



Study on joint programmes

– an analysis of results obtained from on-line questionnaire prepared within the Erasmus Mundus Action 3 project “INTERUV: joint programmes – facilitator for university internationalization”

August 2013

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

List of contents and figures:

- 1. Rationale and methodology 2
 - Figure 1. Number of responses by countries. 3*
 - Figure 2. Response rate to the INTERUV on-line questionnaire..... 3*
- 2. Results - analysis of data collected from the questionnaire 4
 - Figure 3. Institutional internationalization strategies..... 4*
 - Figure 4. Joint study programmes in the institutional strategies..... 5*
 - Figure 5. Information on how may joint programmes are run by HEI..... 6*
 - Figure 6 Number of joint study programmes implemented by a HEI..... 7*
 - Figure 7. Level of study at which joint programmes are implemented..... 7*
 - Figure 8. External financial sources used to implement joint study programmes. 8*
 - Figure 9. Average number of partners involved in the consortium running a joint study programme9*
 - Figure 10. Involvement of non-academic institution in joint study programmes. 9*
 - Figure 11. Percentage of joint programmes implemented with participation of non-EU partners. . 10*
 - Figure 12. Joint study programmes by academic disciplines..... 10*
 - Figure 13. Type of qualification obtain upon completion of joint study programme..... 11*
 - Figure 14. Number of students enrolled in joint study programmes..... 12*
 - Figure 15. Origin of students enrolled in joint study programs..... 13*
 - Figure 16. Benefits of joint study programme implementation. 13*
- 3. Conclusions..... 14

1. Rationale and methodology

When the INTERUV consortium – 15 Erasmus Mundus National Structures from: Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Finland, France, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and United Kingdom – worked on the project's proposal, it was realised that although European HEIs have already developed their internationalisation strategies, many of these strategies will be, or should be, subject to amendments. Many HEIs still need to develop or substantially change their strategies. Joint programmes are not always seen by HEIs as a good tool for improving their international dimension and quality of their teaching and research. Thus they are often excluded from HEIs' (internationalisation) strategies.

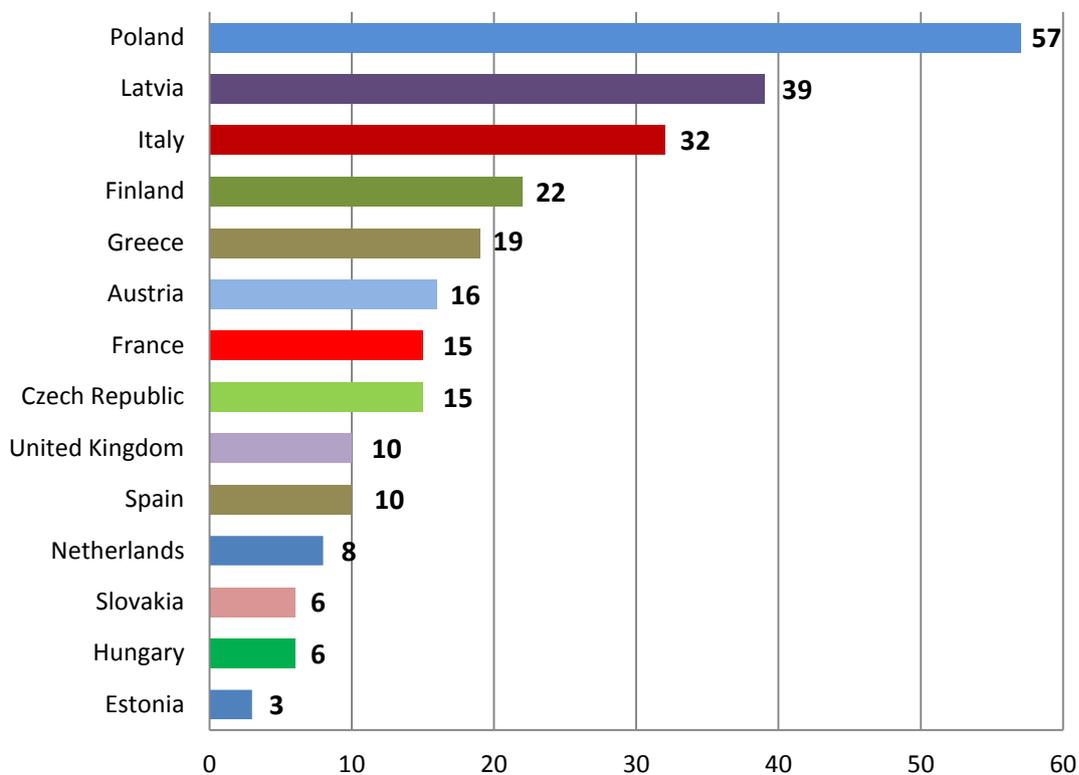
In order to identify the place of joint programmes in the (internationalisation) strategies of HEIs located in countries taking part in the project, a simple study was conducted. The study was based on an on-line questionnaire which was sent to HEIs located in INTERUV countries. Originally it was planned that the study will be open for these countries which do not have clear evidence of the place that joint programmes play in higher education development policies and/or which are willing to improve their situation in this respect. Eventually all but one (Norway) countries decided to take part in the study – National Structures have learned that information about approach to joint study programmes is quite fragmented so any further information allowing to make national analysis is supportive.

The questionnaire was prepared by the INTERUV consortium by using surveymonkey.net platform. Additionally to the main questions related to joint programmes in the internationalisation strategies, some more questions on already implemented joint programmes have been asked. The full text of the questionnaire is presented in annex 1.

The responses on the on-line questionnaire were collected between 5th March and 24th April 2013 in the following INTERUV countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom.

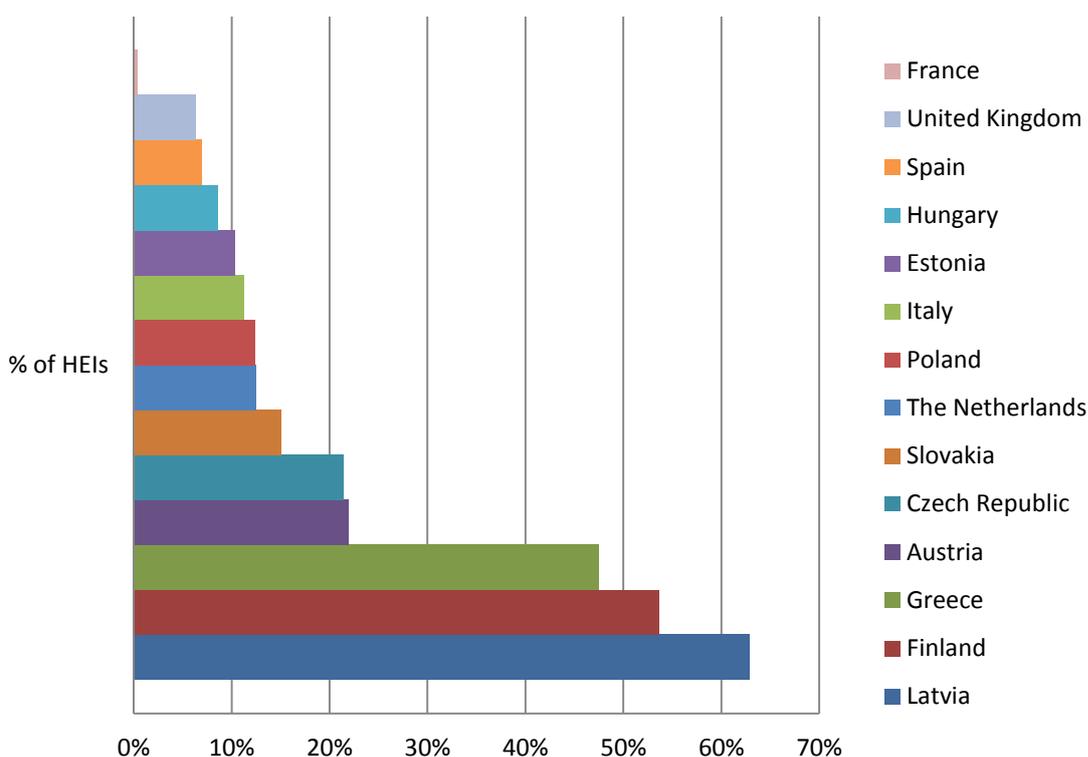
Erasmus Mundus National Structure in each country was responsible for sending out information about the study and request to fill-in the on-line questionnaire. Most countries used their standard e-mailing lists to Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus Institutional Coordinator and/or contact persons, and to HEIs legal representatives. Information about the study was available at the National Structures webpages. Thus theoretically all HEIs located in a given country had a chance to take part in the study. It was the reason for taking as a basis for the response rate the number of HEIs located in the country.

Figure 1 Number of responses by countries.



The highest numbers of responses was received from Polish and Latvian institutions.

Figure 2 Response rate to the INTERUV on-line questionnaire by countries.



Latvia reached the highest response rate (62,90%) followed by Finland (53,66%) and Greece (47,50%). These three countries managed to get remarkable interest of the study within their HEIs. Response above 20% (respectively 21,92% and 21,43%) was achieved by Austria and Czech Republic. Majority of countries reached the response rate between 10 and 15%.

The average response rate 13,56% gives right to generalise results obtained via the study. The most reliable results are for the countries which achieved response rate at the level of around and more that 50%.

In total 258 responses to the on-line questionnaire were received (Austria: 16, Czech Republic: 15, Estonia: 3, Finland: 22, France:1 5, Greece: 19, Hungary: 6, Italy: 32, Latvia: 39, the Netherlands: 8, Poland: 57, Slovakia: 6, Spain: 10, United Kingdom: 10).

2. Results - analysis of data collected from the questionnaire

Institutional strategies for internationalisation

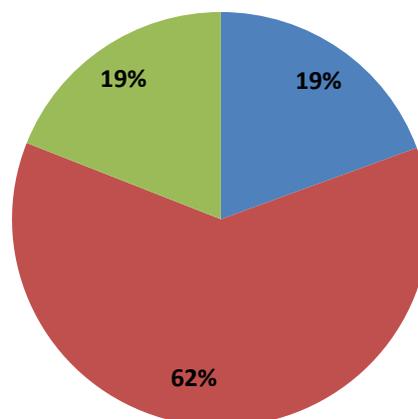
Answering the question „Does your institution have an internationalisation strategy?“:

- 19% of the HEIs responded “YES, as a specific internationalisation strategy”
- 62% of the HEIs responded “YES, as a part of an overall strategy”
- 19 % of the HEIs responded “NO – internationalisation is not specified in any official document”

Figure 3 Institutional internationalization strategies.

Does your institution have an internationalisation strategy?

- YES, as a specific internationalisation strategy
- YES, as a part of an overall strategy
- NO – it is not specified in any official document



Majority of institutions have their strategies for internationalisation (81% of all responding). In case of Estonia, Finland, Hungary and UK 100% of responding HEIs reported existence of the strategy for

internationalisation (as separate document or as part of the overall mission/ development plan). The highest number of HEIs reported that they do not have their internationalisation strategy (in any form) has Latvia (41%), Slovakia (33%), and Greece (32%).

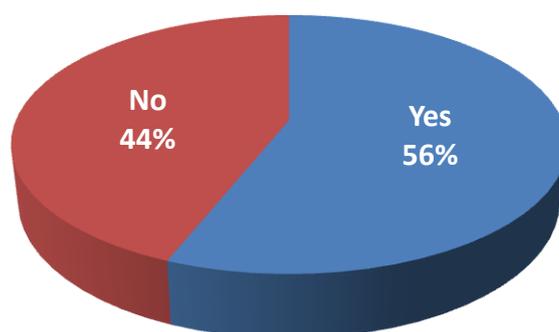
It could be interesting to mention here that in the survey made in February 2013 by EUA on “Internationalisation in European higher education: European policies, institutional strategies and EUA support” [brochure series: EUA Membership Consultation]¹: 99% of the institutions that replied either have an internationalization strategy in place (56%), intend to develop one (13%) or have considered internationalisation in other strategies (30%). In the same survey 91% respondents felt that there would be an added value to an EU strategy for internationalisation, particularly in promoting internationalisation to university leadership, national bodies and to the wider university community. There was also a notable interest in receiving support for internationalisation strategy development, which is very interesting, given the fact that majority of institutions stated that they already have a strategy in place.

Anyway, it seems and majority of European HEIs are ready to fulfil the recommendation stated in the document signed by the ministers responsible for higher education in countries belonging to the Bologna Process during the Bucharest conference called “Mobility for better learning. Mobility strategy 2020 for the EHEA”, which in the point 10 says “We (the ministers) call on HEIs to adopt and implement their own strategy for their internationalisation”². The progress will be monitored for the ministerial conference in 2015.

Although for people dealing with European educational programmes, especially Erasmus Mundus, it is obvious that joint study programmes are very valuable and beneficial form of education, joint programmes are not mentioned in the strategy of almost half of HEIs.

Figure 4 Joint study programmes in the institutional strategies.

Are joint study programmes mentioned directly or indirectly in the strategic document(s)?



Only in case of Estonia all responding institutions stated that joint study programmes are directly or indirectly mentioned in their strategies. High percentage (between 63 and 83%) is reported in case of

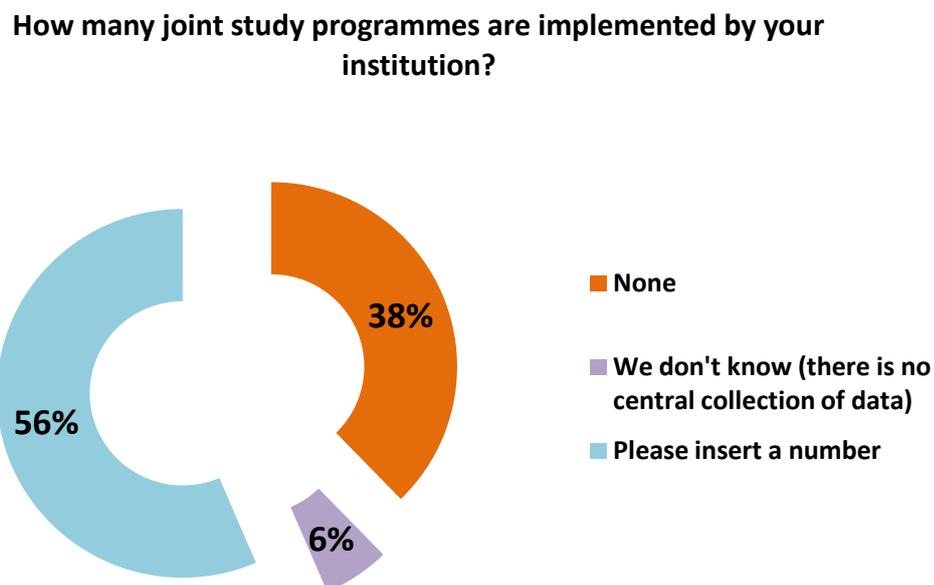
¹ “Internationalisation in European higher education: European policies, institutional strategies and EUA support”. Copyright 2013 by the European University Association.

² <http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/%281%29/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf>

Hungary, Finland, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, Slovakia, and the Netherlands. The lowest percentage of institutions which have included joint programmes in their institutional strategies (but still 40% of them) was reported by France and Latvia.

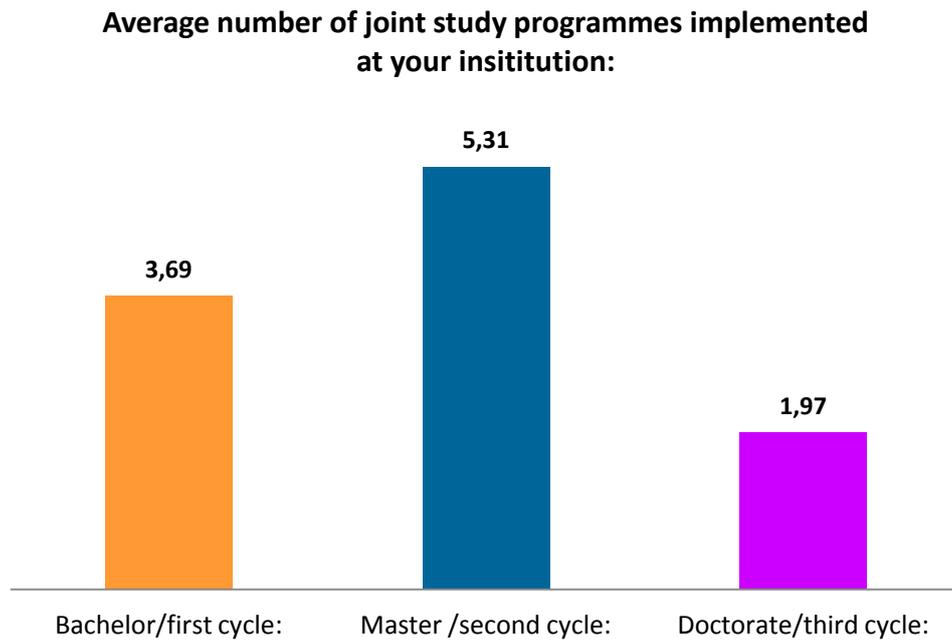
Answer to a question „how many programmes are implemented by your institution” ? was “none” for almost 40% of institutions (they stopped here to fill in the questionnaire). More than half of institutions inserted a concrete number of joint study programmes and almost 6% answered “We do not know”. This answer is quite interesting, showing substantial shortcoming in methods and tools of data collection.

Figure 5 Information on how may joint programmes are run by HEI.



Data related to the number of joint study programmes carried out by a given HEIs seems to be not reliable (in case of some HEIs provided number seems to be too high) aggregated data for all responses shows that an average European HEI has more than 3 joint programmes at the 1st cycle level, more than 5 at the 2nd cycle level, and almost 2 at the 3rd cycle level.

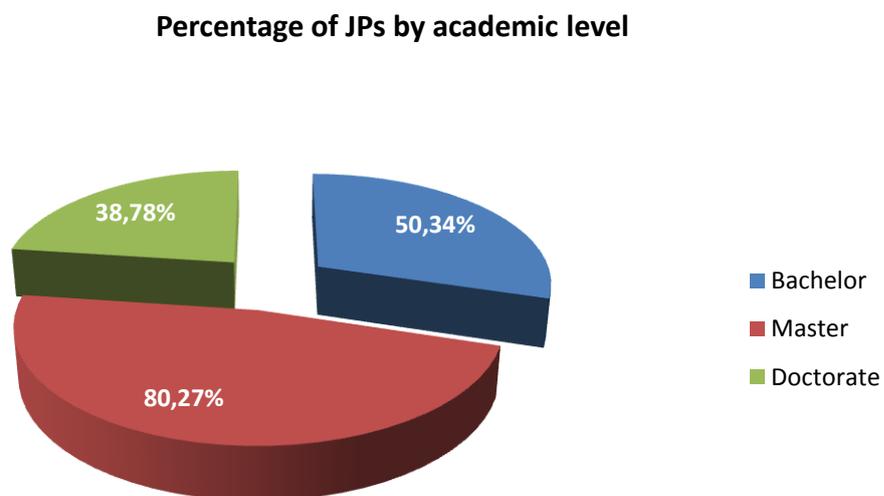
Figure 6 Number of joint study programmes implemented by a HEI.



If we consider that answers to this questions are correct, the highest average number of joint study programmes implemented at all levels (cycles) has Hungary, followed by France, United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. The lowest average number reported Latvian, Slovak and Polish HEIs.

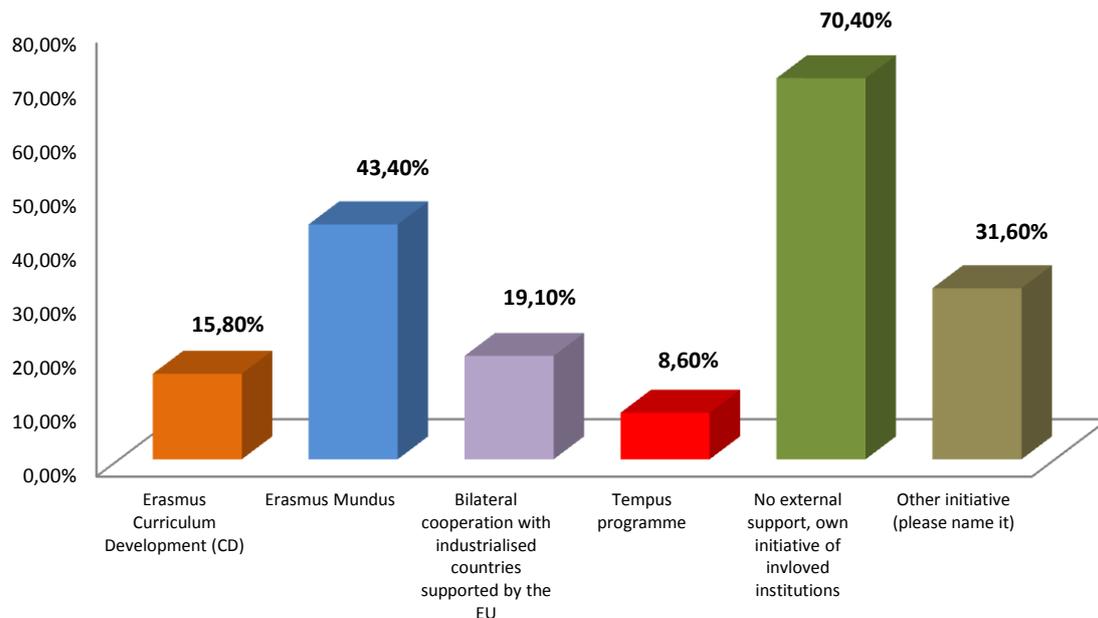
The INTERUV study proves what has been reported by many other similar analysis that Masters (2nd cycle) are most suitable for joint study programmes.

Figure 7 Level of study at which joint programmes are implemented.



There are various ways use by HEIs to prepare and implement joint study programmes. The INTERUV study proved that substantial support is provided by European educational programmes. However, which is positive and quite promising, majority of joint study programmes have been result of the institutional initiative.

Figure 8 External financial sources used to implement joint study programmes.

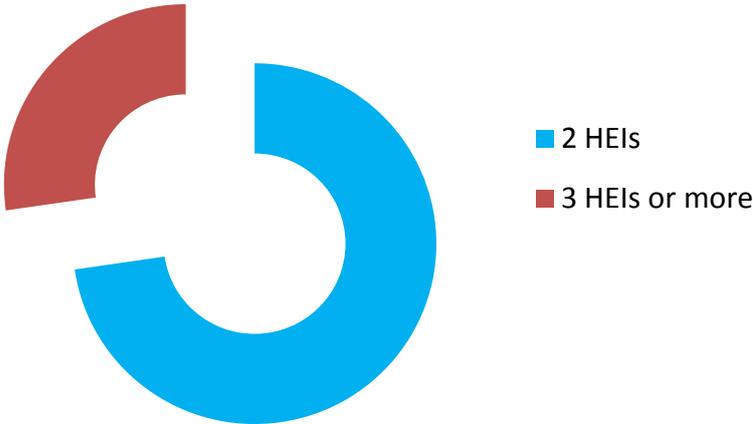


As an answer to this questions more than one option could be chosen. It should be mentioned here that answers from all countries reported support of the Erasmus Mundus programme. Erasmus Curriculum Development projects were not mentioned by Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia and UK. Support via bilateral cooperation with industrialised countries was not mentioned by Austria, The Netherland and UK. And support of Tempus programme was not reported by Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary , the Netherlands and UK.

From the management point of view it is easier to implemented programmes offered by smaller consortia (lower number of partner institutions). INTERUV survey proved that joint programmes offered by two HEIs (and most probably leading to double degree) are most popular. It is in line with findings from the survey made by the Institute of International Education in 2011 [Joint and Double Degree Programms in the Global Context: report on an International Survey prepared by Daniel Obst, Matthias Kuder, and Clare Banks] where we can find that “double degrees are much more common than joint degrees”³.

³ “Joint and Double Degree Programms in the Global Context: Report on an International Survey”. Copyright 2011 by the Institute of International Education.

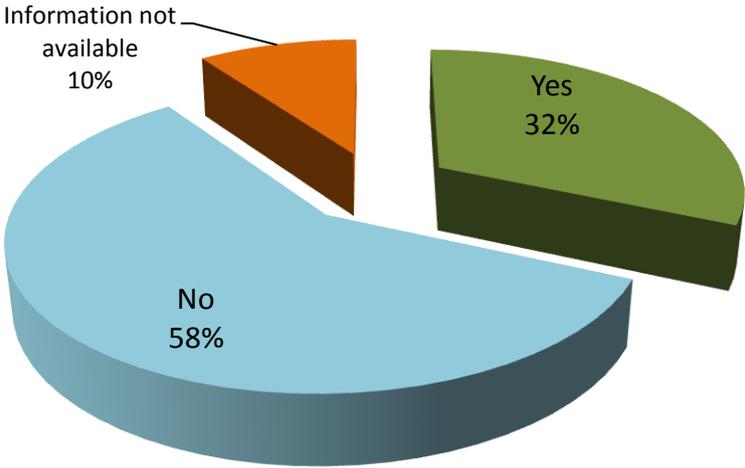
Figure 9 Average number of partners involved in the consortium running a joint study programme.



Taking into account that cooperation with business, enterprises and non-academic sector in general is very much expected from the HEIs, information that majority of joint programmes are run by academic institutions only is not positive. Only 48 HEIs responded positively to the question “Are any non-academic partners involved in the implementation of the joint study programmes at your institution (business partners, research institutions, public bodies, other non academic institutions)?”

Figure 10 Involvement of non-academic institution in joint study programmes.

Are any non-academic partners involved in the implementation of the joint study programmes at your institution (business partners, research institutions, public bodies, other non academic institutions)?



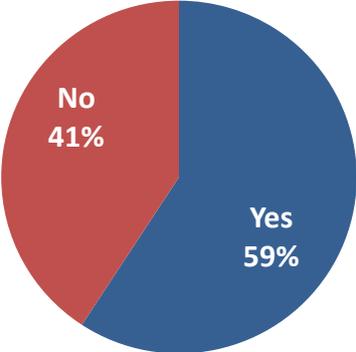
In case of HEIs which positively responded to the question majority reported that they cooperate with research institutions, business partners, public bodies, and others.

The highest percentage of positive responses to the question about involvement of non-academic partners was in case of HEIs located in Spain, United Kingdom, Hungary and the Netherlands.

It is assumed that Erasmus Mundus programme has boosted development of joint study programmes with non-EU partners. The INTERUV study shows that majority of joint programmes referred in the questionnaire involve non-EU institution.

Figure 11 Percentage of joint programmes implemented with participation of non-EU partners.

Do any of the joint study programmes implemented by your institution include non-EU partners?



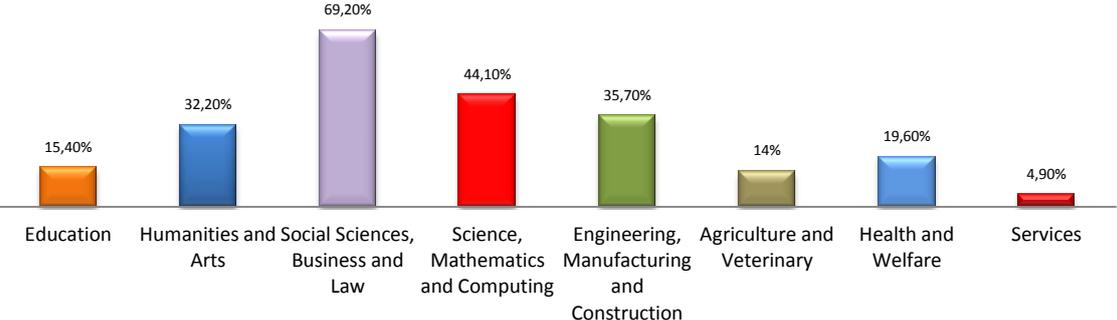
The highest proportion of joint study programmes involving non-EU institution has France, followed by United Kingdom and Italy. At the opposite side (i.e. the lowest percentage of institutions reporting which they have joint programmes with non-EU partners) are Latvia and Greece.

Answers about academic disciplines given by our respondents indicate that the most popular are:

- social sciences, business and law,
- science, mathematics and computing,
- engineering, manufacturing and construction,
- humanities and arts.

Figure 12 Joint study programmes by academic disciplines.

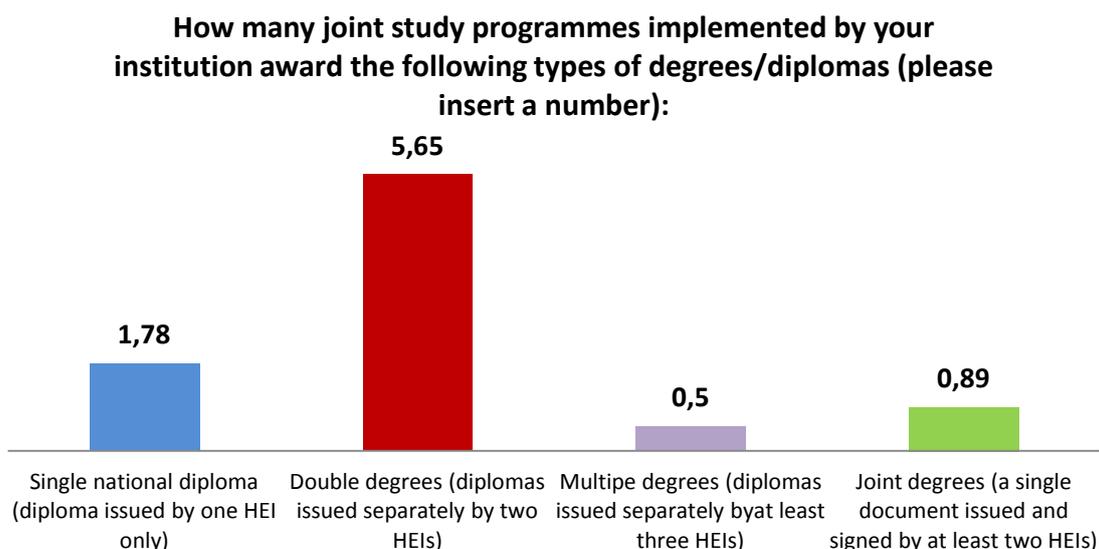
What are the academic disciplines in which joint study programmes are implemented by your institution?



Similar academic disciplines were reported in the IIE survey mentioned before, where we can find that “The most frequently cited academic disciplines for current and future degree programmes are **business and managements and engineering. Social sciences, mathematics and computer sciences**, and physical and life sciences are also popular academic disciplines. Most institutions that plan to develop more joint or double degree programmes at the doctoral level plan to do so in engineering”⁴.

A joint study programme leads to a qualification. Although it is much desired by the politicians and other EHEA supporters that this qualification should have a form of joint degree (joint diploma), the INTERUV project promotes joint study programmes as a process, as an interesting educational offer regardless of type of qualification received upon completion of the programme. The Erasmus Mundus programme promotes joint diplomas by giving preference to programmes ending with joint degree but is accepting other type of qualification (double or multiply degree) acknowledging that obtaining a joint degree and receiving joint diploma is a challenge in many countries belonging to EHEA. National authorities supporting the idea of joint degrees by signing declarations and other strategic documents should take seriously into consideration all obstacles which HEIs are still meeting while trying to issue joint diploma.

Figure 13 Type of qualification obtain upon completion of joint study programme.



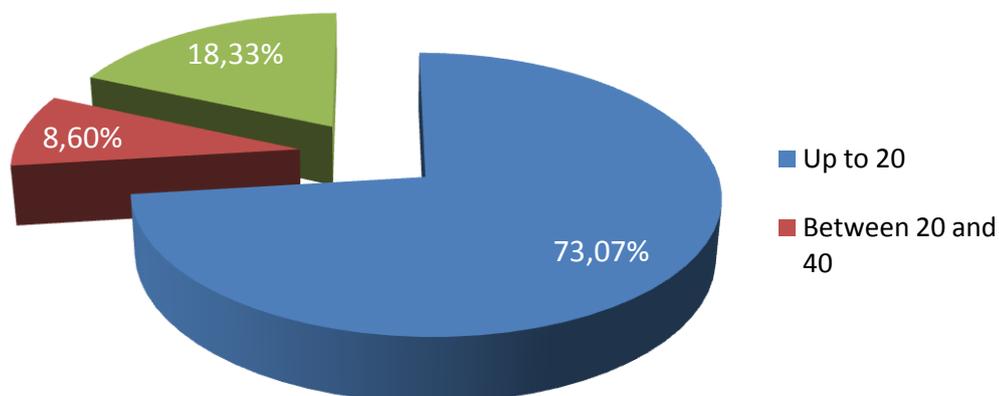
Anyway, the INTERUV study included question related to type of qualification. Responses to this questions were as follows: almost 65% of programmes provides double degree, 20% - only single degree, i.e. diploma issued by only one institution involved in the consortium, 10% of programmes end with joint degree (most probably Erasmus Mundus Master Courses are included here), and 5% issue multiple degrees.

⁴ “Joint and Double Degree Programmes in the Global Context: Report on an International Survey”. Copyright 2011 by the Institute of International Education.

The IIE survey⁵ includes interesting information about the nature of the programmes. A difference was made between so called “stand-alone” programmes, which was exclusively developed as a joint arrangement and so called “add-on” option, where the programme offers just additional component to an existing traditional study programme, offering interested students an optional track through curricular cooperation with a partner universities abroad. Survey responses suggest a marked difference – joint programmes tend to be stand-alone programmes on the contrary to double degree programmes, which were defined by majority as optional add-ons.

Quite often joint study programmes are criticised that they are costly and available for very few students. The fact that students’ cohort in joint study programmes is very limited has been proved by the INTERUV study.

Figure 14 Number of students enrolled in joint study programmes.



Majority of joint study programmes are offered for small number of students. However no further questions related to reasons were asked in the questionnaire. It would be interesting to know if this is due to low interest (low number of candidates) or due to desire to provide interactive teaching and learning which demand appropriate teacher-student ratio.

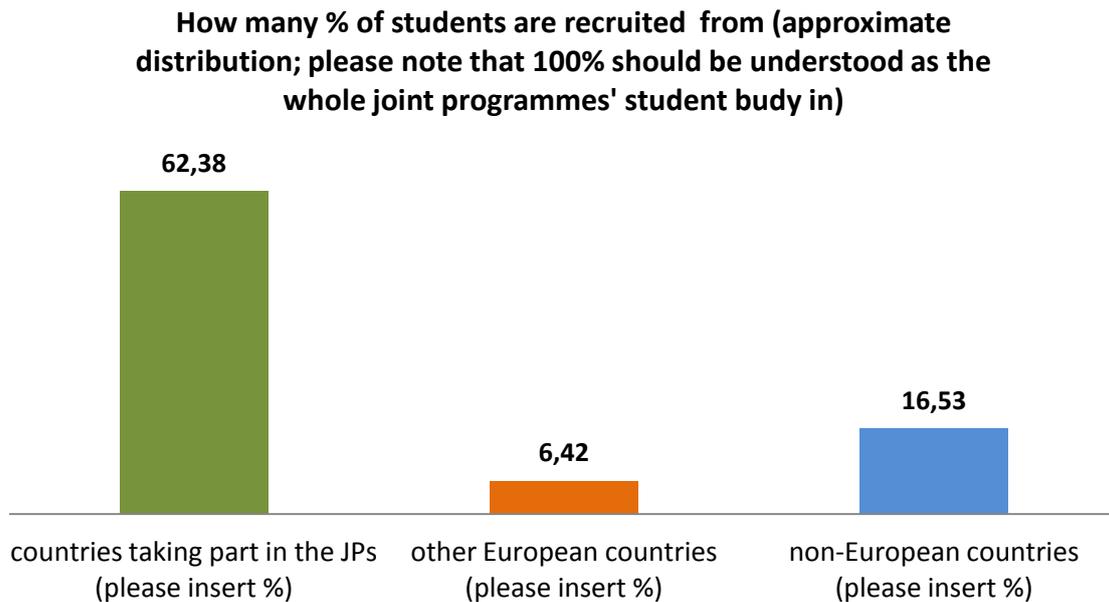
The same about the number of student enrolled in joint programmes says IIE survey – the majority (76%) of participating institutions report joint and double degree programmes with student enrolment of 25 or fewer⁶.

Where the students of joint programmes come from? From the countries constituting a consortium (so called local students), from other EU/EEA countries or maybe from other continents?

⁵ “Joint and Double Degree Programmes in the Global Context: Report on an International Survey”. Copyright 2011 by the Institute of International Education.

⁶ “Joint and Double Degree Programmes in the Global Context: Report on an International Survey”. Copyright 2011 by the Institute of International Education.

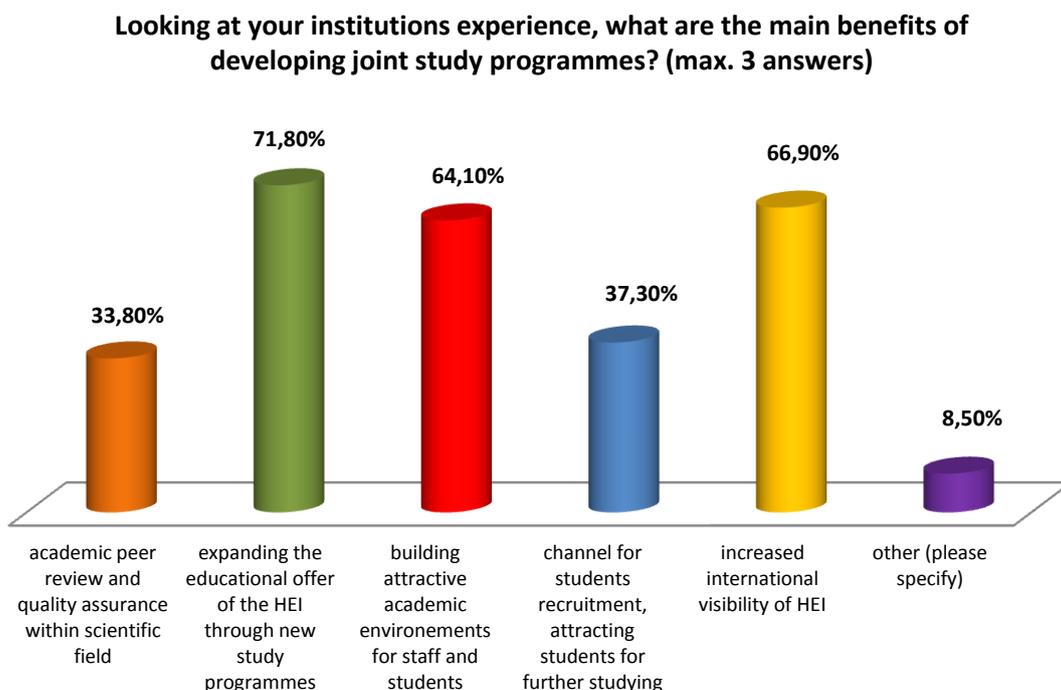
Figure 15 Origin of students enrolled in joint study programs.



Majority are local students, i.e. coming from countries of the consortium. The lowest number of students originate from other EU/EEA countries. Quite good percentage of non-EU countries could be linked with Erasmus Mundus funded projects.

Since joint study programmes are among top priorities of the EHEA development, this should be explained by benefits either for participants or for institutions. In the INTERUV study a question about institutional benefits was asked.

Figure 16 Benefits of joint study programme implementation.



Benefits from joint study programmes most frequently chosen by INTERUV respondents are:

- Expanding the educational offer,
- Increased international visibility,
- Building attractive academic environments for staff and students.

The IIE survey asked for motivations for developing joint and double degree programmes. The answers were: broadening educational offerings, strengthening research collaboration, advancing internationalisation, and raising international visibility/prestige. This is quite in line with the INTERUV answers for main benefits of developing joint programmes⁷.

Other benefits stated by the INTERUV study respondents:

- internationalising the student experience;
- Receiving motivated, good students that finish studies on time;
- Deepen and expanding the cooperation with selected partners;
- Pooling the European expertise in a narrow specialised field, internationalizing doctoral education
- Attracting economic resources;
- Relations with world of work, better cooperation with the global business, better awareness of the business needs for alumni qualifications and research projects;
- Building European Citizenship Partners.

There were comments in the questionnaire which should be carefully analysed by National Structures and national authorities, namely: possibility to award a qualification (for example PhD) for which an institution is not authorized.

3. Conclusions

The study implemented within the INTERUV project proved that collection of data in order to analyse certain aspect of higher education sector is a very challenging task. The INTERUV consortium has realised that data about joint programmes is quite fragmented and not consistent from country to country.

The questionnaire proved (again) that there is need for agreed terminology, definitions and their incorporation within national legal frameworks for higher education.

The consortium predicted that response rate will not be satisfactory since European HEIs are experiencing many request to take part in various studies and research. Although everyone active in the academic world acknowledges that studies are necessary for further development of the sector, it is expected that collection of data in the European Higher Education Area should be better organised. When planning the study the INTERUV consortium did not know that it will be required from all HEIs willing to apply for the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education to fill in certain question related to joint programmes. The INTERUV consortium believes that thanks to data collected by the Commission via application forms for the ECHE general picture about joint programmes within EHEA will become clearer (3389 applications submitted by HEIs from INTERUV consortium countries in comparison to 258 answers received via the INTERUV on-line questionnaire).

⁷ Ibidem.

Joint study programmes will stay among top issues for EHEA in coming decades. They are an attractive educational offer, especially for potential students from outside Europe. But their preparation and realisation is a challenge from the content (academic) and organisational (logistical) point of view. So, they are very attractive but very demanding. They are time, efforts and cost consuming. Thus decision about their implementation should be based on deep and careful needs analysis, followed by a good business plan, including sustainability plan.