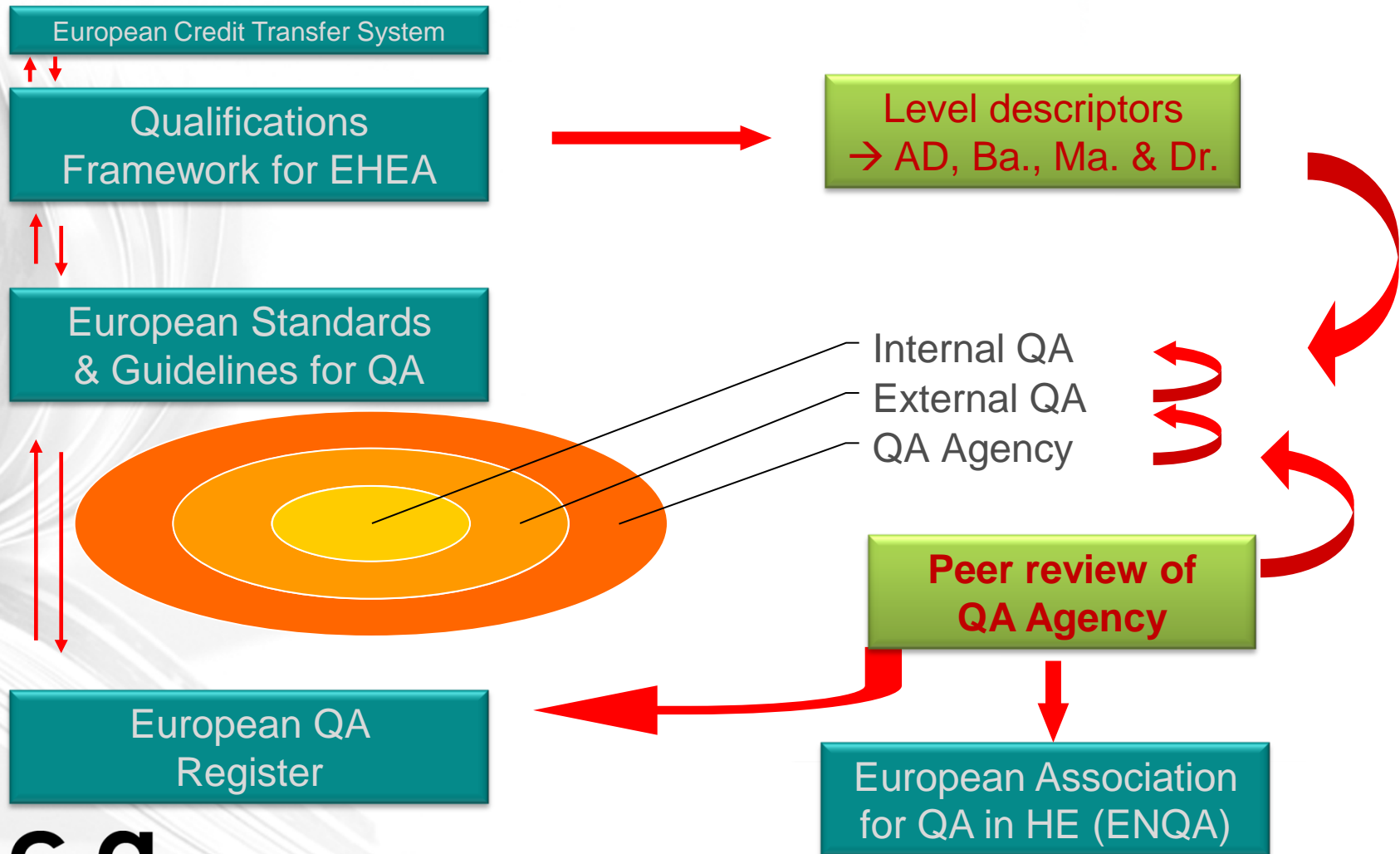
JOQAR: essentials

14 Project partners:

- **Quality Assurance Agencies:** NVAO, ÖAR, SQAA, AQAS, ANECA, OAQ, AQU Catalunya, FIBAA, NAAC, CNA
- **ENIC-NARICs:**
 - Danish Agency for International Education
 - UK NARIC
 - NUFFIC (NL)
 - Ministry of Science and Higher Education (PL)
- **Project groups:** Steering Group, Recognition Group, Accreditation Group (WG 1), Stakeholders Group

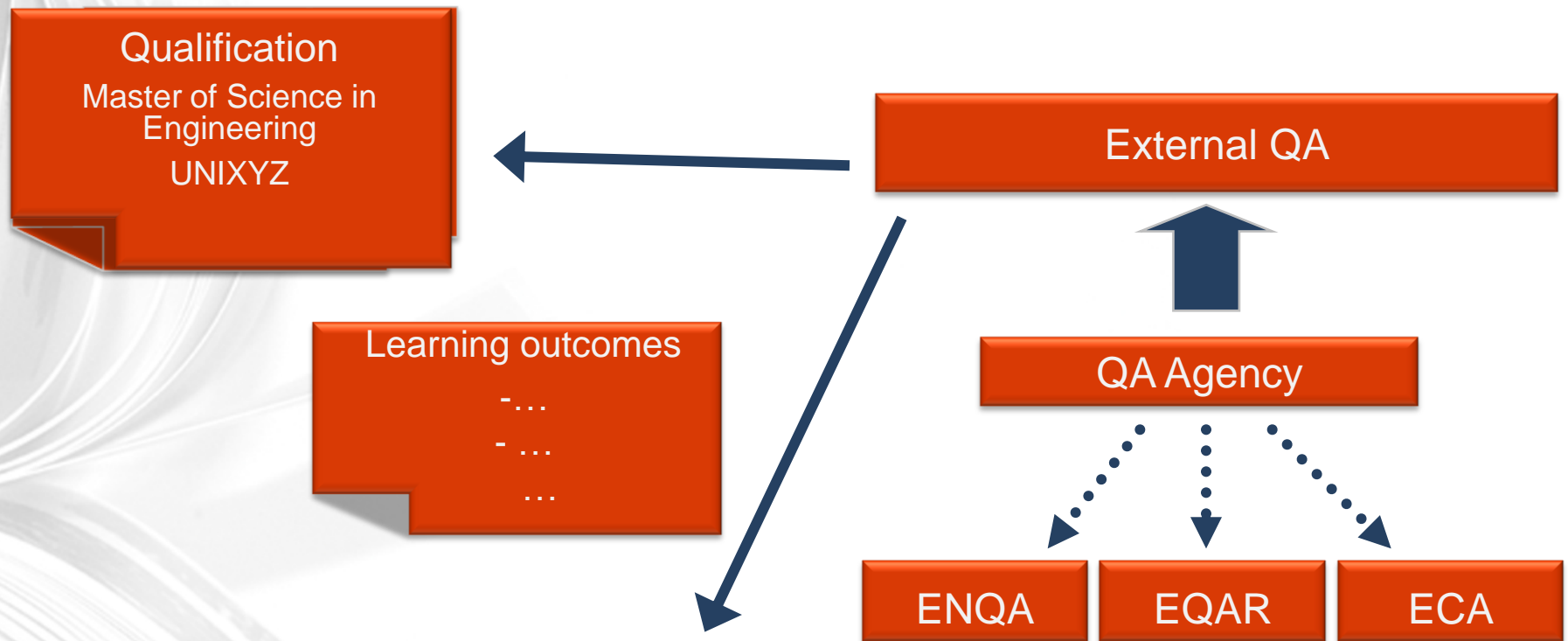
Cross-border quality assurance of joint programmes

European HE Quality Assurance Landscape



European HE Quality Assurance Landscape

Recognition of degrees



EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ECA) AIMS FOR:

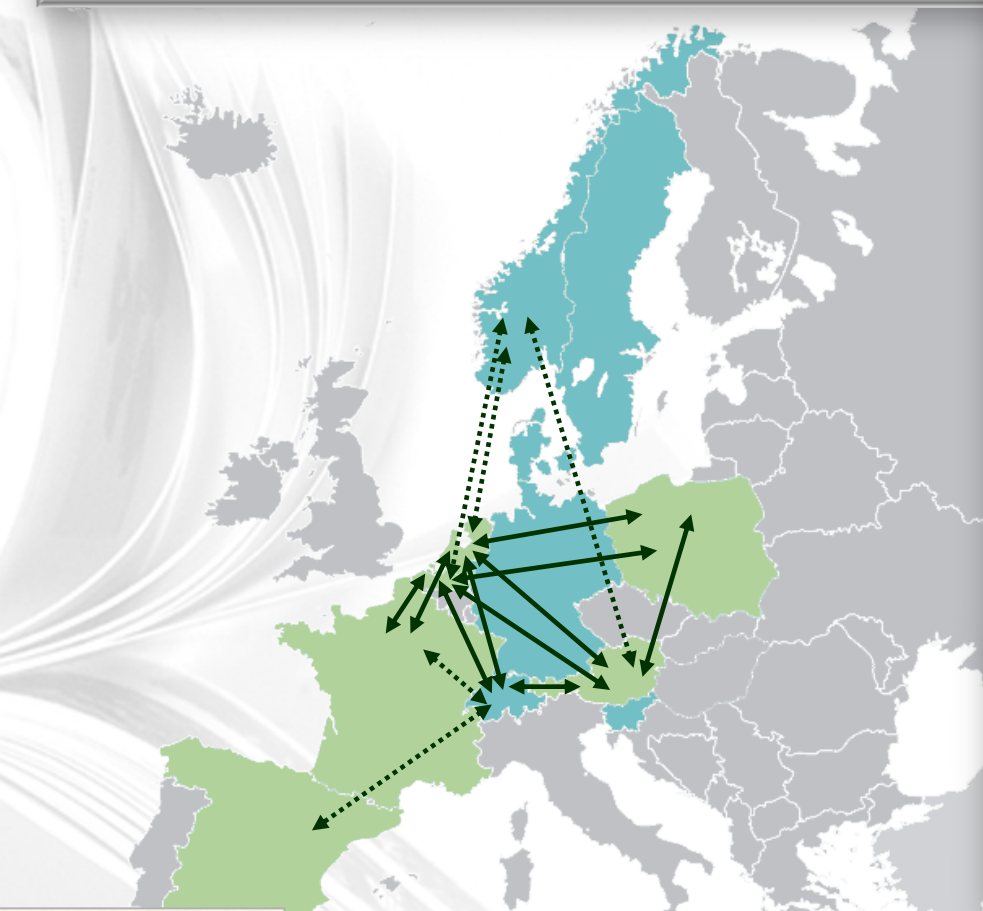
- Mutual recognition of accreditation & quality assurance decisions
- Mutual learning and dissemination of experiences with accreditation(-like) good practices
- Provision of transparent information on quality and facilitation of internationalisation of institutions and students

RESULTS OF THIS COOPERATION:

- Code of good practice (2004)
- Principles for the selection of experts (2005)
- Principles for accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes (2007)
- Bilateral mutual recognition of accreditation agreements (2007)
- Qrossroads.eu (2008)
- Principles regarding learning outcomes in accreditation procedures (2009)
- Multilateral agreement regarding joint programmes (2010)

PARTICIPANTS:

- ECA Partners (& one observer)
- Multilateral agreement re. joint programmes
- ↔ Mutual recognition agreements 2007
- ↔ Mutual recognition agreements 2010-2011



Joint declaration regarding the automatic recognition of qualifications

Aim: if preconditions are met, degrees awarded by accredited institutions and/or accredited programmes should be automatically accepted in the countries concerned



ECA measures to foster mutual recognition

- “Do no harm”-principle
 - Respect for national competencies & legal frameworks
 - Co-operate across borders where possible
- External QA which takes into account:
 - National qualifications framework
 - Learning outcomes
- Transparent publication of results of external QA procedures (incl. learning outcomes)
 - National database:
register of accredited programmes and/or institutions
 - European register: www.grossroads.eu

accreditation

Joint programmes: solutions for accreditation/QA

- Multilateral mutual recognition agreement for JPs (MULTRA)
- OR:

- One single accreditation procedure, replacing multiple accreditation procedures:
 - Based on ECA principles for accreditation of JPs and on mutual trust-building activities
 - One coordinating agency (others are informed or observing)
 - 1 on-site visit, 1 report, multiple (but same!) decisions
 - Pilot projects

Multilateral mutual recognition agreements

- Mutual recognition particularly useful for joint programmes
- Means:
 - Observation missions, including comparisons, between QA agencies
- Expected output:
 - **Publication:** Transferable methodology for including agencies in the multilateral recognition agreement
- Achievements so far:
 - The Multilateral Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Accreditation Results regarding Joint Programmes (MULTRA)
 - Signed by ÖAR, FHR, NVAO, PKA, ANECA and CTI
 - New observation missions are planned: NAAC, SQAA, ZEvA, AQU Catalunya, AQAS, FIBAA, CNA, EVA

Multilateral mutual recognition agreement

Core text of MULTRA:

The signing accreditation organisations agree to apply the ECA principles for accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes;

and confirm that within their competences they accept the results of the accreditation procedures of the other signing accreditation organisations when accrediting joint programmes

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European coordination point: explanation

Aims: 1) Information provision

2) Assistance on single accreditation of joint programmes

Target groups: Coordinators of joint programmes, QA agencies

Outputs: - Publications:

- Feasibility study for the coordination point
- Evaluation report of the pilots

- Knowledge base

Means: Feasibility study, Pilot procedures, Launch of knowledge base

European coordination point: Feasibility study

2 surveys sent out in February/ March 2011:

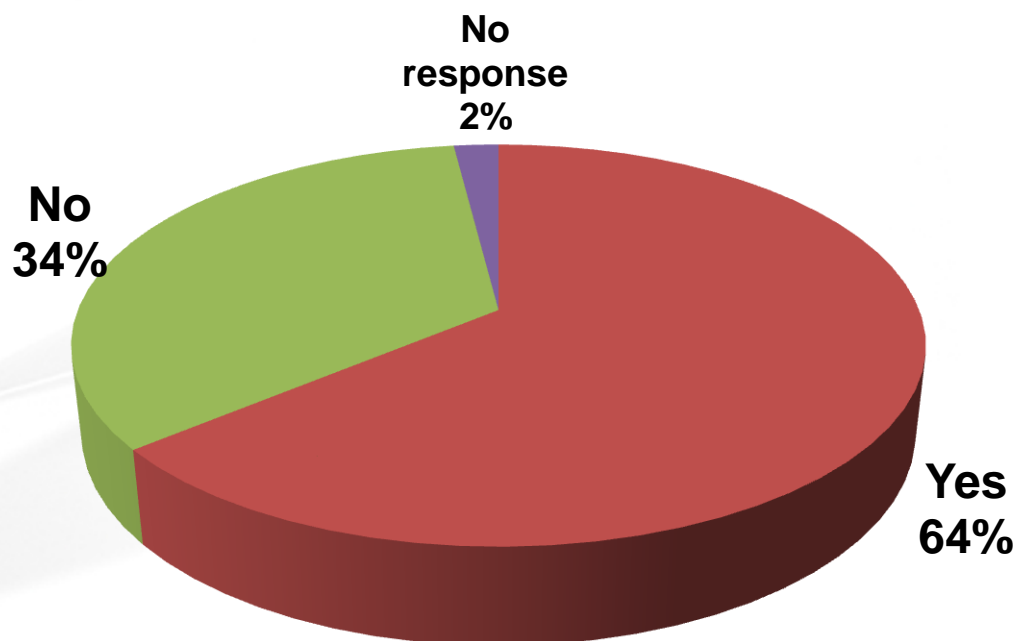
- Programme coordinators of JPs; 50 respondents
- QA agencies; 19 respondents

Report: Feasibility study- a coordination point for joint programmes

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The survey results at a glance- JP's

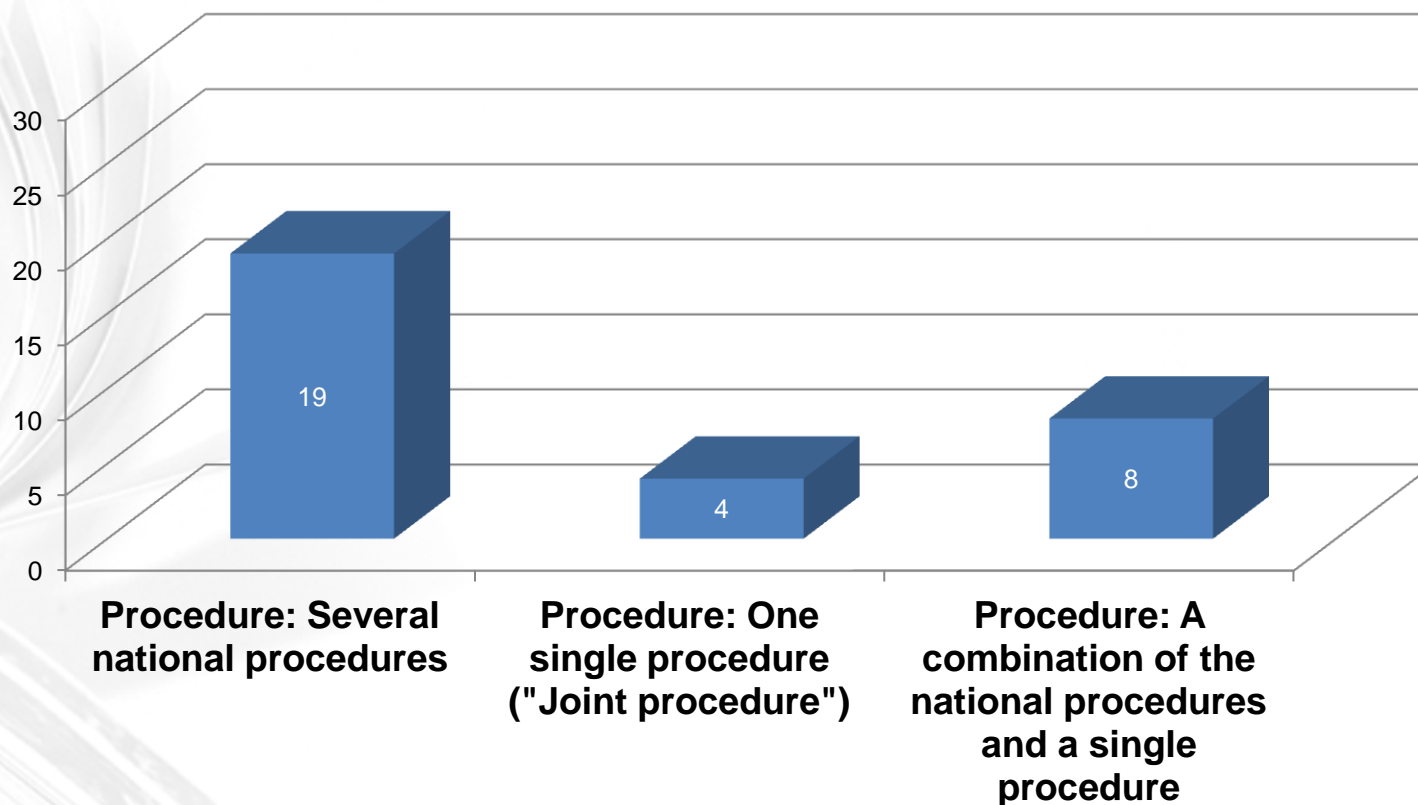
Experience with external QA



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The survey results at a glance- JP's

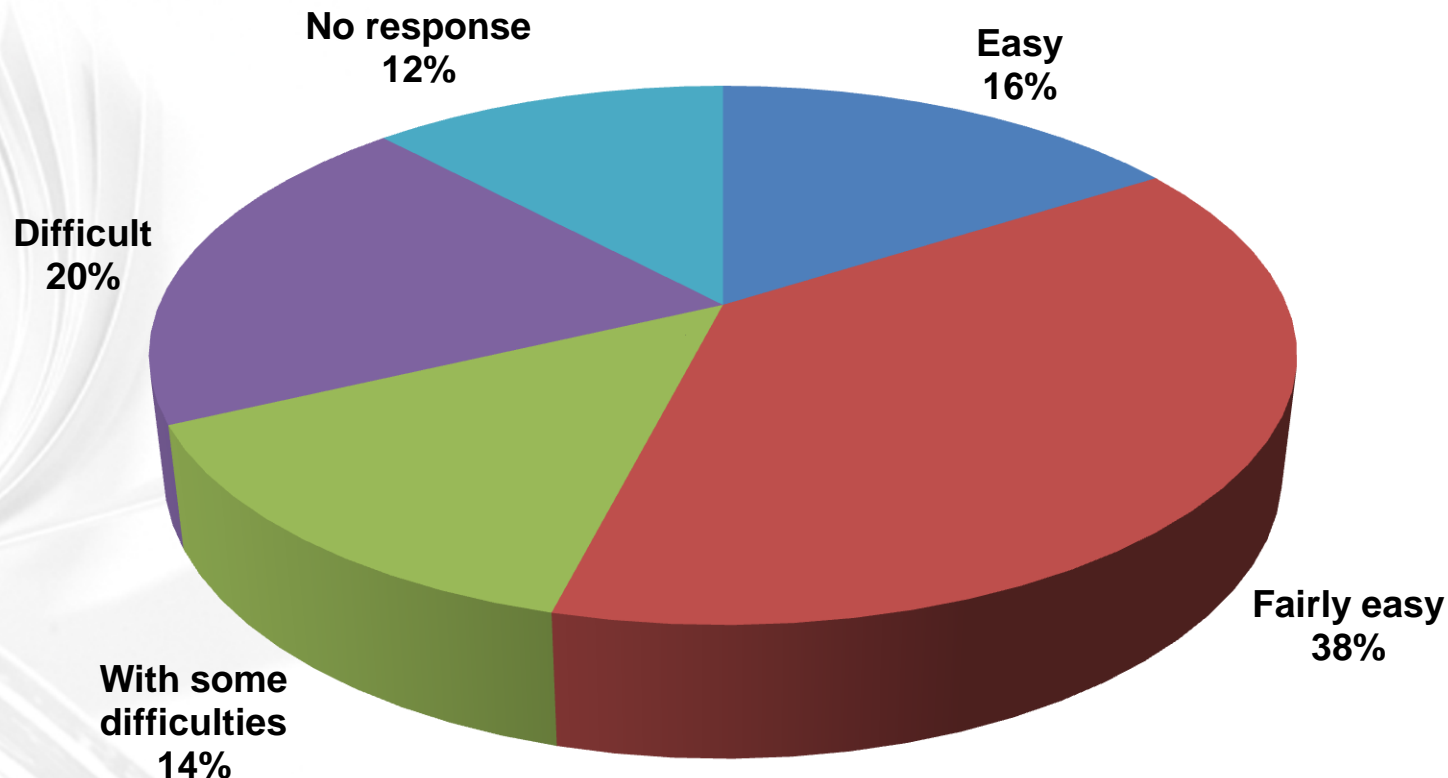
Type of procedure, when experienced



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The survey results at a glance- JP's

How easy was it to identify EQA/A requirements?



accreditation

The survey results at a glance- JP's

Identified main difficulties are related to;

- 1) That joint programmes/ joint degrees are rather new phenomena;
- 2) Differences between the national QA-A/ HE systems

“It is not clearly established which are the quality requirements and when they are they usually change from country to country.”

- 3) That there is no overarching European contact point for joint programmes

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The survey results at a glance- JP's

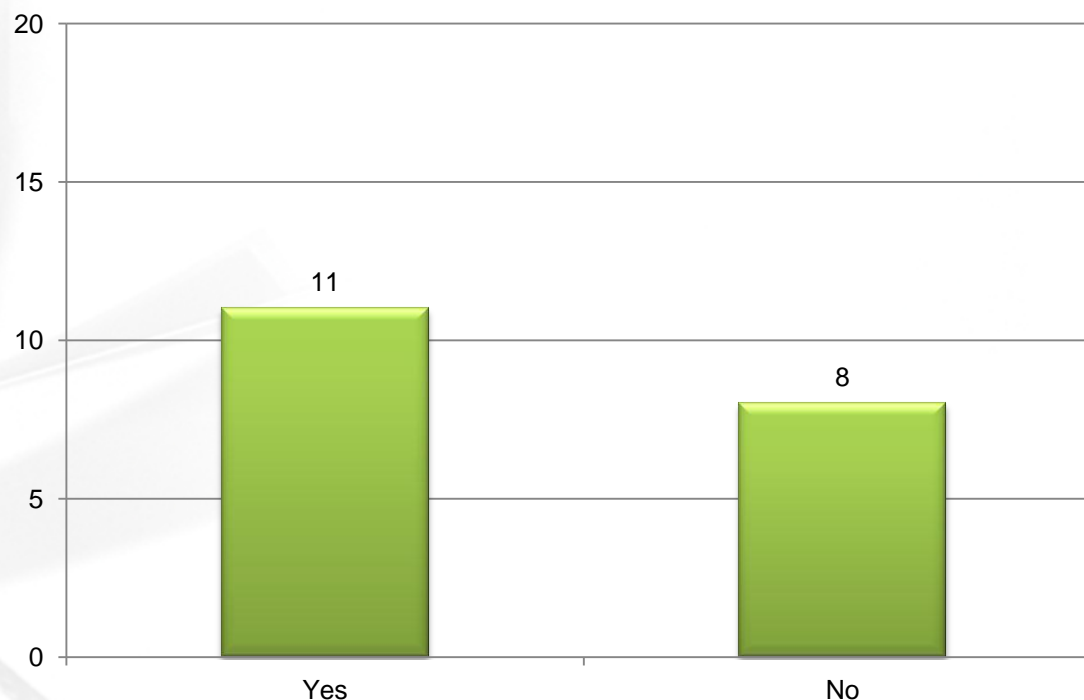
Which information should the Coordination Point provide?

- **Best practices and FAQ on** e.g. QA/ accreditation/ recognition, ask an expert service, practical examples etc.
- **Information on QA procedures;** national and transnational
- **Information on joint degrees;** clear and un-doubtable information regarding legislation and recognition of joint degrees in Europe
- **Help in setting up a joint programme**

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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

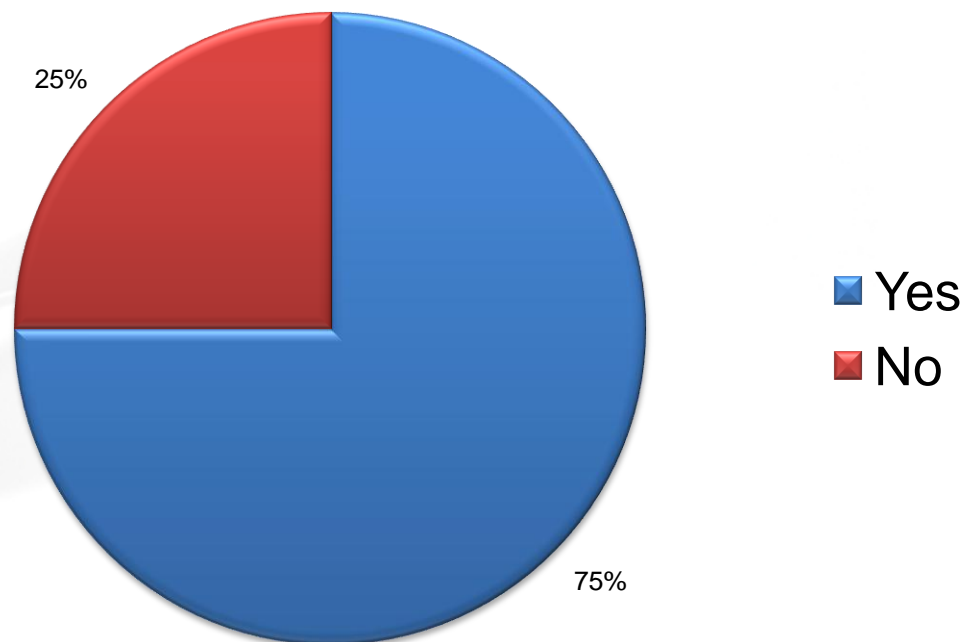
Has your agency already carried out accreditation procedures for joint programmes?



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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

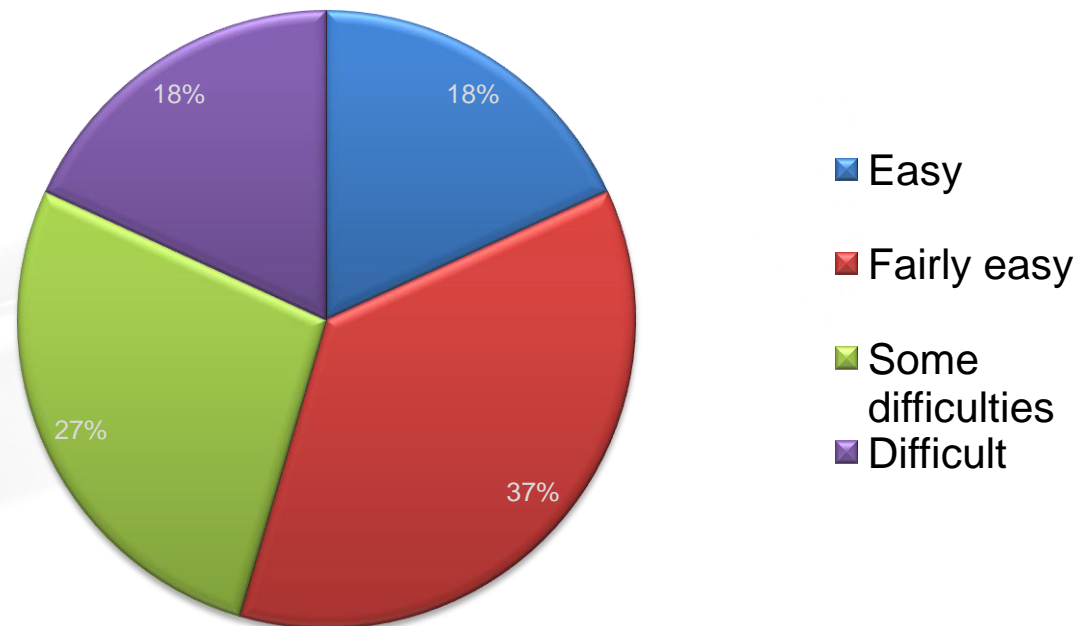
Was there any kind of cooperation with other quality assurance agencies of other countries involved in the joint programme?



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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

How easy was it to identify the relevant accreditation requirements for the joint programme of other countries involved?



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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

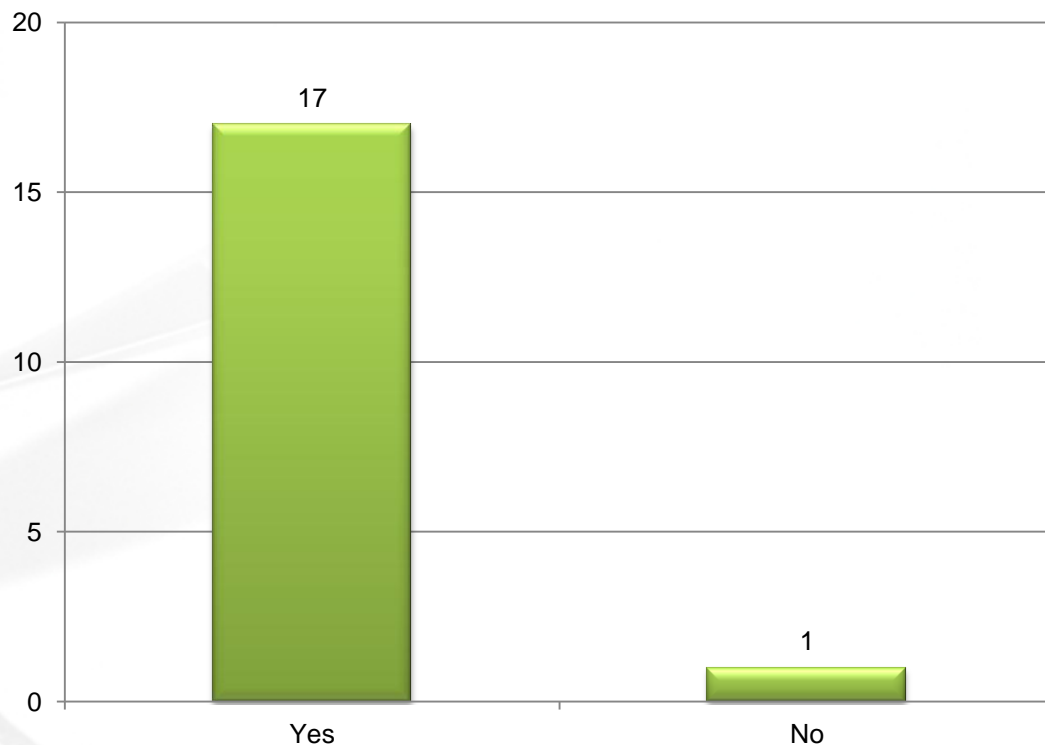
What were the difficulties?

- The use & interpretation of each other's accreditation methodology, procedure, standards and system;
- The production and implementation of the final report, result and decision;
- The cooperation arrangement and the definition of responsibilities between the agencies;
- The communication towards the institution and/or programme and the procedural guideline for the joint programme (e.g. self-evaluation report);

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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

Added value of a methodology and assistance on single accreditation procedures?



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The survey results at a glance- QAAs

Required support/ information from the Coordination Point

- Library of national requirements, legislations and regulations (80%)
- Good practices in the assessment of joint programmes (67%)
- Facilitator when assessing joint programmes and for cross-border recognition of accreditation (67%)
- List of all international joint programmes and relevant accreditation status/requirement (40%)
- Library of national higher education and quality assurance systems (33%)
- Information to facilitate recognition of qualifications awarded by joint programmes (13%)

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Coordination point

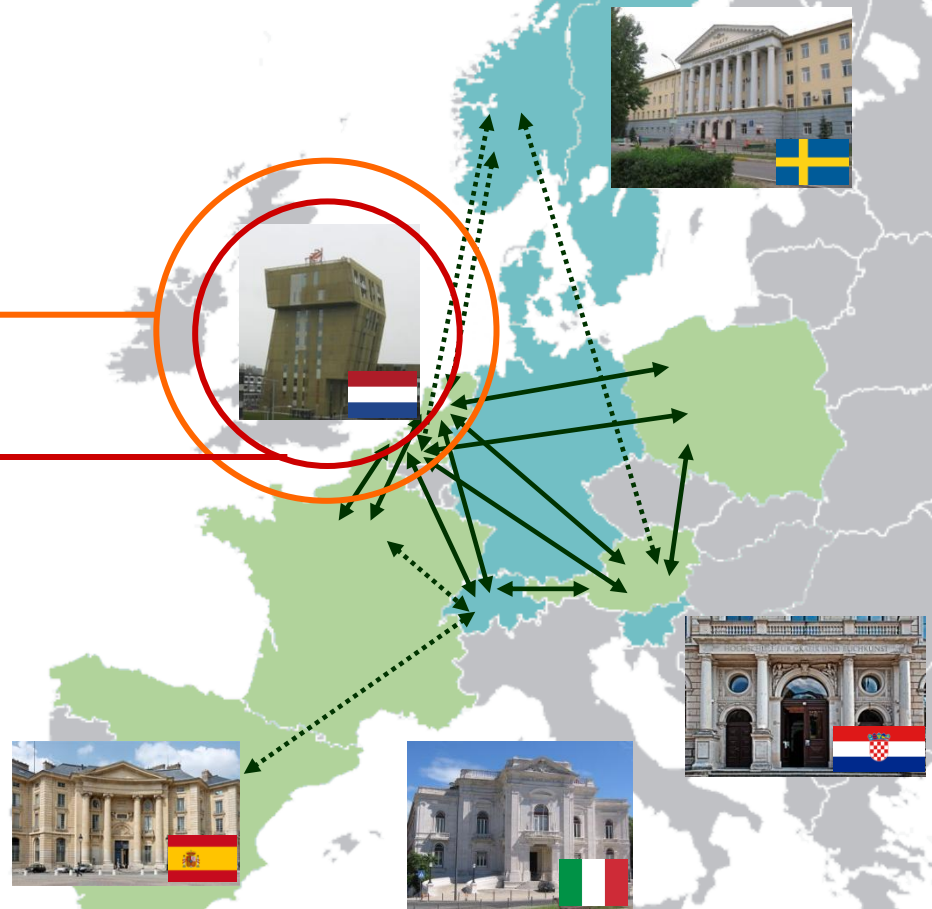
Conclusions:

- seem to be a demand amongst both the joint programmes and the QA agencies for a coordination point regarding joint programmes
- main focus of the coordination point should be **the provision of information and the coordination of single/joint accreditation procedures**
- Work plan with work flow charts is being developed

Pilots: possible accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes

1. Traditional procedure

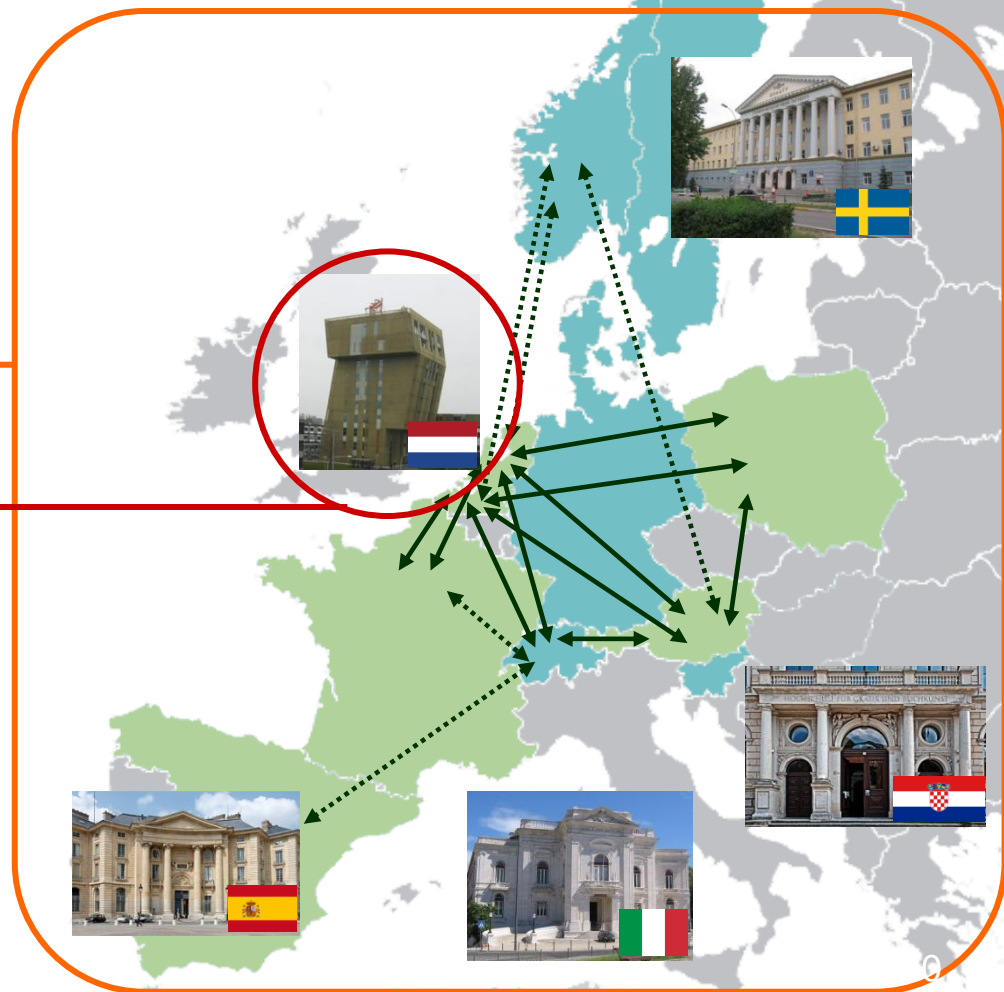
- **Procedure:**
 - Individual agency
- **Focus:**
 - National offer
- **Result:**
 - National (accreditation)
 - Not all parts are covered



Pilots: possible accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes

2. Unilateral procedure

- **Procedure:**
 - One agency
- **Focus:**
 - Whole joint programme
- **Result:**
 - National accreditation
→ All parts are covered



Occurrence

A map of Europe with regions color-coded: teal for Northern and Central Europe, green for Southern and Western Europe, and grey for Eastern Europe. Arrows indicate relationships: solid green arrows point from the teal region to the green region, and dashed green arrows point from the green region to the teal region. A red circle highlights a specific area in Central Europe, with a red rectangle below it. Four inset images show national landmarks: the Swedish Parliament (teal region), the Dutch Parliament (red circle), the Spanish Parliament (green region), and the Italian Parliament (green region). The Croatian Parliament is also shown in a red circle, with a red rectangle below it.

Introduction

Pilot procedures – 4 identified programmes

1. European Master in Quality in Analytical Laboratories (EMQAL)

- University of Algarve , **Portugal**
- University of Barcelona, **Spain**
- University of Bergen, **Norway**
- University of Cadiz, **Spain**
- Gdansk University of Technology, **Poland**
- Central South University, **China**

The Coordinating agency will be; AQU Catalunya

accreditation

Pilot procedures – 4 identified programmes

2. Erasmus Mundus Master of Science in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation (EMBC)

- Ghent University (**Belgium**)
- University of Bremen (**Germany**)
- University of the Algarve (**Portugal**)
- University of Pierre and Marie Curie - Paris 6 (**France**)
- University of Oviedo (**Spain**)
- University of Klaipeda (**Lithuania**)

The Coordinating agency will be; ANECA

accreditation

Pilot procedures – 4 identified programmes

3. European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations

- University of Oldenburg, **Germany**
- Ahfad University for Women, Omdurman, **Sudan**
- Makerere University Kampala, **Uganda**
- Mbarara University of Science & Technology, **Uganda**
- University of Nova Gorica, **Slovenia**
- University of South Bohemia, **Czech Republic**
- University of Stavanger, **Norway**

The Coordination agency will be; SQAA

Pilot procedures – 4 identified programmes

4. Erasmus Mundus Master Course in Law and Economics (EMLE)

- Erasmus University Rotterdam, **The Netherlands**
- University of Gent, **Belgium**
- Hamburg University, **Germany**
- University Paul Cezanne, Aix/Marseille 3, **France**
- University of Bologna, **Italy**
- University of Vienna, **Austria**
- Haifa University, **Israel**
- Warsaw School of Economics, **Poland**
- Indira Ghandi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai, **India**

The Coordinating agency will be; NVAO

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The outline of the pilot procedures

- 1 agency responsible for the procedure
- Agencies of other consortium countries can be involved:
 - Information on procedure and outcomes
 - Proposing additional national criteria
 - Proposing an expert for panel
 - Sending an observer to the site visit
- The **totality of the joint programme** will be assessed in accordance with ECA's Principles for accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes
- Focus on learning outcomes
- Preparatory meeting with agencies and coordinators JPs to agree on criteria, procedure, planning, finances

Pilots: Core + model

Core (joint
criteria)

- Agreed by coordinating agencies and involved agencies

+ (additional
national
criteria)

- Added by involved agencies

Decision

- By coordinating agency
- Accepted by involved agencies

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Pilots: the application document

- Should include information on the totality of the programme
- Should be written jointly by the partners in the consortium (~English)



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Pilots: Selection of experts

- Selection of experts
 - ECA Principles for the Selection of Experts
 - Are the experts familiar with joint programmes?
 - International expert panel. This is particularly important when assessing programmes which are strongly rooted in national HE systems.



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Pilots: site visit

- Site visit
 - The panel has to be able to talk to and discuss with people that represent the totality of the offered programme.
 - Choice of the location of the site visit:
 - Where are the students?
 - Coordinators?
 - Weakest link?



Recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes

TEAM² Project (2008 – 2010)

ECA TEAM²

Accreditation of joint programmes

Single accreditation procedure

Principles for accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes

Accreditation decision

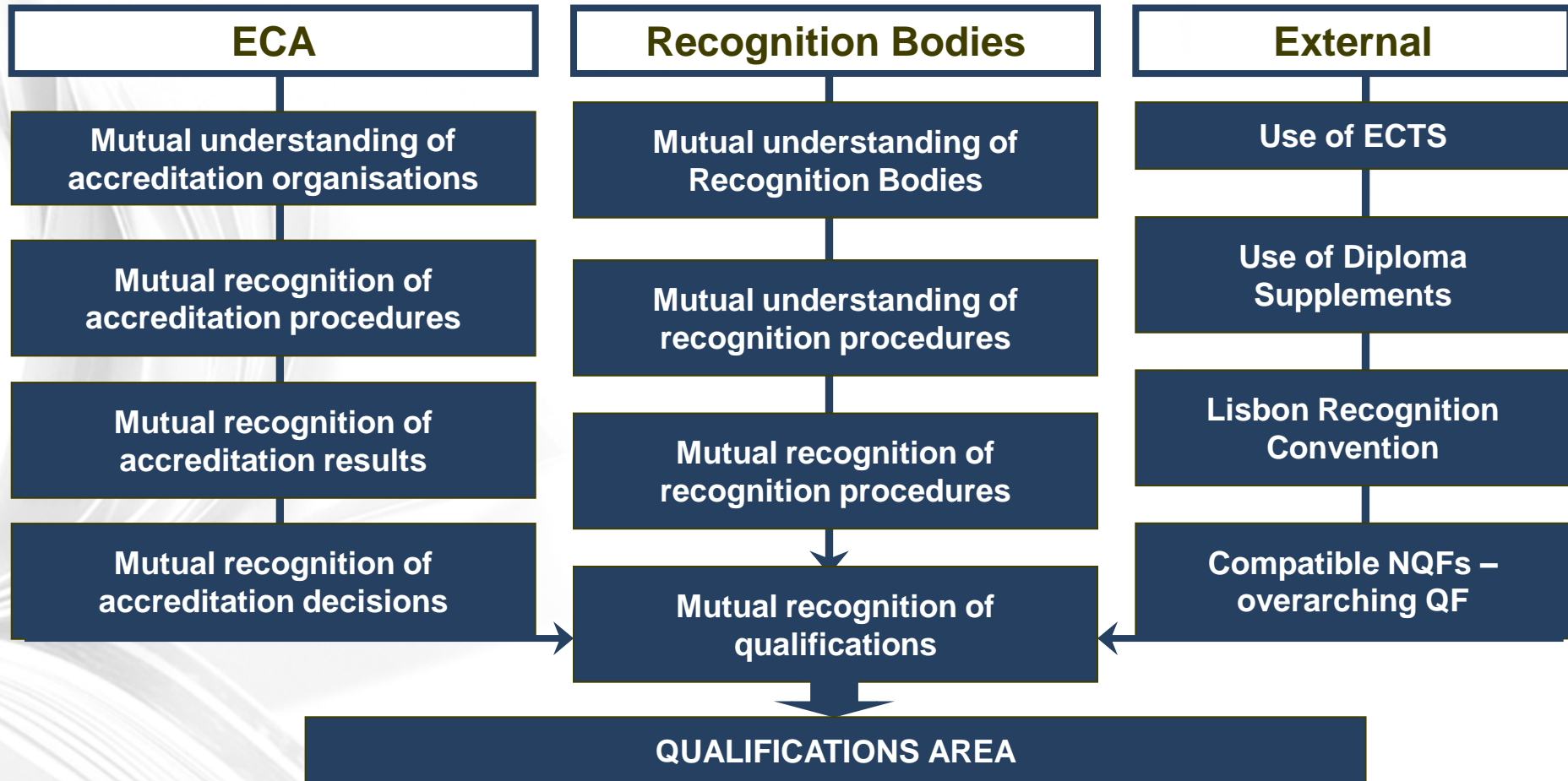
Accreditation in all national systems

Recognition of qualifications of joint programmes?

“All ENIC-NARICs agree that a joint programme needs to be quality assured and/or accredited.”

Source: Aerden, A., Reczulska, H. ,
The recognition of qualifications awarded by joint programmes, May 2010

Roadmap towards a qualifications area



Pilot Project: The Netherlands and Flanders
→ even more difficult than expected

Measures to foster mutual recognition

- Real application of Lisbon Recognition Convention
- The art of using learning outcomes
 - Programme design
 - Quality assurance & accreditation
 - Degree & diploma supplement
 - Recognition procedures
- National qualification frameworks
 - European and cross-border compatibility
 - Verifiable and transparent
- National registers of recognised higher education
 - Quality assurance (& accreditation)
 - Learning outcomes

Recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes

1. Awareness-raising about ENIC-NARICs' expectations regarding joint programmes
 - Degree design
 - Diploma supplement
 - Legal frameworks
 - Output:
 - Publication:
Designing Degrees and Editing Diploma Supplements awarded by Joint Programmes: Guidelines and good practices

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Recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes

2. Establishment of a common ground among ENIC-NARICs regarding the recognition of degrees awarded by joint programmes
 - Legal principles
 - Consortium cooperation and programme offering
 - Degree awarding
 - Output:
 - Publication:
Recommendations regarding the Recognition of Degrees awarded by Joint Programmes

Towards better (European) coordination

**Guidelines to
facilitate recognition
of degrees awarded
by joint programmes**

For joint programmes
(from perspective of ENIC-NARICs)

For credential evaluators and recognition bodies
(ENIC-NARICs)

Information & assistance re. single accreditation of
joint programmes

For coordinators of joint programmes and QA &
accreditation agencies

**European Coordination
point for external QA
and accreditation of
joint programmes**

Perspectives on joint programmes

Feasibility study:
a coordination point for
joint programmes



Axel Aerden & Kaja Braathen

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Joint programmes:
Too many cooks
in the kitchen?



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How to assess
and accredit joint
programmes in Europe



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The recognition of
qualifications awarded
by joint programmes



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Methodological report

International European Evaluation Project II (TEEP II)

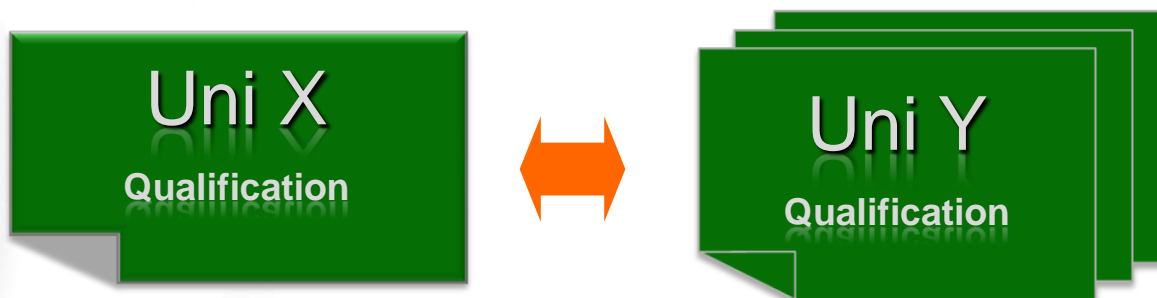
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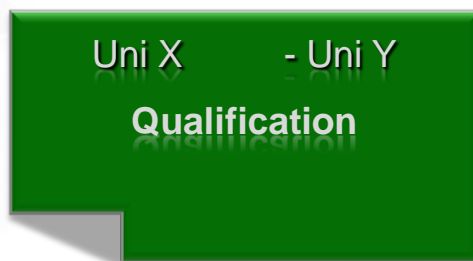
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Some terminology

- Different types of degrees
 - Single, double, multiple degrees



- Joint degrees



- But complex mix of the above is possible

Joint degree: example & definition



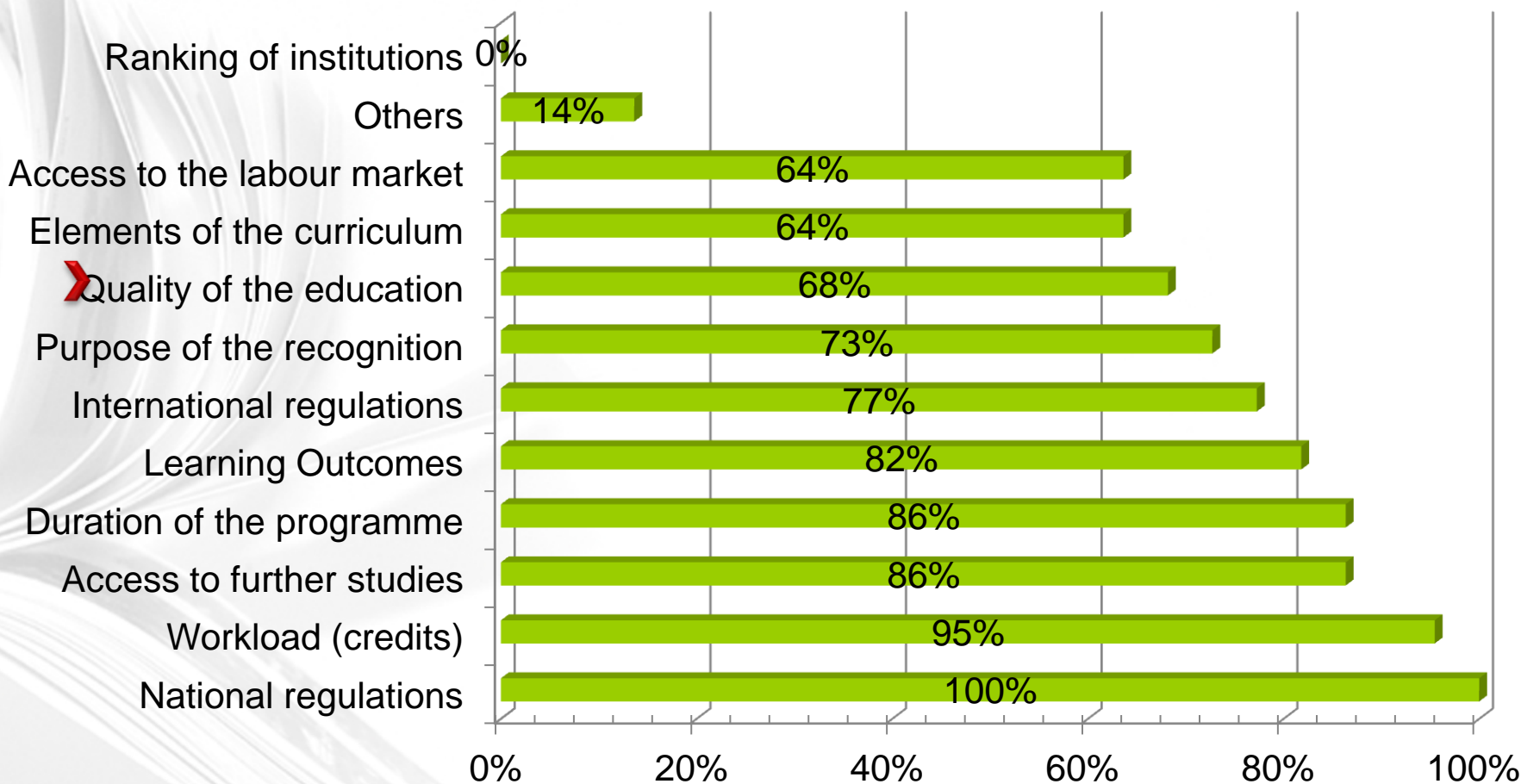
A recognised degree awarded by the higher education institutions that offer the joint programme, attesting the successful completion of this joint programme.

Single document

Signed by the competent authorities of the institutions involved in the joint programme

Replaces the separate (institutional/national) degrees

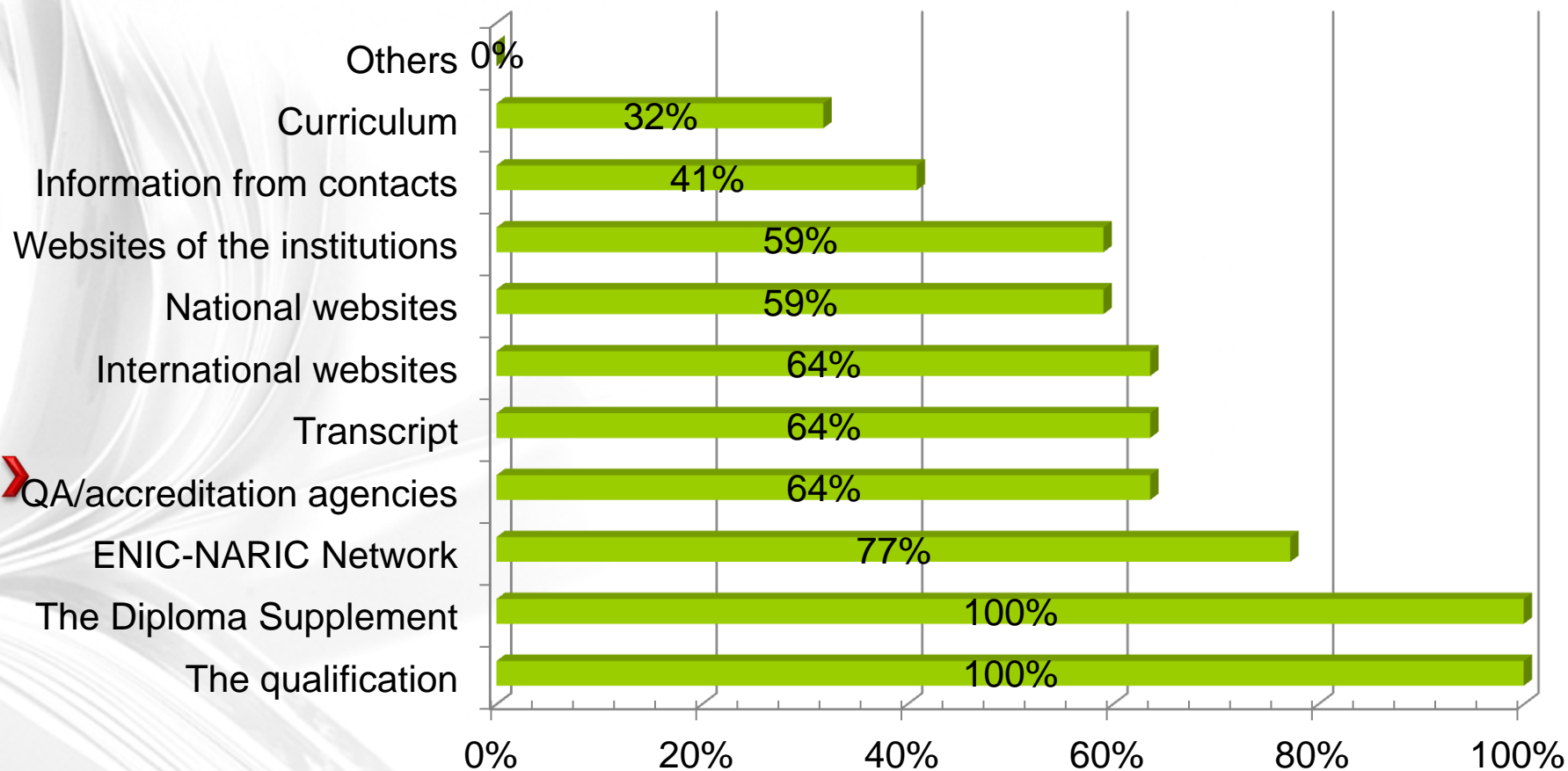
Criteria taken into account by ENIC-NARICs



Source: Aerden, A., Reczulska, H. ,

The recognition of qualifications awarded by joint programmes, May 2010

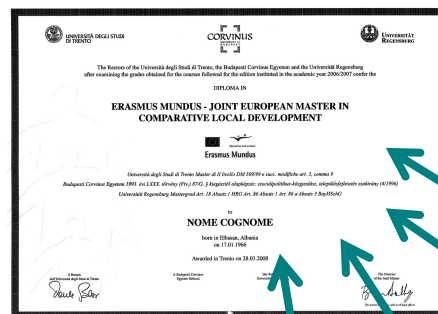
Main sources of information ENIC-NARICs



Source: Aerden, A., Reczulska, H. ,

The recognition of qualifications awarded by joint programmes, May 2010

Example



Recognition will be denied

- An unrecognised institution figures on the awarded degree
- The unrecognised institution is seen as making use of joint programme arrangements to flee the national regulatory framework.

Recognised



Recognised

Recognised



Not recognised

Example



Recognition may be denied

- One of the institutions involved in the programme is not recognised
- This unrecognised institution is seen as making use of joint programme arrangements to flee the national regulatory framework.

Recognised



Recognised



Recognised



Not recognised

Example



Recognition may be denied

- IF one of the institutions involved in the programme cannot award Master of Science degrees (e.g. not accredited)
- THEN this institution is seen as making use of joint programme arrangements to flee the national regulatory framework.

Recognised



Recognised



Recognised



Recognised



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TEAM II survey results

- Observations:

- These qualifications /degrees are not treated differently
- Legal aspects are a serious obstacle towards recognition.
- Joint programmes and joint qualifications need to be better incorporated into the national higher education systems
- ENIC-NARICS are aware of the fact that some institutions use joint programmes to escape national legislation
- The degree and the diploma supplement do not provide the necessary information about the joint programme
- All ENIC-NARICs agree that a joint programme needs to be quality assured and/or accredited

Recognition of JP: A way forward

- HEIs offering joint programmes should:
 - Award qualifications/degrees in such a way that recognition is facilitated
 - Be able to know what is expected of them
- A need for guidelines
 - Conformity to national legislation re. HEI, JPs and (J)Ds
 - Transparency and clarity from but also for
 - national authorities, QAAs and HEIs
 - Essential and required information provided by:
 - the degree
 - the Diploma Supplement
- 1st JOQAR Workshop with ENIC-NARICs on 9 February

Inclusion of Erasmus Mundus programmes on Qcrossroads

- Qcrossroads is a website driven database
- Lists all accredited institutions and programmes in:
 - Austria, Denmark, Flanders, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland
 - More countries to follow
- Provides standardized information on accreditation results
- Database currently contains information about 15,000 study programmes offered at 2,750 HEIs
- Search engine
- Information on QA and HE systems, qualification frameworks, recognition, studying in Europe
- www.qcrossroads.eu



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- Higher education in Europe

Recognition of qualifications

- Degree structure in Europe
- Quality assurance & accreditation

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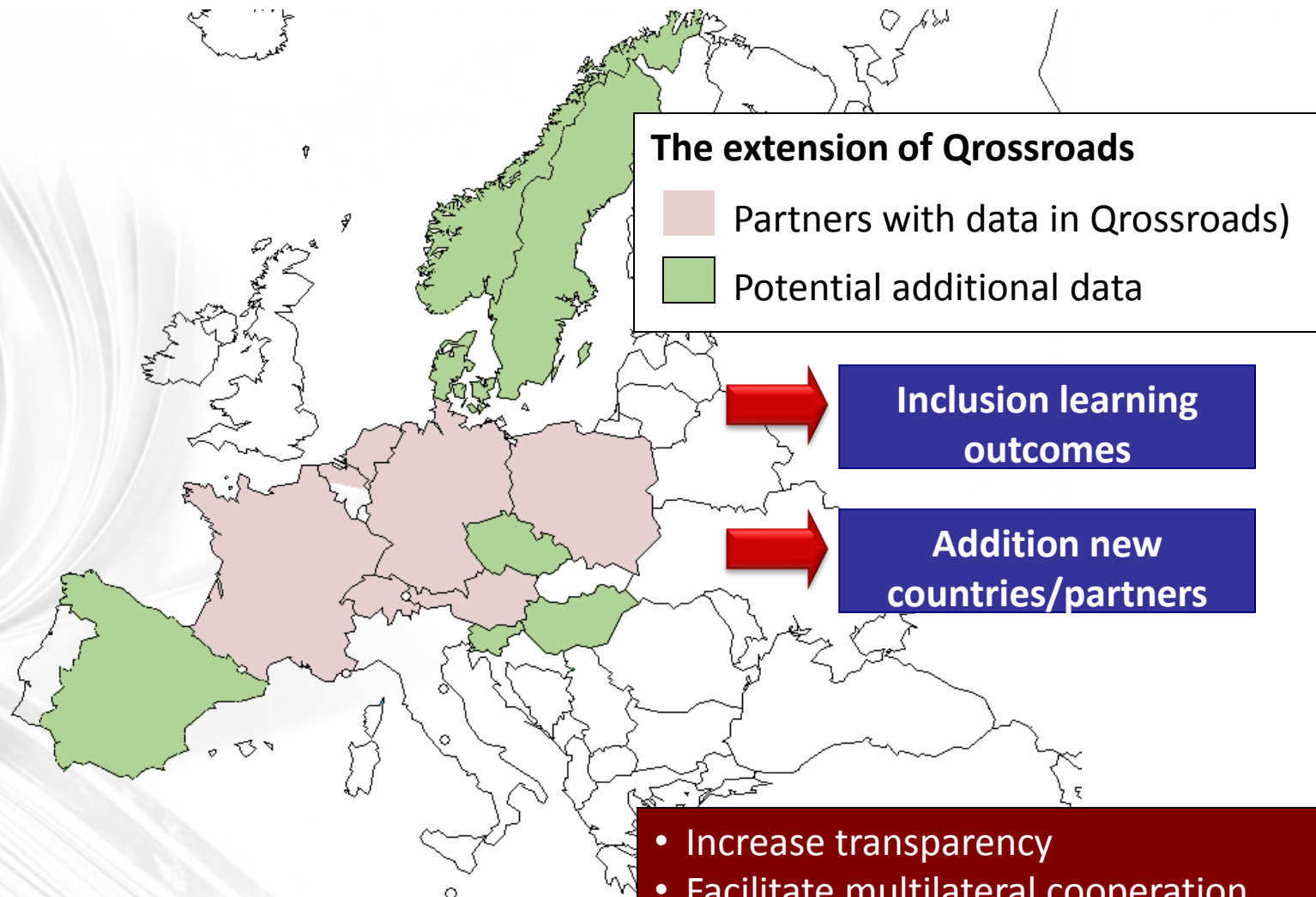
[Find it out](#)



Recognition Bodies

Is that institution and the qualification awarded by it recognised?

[Find it out](#)



- Increase transparency
- Facilitate multilateral cooperation
- Facilitate recognition of qualifications

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Launch of a knowledge base

- Wiki site
- Information of QA/accreditation and recognition of joint programmes
- Important stakeholders such as QAA's, E/Ns, the EM National Structures and the European Stakeholders organisation can be given access to this site
- Will be integrated on the ECA website

Thank you for your attention



For more information: secretariat@ecaconsortium.net

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